

FAITH, HOPE, AND THE RESURRECTION

1 Peter 1:17-21

Intro: I am going to do two things today that I do not usually do. The first is, I am going back in 1 Peter to a passage which we have already considered in our present consideration of this Epistle. The second is, I am going to use the same text today, but on a different theme.

I am going back to this passage this morning because of its emphasis on the resurrection of Christ. This is Easter Sunday when the professing Church recognizes that event in history--the resurrection of our Lord.

Tonight we will be observing the Lord's Supper, and, when we do in the evening, I try to center the whole service around that ordinance which the Lord ordained for us to practice in remembering Him in His death.

Historically, of course, these events took place in the opposite order from the way we are considering them, but you will understand that that is because of the order of our services--the Lord's Supper commemorates the death of Christ, but this morning we are thinking about the resurrection of Christ.

As we have been considering 1 Peter in our Sunday morning services, those of you who have been memorizing this Epistle and those of you who have been reading it, have doubtless noticed that Peter emphasizes certain themes by referring to them more than once. One of those themes is the resurrection of Christ. Let me point them out to you:

- 1) 1:3.
- 2) 1:11.
- 3) In our text for this morning, 1:21.
- 4) 3:18.
- 5) 3:21.

The book of Acts shows us also that the resurrection of Christ was a prominent theme in Peter's preaching from the Day of Pentecost on. We will be looking at some of the things he said as we look into the 21st verse of 1 Peter 1.

Let me read 1 Peter 1:17-21 to you. (Read.)

I have been pointing out to you as we have gone through chapter 1 and up to the 12th verse of chapter 2 how much Peter can say in few words. But we cannot really give the credit to Peter because the Spirit of God was directing him in what he wrote. Nevertheless, he could say a lot in a few words.

Notice the time he covered and the events referred to in just verses 19, 20, and 21.

- 1) V. 19 -- "the precious blood" is a reference to His death on the Cross.
- 2) V. 20 -- the death of Christ was ordained by God "before the foundation of the world."
- 3) Also in v. 20 -- "manifested in these last times" refers to the time of our Lord's birth.
- 4) V. 21 speaks of Christ's resurrection.
- 5) And then we also see in v. 21 the word "hope," which has to do with the coming of the Lord for His people.

So we can see that Peter spanned all of time, from eternity to eternity, and what he had to say focused completely upon our Lord Jesus Christ.

The general theme of what Peter wrote here had to do with salvation, our salvation from sin, from divine judgment, from the wrath of God. And it was all made possible by the first coming of Christ through His death and His resurrection.

Now let us look in particular at v. 21. The first thing to notice is that . . .

I. GOD RAISED UP CHRIST FROM THE DEAD AND GAVE HIM GLORY.

The resurrection of Christ was a miraculous work of God--a real work. It actually happened. It is a fact of history. Jesus Christ came forth from the grave in His body. This was not some kind of a spiritual resurrection which left His body in the grave. Jesus Christ was brought back to life! God did it! There is no question about it.

Other passages tell us that Christ Himself as well as the Holy Spirit both had a part in His resurrection, but here Peter emphasized the fact that God raised Christ from the dead!

Peter knew this because He saw the Lord after He was raised. He talked with the Lord. Peter began preaching this right after the Lord ascended back to heaven, and, as he wrote this Epistle, it was some thirty years later and he was still saying the same thing!

Listen to what Peter said in Jerusalem as he was preaching on that memorable Day of Pentecost--Acts 2:23--speaking of Christ:

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel
and foreknowledge of God,
ye have taken,
and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Whom God hath raised up,
having loosed the pains of death:
because it was not possible that he should be holden
by it.

But He did something else.

He, that is, God, "gave him glory."

We could paraphrase that statement and say, He glorified Christ!

Hebrews 2:9 says,
But we see Jesus,
who was made a little lower than the angels
for the suffering of death,
crowned with glory and honour . . .

What does this mean?

Well, it certainly means that He came out of the grave with a body that had been glorified. It was the same body that He had lived in during His life, but it was glorified at His resurrection. It was a body no longer subject to death. He could never die again. His body was now eternal! The work He came to earth to do was finished, and after His resurrection death no longer had any dominion over Him. Cf. Rom. 6:9.

But it meant something more than that.

Always when we read in Scripture of the glory of God in relation to His Person, it means that God is revealed, or, in the case of Christ, that Christ is revealed. To state it another way, one way in which God is glorified is when His glory is seen! For Christ to be glorified meant not only that He was resurrected in a glorified body, but that He ascended back to heaven, and that He was seated at the right hand of God--a position never given even to the greatest of God's angels. It is reserved for God, the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!

This is what the Lord Jesus was praying about in John 17:1-5. (Read.)

During our Lord's life here on earth His glory was veiled. Men could see Him and think that He was only a man. But not so after His resurrection. Then He appeared to His disciples as the Lord of heaven, the Just One, the Holy One, the Prince of life, the Saviour. These are titles which Peter used in Acts 2 and 3 and 5.

Paul touched on this in Rom. 1 when, speaking of "the gospel of God" (v. 1), he said,

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
 which was made of the seed of David
 according to the flesh;
And declared to be the Son of God with power,
 according to the spirit of holiness,
by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And a final thing that His glory meant, He became the object of praise and worship for angels and for His people as never before!

Oh, what a day that was--Jesus Christ raised from the dead, glorified, manifested in His glorified body as none other than the Son of God.

But what else does our verse tell us in connection with the resurrection of Christ?

I have said that it has to do with our salvation. Peter makes that very clear in vv. 18, 19. But does this mean that all are saved because Jesus Christ died and rose again?

No!

Salvation is by faith. And so let us talk about this.

II. SALVATION BY FAITH.

Peter mentioned believing in God in the first part of v. 21, and then he mentioned "your faith" in the latter part of the verse.

But in v. 9 he told what is the goal or purpose of our faith--"Receiving the end of your faith,
 even the salvation of your souls."

So salvation is by faith. It comes by believing. But, believing what? faith in what?

Well, our verse says, believing in God, "that your faith and hope might be in God."

But we still need to see what it means to believe in God.

It means to believe that God ordered all of this, that God was the One Who did all of this, that He was satisfying His own righteousness when Jesus Christ, His Son, came and died, shedding His precious blood, that sinners might be saved. So you cannot believe God without believing what

He did in Christ. And to believe "in" God means that you are trusting in Christ and what He did for your salvation.

Now if this believing in God sounds strange to some of you, let me remind you of John 5:24,

Verily, verily, I say unto you,
He that heareth my word,
and believeth on him that sent me,
hath everlasting life,
and shall not come into condemnation;
but is passed from death unto life.

So, to be saved, we must believe that God did all of this through Christ, finally raising Him from the dead, and glorifying Him, and that this is the only claim that we have on salvation. As Peter said in another place,

Neither is there salvation in any other:
for there is non other name under heaven
given among men, whereby we must be saved
(Acts 4:12).

Believing means two things:

- 1) Accepting the teaching of Scripture regarding the death and resurrection of Christ as true,
and
- 2) trusting in Christ, and Christ alone, for salvation from our sins.

Do you believe in God in that sense?

Perhaps you say, "Well, sometimes I feel that I do, and at other times I am not sure."

Let me call your attention to another part of this verse--the statement, "**Who by him** do believe in God." By whom? By Christ! You see, your faith comes from Him. Look to Him for your faith and then you will truly and continually believe. You see, Peter believed, according to vv. 20, 21 that Christ came and died especially for those who would believe in God, and so all who will ever believe in God for salvation always and only find their faith in Him. Salvation is all of God, even the faith. So look to Christ for your faith because salvation comes only to those "**who by him** (Christ) **do believe in God.**"

One more point:

III. THE HOPE OF SALVATION.

The hope of salvation is a vital, integral part of salvation, but what is our "hope"?

See 1:3-5.

Our "hope" is the final fulfillment of our salvation. It means heaven. It means glory for us. It means being with Christ and being like Christ. It will all be completed when the Lord comes for us. This world is not our home, our final dwelling place. We are bound for heaven. So if we are trusting in God to save us through Christ, we can be sure that we are saved now, and that we will be saved eternally. That is the prospect, the goal, the final purpose of our trusting in Christ.

Concl: You see, this is the Easter message. This is the purpose of the coming of Christ--of His death and resurrection. It indicates that God, in raising Christ from the dead, was bearing witness to the fact that the Lord had done everything necessary for the salvation of every person who would ever believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I ask you this morning, is He your Saviour? If He is not, you are still under the judgment of God, and if you go on like you are you will spend eternity in hell. There is no other Saviour--only Christ. But the promise is that if you come to Him, believing God about His Son, and trusting in what Christ has done. And once you trust in Him, since salvation depends upon the Lord, you can never again go back and be lost.

May God move upon your heart, making these truths clear, and then drawing you to place your God-given faith in Christ that you might be saved.