



KIAMA ANGLICAN CHURCHES

Sermon

1 Peter 1v1-12

Strangers in the World

New Birth into a Living Hope

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AIM:

To humble the sinner, to exalt the Saviour, to promote holiness
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Whatever the text, faithfulness demands that we should hear
the echoes of nails hitting his hands.

The Passage

1 Peter 1:1-12

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,

2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, **5** who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7** These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire —may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **8** Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, **11** trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. **12** It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Introduction

Isn't it great to be 'back' together – even with some restrictions!
This is what church is meant to be.

This is the way Peter's first readers/hearers would have first got this letter...read to them as they gathered, probably in someone's home...

As we gather here in that 2000 year old tradition let's
PRAY.

To the Point

A newspaper columnist several years ago *described the amazing good fortune of a man named Jack Wurm. In 1949, Mr. Wurm was broke and out of a job. One day he was walking along a San Francisco beach when he came across a bottle with a piece of paper in it. As he read the note, he discovered that it was the last will and testament of Daisy Singer Alexander, heir to the Singer sewing machine fortune. The note read,*

"To avoid confusion, I leave my entire estate to the lucky person who finds this bottle and to my attorney, Barry Cohen, share and share alike."

According to Boyd, the courts accepted the theory that the heiress had written the note 12 years earlier and had thrown the bottle into the Thames River in London, from where it had drifted across the oceans to the feet of a penniless and jobless Jack Wurm. His chance discovery netted him over 6 million dollars in cash and Singer stock.

How would you like to have been making Mr. Wurm's footprints on that San Francisco beach? What a find!

Peter writes in his first letter of an infinitely greater inheritance that is there for all of us. Great comfort to all Christians...a share in Jesus' inheritance.

A New Birth into a Living Hope

Five Headings (briefly):

Our Calling

Our Salvation.

Our Inheritance

Our Guarantee

Our Response

1 Peter 1:1-12

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

As with most letters of the first century this one opens with the name of the writer and his credentials. This writer is **Peter**...

...the Peter who walked the dusty roads, streets and lanes of Palestine with Jesus about 30 years before this is written... the fisherman, the disciple, the bold defender, the scared denier, the forgiven pastor.

He is an Apostle – a ‘sent one’ and, in this case, one sent by Jesus the Christ.

Those who held this office had authority at least equal to the Old Testament prophets, for the apostles could speak and write God’s very words and thus could write the words which became New Testament Scripture.

We understand that the time of writing is about the mid-60s AD and Peter is in Rome (not long before he is martyred) and, with the help of Silvanus, writes from there. This is around the same time that strong tradition has it that Mark wrote his Gospel in Rome at Peter’s narration/dictation.

To God’s elect, exiles

Then to the recipients – Peter calls them two very significant ‘names’:

elect,

Or chosen (v2) according to the foreknowledge of the Father.

God has chosen them – from before the creation of the world.
God is not thwarted and God has a plan.

exiles

Lots of different words for this one in the various translations
I like the 'sojourner' tag – 'old fashioned word though it is.
It speaks of not absolutely belonging. More or less happily living
'abroad' but knowing you belong to another, perhaps better,
place.

The plight of those Australian citizens who would, now, like to get
back to Australia gives us some insight – they are and we are not
where we belong. So they are, WE ARE, the chosen sojourners.
Specifically...

***scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia,
Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,***

This is north western modern Turkey and includes the area where
30 years or so later John would write his letters to 7 churches
that form part of the greater 'letter' we call Revelation.

Interesting to contemplate the results of what Peter is saying
to them in each of the churches we looked at earlier in the
year.

Our Calling

Our Salvation
Our Inheritance
Our Guarantee
Our Response

² who have been chosen

Again these people are the 'chosen people' of God.
The activity of God throughout the Bible is to gather a faithful
people to himself. This is referred to again in v9 of chapter 2.

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,

and this is the work of God's will – he has elected them and
chosen them – an echo of God's chosen people of the OT -

*This implies that their status as sojourners, their privileges as
God's chosen people, even their hostile environment in*

Pontus, Galatia, etc., were all known by God before the world began, all came about in accordance with his foreknowledge, and thus (we may conclude) all were in accordance with his fatherly love for his own people. Such foreknowledge is laden with comfort for Peter's readers.

through the sanctifying work of the Spirit,

The second person of the Trinity is the one now engaged in the ongoing work of making them holy.

The unseen, unheard activity of God's Holy Spirit surrounds them almost like a spiritual atmosphere 'in' which they live and breathe, turning every circumstance, every sorrow, every hardship into a tool for his patient sanctifying work.

to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:

And that sanctifying shows itself in obedience to Jesus.

What Peter will call 'doing good'

John 15:14 *You are my friends if you do what I command...*

The 'blood' reminds us of the cost of this great grace we are given – Jesus messy death on the cross.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

The traditional greeting of the Jews and the Greeks Christianised by the statements beforehand.

Our Calling

Our Salvation

Our Inheritance

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Our Response

3 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!*

So Peter (like Paul in his letters) launches into a shared praise/prayer/meditation for what God has done and is doing in Jesus.

Reminding his readers and us of the great facts of our salvation.

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Our salvation is

A great mercy,

Not of our own making – it is the gracious work of God. Mercy by its very nature is undeserved – a gift.

A new birth

Born again – as in John 3, ‘You must be born again.’

A living hope

This salvation has a future – it looks forward with positive hope

A living hope, a hope that is certain.

Hope in scripture is always certain – not the ‘I hope I get a Porsche for Christmas’ hope – but a certain hope guaranteed by the one who has the power to bring it to pass.

Through the Resurrection

Guaranteed by the space time factual EVENT of the cross.

We know it is a true salvation, a true new birth and a certain hope because Jesus rose from the dead

Salvation stands out

Planned by God the Father

Procured by God the Son

Applied by God the Spirit

Our Calling

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⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

This is called ...

An inheritance

We share in the inheritance of the Son of God. We are brothers and sisters with Jesus. And ... it cannot...

perish, spoil or fade.

That is, it can never perish – death proof! Never spoil – sin proof!

Never fade – time proof!

11

Our Calling
Our Salvation.
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Our Response

This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,

Kept in Heaven – ‘Guarded’ in heaven is the sense.

Great assurance in this.

⁵ who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

And that is not all – there is yet more to be revealed

Not just 2 for one or a set of steak knives.

But the bonus is the very BEST bit,

It has ongoing – truly ongoing and ongoing – effect

When Jesus comes to finish what he has started he will bring the full glory of the salvation he has won for us with Him for us.

12

Our Calling
Our Salvation.
Our Inheritance
Our Guarantee

Our Response

⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

And of course, this is cause for great rejoicing.

Which is different to moment-by-moment ‘happiness’

It is deeper and more far sighted

13

Though it may get tough now and for a while. Suffering is one of the great themes that runs through this letter and others will touch more fully on it. But for now, note:

There are trials

This is the normal lot of the Christian.

Things could be tough for these Christians – but not yet organised, state sponsored persecution.

I suspect for them, like us Satan doesn't have to be so direct – a sly word, the cutting remark, the stifled laugh, etc.

BUT are not our trials also of the more distracting sort -

Tempted by this world to turn away. - Comfortable things first - other things to do. - So that our faith wavers, whimpers, and 'dies'.

They have a purpose:

The building up of our holiness – our sanctification.

Refining

Remember God is far more interested in your godliness than your happiness.

They look to a result:

The praise of Jesus and God – now and when the fulness of our hope is revealed.

⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

A working definition of Faith.

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.

And...this is all part of God's plan which is revealed in the Old Testament. If we wish to see the full glory of God's work in the world we need to see and understand what God has done throughout time. The fullness of the story. This is what the prophets – not just the writing ones - of the OT were all about.

¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Even Ecclesiastes speaks to us of a world that needs Jesus and his work in the world and us.

Even angels long to look into these things.

And even the angels in 'heaven' long to have the insights into these things that those who are saved through Jesus have.

And so v13 – ***Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope***

Prepare your minds for action

Get a grip on your thought processes.

But that is for next week ...

Conclusion

Our Calling / Our Salvation / Our Inheritance

Our Guarantee/ Our Response

All of these are God's handiwork. This is all important.

Too quickly we see ourselves deserving it. Our reliance must be on God. To rely on ourselves, if we are honest, is to have no real confidence.

Our Response

Rejoice - Obey - Rejoice - Grow - Rejoice

Back to the guy on the beach with 6 million dollars

Now let's compare Jack Wurm's inheritance with yours if you are

trusting Christ as your Savior. You have become an heir with Christ. Your eternal future is secure! Think about what you have. Think about what it will mean to you 100 years from now. Try to imagine the eternal life, the eternal happiness, the eternal gratitude, the eternal peace, the eternal profit. The psalmist said that this “inheritance shall be forever.”
Six million dollars doesn’t even begin to compare with our spiritual inheritance!

Isn’t it great to be back – gathered together – even with restrictions – that is the way Peter’s first readers/hearers would have first got this letter – gathered to share the inestimable inheritance we have in Jesus. And, over the next few weeks, to share this wonderful letter from Peter that one preacher has called ‘The Handbook of Christianity’.

Prayer:

1 PETER 1:3-6

Paraphrased

***Praise be to you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
In your great mercy you have given me (us)
new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade
that is kept in heaven for me (us),
who through faith are shielded by your power
until the coming of the salvation
that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
In all this I (we) greatly rejoice
through the name of Jesus who makes all this possible.***