

Second Sunday of Easter – 2023

Saturday, 4/15 at 4:00 | Sunday, 4/16 at 9:00



Text: 1 Peter 1:1-9 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: *Waiting can be difficult!* These are some *normal* times of waiting in this life:

- Waiting to eat when we are hungry.
- Waiting to heal from an injury.
- Waiting for test results.

Today's sermon focuses on our waiting to receive our *eternal inheritance*. In this sermon we are going to discover things that are ➔*so exciting* and ➔*so important!*



1. **Peter's Readers:** **1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens [temporary residents], scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia [which is the present-day**

country of Turkey, but was very Christian at the time of Peter], **who are chosen** ² **according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey [trust in] Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood... //**

Notice how they were saved through the work of the F, the S, and the HS – *just like us!*

2. **So Exciting:** ³ **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ **who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** // Let's think about ***God's great love for us:******
- a. Great mercy: That is what God the Father has shown to us – *since He has held back the eternal punishment we deserved!*
 - b. Born again: God the Father caused our spiritual birth; *we are now alive physically and spiritually!*
 - c. Living hope: We do **not** have wishful thinking, **but** *God the Father has gifted us with absolute certainty!*
 - d. Through the resurrection: Since our dead Jesus NOW LIVES FOREVERMORE, *we are convinced of our coming resurrection and eternal inheritance!*
 - e. Indestructible inheritance: Peter used these terms:
 - i. Imperishable – Cannot die; immortal!
 - ii. Undefiled – Cannot rust, decay, or decline!

- iii. Unfading – Like a flower in bloom – *eternally fresh, lasting forever!*
 - f. Reserved in heaven: Our inheritance is kept secure by God, *awaiting our arrival!*
 - g. Power of God: We are weak, *but He is strong*. He *gave* us faith in Jesus and *is* working to keep us in the faith!
3. **So Important:** ⁶ **In this** [*your present state of being saved and your coming eternal inheritance*] **you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary** [*if it is God's will*], **you have been distressed by various trials** [*testing*], [*Why?*] ⁷ **so that the proof of your faith** [*your faith – having been tested and proved to be genuine*], **being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;** ⁸ **and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,** ⁹ **obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.** // Note: The proof of our faith is more precious than gold!
- a. Intellectual assent or saving faith?
 - i. **Intellectual assent is head knowledge:** “...the demons also believe, and shudder” (Jas. 2:19). Demons know MUCH MORE than we do, *yet such knowledge DOES NOT SAVE THEM*. Many people have some knowledge about God, the Bible, and Jesus; some of those same people also try to be decent and, *we might say*, follow the rules. All such things are not bad – in and of themselves, *but such things DO NOT SAVE*.

- ii. **Saving faith is a relationship with Jesus:** Jesus prayed: “...this is eternal life: that they [my followers] **know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent**” (Jn. 17:3 NIV). When a person is saved, **he knows the Father and Jesus, he is in relationship with them!** So, he ▶learns from Jesus, ▶talks to Jesus, and ▶lives for Jesus!
- b. The results of testing? In school, testing can show the level of understanding.
 - i. **Testing a believer:** When God tests us – *for example, with a cancer diagnosis*, we are forced to put our faith into practice.
 - ii. **Testing someone with intellectual assent:** When he goes through a trial, he may ▶question God, ▶become angry with God, or even ▶deny God’s existence.
- c. The benefits of testing? As the testing confirms our trust in Jesus, it also ✓**grows** our confidence in God’s promises, ✓**increases** our peace in every circumstance, and ✓**looks ahead** to the return of Jesus – *which will be the day we 😊receive our eternal inheritance and 😊begin enjoying the fulness of eternal life!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, make us certain of our saving faith, carry us through every test, and keep us looking forward to Jesus’ return and the fulness of eternal life!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube and Podcast:** Benefit from the Bible
Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com
7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230