

1 Peter

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

[0 : 00] As the Lord may help me this evening, I will direct your attention to the first epistle of Peter, the first chapter and the third verse.

The first epistle of Peter, the first chapter and the third verse. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundance mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

In this verse, the apostle draws our attention to Jesus as the man.

Jesus as the eternal God clothed in humanity.

[1 : 30] Jesus, who acknowledged God to be his God and his Father to be his Father, so that we hear those blessed sounding words spoken to Mary, go to my disciples and tell them, I ascend unto your Father and my Father, unto your God and my God.

Lord, it will be a blessing for us this evening if we see and feel a sweetness in the condescending grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How impossible it sometimes appears to us to worship God in the glory of his heights.

But how wonderful that he should descend to men of no estate for his mercy and cure it forever.

And the apostle here seeks a benediction upon the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[3 : 14] The God and Father of that blessed man who came upon this earth, but who now rules the courts of bliss.

Shall we not be attracted to Jesus Christ? But when we speak of him as a man, we do not speak of him with the limitations that are imposed upon us as sinful creatures, except that he looked unto God for his needs to be supplied.

We read in the word of God that he was crucified through weakness.

I have understood that the Greek original, in relation to this word weakness, means that he abstained from his strength.

And we may ponder that point. You see, some have fallen into the area of thinking that the Lord could not accomplish certain things.

[4 : 49] He could not because he was weak. Well, we must understand that weakness in a right way. He was only weak insofar that he abstained from his strength.

And if the Lord should condescend to give us a little meditation, I feel confident that the glory of the Lord will be revealed.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have reason to bless God, even the Father, this evening.

That it should have pleased him to send his only begotten Son into the world. Wonderful, divine pleasure.

A word, a scripture, which is so often repeated, and yet repeated with little understanding, still remains precious to the people of God.

[6 : 11] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It is that same ever-blessed and glorious person, the Father, that Peter here, that speaks of and says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for that unspeakable gift which was bestowed upon the Church of God.

It would have been very different if we had have read here, Blessed be the God, or rather, Blessed be the Father of the Eternal Son.

Wonderful and real and true, that is. But to the Church of God, everything centers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 27] Everything centers in a person that represented and contained and shined forth two natures, divine and human.

We should never be confused into thinking that there were two persons. It was but one person, but there were two natures, the divine and the human.

And this person is described as the God-man. And when we therefore consider the Lord Jesus Christ as a man, we must always remember that this is the Son of God.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which according to His abundant mercy.

What are our feelings about God's mercy? Do we ever have to refer to it as abundant mercy?

[8 : 57] Paul, when he wrote to Timothy, refers to abundant mercy, abundant grace.

and if we look at our color and make, if we should ever have to associate ourselves with these words in the first chapter of Timothy, who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, but I obtained mercy because I did it infinitely in unbelief and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Do we ever fear it necessary for this word abundant to come in the profession of our faith?

Peter surely found it necessary that he should come within the profession of his faith which according to His abundant mercy.

Now the abundant mercy of God as Peter refers to it here is seen in the new birth.

[10 : 31] Oh the unspeakable abundance of God's mercy in the new birth. And if we have an evidence that we are born again what shall we say?

How shall we describe it? But on the basis of the abundant mercy of God not just mercy you know the more we come to grips with real truth we shall be the more willing to use what some people would say is extravagant language.

But it will not be so with you if your guiltiness is great. to speak of the abundant mercy of God you needed the abundant mercy of God not only prior to the new birth but since.

And it is good it will fill your heart with a deeper sense of worship the closer the closer you get to your feeling of such a depth of sin and guilt exceeding sinful that of necessity will cause you to speak of abundant mercy.

You see we have to leave other people sometimes if they are content to speak of mercy well we shall have to leave them but we shall have to say some of us perhaps this evening will have to say I must speak of abundant mercy because the abundant mercy of God was the only real and true description of the whole scene when God quickened my soul into life and therefore we shall find upon reflection the spirit of worship entering into our hearts when we think of this great this abundant mercy that was exercised and made a reality in our lives when

[13 : 03] God formed in our hearts Jesus Christ the hope of glory now we must not forget if this has taken place in our hearts that to bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ election is in the love of the Father we have it in the previous verse elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and the next point which he raises is through sanctification of the Spirit now these two points are followed through in the verse of our text blessed be the

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again that is the sanctification of the Spirit sanctification in the first place of being separated unto God and separated from an ungodly world I feel it is important for us to consider separation in so far as it is a separation unto God sometimes people talk about separation and they are contented if they can observe according to their satisfaction a separation from the world we may be deceived if we settle for that the separation which we want to know is a separation to

Jesus Christ or to God in Christ you see calling may be considered by some to be a calling out of the world out of darkness which of course it is but you may be deceived if you stop there in order to have that which is positive we shall refer you to the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in the first chapter and the ninth verse where we read God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ our Lord and this is the positive side of calling are we called out of an ungodly world there are people that do come out of an ungodly world and they associate themselves with religious people but their fellowship is not with Jesus

Christ now if our fellowship is not with Jesus Christ we are lacking of vital evidence and if we haven't a clear evidence of it we may come to the end of our lives only to find that though we are called out of the world we are still deceived for many are called but few are chosen called indeed out of the world but to be chosen to have fellowship with Jesus Christ is the real yardstick by which we may judge the whole matter which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again we are begotten by the word of truth it may be profitable for us to consider the new birth but we were considering the sanctification of the spirit emphasized in the first place in the meaning of the word sanctification separation and then in the second place to make holy and we must look at this word holy straight in the face because without holiness no man shall see the Lord people may speak and truly speak of their sinnership and it's needful that they should speak of their sinnership but it's needful that we should see the Lord this side of the grave because if we don't see the

Lord this side of the grave as our saviour and redeemer we shan't see him the other side so these points become very very important to us without holiness says the same apostle no man shall see the Lord now how shall we know something about that the same apostle Peter instructs us like this he says ye are partakers of the divine nature and John in his epistle tells us that that which is born of God sinneth not I know sometimes the power of indwelling sin is so strong our old nature is so powerful that we almost come to the conclusion that we are complete sin well if we are born again then we are partakers of the divine nature how will you know that well every feeble desire and wish so weak comes forth from the divine nature when the feeble desire is after

[20 : 50] Jesus Christ the word of God is so clear that the natural mind is enmity against God and it cannot receive the things of the spirit of God neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned and it is the work of the spirit to take the things of Jesus and to show them unto you now has the spirit of God taken anything of the things of Jesus and show them unto you then I can assure you from the scriptures and from personal experience that you will find no attraction in your old nature but if you should say well I have held attraction then is this not a good sign are you not born again of the spirit are you not a partaker of the divine nature is not

Christ formed in your heart the hope of glory it must follow which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope hope now this lively hope is something that we would try to say a few things about this evening not all hopes are lively we may perhaps refer to a living hope which is certainly the hope of Jesus the hope which is brought in the soul by the spirit of God but then if we are really to know anything of the joy of salvation it will only be as a lively hope works now the apostle here says which who has begotten us again unto a lively hope now a lively hope can only be found in living people you may put a lively hope into a dead body without any response at all have we any knowledge in our experience that we have a lively hope and how shall we know whether we have a lively hope well if we have a lively hope there will be certain times when we shall be alive with fervent desire we know what it is naturally to have a liveliness of spirit when we're alert when those things which we do or consider are a pleasure and a benefit this can be contrasted by other times when perhaps our mood is very different and it may be that you know the difference between a living hope when perhaps you're low and in a low place and a lively hope when things are made more clear hath begun in us again unto a lively hope now before coming to enlarge upon this we shall notice what makes the hope lively by the resurrection of

Jesus Christ from the dead in the eighth chapter to the Romans the apostle brings forth his points when he said who is he that condemn it it is Christ that died then he goes on to say yea rather that is risen again who is even at the right hand of God who also make an intercession for us now let us take one incident in the scriptures and make to notice the difference between a living hope and a lively hope in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke a chapter which speaks to us of the two that were on the road to

Emmaus after the Lord's death and the effect of that death was very apparent and they talked together of all these things which had happened and it came to pass that while they communed together and reasoned Jesus himself drew near and went with them but their eyes were holden that they should not know him and he said unto them what manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad and one of them whose name was Cleopas answering said unto him art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days and he said what things all this leading up to the evidence of a living hope and they said unto him concerning

Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet mighty indeed and word before God and all the people and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death and have crucified him now the next verse speaks to us of a living hope but we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel beside all this today is the third day since these things were done undoubtedly by reason of the things that have taken place joy had receded almost perhaps been extinguished many exercises were passing in their mind in their soul as to whether after all they had been mistaken we thought we trust him but now what has happened happened our entire hope was reposing in this man

[28 : 52] Jesus Christ but now he's crucified no wonder the apostle goes on to say it is Christ that died yea rather that is risen again and at this stage their living hope under the power of the spirit and resurrection of Jesus Christ translated transformed their living hope into a lively hope and what was it what was the subject that made such a difference ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory and beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself what a sermon was preached on that occasion how Christ was set forth in all the glorious fulfillment of the

Old Testament scriptures we cannot imagine we cannot ascend to those glorious heights of what it must have been to hear the Lord of life and glory drawing their attention to one scripture and then to another and so on and so forth not only in one part but he began at Moses began in the Pentateuch began in Genesis went through the five books and the prophets we read elsewhere in the Psalms expounding to them himself now we read on when their eyes were opened and they knew him and he vanished out of their sight they said one to another did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scripture sometimes by the favor of

God a living hope has become a lively hope hope to the divine favor of God in applying a few words or a discourse with power to the soul what was it that made it lively well it was the resurrection of Jesus Christ and what is it that will make your hope a lively hope but this knowledge not merely a knowledge theoretical doctrinal but a knowledge of the experience of his resurrection in the soul you see it is the power of the resurrection that will make our hope lively certainly of course the power of the resurrection will maintain our living hope because hope will never die until it is changed to sight has forgotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of

Jesus Christ from the dead and everything in true religion depends upon Jesus Christ rising from the dead you know it meant so much to the early Christians and the early Christians when they met one another they saluted each other with just these words Christ Christ is risen how good it would be for us to do the same if we should come to the house of God on the Lord's day morning or any time deject it perhaps feeling our hope is at a very low ebb we've almost lost it but may it not be a means of revival to meet a friend who said

Christ is risen indeed and have appeared under Peter now you see this will draw our attention to a wretched man a man which no doubt has been looked down upon by thousands of Pharisees in the course of the years the Pharisees are not confined to the Jewish faith not in the spirit of it but maybe we're thankful sometimes to come to the house of God and we should be thankful to hear the Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Peter of all things of all people and it would certainly be a wonderful blessing if you had denied your

[35 : 02] Lord and can you say you never have may not be in just the same way that Peter did but how often too often perhaps we should have to hide our head in shame because we have at times been tempted and try to make ourselves as one of the ungodly well now hope will be strained we shall be at the point after this is the grace of God adequate to reach me at this extremity will it touch such baseness will it deliver me from going down into hell after such wickedness wonderful will be the manner in which your hope will be revived when you hear that

Christ is risen indeed risen in all truth risen in all reality and you see the resurrection of Christ is not merely something outward it is something which is felt in the soul have we felt it in the soul ourselves when our very being has been changed because by the power of the resurrection and the faith in the resurrection granted to us we feel moved to believe that everything depends upon Jesus Christ rising from the dead in the Corinthians the apostle makes this very clear when he says if Christ be not with risen you are yet in your sins your faith is vain and our preaching is vain also yet in your sins and maybe this is a point which troubles some how dreadful my faith seems so low am I yet in my sins do I know nothing about a risen saviour well you'll need abundant mercy won't you and if abundant mercy is given this will be the outcome has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus

Christ from the dead now what is this lively hope in its ultimate well the next verse describes it to us briefly to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you everyone in the world has hopes as we change from year to year decade to decade childhood to man and woman hood from single to married state and so on well we have various hopes but many of these hopes of course will terminate in the flesh many of these hopes if they're not attained to will cease to be as we pass a certain age so to speak but what is the hope of the

Christian well the hope of the Christian is that he will reach the celestial city and that hope will need to be lively because it will be subjected to much proving so one of our hymns says huge sorrows meet us by the way huge sorrows meet us as we go and devils aim our overthrow you'll need a lively hope when that takes place but fire infernals can't prevail the

Christian's hope can never fail well why can't it fail because it is alive we should not forget as a warning not necessarily as a discouragement that mentioned in the scripture is the hope of the hypocrite now the hope of the hypocrite will fail the scripture assures of that and it may be that there is a concern in some hearts lest this is just what their hope is well can we say a word or two about the hope of the hypocrite what about the hypocrites in the Lord's day they had no love to the Lord Jesus Christ and may we take that point in regard to your hope has it ever drawn out your desires sometimes to the

[41 : 39] Lord Jesus Christ and have we ever looked at it in relation to those words in the Hebrews which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast which entereth in to that within the veil whither the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus but who are the people who are saying which hope we have the previous verse tells us those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them now you see a lively hope is not just a hope as we may feel it bubbling up in our hearts but it is the laying hold by faith of a person that is

Jesus Christ laying hold of the hope that is set before us now those that are fleeing to refuge fleeing to a place of refuge are aware of their danger are we fleeing to the living and lively side of the Lord Jesus Christ in that dread moment oh to hide beneath his sheltering blood through Jordan's icy waves divide and lend my soul with God a lively hope is to be found in a lively and living person and that person is Jesus Christ who is referred to as the hope of Israel the hope of

Israel we have to go back to a passage in the book of Deuteronomy where Moses in his concluding words he says happy art thou O Israel who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord the shield of thy help and who is the sword of thy excellency and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee and thou shalt tread upon their high places these happy people were blessed with a lively hope the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee and shall say destroy them now a lively hope is a hope which how shall

I put it is joined to Jesus Christ this point of union with Christ is a very important one because it doesn't matter what you may speak about in respect to your hope and its liveliness and your hope in Jesus Christ then if it's not joined to Christ if you are not joined to Christ in an indissoluble union at the new birth then your hope will fizzle out but if that hope in Christ is by Christ and maintained by Christ from the life which you receive from Christ then it won't fizzle out union to

Christ is most important you think of the words that are often spoken of in the gospel according to John without me ye can do nothing I often feel this has been misapplied sometimes people have sat down and said well yes I know I'd like to do this and I'd like to believe but there we are I can do nothing without Jesus Christ it's a wrong attitude the marginal reading is I feel very instructive severed from me ye can do nothing see the whole point is in the parable of the vine and the branches and if you're severed from

[47 : 14] Jesus Christ then you could do nothing because you're a branch cast off and cut off and cast away ready for the burning it is important that we should discover that our life is in Christ that our root is in Christ and that the motions of life the motions of our lively hope are derived from the fruitfulness of Christ root and therefore whatever may come over it it will still be maintained we'll just take a view of the tree as it passes through its various seasons and when we come to the winter season in many trees we may well wonder from the outward appearance as to whether there's any life at all it doesn't appear to be on the branches perhaps we may snap a tweak and conclude that yes there is life there we can see a little bit of green but then when the spring comes then there is a rising of the sap now one of our hymns says my winter has been long but are you looking for the rising of the sap is there a heaving and a sighing for the rising of the sap that you may enjoy a lively hope and the effect of a lively hope and the indication of a lively hope may be found in the words that we read in the song of

Solomon in the second chapter where we have it arise my love my fair one and come away for though the winter is past the rain is over and gone the flowers appear on the earth the time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land the fig tree put it forth her green figs and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell arise my love my fair one and come away two heavenly places in christ jesus how differently our whole lives are when we are blessed with a lively hope when it is springtime in the soul when our thoughts are heaven bought do we know anything about the changes of the seasons do we see sometimes we may be discouraged because we forget that the people of god are like the trees well you may think about trees naturally and you know that they are subjected to the four seasons passing year by year over them and all those seasons are necessary to their growth as well as to their blossoming and to their fruit is it not so in regard to the trees of righteousness there are time there is a time when the root must go downwards and would that be true to say that's in the winter time when there is a taking hold of the foundation the foundation of god standeth sure having this seal the lord knoweth them to his and you can hold on to that sometimes when you can't see anything else a hope that then when the sun rises and the springtime comes and the singing of birds is heard and joy is felt in the soul we have the evidence of a lively hope and the springtime speaks to us of the resurrection and springtime in the soul is the experience of the resurrection in our hearts blessed be the

God and father of our lord jesus christ which according to his abandoned mercy hath forgotten us again and to a lively hope by the resurrection of jesus christ from the dead