

Lesson 2



LESSON OUTLINE:

PRAY

READ

ENGAGE

ANSWER

CONNECT

HOMEWORK

READING:

1 PETER 1

STUDY TEXT:

1 PETER 1:3

THEME:

OUR GREAT SALVATION
(PART 2)

STUDY METHOD:

Attributes of God
Promises of God
Principles for Life
Lessons to Learn
Examples to Follow

FURTHER STUDY:

GOD'S MERCY:
PSALM 104;
LAMENT. 3:22-23;
ROMANS 12:1-2

MEMORY VERSE:

1 PETER 1:3

PRAYER & PRAISE:

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

When Peter writes, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (verse 3) he is speaking of the offering of praise to the Lord. Christians cannot confer blessings to the Lord (like He does to us), because He is the author of all blessings.¹ However, Christians are called to magnify the Lord by expressing thanks to Him in their hearts, with their lips, and with their lives.

God's Great Mercy

At the heart of the character of God is an abundance of mercy. The word *"mercy"* in the Bible contains a wealth of meaning. In its most basic sense it refers to loving-kindness, compassion, and good-will to the undeserving. In other words, God withholds what is the just dessert for the wicked, and instead pours out His love and kindness upon them. The mercy of God is not small in measure or insignificant. Peter uses the word *"great"* (ESV) or *"abundant"* (KJV) to describe the dimensions of God's mercy.

Theologically speaking, mercy and grace always go hand in hand. Mercy withholds the justly-deserved punishment and grace dispenses favour.

Born Again to a Living Hope

The words *"has caused us to be born again"* (verse 3) communicate the fact that salvation is a work of God and cannot be achieved by human means. This is a foundational truth of the gospel. Speaking of God's work in salvation, the Apostle John wrote, *"who were born [again], not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."*²

To be *"born again"* is to be made alive spiritually. Jesus introduced this metaphor in John 3 when He had interactions with Nicodemus, the Jewish religious ruler. In that passage, Jesus said, *"unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*³

What is the *"living hope"* that the Christian experiences through salvation? It is many things: the assurance of eternal life; resurrection from the dead; a vibrant relationship with God and His Son; and the promise of Christ's imminent return.

The foundation of this *"living hope"* is found in the fact that Jesus Christ Himself rose from the dead. Paul said, *"If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins."*⁴ On the other hand, Romans 6:5 says, *"For if we have been united with him [Jesus] in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."*

¹ James 1:17

² John 1:13

³ John 3:3

⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:17

Because Jesus was the *“firstborn from the dead”*,⁵ we can be absolutely assured that we, like Him, will be raised from the dead, and this is our living hope! Our hope is alive because Jesus is!

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Christians should live with an attitude of gratitude. Make a list of things that we can “bless” (praise) the Lord for. You may need to use a separate sheet of paper.

2. Read Psalm 136 together as a group in the ESV & KJV. What is the recurring theme? How is God’s *“steadfast love”* connected with His mercy and grace?

3. According to Philippians 1:6, Acts 16:14, and Ephesians 2:8-9, who initiates and performs the work of salvation? Why does this matter and what difference does it make?

4. What aspects of the character of God in Titus 1:1-2 give us hope for the future?

5. Read John 3:1-8. What truths do you observe in this text about being *“born again”*?

6. Briefly share your testimony of new birth (salvation) with the group. How did you become a Christian? When did this happen? What has taken place since then?

QUESTIONS FOR THE PASTOR:

⁵ Colossians 1:18