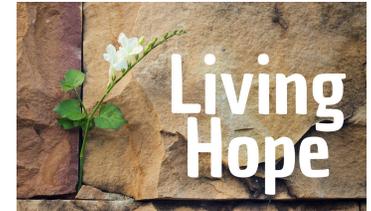


**REFLECT: What is HOPE and why is it so important?**

**Hope is...**

Webster Dictionary: "Desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment . . . to desire with expectation of obtainment . . . to expect with confidence."



**What is a "living hope"?**

Peter is writing to those who are exiled from their home country. They are living as "foreigners" because of the persecution they were suffering under. Many had lost land, belongings, and friends during that time. Where do we find that happening in today's world as well?

In all of this Peter reminds them of their greatest inheritance.

**What is that inheritance and what does it look like? (Note vs. 4-5)**

The Apostle Paul also wrote something very similar to the believers in Ephesus. Note what he says in Ephesians 1:9-14...

<sup>9</sup> God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. <sup>10</sup> And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. <sup>11</sup> Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

## Finding A Living Hope

**READ:** 1 Peter 1:1-7

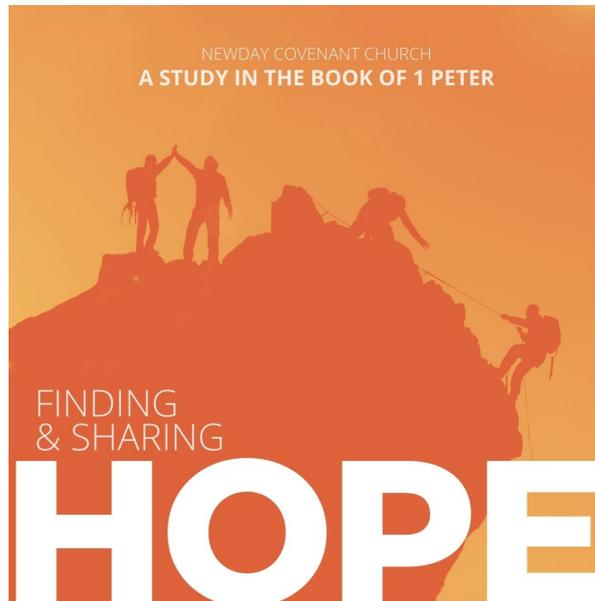
This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I am writing to God's chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. <sup>2</sup> God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

May God give you more and more grace and peace.

<sup>3</sup> All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, <sup>4</sup> and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. <sup>5</sup> And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.

<sup>6</sup> So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. <sup>7</sup> These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.



<sup>12</sup> God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God. <sup>13</sup> And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. <sup>14</sup> The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

Paul said, "he (Christ) makes everything work out according to his plan".

**Why is that an important element in our holding on to hope?**

**Read 1 Peter 1:1-7 again in the Message translation below. Underline what gives you hope in this passage...**

<sup>1-2</sup> I, Peter, am an apostle on assignment by Jesus, the Messiah, writing to exiles scattered to the four winds. Not one is missing, not one forgotten. God the Father has his eye on each of you, and has determined by the work of the Spirit to keep you obedient through the sacrifice of Jesus. May everything good from God be yours!

<sup>3-5</sup> What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you'll have it all—life healed and whole.

<sup>6-7</sup> I know how great this makes you feel, even though you have to put up with every kind of aggravation in the meantime. Pure gold put in the fire comes out of it *proved* pure; genuine faith put through this suffering comes out *proved* genuine. When Jesus wraps this all up, it's your faith, not your gold, that God will have on display as evidence of his victory.

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*Hope itself is like a star- not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity, and only to be discovered in the night of adversity*

C.H. Spurgeon

**Respond: What are some of the ways Jesus offers a living hope in your life?**

**In what ways does your hope for the future change the way you live each day?**

Peter not only describes a hopeful life in this passage but he also demonstrates one. He speaks to his readers as if they are already doing what they need to do in their circumstances—trusting fully in God in the midst of their trials and difficulties. His hope for them is unconditional. We will always face trouble, but we can face them assured the Lord is with us and that he will see to it his purposes are accomplished in us. We hold on to that hope!

Prayer: *Father, help us to see the joy that is before us. You have given us such a great treasure and inheritance—the promise of salvation. Forgive us for losing sight of our glorious future. Renew our vision and help us strain toward the goal of our faith—the salvation of our souls. And when we face trials, remind us that you have won the ultimate victory.*

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- 2. We are a community that longs for deeper life relationships with God and others.**
- 3. We are passionate about investing in children, youth, and families.**
- 4. We are a people who have a desire to be led by and experience the power of the Holy Spirit in everyday life.**