

Studies in I Peter (11)

The Believer's Salvation

Introduction

- A. Peter was trained in the days following his call so he could "strengthen his brethren" (Luke 22:32). As we study his Epistles we see how fully these words were fulfilled. He is an example of Rom. 8:28,29.
- B. Because the Bible is inspired we can apply these truths to ourselves. As Peter described the believers and their salvation we realize God is speaking to us.

I. The Grace of God in the Believer's Salvation, I Peter 1:3-2:10.

- A. The description of salvation, Vs 3-5.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1:3-5)

- 1. The believer's past -- he have been "begotten" (born again).

- a. The source of the new birth -- God the Father.

Peter breaks out in praise to God. His word "blessed" is often translated "eulogize." His adoration reminds us that every benefit must be traced back to our heavenly Father. We are among the elect, we are strangers, recipients of the work of the Holy Spirit, and have all the grace and peace of God -- simply because of God's love.

All these benefits were given to us in the new birth.

- b. The basis of the new birth -- His abundant mercy.

We are born again only because of God's loving mercy, because no one can merit salvation. We will never know how great His mercy is -- but we know our sin is infinitely serious because of how great He is.

- c. The explanation of the new birth -- begotten.

Peter speaks of our salvation as a spiritual birth which came to pass when the Holy Spirit applied the benefits of the Crucifixion to us (John. 3:3,5; Titus 3:5). This new birth is a divine gift, it is instantaneous, it is a complete reversal of our spiritual condition, and brings about a radical change in our character (II Corinthians 5:17).

- d. The content of the new birth -- living hope.

The word "hope" in the Bible is not an expression of doubt or uncertainty -- but certainty in expectation of God doing what He has promised. It is a "living hope" because it is a characteristic of those who have spiritual life. When a person has continual doubt it signifies that he or she is not a believer -- or there is something very serious in their life that is not Biblical.

- e. The power of the new birth -- the Resurrection.

Jesus Christ died under the penalty of our sins and was resurrected from the grave. Great spiritual power was provided for us by His work. This power can set us free from our guilt and bondage, give to us eternal life, and enable us to live in freedom from sin.

2. The believer's future -- he has an "inheritance."

- a. The description of our inheritance.

The word refers to a gift given because of a family relationship. For the believer it means all that God has promised. It is spoken of as future, because that is what the next moment is, and as reserved in heaven, to remind us that only there will we know it completely.

- b. The characteristics of this inheritance.

The fourfold statement, "incorruptible, undefiled, fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" indicates that our inheritance is holy, without blemish, permanent, and being kept for us. As we think about our future these words should fill our mind. In the spiritual realm every believer is a multi-millionaire.

3. The believer's present -- he is "kept by the power of God."

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I Peter 1:5

- a. The explanation: The word "kept" is a military term used to describe keeping a prisoner or protecting a city. God here gives us the promise that He will keep the believer in a saved condition.
- b. The source: What keeps the believer saved is the infinite power of God. There is no greater power -- therefore we need not be anxious.
- c. The evidence: We know we are among those God is keeping -- if we have true Biblical faith. We are not kept saved because of our faith but our faith is an evidence that we are being kept.
- d. The goal: The word "salvation" is here used in the future tense. It speaks of the believer's glorification. We will be kept until we no longer need to be kept -- because we will be in Heaven.