

Sermon: Hope and Glory (1 Peter 1:3-12)
Impact Church London
July 11, 2021

Recap: Context, if you don't have context you get "con(ned)."

1. Author — Peter, An Apostle

2. Audience — Scattered Believers (parepidémos - people who are passing through, but still have a relationship with those who are local). We are that: "in the world but not of it." Our relationship to the world and culture can be shaped by a few responses: withdraw, blend in, fight, or **Express True Grace**

Example of how and why context matters:

1 Peter 2:13-14

"Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good."

Even Peter didn't follow this advice outside of context. When told by the Jewish leaders not to preach in Jesus' name he and the other apostles replied:

Acts 5:29

"...We ought to obey God rather than men."

Another contextual difficulty: we don't have a king, we live in a representative parliamentary democracy in which our engagement is encouraged.

These were things that Peter and the scattered people of God had to work out in their time and their setting (a totalitarian regime), and these are things that we need to work out in our context (a 21st century, hyper-modern, parliamentary democracy).

Appropriate response to hostile culture in every context: "Express True Grace."

3. Application — True Grace Works

1 Peter 5:12

12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

Intro: "Hope and Glory"

We also need to understand the spiritual context of the book to understand what God was looking to do and how this letter served that purpose.

Colossians 1:9-11

"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding..."

His grace is working in us unto his eternal purpose and no other; establishing relationship, and through that relationship, manifesting his manifold wisdom, making himself known to, in , and through the church to the rest of the creation.

That was God's purpose and context in Peter's time and ours. To really embrace the message of 1 Peter as grace and not law we have to see that grace works, and that it is working out something specific within us.

"I believe that if we introduce Grace to Suffering it will result in GLORY!" - Ps. Karl

Sermon : "Hope and Glory"

1 Peter 1:3-12

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

The God we are talking about is not the unknown, unknowable God of the theists, but the one we know and understand to be revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-4

"begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you..."

We have been begotten again, born again, made new, raised up into new life, joined together with Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-7

"But God...made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,..."

How does this help us? How did it help the believers scattered in a hostile world?

He raised us up with Christ, made us to sit with him in heavenly places, and now the hope we have is that the lives we live, the relationships we have, the type of people we are, the influence we have, the jobs we do, the condition of our worldly affairs, and the capacity of our relationships with Him and others comes out of, is built by, and sustained through that resurrection life in us. It is not dependent upon external factors in a hostile culture.

1 Peter 1:3-4

"begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you..."

We also have been raised up into an inheritance, one that is not found in the hostile world we find ourselves in. It is not an inheritance that is gained, acquired or accessed like an earthy inheritance. This inheritance cannot be threatened or stolen by lawsuit or lockdown, it can't be dwindled away by taxes and theft. Its not subject to the conditions of rot, decay and loss.. this inheritance is ***"incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you..."***

Not only is this inheritance of ours guaranteed and protected, under guard in heaven, but we are ourselves are protected, preserved and guarded.

1 Peter 1:5

"who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

This living hope we have causes us great joy.

1 Peter 1:6

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials..,"

Why might grievous trials be necessary?

God has a purpose and an agenda, that if embraced by us will mean at times that we look, and act, and think, make different decisions, and participate in life in ways that are totally different from the culture around us. Not because we are trying to be different, but because the life of Christ in us is different and produces different outcomes in our lives, if we allow it. This does and will invite persecution, difficulty, tribulation.

The early Christians, right across the whole of the Hellenized Roman world sought peace. Paul instructed them:

1 Timothy 2:1-2

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”

Writing about the Christian experience in the Roman world, N.T. Wright said:

“Worshipping the gods — the great pantheon of Greek and Roman gods with plenty others added on here and there — permeated every aspect of life in Paul’s [and Peter’s] world. To pull back from all of that and to worship “the living God” instead was far more than the equivalent of, say, in the modern West giving up gambling and attending church one a week. It would mean different action and patterns of life every hour of every day. Perhaps the only way we can imagine such a thing in today’s secular world is to think what it would be like to give up all our usual machines and conveniences: car, cell phone, cooking equipment, central heating, or air-conditioning. You would have to do everything differently, only much more so. The gods were everywhere and involved in everything. In the ancient world, whether you were at home, on the street, or in the public square; attending festivals great and small; or at moments of crisis or joy (weddings, funerals, setting off on a journey) — the gods would be there to be acknowledged, appealed to, appeased, or placated. Once the message of Jesus took hold, all that would have to go. The neighbours would notice.”¹

Herein was the problem: they sought the peace and prosperity of the leadership and society in which they lived, yet by their exclusive worship and devotion to Jesus, they stood out, were persecuted, relegated to the margins of society, were scapegoated when things went wrong, and were often times excluded from trade,

¹ N.T. Wright, *Paul: A Biography* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2018), 110-111.

social gatherings, good jobs, and any place in the public sphere, eventually leading to imprisonment, the taking and plundering of their possessions, and even death.

That's why Peter says that if need be you are tested by trials. Not because God needs to test them, but if they must face these in order live an authentic confession of faith that Jesus is Lord, so be it. If need be he said, it would be that...

1 Peter 1:7-8a

“that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. ”

When Jesus is revealed all that they lost would be restored and more, no longer shamed, ostracized and left out, but in their faith; praise, honour, and glory.

Peter then lays out in practical terms the process by which we live out this living hope, how you access and release the inheritance guarded for you in heaven, how you endure and live with hope even in the face of these pressures:

1 Peter 1:8-9

Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Peter boils it all down to this as the ultimate how to: faith in the resurrected Christ and our share in that same Life.

And if anyone should be confused, misunderstand what he is saying here, he ends this section with emphatic declaration that what he is saying is not only true, but it is what God has always been pointing to through the prophets and the scriptures.

1 Peter 1:10-12

“Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.”

In a cheeky way here Peter is saying, not unlike Paul, even if an angel from heaven tells you otherwise, this right here is where its at: **Christ and his resurrected life in you is your hope and glory!**

Summary

Peter is speaking to people living out their faith in Jesus in a hostile culture that at times presented the Jesus followers with real persecution, hardship and trials if they were to live out an authentic and genuine faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

He encouraged them in the abounding grace and peace of God, to find living hope not in their external circumstances, and not even with a promise that God will change the external circumstances and difficulties that they are facing, but by telling them to find their hope for glory in their share in Christ's resurrected life, in the inheritance they have guarded for them in heaven, and in the fact that no matter what is happening in this hostile culture, it is God's power that is also keeping ***them***.

He affirms to them that this is the eternal truth, the one hope for glory that even the prophets of old had spoken of, and encouraged them to receive all of this ***by faith***.