

Living Hope

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[0 : 00] Would you stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together in 1 Peter 1, verses 3-5.

! Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? Have you ever placed your hope in someone only to be led down when they failed to meet your expectations and shattered your trust?

Perhaps it was a highly touted player drafted by your favorite team, the one who you believed would finally lead them to glory, only to watch them become a bust.

Perhaps it was a politician that you voted for, someone you thought could bring real change to your life and to this world, but who ultimately failed to deliver.

[1 : 39] Or perhaps it was a new boss or a job you hoped would transform your circumstances, but instead it left you disappointed. Sometimes the letdown comes from someone you admire and respect, a role model whose moral failure or scandal destroys the hope you had placed in them.

And sometimes it's even closer than that. A friend, a parent, a child, or a spouse, in whom you had invested hope only to find yourself questioning whether you can continue to do so after they did something to let you down.

Sometimes it isn't a person who lets us down, but a life circumstance that shatters our hope for the future. A fire or a tornado that destroys your home.

An illness or diagnosis that changes your health forever. A major injury that will limit you physically for the rest of your life. Or an untimely death that brings tragedy and sorrow.

These are the moments that not only steal our hope, but rob us of joy. Luke 24 records two men on a journey from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus.

[3 : 03] They were followers of Jesus. They had high hopes for him. But Jesus had just died in a violent, tragic, and humiliating way.

And as they traveled, they were met on the road by Jesus, though they didn't know it yet. Their conversation with the risen Jesus, again, whom they did not recognize, reveals their deep disappointment, sense of defeat, and loss of hope.

I want to read that encounter with you in Luke chapter 24, verses 13 through 34. That very day, the day of our Lord's resurrection, two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

And they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

And he said to them, what is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk? And they stood still, looking, sad.

[4 : 12] And then one of them named Cleopas answered him, are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days? And Jesus said to them, what thanks?

And they said to him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who is a prophet, mighty indeed, and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him.

But we had hoped, we had hoped, that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and beside all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.

Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.

Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. But him they did not see. And Jesus said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

[5 : 21] Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. And Jesus acted as if he were going to go further, but they urged him strongly saying, Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.

So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened. And they recognized him.

And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, Did our hearts not burn within us while we talked to him on the road, while he opened up the scriptures to us?

And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven. And those who were with them gathered together saying, The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon.

[6 : 25] Then they told what happened on the road and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. The revelation of Jesus' resurrection instilled in his followers a hope that transcended their earthly circumstances and an irresistible joy that they were eager to share.

This hope is unlike any other, for it is a hope that rises above disappointment. It rises above discouragement in the sufferings that we encounter in this life.

It is a living hope because Jesus Christ lives. This truth was proclaimed in that day. It is proclaimed today.

And it's the truth that is proclaimed from our text this morning. The main idea for my sermon is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ give believers a living hope that transcends earthly suffering.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives believers a hope that transcends earthly suffering. Our text this morning was written by Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

[7 : 31] Peter was one of Jesus' 12 disciples. He was the most vocal of the 12, often putting his foot in his mouth as a result of that. Peter faced the sorrow of having denied knowing Jesus just as Jesus said that he would prior to Jesus' crucifixion.

Peter endured profound hopelessness and fear as he hid with the other disciples during the days Jesus' body lay in the tomb. Upon hearing that Jesus' body was missing, Peter ran to the tomb only to find that it was empty, which perplexed him further.

But when Peter saw Jesus risen and alive, his hope was restored, his joy was renewed. He had a living hope that continued to transcend his earthly circumstances as he boldly shared the good news of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done.

Peter wrote this letter to Christians under the cruel reign of the Roman Emperor Nero. They were being persecuted by him. Many of them would lose their jobs.

They would lose their homes, their families, and even their lives for following Jesus. These people were stressed, anxious, fearful, and they must have felt hopeless.

[9 : 01] None of us have experienced probably today in our culture what these people were experiencing in theirs, but you can probably sympathize with what they were feeling.

Do you remember the old Peanuts comic strips featuring Charlie Brown? Thank you, Wes. And a recurring gag showed a rain cloud hovering over someone's head, following them wherever they went.

While everyone else enjoyed the sun's warmth and light, that unfortunate soul remained trapped beneath a gloomy cloud as it rained on them all day.

Life feels like that sometimes, doesn't it? That may be how your life feels right now. That's how life felt for Peter's original audience.

But in these verses, the Lord takes us above the storm clouds of depression and despair. He lifts our eyes and he directs our focus to a truth that transcends our suffering to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

[10:16] Jesus suffered to bring an end to our suffering. Jesus died to put an end to death. Jesus rose and that gives us living hope for those who believe in him.

My hope and my prayer this morning is that through his word, the Lord will give you this hope that if you don't have it, he will give it to you in salvation or if you have been saved that he will use his word to remind you of the hope that he's been gracious to give you in saving you.

There is hope for you, friend. And it will live out your earthly suffering because it's eternal. Our text today shares three features about the living hope that the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives to those who believe in him.

The first feature is the source of our living hope. In verses 1 and 2, Peter introduces himself and he addresses the recipients of his letter.

Again, Peter's audience were Christians facing persecution for their belief in Jesus. They had suffered great loss. This was a big problem. And when you have a big problem, you're probably tempted to obsess over it.

[11:37] You can't stop thinking about it. The more you dwell on the problem, the larger the problem looms in your mind. Worry, anxiety, and despair begin to take hold.

You imagine the worst case scenario hoping that it will prepare you but it only leads to deeper feelings of hopelessness. God tells us a better way.

the right way to face such problems. Philippians 4, 4-7 says, Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

The Lord is at hand. Do not be anxious about anything but in everything. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

the answer is to deny the problem or pretend that the problem isn't a problem but to put that problem in perspective by comparing it to God. Peter encourages these Christians who are under duress and he begins doing that in verse 2 in a way that we wouldn't expect.

[12:50] He starts with a doxology, a short hymn or verse of praise. In the beginning of verse 3 again, he says, Blessed be the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brother, sister, remember that there is never a moment when praising God isn't appropriate. In fact, it's through praise that we regain proper perspective.

Seeing our problems in light of God's greatness as we praise Him, we're reminded of our greatest problem, one which we could never solve on our own but that God in His mercy resolved for us through Jesus Christ, His Son.

Peter continues in verse 3 by pointing his audience to this truth. He says, According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope. Here, Peter shares three amazing truths about God.

First, he says that God has great mercy. We live in an unmerciful culture. When a person, often a celebrity, professional athlete or public figure says something that goes against popular opinion, they are denounced, boycotted, shamed, and in effect, canceled.

[14:10] They lose their status, their jobs, and they're often treated as if they're dead. As a result, people live in fear of saying or doing something that popular society won't approve of.

While cancel culture is a new term, our world has been engaging in canceling people and behaviors they don't like for thousands of years. Jesus was intimately familiar with the struggles of living in a society that was dead set on his destruction.

The religious and political leaders of his day had no mercy for him and they had no desire to understand him. They criticized him publicly and they met secretly to plot his death to cancel him. Jesus being God knew their plans and he knew that their plans would ultimately fulfill his father's plans. and in John 15, 18 through 20, Jesus prepared his disciples to be on the receiving end of such unmerciful treatment.

There he says to them, if the world hates you, know that it hated me first before it hated you. If you are of the world, the world would love you as its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

[15 : 31] Remember the word that I said to you. A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

Unlike our world, God is merciful and his mercy is great. The Bible says that God created the world in six days.

The pinnacle of his creation was Adam and Eve, a man and a woman who were made in his image. God gave them dominion over the inhabited earth.

They had all that they needed to live and to thrive in a world without sin. They also enjoyed perfect fellowship with God and with one another. Everything was theirs to enjoy, but one thing, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God told them not to eat of it, but if they did eat of it, he warned them that they would die. In obeying this command, Adam and Eve would acknowledge that they were created in God's image.

[16 : 36] They had dominion on earth, but they weren't God. In obeying this command, Adam and Eve had the opportunity to demonstrate faith in God by trusting in his word.

In obeying this command, Adam and Eve had opportunity to demonstrate their love for God by doing what he said. Unfortunately for them and for us, they disobeyed God's command when they were tempted by Satan.

They ate of the fruit they were not supposed to, and they and all of creation fell under the curse of sin. They were banished from the Garden of Eden.

And though Adam and Eve died spiritually and would eventually die physically, God did not cancel them. Their relationship with him would change, but his love for them wouldn't.

God promised to one day send a deliverer who would crush the serpent's head, though this deliverer would himself be wounded. After God finished pronouncing the curse of sin and its consequences, Genesis 3.21 says, Here God establishes a pattern, a solution to cover our shame and forgive us of our sins by providing a substitute to die in our place.

[18 : 09] God made a sacrifice. The skins that clothed Adam and Eve didn't magically appear. An animal's life was substituted as a sacrifice.

Its blood was shed to clothe Adam and Eve. From this point on, God reveals in the Bible his plan to redeem sinners by one day sending a better sacrifice, a superior sacrifice to fully atone for our sins, to fully clothe and cover us, whose flesh was pierced and whose blood was shed to atone for our sins, to clothe us in his righteousness and to give us new life in him.

Only God truly has the authority and power to cancel someone, but instead he has promised and he has provided eternal life to those who believe in him.

This leads to the next truth that Peter shares in verse 3. God's great mercy has caused us to be born again. Mercy is something that cannot be earned and it is something that you cannot deserve. The Bible says that salvation isn't a paycheck that you receive or earn, it's a gift that you receive. In John 3, Jesus meets with Nicodemus. He was a prominent Pharisee.

[19 : 35] He was a teacher in Israel. Nicodemus was one of the few Pharisees who instead of feeling threatened by Jesus, understood that he had come from God. I want to read to you a portion of that conversation in John 3, 1 through 8.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

Jesus answered him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water in the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit.

[20 : 45] Jesus describes salvation as a new birth here. Why does he do that? Why does he describe it as a birth? Well, think of your birth.

What control did you have over it? Did you will your life into existence? Did you choose your parents? Did you choose where you would be born?

What time you would be born? No. So it is with the new birth. God causes it to happen because he's the only one who can. Just like a physical birth when a new person enters the world, that's what happens spiritually within a person's heart when they become a Christian.

They're changed. There's a change that takes place and it's so radical. It's as if they were born a second time. They're born again. This new birth results in a believer having a hope that they didn't have before.

The hope of a restored relationship with God, their creator, and being in his presence forever. This is the believer's living hope. The living hope that Peter describes here stands in stark contrast to how we typically use or how we understand the word hope.

[22 : 02] We typically use the word hope in a way that expresses our desire for something to happen, but that in reality may or may not happen. We might say, I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow.

Or in our case, I hope it does rain tomorrow. We might say, I hope the Chiefs win the Super Bowl again. Some of you who are less sanctified may hope the opposite.

When the New Testament speaks of our future hope, it speaks of it as a reality. We're looking forward to something that will happen, something that we will experience.

It's a hope that is certain. The school system in a large city had a program to help children keep up with schoolwork during days that they were in the hospital.

One day, a teacher who was assigned to the program received a routine call asking her to visit a particular child. She took the child's name and his room number and talked briefly with the child's regular class teacher, who told her, we're studying nouns and adverbs in his class right now.

[23 : 22] The regular teacher said, and I'd be grateful if you could help him understand them so he doesn't fall too far behind. The hospital program teacher went to see the boy that afternoon.

No one had mentioned to her that the boy had been badly burned and was in a great deal of pain. Upset at the sight of the boy, she stammered as she told him, I've been sent by your school to help you with nouns and adverbs.

When she left, she felt she hadn't accomplished much. But the next day, a nurse asked her, what did you do to that boy? The teacher felt she must have done something wrong and she began to apologize.

No, no, the nurse said, you don't know what I mean. We've been worried about that little boy, but ever since yesterday, his whole attitude has changed. He's fighting back.

He's responding to treatment. It's as though he's decided to live. Two weeks later, the boy explained that he had completely given up hope until the teacher had arrived.

[24 : 29] Everything changed when he came to a simple realization and he expressed it this way. They wouldn't send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy, would they?

That boy had renewed hope and the certainty that he would not die. He had a living hope. The living hope Peter describes here transcends our suffering and it transcends the reality of death for believers because they know Jesus is a living Savior.

In the rest of verse 3, Peter says, our living hope comes through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The source of our living hope flows from the heart of a merciful Father and our new birth is effected by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

The Bible says that those who receive the new birth caused by the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit have the Spirit of God living inside of them and will experience resurrection themselves one day too just like Jesus.

Romans 8, 9 through 11 says, you, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit does not belong to him.

[25 : 44] But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Father was displaying to the world what he has in store for those who believe in his Son, who have turned away from their sin and have turned to him in faith.

1 Corinthians 15, 20 through 23. Again, but in fact Christ has been raised from the dead. The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep for as by a man, Adam, came death, by a man also has come the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. When God saves a person, he gives that person new life and the new birth and a living hope.

A promise that he has the power to fulfill. God keeps his word. If you are in Christ, you will be raised one day to experience the fullness of God and all that he has prepared in heaven for you.

[27 : 14] You may not feel hopeful right now, but brother, sister, it doesn't matter how you feel. In Christ, you have this living hope.

You may feel hopeless, but in Christ, you are never without hope. Jesus died and rose again so that you may never be without hope.

You have a living hope. It's not wishful thinking, it's alive, it's yours in Jesus. If you are in Christ, you have this living hope.

And if you are not in Christ, you can be in him. You can have this living hope. God has brought you here today to hear about his great mercy, to hear about his amazing grace.

you can have this hope if you turn to Jesus, confessing your sins and asking him to save you.

[28 : 17] And he will. He is the source of living hope and the hope he gives transcends earthly suffering. I've spent most of my time this morning on verse 3 because if you don't know the source of living hope, the rest doesn't matter.

But if you do, the rest of what Peter has to say about living hope here, well, I believe, continue to lift your face and will warm your heart. So now we look at the second feature, which is the substance of living hope, which comes in verse 4.

To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. In ordinary conversation, when we speak of an inheritance, we refer to the wealth someone who dies, leaves to those that they care about.

Maybe you've received such an inheritance before or probably you've daydreamed about some unknown, distant relative that you have that you don't know but who knows you and who is going to die and who is going to give you all their wealth.

Let's just say that there is such a person who recently died and tomorrow you will be notified that you are the recipient of all their wealth. It is now all yours.

[29 : 41] You'd be happy to receive it, wouldn't you? But as great as an earthly inheritance can be, the inheritance Peter describes here in verse 4 is infinitely superior.

Earthly inheritances are bound to the earth. They have a time limit, so to speak. You only have so much time to possess it before you die and then it becomes someone else's.

Earthly inheritances can be wasted, they can be stolen, and they can lose their value over time.

However, the living hope Christians have results in an inheritance that isn't time-bound and that will not be wasted and cannot be stolen and will never lose its value.

David Helms said, evidently, Peter finds it difficult to find words that do justice in capturing the greatness of this future inheritance and describing it, he can do no better than use three words that tell us what it is not.

So let's look at those three words here quickly. First, Peter says that our inheritance is imperishable. We use the word perishable most often in reference to food.

[30 : 53] For example, milk is perishable. Even if you refrigerate it, milk will spoil in a week or two. So by contrast, something that is imperishable can never go bad.

It's permanent. It cannot be spoiled. It cannot be ruined. Next, Peter says that our inheritance is undefiled. I think this word is harder for us to understand because we live in a world that is still under the curse of sin and everything is affected by that in some way.

Someone may give you a gift to Hawaii, a trip to Hawaii. What a blessing, right? But there's still some defilement that comes with it. It's not all good.

You still have to fly in an airplane. You still have to go through TSA. You may fly in turbulence. You could lose your luggage. You could get sick when you get there and it could rain the whole time while you're on vacation.

Here's another example. You might get a great new job with better pay and better benefits, but you soon realize that it's not all good when you meet that one co-worker who gets under your skin.

[32 : 10] You may welcome a new baby into this world. What a joy as parents. But with that comes the loss of sleep and years of changing dirty diapers.

Even the best earthly blessings are diminished or defiled in some way. But the believer's inheritance in Jesus will be totally undefiled.

It will be flawless. It will be perfect. Finally, Peter says that our inheritance will be unfading. Think of getting a new car.

It has that new car smell. It doesn't have all the dirt and the crumbs and the crevices on the inside. The outside is cleaned and polished and shiny.

But eventually that new car becomes an old car. The new car smell fades. So does the paint. The interior gets worn. The engine breaks down.

[33 : 11] It fades from the inside out. Same thing with furniture or clothes or shoes or houses. New things eventually become old things.

Everything on this earth inevitably fades away. But the inheritance believers have in Christ will never lose its splendor. It will never deteriorate and the joy and delight of experiencing it for the first time will never diminish over time.

And it is all being kept. It is all being guarded by God in heaven for you. Since this is the case, why would you devote your life, your time, pursuing anything else?

Jesus said in Matthew 6, 19 through 21, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. In Christ we have a living hope. a living hope in the great things that God is keeping for us in heaven.

[34 : 29] And not only is he guarding that inheritance, he's also guarding you. He's keeping you.

He's preserving you to one day receive it. And we come to the third feature here, the security of our living hope.

Verse 5, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Now you could read this verse and think if a person is saved when they trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit when they are saved, what is this salvation ready to be revealed in the last time?

Is there another salvation that I'm not aware of? Good question. When the Bible talks about salvation, it speaks of it in the past, present, and future since.

Look at Romans 8, 28-30, and we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom he predestined, he also called. Those whom he called, he also justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified. God saves us.

[35 : 52] When we are saved, he justifies us. Our sin is transferred to Jesus' account, and we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. As a result, God sees us in Christ.

We are justified in the sense that according to God's accounting, he treats us as if we not only never sinned like Jesus, but as if we always obeyed him like Jesus.

After a person is saved, they undergo the next phase of salvation, which is sanctification. Through the life that they have inside of them and the Holy Spirit who lives in them, they grow up in Christ, they mature, they desire to be sinless and to obey the Lord, they desire to be holy, they are being shaped into an image that looks more and more like Jesus.

These are two phases stages of salvation that believers experience in this world, the only two. The final phase or stage is glorification.

And that's what Peter is talking about right here. In the past, a believer is saved from the penalty of sin. In the present, a believer is being saved in the sense that they are being sanctified from the power of sin in their life and in the future.

[37 : 10] In glorification, the believer is saved from the presence of sin completely, totally, and forever in heaven. Peter emphasizes here that from start to finish, it's God who does all of this.

He saves us, he keeps us, he will complete his work in us. That truth is the source of a believer's living hope.

It's the truth that we celebrate today and all days because Jesus rose from death. We have a living hope that transcends our earthly suffering.

So how do we adjust our lives based on what we've just heard? Well, it depends on how you answer this question. Are you being guarded for a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time? Can you say that confidently this morning? If not, what you need to do, the adjustment that you need to make, friend, is a transformation.

[38 : 25] You need to trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And he's brought you here today to hear his word, to hear his gospel. And if you recognize that you're a sinner and you understand that Jesus died for your sins and if you understand that he rose again, if you believe that, you will be saved and you will have this living hope that transcends earthly suffering.

And if God has been gracious to save you, having this hope, being reminded of this, should change everything about the way that you live.

I'm going to close with Romans 5, 1-5. God's word will have the final word and I pray that he will use this to encourage you. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope and hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this hope, this living hope that you have been merciful and kind and gracious to give to us.

[40 : 07] Lord, we thank you for the hope that we have in this life that death is not the end. We thank you for the hope that we have as a result of that from Jesus, your son who lives sinlessly, who died sacrificially, and who rose again, and who shares his life, who shares his victory with us, and who gives us a hope in this life.

That transcends our suffering. Lord, for those here this morning, you know their situation, you know their case, you know what they are suffering through, and you know, Lord, the ways in which they are tempted to lose hope.

And I pray, God, that through your word this morning, you will continue to encourage them, that they have a hope in Jesus through his resurrection that transcends all suffering.

suffering. We have a hope that we will be with you. We have a hope that we will be in your presence and we will receive this heavenly treasure that does not perish and does not fade and cannot be corrupted.

Lord, for those here this morning whom you've brought into this place who don't have this hope because they don't know you, I pray, God, that today would be the day of their salvation. I pray that they would wrestle with what they've heard this morning, that they would take account of their lives and their situation, that they would see the things that they're putting their hope in that will disappoint them and that they would no longer waste their time in their life, that they would see their need for you, that they would turn to you, and that, Lord, you would save them.

[41 : 44] God, we thank you for this living hope that we have, and we pray that in our lives, Lord, we would declare the good news of this hope that we have in you, Lord Jesus, in whose name we pray.

Amen.