

# Our Inheritance in Christ

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 30 September 2024

Preacher: Tom Holland

[ 0 : 00 ] 1 Peter 1, verses 3-5.

A few years ago, a book was published,<sup>!</sup> and it was declared, I think, by the writer,<sup>!</sup> to be the best-selling book of his life.

It's time. And the book I'm referring to is *Your Best Life Now*, written by Joel Osteen. My library at home is around 2,000 books, and they're everywhere.

In addition to numerous bookshelves, they can be found on the floor next to the bed, in my study upstairs, in every bathroom.

Mike knows that as my plumber. But I've never owned a copy of *Your Best Life Now*, nor have I read it.

[ 1 : 07 ] Additionally, I have no plans to read that book. But I have always been struck by the title. If what we're going through right now is our best life now, I would suggest that most people are going to be spending eternity in hell someday.

If this is the best life, hell is a, one way to describe it, it's a perpetual state of dying.

But you never really die. But if this is my best life now, I'm in deep trouble. Here are some quotes from that book.

By the way, my intention is not to drive you to the book. If I was going to do anything, it would be to try to drive you away from it. But these are all from *Your Best Life Now*.

Quotes by the writings of Joel Osteen. God wants this to be the best time of your life. Happy, successful, fulfilled individuals have learned how to live their best life now.

[ 2 : 24 ] As you put the principles found in these pages to work today, you will begin living your best life now. And now for the person who is saved and been embraced by Christ, had their sins forgiven, what we are experiencing today is not even close to being our best life now.

Try as we might, we cannot comprehend what our life with Jesus is going to be like. Why is that impossible in fullness?

Well, 1 Corinthians 2.9 gives us a clue. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him.

But the Lord has revealed to us what this life will be like for the true believer who loves the Lord and wants to follow Him.

It will be a life, I'm talking about the present life, it will be a life of trouble, persecution, rejection, and difficulty.

[ 3 : 47 ] There will be trials and temptations, pain, suffering, sickness, and then it will all culminate in physical death. I used to tell guys, life's tough and then you die.

Now that is not my list. It was developed by John MacArthur from various New Testament passages. For followers of Christ, this is sort of our worst life now compared to what is coming. But really, it's not that bad. If you think we have it tough, may I suggest you get a copy of Fox's *Book of Martyrs* and read it.

We've got some upstairs. Or I can get you a free copy anytime at VOM. Those guys died by being burned at the stake.

But they died praising God and praying for forgiveness for their executioners and their tormentors. Compared to heaven, this is our worst life now.

[ 4 : 57 ] But it just isn't that bad when we think about it. I do think we all look forward to that time when we will experience all the promises the Lord gave us concerning life with Him and glory.

But we should not expect those promises to show up here. And we understand that. Good rule of thumb is never expect more than this life can deliver.

So for our study this evening, let's read one of the great doxologies found in Scripture. I'm going to read 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.

Now there is something amazing about this doxology. Peter, writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is calling, really, for praise from people who do not currently possess the great truths contained in this passage or in these books.

[ 7 : 01 ] We know that because He refers to it as an inheritance. Something they didn't possess yet. So what is an inheritance?

An inheritance is something we do not currently possess but will possess it at some future time. In God's economy, our inheritance is being stored up for us in heaven.

It cannot be defiled. It will not fade. It is kept in heaven by the power of God and He's going to reveal this to His children in the last time and that's a form of saying in His timing.

He'll reveal it all to us. So who are the people that Peter is addressing here? Through the power of the Holy Spirit, He's really speaking to all believers in every age.

But the people specifically in mind were the ones, some of which we looked at last week. We learned that they were aliens in that culture and that these people had been scattered throughout the Mediterranean world in places like Pontus and Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

[ 8 : 40 ] Life for Christ's followers was hard for them. They were under severe persecution from the unbelieving world that surrounded them.

They were poor. They had scant resources to get by in life. And it's interesting that in verse 6, which is skipping ahead, Peter says, In this you rejoice.

Well, what did they have to rejoice about? They could rejoice because they were all going to receive an inheritance from the Lord that would remain with them for eternity.

So for a few moments, let's consider employing a doxology to describe this passage. What is a doxology?

A doxology is a celebration. It is an exaltation of praise directed at God for the life to come.

[ 9 : 56 ] Now, I can assure you they have no regard that somehow, speaking of these people back then, none of them thought, boy, this is our best life now.

I promise you. The doxology in 1 Peter is a call to worship. The doxology is looking forward to the life that will come in eternity.

It is centered on our inheritance promised to us by the Lord. And we can be certain that it was not their best life now.

In fact, if Joel Osteen had shown up with this theology, I'm not so sure they wouldn't have stoned him to death. Now, back to the doxology in chapter 1.

Clearly, this life was not their best life for them. And that's the way it's been throughout history.

There are no promises in the Bible that this is our best life now.

[ 11 : 09 ] Our best life is to come. I personally am looking forward to the millennial reign. I think that's going to be a neat time. The Lord will be on earth.

We'll be on earth. And so, Peter calls for a doxology, a celebration of exalted praise to God for the life to come.

It is a hymn, really, that I read to you in verses 3-5. It is a call to worship the Lord God who has promised us eternal joy and blessing in the future and an inheritance of salvation to be revealed a living hope.

We are to learn the sooner the better that our best life is not here and now. This doxology centers on our inheritance.

We're going to talk a lot about inheritance. And please notice that is the key word at the beginning of verse 4, to obtain an inheritance.

[ 12 : 32 ] The word means a fully realized and possessed gift. We have a guaranteed future that God has already determined and established.

It is described our inheritance. Now, we probably all understand the concept of an inheritance.

We understand for one thing that an inheritance is something that comes to you in the future. In the Old Testament, inheritance was a familiar word.

it was used for the Jews to describe the land of Canaan because Canaan was the inheritance that God promised to the children of Israel.

This inheritance of the earthly Israel, this land of Canaan, the promised land sometimes it was called, had begun with Abraham, the father of the nation Israel.

[13:48] But it was not realized for a long, long time there were hundreds of years between the promise of the inheritance and the realization of the inheritance.

they had to endure hundreds of years of bondage in Egypt and trouble in Egypt.

And when they finally left, there were decades of wilderness wanderings in which a whole generation of Jews died out in the desert, out in the wilderness.

They led a very troubled life. until they entered into their inheritance, you might say that all the years waiting for their inheritance were years of very difficult times.

In a very similar fashion, Peter is saying, the Lord is calling on these troubled believers who are getting hammered from every side with all the difficulties life can possibly bring to bear upon them.

[15:08] Just forget and set aside living your best life now. Instead, wait with hearts full of praise for the best life which is to come in the future. In fact, he is saying you should be so committed to that that you burst spontaneously into praise that you join me in this doxology for something you do not now possess.

Yes, you are the children of God and therefore heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Yes, you are waiting to possess your unimaginable inheritance.

It's an eternal inheritance. but we like them are childish like a childish prince who before his years of maturity can never grasp the enormity of a royal inheritance.

We have little understanding of what God has prepared for us. We have little comprehension of the realities of what we are going to receive from him when he gives us all the crowns that he has promised to us and crowns us really with everlasting bliss and the joy of eternal heaven.

We have no way to fully comprehend it but we need to get the finest, the purest, the truest, the widest, deepest, broadest understanding of it we can because it produces joy in the midst of trouble.

[16:53] Some have said we make too much of life's difficulties. We cannot be telling people that Jesus wants them to live their best life now because it will be a disappointment.

Do not invest too much expectation in it. it is full of trouble and if you expect too much out of this life this life will steal your joy.

If you expect little and are grateful for every small benefit you live in the light of the life to come and then this life can steal nothing of your joy.

You attach your joy, you attach your sense of God's loving you to what you have in this life and God in your mind will be a disappointment.

That's why the Apostle Paul said this in Ephesians 1.18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you will know what is the hope of his calling and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance.

[18:15] So we need to get a grip on our heavenly inheritance. If we live in the light of the fact that our next life is our very best life then we can take what comes.

This life is a vapor. It appears for a little time and then it vanishes away. Paul calls on us as Peter calls on us to transcend this life, live in adoring wonder and praise and worship to God for the life to come.

So what is this inheritance we will receive? He calls it at the end of verse 5 a salvation salvation or salvation ready imminent to be revealed in the last time.

It is the final aspect of our salvation. There is a past aspect we've covered this when you believed in Christ you were saved from the penalty of sin because you were justified declared righteous your sins were placed on Christ.

Presently you're being saved from the power of sin that no longer has dominion over you but that final phase of your salvation you will be saved from the very presence of sin.

[19:54] It will not exist in the world to come and it's then that we will be delivered fully finally completely from all decay all sickness and trouble conflict and pain suffering grief guilt sorrow anxiety tears discipline hatred disappointment misunderstanding weakness failure ignorance confusion imperfection and on and on I tried to come up with some other words I didn't have my thesaurus for us the only way we can understand perfection is from the standpoint of all of that

which is our experience so we have to use negative to speak of perfection we will enter into eternal experiences of pure joy pure peace and pure holiness it is this salvation in its final form ready to be revealed at the last time by the way that is the time when we leave and meet

Jesus face to face or the time when he comes to take us to be with him a lot of things happen including death is swallowed up it is absolutely swallowed up in eternal victory and we will then enter into our eternal inheritance it is really of little consequence how much you have in this life or for that matter how much you do not have how well you are how sick you are how fulfilled you are how humanly speaking unfulfilled you are how many successes you have had or how many failures you've had how many fulfillments you've had or how many disappointments in the context of the whole it means very little we all came into this world with nothing and we go into the next world with nothing you can't take it with you there used to be a famous saying you never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul let me tell you about people that tried to take it with them for one thing it was the Egyptian pharaohs they accumulated so much in this life they built massive pyramids to take all of it with them

I've been to Egypt I've been to the pyramids and I've seen them do you know what the pyramids got for storing these accumulated wealth they got robbed they were emptied out I remember in Fort Worth there was an old man named G.C.

Richardson and he was worth about 600 million dollars doesn't sound like much to someone like Stan Branson but it's still a good amount of change and a guy I knew was sitting on like row three and there were two oil lawyers right in front of him and the funeral was getting ready to start and one of them leaned over and said how much did G.C.

leave and he goes he left it all there's a lot of truth to that he left every bit of it he didn't take any of it with him he left it all as a true church of Jesus Christ we are not offering people their best life now I remember we had a woman join our church one Sunday and Monday morning she got robbed she stormed down here to Dr.

[ 24 : 15 ] McBride's office and said what's going on you had me give my life to Jesus yesterday and this morning I got robbed and Mike said this isn't heaven and she stormed out we never saw her again she wanted nothing to do with it but we're not offering people their best life now that sets up an impossible illusion because that allows people to define what their best life is for now and then they somehow want to force Jesus to deliver on that we need to learn to live in the light of our best life which is coming after this life no matter how difficult this life is we live in hope so Peter calls us then in this doxology to join him in some praise go back for a moment to verse three and I'll make a few comments a very simple way to understand this it's a call to praise in verse three it says blessed be the God and father of our

Lord Jesus Christ among the Jews the common way to start a praise was to say blessed are thou O God very common and that is the way the Jews started their praise blessed means worthy of adoration and the Psalms are filled with such praise Psalm 34 1 I will bless the Lord at all times his praise shall continually be in my mouth Psalm 103 1 bless the Lord oh my soul and all that is within me bless his holy name Psalm 103 2 bless the Lord oh my soul and forget not all his benefits Psalm 103 verses 22 bless the

Lord all his works and all places of his dominion bless the Lord oh my soul Psalm 104 1 bless the Lord oh my soul oh Lord my God you are very great you are clothed with splendor and majesty Psalm 104 35 bless the Lord oh my soul praise the Lord for the Jew this was a very typical form of praise Peter a Jew borrows from his own experience as a Jew talks the way of a Jew would talk when he says blessed be the God but then Peter adds something that's very important blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ that's quite an addition that's quite an addition and it's very important to understand for us

Gentiles we need to understand what Peter has just done with these words he introduces us to our source of inheritance for many years now whenever I've been asked to pray I start by saying gracious God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ I do that because I once read from one of the Puritans that may be the greatest blessing we can bestow on the father to refer to him as the father of the Lord Jesus Christ in Peter's words where does the inheritance come from it comes from the one who is being blessed that is God and that is why Peter blesses God adores God praises God and he exalts God God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ has bestowed upon us our inheritance he is the source of our inheritance which means our inheritance is a gift from

God we've not earned our inheritance we can never deserve our inheritance so where did this gift come from it is a gift from God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ stated in the plural it is a gift to us the source of the concept comes from the spirit of God Paul had the same concept as did Peter and Paul expressed it in Ephesians this way Ephesians 1:3 blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places now we know that the source of our inheritance!

[30:01] is God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ what motivates God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ to bestow upon us his inheritance well this has revealed to us in the opening words of 1 Peter God is motivated to do this by his great mercy clearly we do not deserve mercy but there are no words to describe how desperately we need the mercy we don't deserve over 80 times in the New Testament God refers to himself as the God of mercy God's very nature is to be a God of mercy the source of our inheritance is God the Father of the

Lord Jesus Christ the motive of God granting us an inheritance is his merciful heart to people that are really in misery so how do we appropriate these gifts beginning in the last part of verse 3 through verse 5 chapter 1 of Peter he has caused us this is the great motivation 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 we do not receive this future inheritance!

by natural birth what does an heir do? an heir inherits that's the role of an heir he inherits inheritance how do we inherit the great inheritance reserved and guarded for us in heaven to obtain this inheritance we must be born again or born from above that's the people that receive God's inheritance you have to be a child of God to have an inheritance!

inheritance from God and so God wonderfully miraculously supernaturally gives us life you'll remember this Jesus said to Nicodemus unless you're born again you're not going to see the kingdom of God you're not going to inherit all that God has for his own so Peter says blessed be the God who has caused us to be born again who has caused us to be born into his family so that now I am a child of God and an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ this comes of course later Peter says in the same chapter 1 verse 23 this being born again is not of seed which not like human birth or natural birth but imperishable through the living and abiding word of God it is a spiritual birth that God produces in the great power of regeneration through the word of God we studied a lot of this when we did salvation God's way verse 25 he says the word of God which was preached!

[34:07] to you you heard the gospel you believed the gospel as you believed the gospel God gave you newness of life and you were born into his family and now you have a living hope a living hope a very important phrase so let us very quickly review our inheritance The source of our inheritance is God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the motive of God granting us an inheritance is his merciful heart toward those in misery and the gift of inheritance is appropriated by regeneration or being born again Greek word anathen born from above well Peter has one more truth regarding our inheritance!

God God and Father of our Lord Jesus motive is mercy its means is regeneration or being born again but what is the nature of our inheritance!

Put another way how long does our inheritance! last? the nature of our inheritance is permanent and that leads to the security of our inheritance!

It's secure! Our inheritance does not tarnish! It does not decay! It does not wither! But can it be taken away and given to somebody else?

Some Christians believe that! Can it be taken away? Can we forfeit it? Can we be disinherited? Can God disinherit us who have been born again?

[36:04] The answer comes at the end of verse 4 and end of verse 5 the inheritance first of all is reserved in heaven for you kept in heaven for you who by God's power are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time your inheritance is secure with God in heaven in spite of our weaknesses and in spite of our struggles in this life this unchanging inheritance is reserved in heaven for you and not for somebody else your inheritance will not be assaulted plundered tarnished or be taken away that speaks to the security of the believer it is safely in heaven and stored for us in the holy presence of God

Thank you.