

The Gospel: Living Hope and an Amazing Inheritance

What's the Big Idea?

God's people are chosen aliens who have a living hope and amazing inheritance because of their relationship with Christ.

What's the Problem?

We don't realize or forget our identity as chosen aliens, so we hope in other things instead of in the living hope we have because of Christ.

What's our Response?

God calls his people to live out their identity as chosen aliens by praising him for the living hope and amazing inheritance we have in Christ.

Memorize

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3

What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

This passage introduces 1 Peter and includes a greeting, an expression of worship for the living hope and amazing inheritance God's people have through faith in Christ, and a reflection on the glorious salvation we experience through the gospel.

Greeting-1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter, the author of this letter, calls himself an apostle. An apostle literally means a "sent one." God has sent Peter as his special representative to convey his good news to people.

Peter addresses his letter to Christ-followers in central Asia, whom he describes as chosen aliens. Aliens are temporary residents in a foreign place. "Chosen" speaks of the God of the universe setting his affection on his people and calling them into a relationship with him. Peter writes to people who were likely scattered throughout the region because of persecution arising from their faith in Christ. So it was really important for them to focus on their identity as chosen aliens.

It's really important for us to focus on that identity too. Help your group see their identity as chosen aliens as a result of being in a relationship with Christ. Lead them consider the implications of living as chosen aliens. Discuss with them what happens when they fail to see this as central to their identity.

Praise-1 Peter 1:3-9

Peter praises God that he has caused his readers to be born again. This gives them a living hope and an amazing inheritance. This living hope and amazing inheritance should cause us to rejoice, even when we go through the most difficult times.

Lead your group in considering what this living hope and amazing inheritance are all about and how they can make a difference in the circumstances they're facing.

Reflection on the Glory of the Gospel-1 Peter 1:10-12

In this section Peter reflects on the glory of Christ's salvation. He says that God's prophets in earlier generations knew that were speaking of the Messiah, but they didn't know his particular identity. That revelation is clear as day for us who live

after the time of Christ. But it's more than clear. It's glorious. It's so glorious that even angels, who've never experienced grace the way we as blood-bought followers of Christ have, long to look at this salvation. They gaze at it as ones who are obsessed.

Help your group to gaze at the beauty of the gospel and challenge them to consider to what degree its beauty has captured their hearts.

What Are the Questions?

Launch

What are examples of aliens (people living in a place that's not their home) in our world? What is true of these people?

Explore

Read 1 Peter 1:1-2

1. Who is the author of this letter, and who is it written to?
2. How does Peter describe his readers in verse 1?
3. In what ways do you think God's people are like aliens, foreigners, and strangers in the world?
4. How does Peter describe his readers in verse 2?

Read 1 Peter 1:3-9

5. Why does Peter say God is worthy of praise in verses 3-5?
6. What do you think Peter means by being born again?
7. What inheritance do you think Peter is talking about in verse 4 (look at John 3:16 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17 for clues)?
8. How does Peter describe this inheritance in verse 4?
9. What does verse 5 say about God's work in our lives to ensure that we receive this inheritance?
10. What role do we play in experiencing God's protection?
11. According to verses 6-9, how should we respond to God causing us to be born again into this living hope and amazing inheritance?
12. Why should we respond in this way, even when we go through trials?

Read 1 Peter 1:10-12

13. What is Peter's point in these verses?
14. Why do you think angels long to look into the beauty of the gospel?

Apply

15. What happens if we fail to realize that as followers of Christ we're aliens or strangers in this world?
16. What difference does it make to know that we're chosen by God and set apart by his Spirit to experience his forgiveness?
17. How does it encourage you to know you have an inheritance that's imperishable, undefiled, and unfading?
18. If angels never die and never get over the beauty of the gospel, how can we develop a similar response?

What Are the Answers?

1. Peter writes to "chosen aliens" scattered throughout ancient central Asia.
2. He describes them as aliens.
3. They live in a place that's not their permanent home and don't always connect with the values and practices of the culture.
4. They're chosen according to God's foreknowledge by the work of the Spirit who sets them apart for a relationship with him so that they can obey Jesus Christ and know the cleansing that comes from his shed blood on their behalf.
5. He's caused us to be born again into a living hope and amazing inheritance.
6. Being born again means experiencing a spiritual new birth that ushers us into a relationship with God.
7. As Christ's followers, we inherit an eternal relationship with God in which we get to be with him forever.
8. Our inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
9. He protects us by his power.
10. We trust him.

11. We should rejoice with inexpressible joy.
12. God is working through these trials to refine our faith and bring about the final salvation of our souls.
13. God's prophets in earlier times knew they were prophesying about the Messiah, but they didn't know his specific identity. But God has given us as Christ's followers of beholding beautiful things related to the gospel that even angels long to look at.
14. As beings that have never sinned and therefore have never experienced God's undeserved favor in the face of their sin, they likely have a special fascination with the gospel.
15. Allow the group to discuss.
16. Allow the group to discuss.
17. Allow the group to discuss.
18. Allow the group to discuss.