

OBTAINING THE OUTCOME OF YOUR FAITH

I. 1 Peter 1:3-21

A. My Dad had a thousand little sayings. Those of you who knew him heard a few of those. Sometimes he'd walk into a room and say, "*What in the cat hair is going on here?!*" What *cat hair* had to do with an unfamiliar situation, I have no clue, but I sometimes utter the same phrase when what's going on escapes me.

B. Churches in our day vary greatly. I actually appreciate the variety and diversity in the body of Christ. As we gather here in a small rural town to worship and share Communion, all over the world people are doing the same in countless different ways. Some in cathedrals. Some in white clapboard chapels. Some under trees in the bush of Africa. Some in shacks on the Tundra. Some in inner cities, or in Appalachia, or secretly in homes in China or the Middle East.

C. In any one of those gatherings a stranger or invited guest might wander in and ask, '*What in the cat hair is going on here?!*' They may wonder: Why are these people doing this? What are they about? What is the bedrock foundation of their faith? What caused these former sinners, these enemies of God, these profaners of His name, to become a part of His Family? Some see the cross and are drawn to it. Others quickly shift their glance toward the exit signs.

D. Hopefully our text today will remind us all, while informing all inquiring souls, as to what in the *cat hair* is going on here--who we're about, why we're about it, where our deep and abiding Hope lies, and what our future holds.

E. 1 Peter 1:3-12 (ESV) was written by the one who first recognized who Jesus was, who later denied Him 3 times, who was then restored by Jesus and charged to feed His sheep. Tradition says he was crucified upside down for his faith...

1) **V3: 3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, (According to what?) He has caused us (Who caused what?) to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (You're either born once and will die twice or you've been born twice and will only die once.)*

2) **V4: 4** *to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, (Because of our Lord's mercy, He made us who were dead spiritually, alive--regenerated us--caused us to be born anew in Christ--and made us His children forever. The Bread & Cup remind us. (And in the meantime?)*

3) **V5: 5** *who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (Our salvation is initial, progressive, & final.)*

4) **V6-7: 6** *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Can anyone here relate to trials?)*

5) V8-9: (So where do we stand between salvation and glory? What's our *in-the-meantime* position?) **8** Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. (If you've seen Jesus' image on a honey bun or cloud cluster, that doesn't count!) Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. **The Bread & Cup remind us.**

6) V10-12: **10** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, **11** inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. **12** It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. (Concerning this salvation; concerning this Gospel of Grace; concerning this undeserved mercy and love from God that came to us as a result of Jesus Christ--God the Son--taking our sin upon Himself and absorbing our justly earned punishment--it's so glorious, so amazing and mystifying that angels are confounded, baffled, and thoroughly perplexed. Despite our God being the Maker of all things seen and unseen, there's nothing more stunning in all the universe than what God has done to make us right with Himself, even making us His children, and granting us everlasting life!) **The Bread & Cup remind us.**

F. Sitting on a beach, there's an inherent majesty to the ocean. Each wave rolls in with its own power and beauty. They hit the beach so faithfully that you never doubt the next one's coming. Sandpipers dance about the shore like an old Charlie Chapman movie. Shorebirds feed off the minuscule treasures deposited by each wave. The tiniest of shells give evidence of unknown histories. Likewise, the most elaborate and well-sculpted sandcastles made by humans all crumble away by high tide. When hurricanes form, the structures of man can also disintegrate as though they were made of sand. But the wonder of the sea, with all its beauty and might, is dwarfed by the majestic power and love of God as displayed in the glorious revelation of Jesus Christ. **The Bread & Cup remind us.**

* Read the lyrics to the hymn, "*Behold Our God.*"

Who has held the oceans in His hands? / Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice! / All creation rises to rejoice!

Who has given counsel to the Lord? / Who can question any of His Words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things? / Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?

CHORUS

Behold our God, seated on His throne, / Come let us adore Him!
Behold our King, nothing can compare, / Come let us adore Him!

Who has felt the nails upon His hands, / Bearing all the guilt of sinful man?
God eternal humbled to the grave, / Jesus, Savior risen now to reign!

CHORUS

Behold our God, seated on His throne, / Come let us adore Him!
Behold our King, nothing can compare, / Come let us adore Him!

*** Pray & Serve Communion...**

*** 1 Peter 1:13-21 (ESV) is our Benediction:** *13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." 17 And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a Lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[1 Peter 1:3-12 \(ESV\)](#)

3 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, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **8** Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. **10** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, **11** inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. **12** It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

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foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you **21** who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Behold Our God

By Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird, and Stephen Altrogge

VERSE 1

Who has held the oceans in His hands?
Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice!
All creation rises to rejoice!

CHORUS

Behold our God, seated on His throne,
Come let us adore Him!
Behold our King, nothing can compare,
Come let us adore Him!

VERSE 2

Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His Words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?

VERSE 3

Who has felt the nails upon His hands,
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man?
God eternal humbled to the grave,
Jesus, Savior risen now to reign!

TAG

Men: You will reign forever!
Women: Let Your glory fill the earth!

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Bonus Stuff

Ephesians 3:7-12 (NLT)

7 By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving Him by spreading this Good News. **8** Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, He graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. **9** I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan

that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. **10** God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display His wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. **11** This was His eternal plan, which He carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. **12** Because of Christ and our faith in Him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence.

Isaiah 40:9-26 (ESV)

9 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" **10** Behold, the Lord God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him and His recompense before Him. **11** Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes. **12** Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance and the hills in a pair of scales? **13** Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or as His counselor has informed Him? **14** With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge and informed Him of the way of understanding? **15** Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. **16** Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. **17** All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless. **18** To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him? **19** As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, a goldsmith plates it with gold, and a silversmith fashions chains of silver. **20** He who is too impoverished for such an offering selects a tree that does not rot; he seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman to prepare an idol that will not totter. **21** Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been declared to you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? **22** It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. **23** He it is who reduces rulers to nothing, who makes the judges of the earth meaningless. **24** Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown, scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, but He merely blows on them, and they wither, and the storm carries them away like stubble. **25** "To whom then will you liken Me that I would be his equal?" says the Holy One. **26** Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one of them is missing.

Charles Spurgeon on 1 Peter 1:10-12

"Observe, dear brethren, that the prophets did not speak without due consideration, but they "enquired and searched diligently" into the meaning of that salvation of which they "testified beforehand." Holy Scripture must not be read by us carelessly. We ought to peer, and pry, and search into it to get at its hidden meaning, and the prophecies as well as the rest of the Word are to be searched into by us upon whom the ends of the earth have come. Observe, also, that this divine revelation is of great interest to the holy

angels before the throne of God; they stand gazing down as if they were trying to understand the wondrous mystery of redemption, and the great and glorious gospel of the grace of God."

"Behold Our God" - Sovereign Grace Music
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqrlI3Lkf58>

John Piper Recites from 1 Peter - Desiring God
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_7tJrTmGxs

2 Ways to Look at the People in Your Church - Tim Challies
<https://www.challies.com/articles/i-am-satisfied-about-you/>

Rubberneck

by Dennis Fisher - Our Daily Bread
<https://odb.org/2007/06/03/rubberneck/>

"It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things." - 1 Peter 1:12 (NIV)

Have you ever watched people at a tourist spot? At places like the Coliseum in Rome, the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, or the Grand Canyon in Arizona, visitors strain their necks to get a better view. Some call this "rubbernecking," which means "to observe with curiosity."

The Bible tells us that such fascination also goes on in the heavenly places. The apostle Peter pulls back the curtain of heaven to let us see angels gazing at God's plan of redemption—*"things which angels desire to look into"* (1 Peter 1:12). The Greek word translated *"look into"* means *"to stoop and look at carefully with curiosity."*

But why are angels so fascinated by man's salvation? The most likely explanation is that they are amazed at the astonishing way God solved the problem of sin (Eph. 3:8-12). The cross was the means by which God provided His Son as the righteous substitute to pay the penalty for sin while upholding His holy standard (Rom. 3:19-31). God now provides redemption to any human being who will repent, believe, and receive it.

Are you thankful for your salvation? The angels are! They rejoice every time a sinner repents and puts his faith in Christ (Luke 15:10).

Reflect & Pray: *The cross of Christ is the bridge between God and man.*