

BORN AGAIN & BOUND FOR GLORY

First Peter 1:3:5

When asked to seek God about what they should be most thankful about, the participants in a worship seminar all returned with the same answer. There are many things worth thanking God about, but none more than this simple fact: *He has saved us*. Our thanks to God for saving our souls is inexpressible. The one who has received God's salvation is not racked with doubts about it- they are positively overwhelmed about it! Our thanks to God for saving us blends with ecstatic and emotional praise. At the point of salvation there is often weeping. Initially we weep tears of repentance and sorrow over our deeply offensive behaviour to God, but the tears of sadness soon become tears of joy as we realise that the same God who condemns our sin has also pardoned the sinner. I once helped an elderly widow by putting a light globe into its socket. She kept the light on at night to reassure herself that no-one else was in her home. She had been taken advantage of by unscrupulous tradesmen in the past and felt that the only way she could get her light globe changed was to call an expensive electrician. When I simply reached up and changed it for her, she immediately burst into tears. These were tears of joy responding to an act of kindness. What God has done for us is much more than replace a burnt out light globe in our lives, He has delivered us from cruel destruction. How much more should we be thankful?

1. What reason does Peter give for praising God? (vs. 3)
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Appreciation for what God has done in our lives results in exuberant praise. Remember what David did when he was overwhelmed with gratitude for God (2Sam. 6:14)? The origins of the word *praise* are based on the Hebrew word "Halel" which means *to be (clamorously) foolish; to rave*.

2. What are some reasons why we don't praise God like we could?

3. How did Jesus say we should be prepared to worship? (Matthew 18:3-4)

4. Note the following Scriptures and observe the degree of response to God-
Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 2Chron. 15:12

Our praise to God must come from our heart. We must be like little children adoring our Father in what would appear to others to be foolish ways. Watch any father playing and laughing with his children. Observe the tenderness and naturalness when they exchange the words "I love you!". Often when my children are enjoying themselves in my company they'll sing a little impromptu song. This is a new song. It comes out of a heart of joy and thankfulness.

5. What do God's people do when they have a heart of joy and thankfulness?
(Ps. 33:3-4; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; Isa. 42:10; Rev. 5:9; 14:3)

Being saved is an event *and* process. We were *born again* the moment we accepted Christ's authority over our lives and His Spirit regenerated us.

6. What happened to our past sins at that point? (1John 1:8-9; Ps. 103:3, 12)

7. What are we instructed to do with our past? (Isa. 43:18; Phil. 3:13-14)

Before God saved us, we were headed to a future with no hope. Now we are destined to a future with a living hope. Our future is secure. We will spend eternity with God. He will wipe away every tear, and be our source of constant joy. All of this has come about because Jesus Christ died in our place. If Christ had just died for us, perhaps we could be assured of an eternity free from wrath. But there would still be no merit for us to enter into heaven and an everlasting relationship with the Creator. This is why Christ rose from the dead. He defeated sin and death and earned for us the entry into eternal life.

8. How does Peter describe what awaits us? (vs. 4)
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SHIELDED BY GOD'S POWER

When we accepted God's salvation for us, we were adopted as His children. Not every person is automatically a child of God. Jesus said of some of the Jews that their father was the Devil (Jn. 8:44). Therefore, only those who have accepted Jesus are true children of God. As any father would, our God looks out for us. He keeps His protective eye over us (Ps. 6:1; 32:8; 34:15). The enemy can not snatch us from God's protection. This is why he tries to *lure* away the child of God from their Father.

9. What are some of the varieties of luring that the Enemy uses to draw us away from God? (note: Heb. 10:25; Luke 8:14)
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Peter was writing to comfort Christians who were suffering under persecution. He assures them that God was guarding them. All they had to do was have faith in God. Faith in this sense means *constant reliance on Christ*. It implies *faithfulness*.

REVEALED IN THE 'LAST TIME'

Salvation is an event and a process. We *were* saved, we are *being* saved, and we *will be* saved. Peter says that there is a salvation ready to be revealed in the 'last time'. The context of what he is describing refers to God delivering His people in the midst of tremendous persecution. This reinforces to us that no matter what attacks His Church, He is still in total control. He still watches over His people. There is more to our salvation than what we enjoy now. There awaits the faithful believer a beautiful inheritance in the heavenly presence of the Lord Jesus.

10. How is this final stage of our salvation described in First Corinthians 2:9 (Isa. 64:4)
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Amen.