

## **We Know Who We Are**

### **1 Peter 1:1-9**

**Andrew Neville 11/2/18**

#### **Sermon Summary**

Pastor Andrew began by recounting a tale of a woman who set out on a journey to find God because, as she explained, she was spiritually hopeless and confused to the point that when a survey was placed under her nose to fill in, she always answered the NONE box in the religious preference section.

And how did she begin her search? By interviewing witches! Later Shamans and “laughing South Africans” were added to the search. When she came across John of God in Brazil (that is his “stage” name), she thought she had the answer. He claimed that he could heal anybody, even through a third party. The third party was permitted a maximum of 3 wishes per person. (Yes, it does have the odour of a fairy tale!). Our seeker offered to go on behalf of others and collected rather a large portfolio of wishes. Strangely, the 3 most common requests were: health, happiness, and love.

This woman failed to find God, but did find out that we are basically similar in our fleshly expectations and desires.

There, but for the grace of God, go I, Andrew confessed. He too felt like that in his youth – being tossed on a sea of confusion (nice description that) – and now gives praise that God pulled him from that chaotic existence.

In 1 Peter 1:1-9, the scripture chosen for today’s message, we were reminded that the people of the Apostle Peter’s day were remarkably similar to us in perception. They understood that others thought of them as strange and a “bit” different. They were existing in a confused society, and many were giving them a hard time. Today, we are no different!

But, and it’s a big but, Peter reminded them (and now us) that they were God’s chosen (elect, v. 1). The gist of the first 2 verses is that God planned our salvation long ago, and it was He who changed our destiny. God wants you and me in his kingdom. We must realise that **every genuine** Christian is a **chosen** person.

1 Peter 1:3-5 talks of the reason to praise God for the inheritance that is ours, that it is kept in heaven for us, and that it is guarded or shielded from “robbery” and even from our own attempted “escape”.

#### **The 3 reasons we can be sure that we cannot lose our salvation**

1. Jesus has risen from the dead. From the day he arose, our destiny was tied to him. The only way anyone can reverse that is by going back in time and preventing Jesus from dying (and therefore from ultimately rising from the dead).

2. This inheritance can never perish or spoil. It is beyond this world; nobody from our planet can touch it.
3. God is protecting (shielding) our inheritance. How? We are guarded by faith (v.5). Also, James 1:12 reminds us to remain steadfast under trial – that’s our part of the job. God does **not** think of you as a loser – even if you think you are! Christians have a living hope. It goes hand in hand with a living faith.

1 Peter 1:6-9 expands our task to “greatly rejoice”, especially in trials. Giving joyful praise under duress will result in receiving an inexpressible joy in return. This is a mystery, but that is what happens to the godly.

So, don’t be unsure. Cheer up. Rejoice always.

Life’s trials are only temporary. While we may never understand the exact reason for a trial, rest in the fact that God knows exactly what He is doing with each and every one of us at every moment. God has your life under control, and He is building your faith in Him.

Genuine faith (verse 7) is greater than investing in gold. Genuine faith will become manifest in praise, glory, and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed again on earth.

Are you a genuine Christian? Have you been born again in Christ.

Even though God may have chosen you – YOU MUST CHOOSE HIM AS WELL.

Once this is done in true faith, know this well – God does not adopt you to drop you later.

For the gift of God’s grace to you, learn to love and honour him in return:

“Grace and peace be yours in abundance. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!” (1 Peter 1:2-3).

**[See discussion questions below on separate page]**

## Discussion Questions

1. Without thinking that there is only one “right” answer, what is your own quick personal response to this question: “What most marks your own identity as a Christian?”
2. If you are not yet a Christian, what do you think most shows you that someone is a Christian (and not just that they go to church or hang out with other Christians)?
3. **Read 1 Peter 1:1-2.** What is the role of the Trinity (3-person God) in making a person a Christian? What does each do: (1) the Father, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) the Son Jesus?
4. What should “grace and peace be yours in abundance” mean to a person who is a Christian?

**Read 1 Peter 1:3-5.** Pastor Andrew offered 3 reasons from these verses that Christians can know their salvation is SURE and cannot be LOST.

5. Why does the fact that Jesus is RISEN from the dead assure Christians that they are born again to A LIVING HOPE?
6. What does it mean to say that the Christian’s INHERITANCE is kept in heaven? Why does this fact offer assurance?
7. If you, through your faith, are GUARDED by God’s power, how does this fact make you feel?
8. What contribution do YOU make to your faith? Read James 1:12.
9. What contribution does GOD make to your faith? For example, when you have doubts and questions during your struggles, what is God doing?

**Read 1 Peter 1:6-9.** These verses tell Christians to REJOICE despite their trials – to BE SURE they will not lose their faith (because they have a LIVING HOPE) and to CHEER UP (with inexpressible JOY) because the trials they are undergoing are BUILDING their faith.

So, what are Christians to think about their trials? Here are 3 things in these verses:

10. Put trials in PERSPECTIVE: How long do they last (compared to eternity)?
11. Trials have a PURPOSE: what is it? Read also James 1:2-4.
12. Of what do trials offer PROOF?
13. What is the REWARD Christians receive when they have persevered through trials, and when will they receive that reward?
14. What is God’s role in your becoming a Christian, and what is your role?
15. Why did you choose to become a Christian when you did? Can you remember?
16. If you have not chosen to become a Christian, what are you waiting for?
17. If you have become a Christian, what could you be doing NOW to live out your identity as a Christian more FULLY – with more LIVING HOPE and more TRUE JOY?