

Reasons to praise God 1 Peter 1:3-9

How easy do you find it to praise God?

I suspect most of us find it easier to do something else.

Instead of actively and passionately **celebrating** what God has done, our temptation is either to **complain** or **critique** or **question** what God is doing. Or even to **ignore** him entirely.

Let's be clear. This is an **outrageous way** to live. It is wrong full stop. However, it does have an explanation.

Why don't we praise God as we should? Here are **two** big reasons.

- We **don't know** what God has done for us, what God is doing for us and what God will do for us
- We have **forgotten** God has done for us, what God is doing for us and what God will do for us

What's the remedy for our lack of praise?

- We need knowledge
- We need reminding of what we already know

This is what I want to do this morning.

I want to show us **four praise reasons** that emerge from **1 Peter 1:3-9**.

It's not hard to see that **praise** should be our response to what is written in this section of the Bible.

Look at verse 3. **Read 3a.**

I love the way Peter begins this section. He is about to outline some big bible truths but none of this is a dry academic exercise.

As the **concepts** and **categories** bubble in his mind he bursts forth in praise of God.

And the implication is clear – this is to be our response too.

What Peter writes should cause us to praise.

What are the reasons to praise God?

First of all, we're told that God has given us new birth

Look at to how verse 3 continues. **Read verse 3.**

At some point in your life, you may be asked this strange question, **are you a born-again Christian?**

The person asking it normally wants to find out if you are one of those extreme Christians? You know the ones that actually believe something. Or are you one of those happy clapper Christians? As if being happy was a bad thing.

The question is strange because it implies that born-again Christians are only one type. However, this verse reminds us that every Christian is born again. Indeed, you cannot be a Christian without experiencing a new birth.

Let's appreciate how **radical** this is.

Being a Christian is not an ordinary thing. It's not like remaining fundamentally the same as you were before but adding a few extra **rules** and **rituals**.

No, a Christian is someone who has experienced the powerful intervention of God to bring about a spiritual birth.

Our church would love to see a dramatic increase in the number of Christians in our town.

Do we appreciate what needs to happen in order for us to see this become a reality? We need God to do lots of spiritual miracles in the dead hearts of countless sinners across our region.

But here's our encouragement. He has done it many times before. Indeed, every Christian is an example of God's power at work.

Look around you. Why are these people here to worship Jesus?

Peter says because God in his **great mercy** has given us new birth.

This should make us praise God.

But we won't if either we don't think God has done this great thing or if we think it is a small thing.

The difference between offering someone a mint in the car and going to the other side of the world to bring them home from danger.

How do you know if you have been born again?

How do you know you are alive? Do you feel alive? Do you feel spiritual alive? Do you show the signs of a spiritually alive person?

If not, then pray for God to work. If we are then let's praise God.

Second, God has given us a living hope

Again we see this in verse 3. **Read verse 3.**

Bible hope is different from the way we normally use the word.

Open Air Theatre – we hope there isn't any rain.

This hope is based on the resurrection of Jesus.

This is not just hope but **living hope**.

What does this mean? This phrase is similar to what Peter says in **chapter 2 verses 4 and 5**, "As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

This suggests to me that just as the living Stone is Jesus so is the living hope.

Our future certain confidence is all wrapped up in a **person**, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's praise God for giving us such a hope.

Third, God has prepared an inheritance for us

Look at verse 4. **Read verse 4.**

Inheritance is the language of family.

Therefore, it's no surprise that those who experience the new birth receive an inheritance.

Normal inheritances vary in value and significance.

But even the best and richest inheritances can degrade.

The expensive collection of wine that tastes like vinegar by the time you get to drink it. The painting that has faded in the sunlight.

But God's inheritance for us will never perish, spoil or fade.

This is kept in heaven for us.

Normally we get an inheritance when someone else dies. But our Christian inheritance is different. We receive it when we die.

Do you ever think about earthly inheritances? Maybe you don't have any expectations. Maybe you have loads.

Let's get this crystal clear. What God has prepared for us in the future is mind-blowing and exciting,

This should **lead us to praise him** for what is to come.

Fourth, God is keeping us safe for our inheritance

There is no point having an **inheritance** that is preserved if the **inheritors** aren't around to enjoy it.

But listen to the promise of verse 5. **Read verse 5.**

God will shield us by his power.

What does this mean? Should we expect a pain free life full of comfort? Is this what it means for God to protect us as we wait for heaven?

Listen to verse 6. **Read verse 6.**

These promises should bring deep and lasting joy.

What is the arena for our joy? It is an arena of testing.

God doesn't promise to protect us from suffering and trials. That's called home. This will be our reality when we get home.

But for now on the journey he promises to protect our faith so we get home.

Why permit the trials to come?

Look at verse 7. **Read verses 7 to 9.**

It's one of God's ways of making sure we get home.

Trials do bring grief.

But God uses them to stop us **pitching our tent short of heaven.**

Through them we trust in God and have our hearts stirred for the future.

The trials come in all sorts of forms.

If they come our challenge is to respond in faith and hope.

We have the promise that God will protect our faith so that we do arrive home.

Not surprisingly, this should result in us praising God.

In conclusion

Don't be discouraged if you are not praising God as we should.

The very fact that we have these truths written down in **1 Peter** is a sign that the early Christians struggled with the same response.

But these reasons are designed to elevate our praise.

So this week let's remember that...

- God has given us new birth
- God has given us a living hope
- God has prepared an inheritance for us
- God will keep us safe so we can enjoy it

Let's pray.