

“From Suffering to Triumph”
A Living Hope — Part 8
1 Peter 3:18-22

“The chief reason God allows believers to remain in this world is so He might use them to win the lost and thereby bring glory to His name.”

John MacArthur

1. Peter’s concise statement of the Gospel

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

1 Peter 3:18a

God’s provision for sin—Christ died for sins

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him

the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures... 1 Corinthians 15:3

The completeness of the provision—once for all

...we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 10:10-12

The substitutionary nature of the provision—the righteous for the unrighteous

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree...

1 Peter 2:24

The outcome of God’s provision—to bring you to God

For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Ephesians 3:12

... we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus

Hebrews 10:19

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which

we now stand...

Romans 5:1-2

2. Christ's proclamation of victory

He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. 1 Peter 3:18b-20a

Jesus died physically—put to death in the body

But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

John 19:33-34

Jesus was alive spiritually—made alive by the Spirit

Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. Luke 23:46

Jesus proclaimed victory over His enemy—he went and preached to the spirits in prison

“preached” = heralded. *In the ancient world, heralds would come to town to make public announcements or to precede kings or generals announcing victories won.*

The spirits were a particular group—who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah

When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose... The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them... The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.

Genesis 6:1-6

3. Baptism corresponds to the flood of Noah.

In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. 1 Peter 3:20b-22

The world was so wicked that only eight were saved.

The ark of Noah is a picture of salvation.

Baptism provides a vivid picture of our response to the gospel and the salvation it brings.

Baptism like a wedding ceremony includes a public confession and commitment. Baptism is a response to God based on a conscience already purified by the Holy Spirit through faith.

Application and Lifework: In the early church, baptism was practiced as an outward profession of faith. So closely associated was baptism with a person's genuine conversion, Peter could say "*this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you.*"

Though water baptism itself doesn't save, some Christians have gone to the extreme of neglecting or delaying water baptism for years or completely. Becoming a Christian and neglecting baptism is like getting married without having a wedding.

Baptism reminds us that we have died to our old lives without Christ and now live new lives united with Christ.

... We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:2-4

If you are a believer and have not obeyed Christ by being baptized, what are you waiting for? It is another way to keep first things first and draw others to Christ.