

Devotional Thoughts :: The Resurrection and Justification by Bob Hoekstra

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

We have a myriad of reasons to bless our great God, to speak of Him with grateful praises. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our heavenly Father has mercifully showered us with so many blessings that we rightly desire Him to be honored and blessed. "For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You" (Psalm 86:5). Based on His great love, He sent His Son to pay for our debt of sin. Through faith in His name, we have received forgiveness and new life. Day by day He is present with us and is working in and through our lives. How blessed we are!

In the Scripture before us, God's merciful heart toward us is focused on a magnificent matter: "who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope." The Lord's mercy has provided a plan whereby He can righteously hold back the awful judgment that we rightly deserve. This plan of salvation offers new birth. God has "begotten us again." This could be rendered, "caused us to be born again." We all were begotten of our earthly parents, a birth that brings temporal human life. For all of us who believe in the Lord Jesus as our personal Savior, we have been given a new birth from God into everlasting spiritual life in Christ. This is one of the heavenly realities that relate to justification (being declared righteous in God's sight, and thereby able to begin a walk with God).

This new birth is also "to a living hope." When we were born into the Lord's family, real "hope" became available to us everafter. Biblical hope is about absolute certainties concerning the future. It is about guaranteed expectations for time and eternity. These are vital needs for every person. Otherwise, people flounder in hopelessness and despair, or they march along in vain fantasies and imaginations.

The unique hope the Lord provides for us is a "living hope." It is a hope that pulsates with resurrection life. " has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This hope is permeated with the Lord's resurrection. This resurrection hope is sufficient to raise us from any agonizing deadness, whether in our aching heart or in our threatening circumstances.

Lord God of mercy, I praise You for Your abundant mercy toward me. I thank You for new birth. I am especially grateful for living hope. I now ask You to work in the dead aspects of my life. Lord, You know what areas of my heart are lifeless. You see the circumstances that are killing me. Raise my heart to new vitality. Lift me above circumstantial living, through the reality of the resurrection of Your Son, Amen.