

investments were divided among us four siblings. It was not very much money but to have something come to me that I had not been expecting was a wonderful surprise and a wonderful gift. The inheritance that our Lord Jesus has established for us is no surprise – in fact, He wants to make sure that we are fully aware of it and actually looking forward to receiving it. It is an inheritance that causes everything else in this life to pale in comparison to it. And that’s why He holds it out in front of us – so that we can know what is coming. While we may be suffering or struggling or hurting, He speaks of this inheritance that He has established for us, a kingdom and a glorious life forever in His presence, a life without pain or suffering or grieving or death or sadness or anything bad. That is what’s coming! We’ve done nothing to earn it, He is simply gifting it to us as His children. So through our faith in Him, we can have the confidence and anticipation of what lies ahead. If you want a couple of glimpses of how our Lord has talked about this inheritance, and if you have the time, I would encourage you to read Isaiah 25:6-9, John 14:1-6, and the last two chapter of Revelation where we have images of the Garden of Eden wrapped into the coming Kingdom of heaven and the Story comes full circle – you’ll find that in Revelation 21-22.

Saturday – Faith

As you read this section of 1 Peter today, listen throughout for the various references to faith – 1 Peter 1:3-9. When all is said and done, it is this gift of faith we’ve been given in our baptism and through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives that is our life-line to Jesus. This gift of faith is what opens the door to all the other gifts the Lord desires to pour into us – the power of Jesus’ resurrection, the promise of eternal life in heaven, the strength to endure suffering and persecution, and to believe in Jesus and love Him even though we haven’t seen Him with our own physical eyes. And as Peter explains, this faith we’ve been given isn’t just a static gift that sits in our hearts. Faith can continue to grow and strengthen, which is our Lord’s desire and intent as well. What we don’t always want to hear is that our faith gets strengthened through the times of struggle and suffering that we go through. And why is that? It’s because in those times we realize how helpless and needy we truly are. There is no place for pride or ego when it comes to following Jesus. Look for those opportunities each day to exercise your faith, to practice living as a child of God, and to put your full confidence and trust in Jesus. He’s here for you. He loves you. He died for you. And He rose for you. And because of that, the realities of life that we have to face, we never have to face them alone. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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This weeks Bring it Home devotions were written by Pastor Glen Schlecht. This publication may be reproduced and shared.



WHAT NOW?

1. Pray throughout this week for Christians around the world who are undergoing persecution and who are suffering for their faith.
2. If you are experiencing suffering, consider giving praise to our Lord as a starting point for asking Him to help you through it.
3. Continue with the “Love Assignment” of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. This is week 10 of 16, love as it’s expressed in “not delighting in evil.” How can you practice love in this way throughout this week? Let Jesus’ Love continue to work in you and through you in amazing ways!

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Monday — Resurrection Realities

Over the next six weeks we're going to be thinking about what Jesus' resurrection means for us, particularly when it comes to some of the hard and harsh realities we have to face in the day-to-day of our lives. To get at that, we're going to focus on the first Epistle (or, letter) written by the Apostle Peter. It's believed that Peter wrote this letter to Christians who were forced to live away from their homeland and were under severe persecution, living as Christians in a hostile cultural environment. What does the Lord have to say to us through this letter of Peter's still today? It seems that we're back in an environment that is quite hostile to Christianity and what are we to do? How are we to live? The topic we addressed yesterday is the idea of suffering. I want to start out this week of devotions by giving you an opportunity to simply read through the part of 1 Peter we focused on, letting you absorb it all once again, and then asking you to reflect on what these verses have to say to you and where you're at in life right now. What challenges do you hear? What's hard? What's comforting or encouraging? What do you find helpful? What insights stand out for you? I would love to hear some of those reflections and if you're open to it, please email me at gschlecht@ImmanuelLoveland.org. With that, read and reflect on 1 Peter 1:3-9.

Tuesday — Praise?

Read 1 Peter 1:3. These are among the very first words that Peter wrote in his letter to his fellow Christians who were under severe persecution. He knew what they were going through so why didn't he start with at least acknowledging their suffering and pain? How in the world could he start with a word of praise to God? It seems pretty backward at first glance, at least from human perspective. But is there something here for us to take away when it comes to understanding the impact of Jesus' resurrection on the realities of our lives? I think so! The reality of Jesus' resurrection is intended to bring everything else in life into its proper perspective. When we take to heart – *truly* take to heart – what Jesus' miracle of overcoming sin, death, and the devil on the cross and through the empty tomb means, we realize pretty quickly how that eternal significance can change the way we approach our daily challenges. Because of what Jesus did, we've been given hope that can carry us through the suffering we may be going through. We can know, with absolute certainty, that no matter what happens, we have a Savior who loves us and has promised us a glorious life that will never end. So Peter's urging for us is to let the first words out of our mouths be words of praise and thanks to our God for who He is. Then, with that confidence and joy, we step into whatever is before us in life, facing it with Jesus in our hearts and by our side. Take a moment right now to offer praise to your Savior for who He is and for all He's done for you.

Wednesday — Living Hope

Read 1 Peter 1:3-4. When you think of "hope," where does your mind go? It's kind of silly, but my first thoughts include things like, "I sure hope the Rockies continue the way they started," and "I hope the Packers can win another Super Bowl with Aaron Rodgers." Then I think a little more and my hopes turn to my children and I hope they find spouses who are Christian,

grounded in their faith, and are awesome lifelong companions. Some of my "hopes" are wishful thinking and others are more prayer-like. But what is this "hope" of which Peter is writing? It's not just "hope" – it's a LIVING hope! Remember again the context – he's writing to fellow believers who are suffering and being persecuted for their faith in Jesus. These are people who are in danger of losing all hope, wondering if their faith and trust in Jesus is nothing more than wishful thinking and wondering if eventually that bubble will pop. The hope about which Peter is writing and which our Lord is offering to us is not wishful thinking. It is a hope that is grounded in the reality of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. It is a hope that is grounded in the life we know, without a doubt, is coming to all of us who believe in Him. It is a hope that is living and breathing – it is a hope that is Jesus Himself. This is the gift that our Lord is offering to us, particularly in those times of suffering, persecution, challenge, and heartache. As we are struggling or crying or hurting, He comes alongside of us and speaks into our ears and into our hearts His words of love and reminding us of all He did for us, all of which can give us hope in the midst of whatever we are facing. Today let that hope of Jesus be alive in you.

Thursday — Our Inheritance

Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. Have you ever been on the receiving end of an inheritance? I had not been until my dad passed away a couple of years ago. I had the experience of being the executor of the estate and my dad lived a very simple, humble life, and had just a small amount of investments that he was able to live off of in his retirement. Upon his death, those small investments were divided among us four siblings. It was not very much money but to have something come to me that I had not been expecting was a wonderful surprise and a wonderful gift. The inheritance that our Lord Jesus has established for us is no surprise – in fact, He wants to make sure that we are fully aware of it and actually looking forward to receiving it. It is an inheritance that causes everything else in this life to pale in comparison to it. And that's why He holds it out in front of us – so that we can know what is coming. While we may be suffering or struggling or hurting, He speaks of this inheritance that He has established for us, a kingdom and a glorious life forever in His presence, a life without pain or suffering or grieving or death or sadness or anything bad. That is what's coming! We've done nothing to earn it, He is simply gifting it to us as His children. So through our faith in Him, we can have the confidence and anticipation of what lies ahead. If you want a couple of glimpses of how our Lord has talked about this inheritance, and if you have the time, I would encourage you to read Isaiah 25:6-9, John 14:1-6, and the last two chapters of Revelation where we have images of the Garden of Eden wrapped into the coming Kingdom of heaven and the Story comes full circle – you'll find that in Revelation 21-22.

Friday — Suffering

Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. Have you ever been on the receiving end of an inheritance? I had not been until my dad passed away a couple of years ago. I had the experience of being the executor of the estate and my dad lived a very simple, humble life, and had just a small amount of investments that he was able to live off of in his retirement. Upon his death, those small