

I. NEW LIFE NOW: because God has "regenerated" those in Christ

A. Why do we need new life?

1. We were dead in our sins (Eph 2:1)
2. We had broken the shalom of God and made ourselves His enemies (Rom 5:10)
3. As enemies we were under His just and righteous wrath (Eph 2:3)
4. Our rebellion brought upon the curse of death, de-creation, disintegration, brokenness, eventually completely disintegrated from God, creation, each other, even ourselves
 - a) *There is death experienced by us every day: disintegration between each other, Creation, even our own selves (shame, "I hate myself," depression, etc), because ultimately we have become disintegrated from God*
 - b) *There is a future death where this disintegration becomes ultimate and final with no hope of reconciliation: a place called Hell in the Scriptures, outer darkness, where there is only weeping and gnashing of teeth in the suffering of this de-creation*
5. But because of the great love with which He loved us, God has both a just and merciful response: The Son of God came down to bear up the wrath due to us and to free us from sin's captivity into shalom again, so that God is just in dealing with sinful evil and merciful in granting us redemption and new life

B. God is to be praised because He has given us new life

1. *according to His great mercy*
 - a) *This life is in accordance with mercy, great mercy*
 - b) *God did not hold our sins against us, but worked to provide a way out of this death, this disintegration through the blood of Jesus*
 - c) *Jesus was disintegrated, de-created, for us so that we might live though we are the sin-bringers who rebelled: This is GREAT MERCY toward God-indifferent self-lovers*
2. *into a living hope*
 - a) *What is "living" hope?*
 - (1) Hope, in the New Testament, is not like our use of hope (I hope the Ducks return to the National championship), which is uncertain wishing, a future yet unclear or unknown.
 - (2) Rather, hope, in the NT, is the *certainty* of future promises being fulfilled by God. It is certain because God has promised it, and we are to place our eyes, our affection, and our trust upon that future fulfillment that it changes the way that we live.
 - (3) That is the point of "living" hope. Living shows us that this type of hope produces change, it is effective, powerful.
 - a) *It's opposite would be "dead" hope, like unto "dead faith" that is unproductive, powerless, and ineffective. Living faith produces. The Living Word produces, it is efficacious.*

- b) *The hope consists in the promise of renewal, re-creation, reconciliation, joy, the rightness of who we were created to be in a life of worship toward God and peace with Him, each other, ourselves and the created order*
3. *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*
- a) *The resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, is the agency by which we receive the life of God*
 - (1) Elsewhere in 1 Peter 1:23-25 we are shown that we are born again through “the living and abiding Word of God”.
 - (2) It is the news of Christ’s work: His perfect life, His atoning death, and His powerful resurrection that regenerates us to newness of life and to a living hope: If Jesus is raised from the dead, then it means that everything that He said about Himself is true!!
 - (3) He paid for our sins so that God would be righteous and merciful; wrathful and loving; holy and reconciling. The resurrection proves that the check cleared and that God accepts us when we close to Christ in faith.
 - b) *Without the physical resurrection of Jesus, we have no living hope, no reconciliation, no new life*
 - c) *But because Jesus was raised from the dead, we know that our sins have been atoned for and that His sacrifice is accepted by the Father in our place: There is no more barrier between God and those in Christ because we are united to Him by faith.*
 - d) *“I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25): Jesus was raised in this newness of life: incorruptible, imperishable, with power, the hope of the re-creation of all that sin has destroyed. New life, new relationships, new bodies, new strength because He lives to hold us secure unto life*

II. NEW LIFE NEXT: into an inheritance as sons and daughters

- C. We are given new life with the goal of inheriting the fullness of life
 - 1. “into” indicates a direction toward inclusion in something greater
 - 2. Inheritance: all that belongs to God belongs to His children so that we receive not the mere blessings of hope, but the actual receiving of these blessings in the future
 - 3. Inheritance implies son-ship, the greatest of God’s blessings, for we are not merely slaves pardoned and set free, but we are made sons and daughters of God, heirs with Christ, brought into the household of God
- D. This inheritance is described in words that heal the death of disintegration:
 - 1. un-decaying (imperishable) – as opposed to the decay of death
 - 2. un-defiled (pure) – as opposed to the rebelliousness of sin that caused our plight
 - 3. un-fading (permanent) – as opposed to the transience of this world, which fades away

III. NEW LIFE NO DOUBT: being kept in heaven for you who are being guarded

E. Our inheritance is being kept

1. *by* the power of God – not your own power or perfection or pursuit
2. through faith – not your strength, but His, we only cling to Jesus as helpless ones
3. *for* a salvation – the result of God's power, through our faith, is the salvation of our souls

F. We are being guarded

1. *by* the power of God
2. through faith
3. *for* a salvation

G. This aspect of salvation is to be completed in the future

1. ready to be revealed
2. in the last epoch

Conclusion: Revelation 21:1-8

If you are in Christ, if you have received Jesus as your Savior and submitted to Him as the Lord over your life, then receive these promises with great joy! As God raised Jesus up from the dead with life renewed, so also has He given to you the newness of life in His Spirit, and where the Spirit is there is freedom and the power toward restoration through faith in Him.

If you have never submitted to Christ, I plead with you to hear the good news of Jesus Christ: His death and resurrection to bring life to disintegrated people. Are you lost? Are you weaving under the heaviness of your guilt, hopeless and walking deathly hallows within this broken world? Let me speak the truth to you. That is my job. It is my job, as a pastor and preacher, to speak to you the truth. It is your job to decide. You have two roads placed before you: eternal life through faith in Jesus, or the coming wrath of God. The disintegration and brokenness and death that you perceive and feel to be even now, is nothing compared to the final death, the final disintegration. God's judgment is real. Death is real. You are alive today to make a decision. One day that opportunity will be over. And God offers to you today new life. Life full of His Spirit, reconciled to Him, yourself, and others, the joy of redemption, the forgiveness of sins, adoption into His family, into blessing now, tomorrow, and ultimately into eternity. A blessing guarded and kept by God Himself. Today is the day of decision. To make no decision is to decide. I plead with you today to choose new life. Turn away from your own strength, come undone before God and plea for mercy. Trust in Christ to bear up God's righteous wrath and to pay for your sins. He has done it. Believe it. In Him you find new life. Newness of joy. New purpose, new hope, new recreated relationships, new wholeness, new health of soul, new, new, new. Repent and believe this good news. Jesus is the crucified and risen Lord and He invites you into His Kingdom by trusting in Him. New life. I tell you the truth. You make the decision.