

Speaking to the soul



Praise God

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3

When Peter wrote these words the storm clouds were gathering; the early Church was soon going to be facing very sharp and painful persecution. Many Christians were going to die, and Peter was well aware that he needed to equip them for the challenges to come. I love the fact that he does so not by offering them words of comfort or sympathy, but by an outburst of praise! It's a good reminder to us that it is always the right time to praise God. It is not a way of dodging the challenges or putting a brave face on things, but because even in the harshest and most testing moments of life, God continues to be faithful, gracious and loving.

Peter reminds his readers that they have been born again because of God's mercy. The new life that we have in Christ is never because of anything good that we have done. There is no way in which we could ever earn salvation. It is entirely because God decided to be generous and merciful. The apostle Paul spelt this out very powerfully in Ephesians 2 when he wrote: "God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead" (vv4-5). It's important for us to remember this because we live in a society where there is a great focus on our achievements. We may feel that our finances, possessions and status have a great deal to do with our own efforts. But our hard work and dedication could never enable us to obtain salvation. For that we are entirely reliant on God taking the initiative and giving us the free gift of new life in Christ.

So, whether you and I are heading into a time of success, failure, joy, pain, celebration or testing we can still direct our thoughts to praise God.

QUESTION

How can you ensure that praise is a continual part of your daily life?

PRAYER

Lord God, I praise you for your amazing generosity. Help me to remember that everything that I am and have has come from you. Amen

Window - I will give you the Crown of Life

