

# Look Out, Not In

**1 Peter 1:3-9**

## Introduction

During Lent, we look inward to see our sin nature and our sins. And we see how much in need of forgiveness we are. But we realize that we will not find relief by looking in. We must look out to Christ on the cross. When we look there, we will receive blessings from above.

## Life

Our reading in **1 Peter** begins: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3).* The first blessing we receive is life. In the **Explanation of the Small Catechism**, we read under the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, the question: *How has Christ rescued you from death?* Citing this verse, the answer is: *Through His suffering, death, and resurrection, Christ has triumphed over death. Since He now gives me eternal life, I need not now fear death.* Because Christ died for us and lives, we don't have to be afraid in this life of anything, not even death.

## The Holy Spirit

Not only does He give us this life by the Holy Spirit, He has given us the Spirit to bless us in three ways.

### *He Enlightens Us*

Since we are in darkness, the Holy Spirit first enlightens us to be able to see and understand spiritual things. Again, from the **Explanation of the Small Catechism**, on the Apostles' Creed, Article III, we read the question: *How do the Scriptures describe the gracious work of the Spirit within you?* Answer: *The Scriptures teach that by the Gospel the Holy Spirit "enlightens me with His gifts," that is, He gave me the saving knowledge of Jesus my Savior, so that I trust, rejoice, and find comfort in Him.* We learn this in **verse 8** of our Epistle lesson, which says: *Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.*

### *He Keeps Us in the Faith*

**Verse 5** of our reading says that we are *by God's power being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* In the words of the **Explanation**, *the Holy Spirit by the Gospel keeps me in the true faith.* Not only does He enlighten us and give us understanding, He keeps us from falling away from the truth of Scripture.

### *He Helps Us Live for God*

Part of keeping us in the true faith is keeping our feet on the right path. As the **Explanation** says: *the Holy Spirit strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith and helps us lead God-pleasing lives.*

## Kingdom

**Verses 4-5** tell us that through the resurrection of Jesus, we have been brought from the dead to *an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* This imperishable, undefiled, unfading inheritance is the kingdom of God. Luther says this about the kingdom

of God in the **Large Catechism**: *For the coming of God's kingdom to us happens in two ways: (a) here in time through the Word and faith (**Matthew 13**); and (b) in eternity forever through revelation (**Luke 19:11; 1 Peter 1:4-5**). Now we pray for both these things. We pray that the kingdom may come to those who are not yet in it, and, by daily growth that it may come to us who have received it, both now and hereafter in eternal life.*

### **Summary**

To sum it up, when we look in faith outward to the cross of Christ, we receive the blessing of eternal life, so we don't have to be afraid. We also receive the Holy Spirit, who enlightens us, keeps us in the faith, and living the way God would have us. And we have the kingdom of God, of which we are now in as His kingdom of grace and as our imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance in glory. Praise the Lord for these blessings.

*And the peace of God,  
Which surpasses all understanding,  
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*