

FIRST WED graphic ... if needed for me to announce this???

Everyone lives with a sense of **reality**.

Our **dominant** reality determines our **functional** reality.

Blind men & the elephant story IMAGE (pic another image if helpful)

<https://cdn.firstcry.com/education/2022/10/01155654/The-Blind-Men-And-The-Elephant-Story-For-Children1.jpg>

Everyone lives with a **LIMITED** sense of reality.

DIFFERENT graphic w/email

I Peter 1:1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ:

To those chosen, **living as exiles** dispersed abroad in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen ...

Reality Check: What is my dominant identity (=reality about myself) in this world?

- **Citizen** (at home)?
- **Exile** (alien; foreigner)?

I Peter 1:1b-2

... **chosen**² according to the **foreknowledge** of God the Father, through the **sanctifying work** of the Spirit, to be obedient and to be sprinkled with **the blood of Jesus Christ**.
May **grace and peace be multiplied** to you.

Ultimate Reality:

Exiles who are chosen, eternally loved and graciously set apart at great cost to God in order to follow King Jesus in abundant living here, now and forever.

Dominant Reality: Christ-followers living in and with **God's favor in a fallen world.**

I Peter 1:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of His great mercy He has given us **new birth** into a **living hope** through the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead⁴ and into an inheritance that is **imperishable, undefiled, and unfading**, kept in heaven for you.

{come up one at a time}

4 Realities of God's Favor

1) Living here and now with living hope

Our world is passionately committed to offering perishable, defiled, and fading hopes to the souls of men and women.

Picture of elephant and blind men (same as above)

I Peter 1:5-7

You are being guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶You rejoice in this, even though now for a short time, if necessary, you suffer grief in various trials ⁷ so that the proven character of your faith—more valuable than gold which, though perishable, is refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

2) Living with a forever perspective

Where is your “at” at (see verse 7)?

{come up one at a time}

- a) Pain (from trials) is comma, not a period in my forever life.
- b) Questioning God's forever love is a waste of time & energy.
- c) Trying to be in “control” will ultimately bury you in frustration, cynicism, burnout, and/or despair.
- d) Self-pity is a losing position and proposition.

I Peter 1:8-9

Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; though not seeing him now, you believe in Him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

True worship of God is simply realizing and rejoicing in ultimate reality!!

- Don't wait to worship until you “feel” like it ... worship the facts of faith and eventually, your feelings will align with facts.**

I Peter 1:10-12

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied about the grace that would come to you, searched and carefully investigated. ¹¹ They inquired into what time or what circumstances the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when He testified in

advance to the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves **but you**. These things have now been **announced to you** through those who preached the **gospel** to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—**angels long to catch a glimpse of these things**.

3) Living in the greatest **time period in history**

Why?

- a) **The Gospel announcement** □ **the availability of the Kingdom of Jesus is here and now!**

Luke 17:20-21

The Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God was coming. “God’s kingdom,” replied Jesus, “isn’t the sort of thing you can watch for and see coming. ²¹ People won’t say ‘Look, here it is,’ or ‘Look, over there!’ No: **God’s kingdom is within your grasp.**”

- b) **The church (community of Christ-followers) has the keys to the Kingdom.**
- c) **The best is yet to come!**

I Peter 1:13-14

Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and **set your hope completely** on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the **desires of your former ignorance**.

- A) **We will not get drunk (distorted reality) or live as dead people (asleep to reality). We will live in living HOPE!**

I Peter 1:15-16

But as the One who called you is holy, you also are to **be holy in all your conduct**; ¹⁶ for it is written, “*Be holy, because I am holy.*”

- B) **We will not live to conform to this world. We will live as those set apart by God.**

I Peter 1:17

If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one’s work, you are to conduct yourselves in **holy fear** during your time living as **strangers**.

C) We will **count the cost of NOT living** in the ultimate reality of God and **fear** living lesser lives here, now and forever.

I Peter 1:18-21

For you know that you were **redeemed from your empty way of life** inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the **precious blood of Christ**, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb.²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was revealed in these last times for you.²¹ Through Him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.