

Easter 2 / April 12, 2026

1 Peter 1:5

“Who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Guarded through Faith for Salvation

St. Peter’s first letter was written to Christians living in various parts of what is now Turkey. Once a hotbed of Christianity, the seven letters of Revelation were written to congregations in this same area. These believers, both Jews and Gentiles, received the gospel with joy when it was first presented to them and their hearts were opened to faith by the power of the Holy Spirit, working through the word. They had a strong and vibrant faith. Peter writes, *“Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible.”* Their faith was a testament to the effectiveness of the word and the powerful working of the Holy Spirit. Their faith in Jesus, whom they had not seen and the blessedness of believing, unscored Jesus’ words when He said to Thomas, *“Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”* We see Jesus first and foremost in the Scriptures, in the gospel in particular, for there He shows Himself to be our Saviour.

St. John wrote his gospel so that those who had not seen would believe. He wrote his gospel so that those who believed would see Jesus He wrote his gospel so that those who believed would continue to see Jesus through faith. All scripture is written so that our faith would be guarded for a salvation ready to be revealed at the appearing of Jesus and the renewal of all things. St. John wrote in the conclusion of our gospel this morning, *“These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that believing you may have life in His Name.”* We see Jesus in the scriptures. We believe in Jesus through the witness of the scriptures. Jesus said the scriptures testify to Him. Jesus said, whoever believes in Him will live even though they die and all who die in Him will rise again. When we take His words to heart and believe Him, we have life in His Name. Take His word to heart and believe in Him! When we take His words to heart the Holy Spirit guards our faith until it is made full at the return of Jesus in our share of His resurrection to life everlasting. His word will not return to Him empty. His word will accomplish His desire, the salvation of those who hear and believe.

The believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the Roman province of Asia and Bithynia, had life because they saw Jesus in the scriptures, heard His call in the gospel and believed in His Name through the power of the Holy Spirit, who made His dwelling within them and among them. There is nothing more powerful than the word of God. There is nothing more important than taking the scriptures to heart, reading them, pondering them, praying them, hearing them, discussing them among ourselves and most importantly, submitting our understanding to them. The scriptures lead us to Jesus. He has the words of eternal life. In the scriptures Jesus calls us to Himself as our Saviour. In the scriptures Jesus nourishes, informs and gives our faith growth. Through the scriptures Jesus preserves our faith and brings it to fulfillment in eternal life.

In Proverbs chapter seven it says, *“My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you...bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.”* In Deuteronomy, Moses said to the children of Israel, *“These words that I command you shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise.”* The word is most important, because through the word the Spirit opens our eyes to see our sins and see our Saviour. Through the word the Spirit opens our hearts to receive Jesus as our Saviour. Through the word the Spirit teaches us to discern truth from falsehood. By the word and the working of the Holy Spirit, the Lord gives us the joy of salvation, the certainty of our election to grace and the promise of the fulfillment of salvation in the resurrection of Jesus to life everlasting. In all the trials of life, in all the challenges of faith, the Lord guards our faith through the scriptures, so that at the revealing of Jesus we will receive the fullness of salvation.

The salvation God gives in Christ through the word and by the working of the Holy Spirit, is founded upon His love, expressed in mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ. One of the reasons the Gentiles in the ancient world responded to the Christian message and felt such joy in their hearts when they believed in Jesus was, because they learned that God loved them and that His love and not their conduct or actions, was the basis of their salvation. Ancient Gentiles did not believe their gods loved them or took the initiative in having a relationship with them. The gods looked out for themselves and looked out for humans only when there was a benefit to them. The gods were quick to anger, often malicious, causing harm without provocation.

The God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of scripture; loves humans as His creation. The Lord loves His human creation despite our sins, before our repentance, without our obedience, apart from anything worthy or deserving in us. God is rich in mercy, generous in love and abounding in forgiveness. He expresses His love in mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ; crucified for the sin of the world, raised for our justification, offered for all to receive, given to all who believe.

God is so gracious that in the gospel He gives the very power by which we receive His grace. He gives the gift of faith. With the word and offer of salvation God gives the Holy Spirit, who opens our hearts to faith and causes us to be born again to a living hope. In the gospel of John, Jesus called the deceased Lazarus to rise and come out of his tomb. As great a resurrection as that was, the greater resurrection is of the human soul, when a human being dead in sin and blind to the mercies of God, deader than Lazarus in the grave, comes to see and believe in Jesus as their God and Saviour. Faith is the gift and working of God. In the letter to the Ephesians St. Paul wrote, *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.”* Believers are alive together with Christ.

There is nothing for which you can be more thankful to God than for the gift of faith, the second birth of water and the Spirit. The book of Revelation says, *“Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power.”* The first resurrection is of faith, when the Spirit opens our ears to hear Jesus’ call, opens our hearts to receive and spirits to believe. Jesus calls us through His word. Hear His Call. Believe Him now. Jesus calls and speaks to us daily in the scriptures that our faith would be guarded and our salvation revealed in the day of His appearing as Lord of lords and King of kings. Blessed are those who hear His call and respond in faith for they have life in His Name.

The believers to whom St. Peter wrote the words of our text had many of the same problems we have today, just minus the technology we enjoy. They lived with the struggle against sin and temptation. They struggled with the doubts common to those who live by faith, believing without seeing. They were led away from the promises of God and the love of Jesus by the allure of the world, the temptations of the devil and the doubts of the sinful nature. To compound all that they were experiencing physical persecution by the Roman State. We have not yet come to that, though the time may not be far away. Like them we need to be prepared for the hostility of human powers, governments and spiritual forces of evil. These

words of Peter addressed first to believers long ago, spoken to believers throughout the ages and to us today, remind and assure us that we are guarded in faith by God's power. All we need do is rest in His power by abiding in His word.

The only thing ancient believers had to guard them in all the struggles of faith and afflictions of life was the word. It was all they had and all they needed. In the word they heard Jesus' call. In the word Jesus came to them with the assurance that His grace was sufficient to meet all their needs. In the word Jesus empowered them to faith and enabled them to express their faith by sharing the gospel of salvation even with those who hated and persecuted them. The only thing we have and the only thing we need to meet the challenges of life and the threats to our faith is the word of God. It is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes. It the dynamite of the Spirit by which He blasts open our sin hardened hearts, so we may see Jesus through faith and have life in His Name. The word is the means by which God guards the faith of believers in life, through death to share in the resurrection of Jesus. Though we do not see Him, we love Him. We love Him, because we see Him in the scriptures as our God and Saviour. He is a present help at all times, especially in time of trouble. We believe in Him, because we see Him in the scriptures. In their words, we hear His call, receive His forgiveness, His mercy, His promise of salvation, His promise to preserve our faith and bring it to fulfillment in our share of His resurrection of life everlasting. God grant this to us all for the sake of Jesus. In His Name. Amen.