Introduction

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in a country where Christians are persecuted for their faith?

Open Doors USA reports:

- 75% of the world’s population live in areas with severe religious restrictions.
- 100 million Christians are suffering from persecution in over 60 countries.

We have been blessed to live in a country where we have religious freedom. But it may not always be that way.

Peter wrote this letter to encourage us to stand firm, be strong and follow Christ.

This is our hope. Christ’s victory is our victory too!

I. Christ has triumphed over sin. Verse 18

“Christ died for our sins once for all.”

“And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:10

This is our hope!

II. Christ has triumphed over death. Verse 18

“He was put to death in the body, but made alive by the Spirit.”

It is an affirmation of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Just as Christ died and rose again, so we who believe in him will also die and rise again.

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26

This is our hope!

III. Christ has triumphed over his enemies. Verses 19-20
This is one of the most difficult passages to interpret in the New Testament.

- Who were the spirits in prison – people or fallen angels?
- What did he preach to them – judgment or salvation?
- When did this happen – in the days of Noah or in the time between Christ’s death and resurrection?

What Christ declared to the fallen angels was not the gospel, but the announcement of his victory and their doom.

Christ was vindicated and so shall we.

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” Colossians 2:15

This is our hope! Christ’s victory is our victory.

IV. Baptism is the seal of our victory. Verses 20-22

Baptism is the sign that we belong to Christ.

Peter writes “baptism now saves you.”

It isn’t the water. It is what baptism symbolizes that saves. It is “the pledge of a good conscience toward God.”

Have you been baptized? Would you like to be?

Conclusion

Life is hard. There are trials and afflictions we all face, but God is good and he is in control.

Be of good courage!

This is our hope. Christ’s victory is our victory too!