

April 12, 2026 – 1 Peter 1:3-9

I enjoy watching restoration videos on YouTube. I don't actually do that much restoration, but I enjoy watching them. Because there are some really fascinating techniques for making old things look new again.

Have something made of white plastic that's turned yellow and dingy with age? Soak it in peroxide and leave it in the sun. It'll turn bright white again. Or maybe it's a colorful piece of plastic that's faded in the sun? Run a heat gun over it and watch the cloudy surface vanish instantly.

Have a rusty metal tool that you want to look new again? Drop it in a bucket of vinegar and it'll be completely rust free in no time. Have a dent in the wood furniture you're refinishing? A wet cloth and soldering iron will make it disappear. It's great stuff.

There's just one problem: all of these fixes are temporary. They can turn back the clock, but they can't stop the decay. Given enough time, the plastic will yellow or fade once again. The metal will rust. The wood will get banged up through use and abuse. We live in a perishable world. And the evidence of that death and decay is all around us.

St Peter talks about this in our Epistle lesson for today. And he uses the same kind of language we might use when we're thinking about restoration. But he takes it further. Much further. He doesn't talk about temporary fixes or surface-level improvement. He talks about something permanent. Something imperishable.

*“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 an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.”*

Everything we try to restore in this world is still perishable. No matter how effective the method, no matter how impressive the transformation, it doesn't last. The decay always comes back. But what God gives, what God restores, is of an entirely different order. It is imperishable. Undefiled. Unfading.

And how does that happen? Well, because *“He has caused us to be born again.”* This isn't a project you undertake. This isn't a restoration you perform. This is something done to you. Or better yet: something done for you. You were not repaired. You were reborn.

Because the problem is not just that we've become a little worn down over time. It's not just that we need polishing or cleaning up. Scripture describes our condition in much more severe terms. We're not simply dented or rusted. We're dead. Dead in trespasses and sins. Perishable to the core.

Which means no amount of moral effort or self-improvement, no amount of spiritual self-help, can fix what is fundamentally broken. At best, we can manage appearances. We can hide the yellowing. We can sand down the rough edges. But the decay remains.

Peter doesn't say, “God has improved you.” He says, *“God has caused you to be born again.”* We have a completely new life. A completely new nature. And with it comes a completely new inheritance.

And this new birth happens *“through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”* That's where the permanence of it comes from. That's why this restoration is different than anything we could do for ourselves. Because it's not anchored in anything temporary, like we are, but in the risen life of Christ Himself.

This is what we see in the Gospel reading from John. The disciples are hiding. The doors are locked. They're afraid. They're doubting. They're still reeling from everything that's happened. And then Jesus comes and stands among them and says, *“Peace be with you.”*

And then, immediately, he shows them his hands and his side. Why? Because those wounds are proof that he can and does bring the peace that he promises. Those wounds are marks of victory over sin, death, and the devil. Those wounds tell the disciples: “I am the creator. And when I say, 'Let there be peace,' there is peace.”

And then, a week later, Thomas is there. Doubting. Demanding proof. And Jesus meets him, too. Not with condemnation, but with the same resurrected body, the same wounds, the same life that cannot decay again. And Jesus does the same thing again. Except that this time its not just speaking peace into fearful hearts. It's speaking faith into a doubting heart: *"Do not disbelieve, but believe."*

*"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."* Like Thomas, Christ has spoken faith into our hearts too. We are truly those who are blessed to have not seen and yet believe.

Because our faith isn't based on a visible restoration. We don't see the full transformation yet. In fact, outwardly, things may look very much the same. The decay of this world hasn't stopped. Your body still ages. Your life still bears the marks of sin and suffering.

Peter is very clear about this reality: *"Though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials."* Christ is indeed risen, but we still live in a perishable world. The rust still forms. The dents still happen. The fading still occurs. And not just outwardly, but inwardly, too. Your faith is tested. Your patience wears thin. Your hope feels fragile.

But these trials, Peter says, have a purpose: *"so that the tested genuineness of your faith – more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

Even gold perishes. Even gold has impurities that must be burned away. But faith – faith given by God, sustained by His Word, anchored in Christ – faith endures. Not because it's strong in itself. But because of what it holds onto. And what it holds onto is imperishable.

That's the inheritance Peter speaks of. Not something stored up here, where it can be lost or damaged or taken away. But *"kept in heaven for you."* Guarded. Preserved. Untouched by decay.

And, like that inheritance, you too are *"being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* Not only is the inheritance kept safe, but you are kept safe. Guarded. Not by your own strength, but by God's power, through faith.

Guarded like those apostles in Acts. They've been beaten. Threatened. Commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus. And what do they do? They leave *"rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name."* That doesn't make any sense at all... unless you understand what Peter is saying.

Because if your hope is tied to things that perish, then suffering is only loss. But if your hope is tied to something imperishable, something that cannot be touched by death or decay, then suffering can never take it away. It can only refine it. It can only bear witness to it.

The resurrection of Jesus has completely changed what it means to suffer. The worst thing that can happen – death itself – has already been overcome. And that means your future is not one of endless restoration projects, constantly fighting against decay. Your future is resurrection. A new creation. An imperishable life.

So yes, for now, we still live in a world where things wear out. Where bodies fail. Where sin leaves its mark. Where everything we try to fix eventually breaks again.

But that is not the final word. *"According to His great mercy,"* Peter says, *"He has caused us to be born again... to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading."* Not restored for a day or a year or even a single lifetime. But made new forever.

And that changes how you live now. You don't need to pretend the decay isn't there. You don't need to hide the wear and tear. You don't need to trust in temporary fixes. Because your eternal life is already hidden with Christ. And when He is revealed, it will be revealed, too.

No more yellowing. No more rust. No more decay. Only life. Only the fullness of what God has already begun in you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Amen.