

Rejoice in Various Trials

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[0 : 00] Well, for the next several weeks, guys, our theme as we work through Peter's first epistle is! We're going to be looking at various aspects of salvation.

We're going to cover tonight in chapter 1 of 1 Peter, verses 6 to 9. I'm going to read that to you. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 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.

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, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

By the way, if I didn't say this, first chapter, verses 6 through 9. One of the great books of the Bible is the Gospel of Luke, written by Dr. Luke.

[1 : 50] And one of the great chapters in Luke is the 15th chapter. I'm not going to read it to you. But that portion of Scripture contains three parables that describe our salvation.

And these parables can be described as follows. The parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost coin, and the parable of the lost, or we usually say, prodigal son.

Now these three parables have certain facts in common with each other. First, they all represent salvation, with each portraying a lost soul that has been forgiven and reconciled to God.

Another thing they have in common is each parable concluded with a celebration. A celebration of a great joy at the recovery of that which was lost.

Something was lost, it was found, and recovered. That, of course, is supposed to be for us an illustration of heaven's response to the salvation to sinners.

[3 : 21] The Bible speaks of the joy of believers in light of their eternal salvation. It is covered so widely in the Old Testament that Peter, who only had the Old Testament available to him when he was on earth, should have a firm grasp of those teachings.

Great passages occur in the Psalms, in Isaiah, and other books of the Old Testament. But also, as we move into the New Testament era, and those books were written, we have sources like 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, 1 John, to name just a few.

Both Paul and Peter wrote about joy in light of the severe persecution that believers were having to endure.

And I would have to say among the American church, those of us in Bartlesville are acutely aware, or should be, that persecution hasn't ceased.

If for no other reason than the fact that we have the headquarters of Voice of the Martyrs here in Bartlesville. And by the way, that's Voice of the Martyrs USA.

[4 : 48] There are 17 Voice of the Martyrs around the world. VOM USA is the largest, and it's actually larger than the other 16 combined.

But we are acutely aware of persecution, or should be. In our lesson tonight, Peter is going to give to us five aspects of salvation joy.

And they're as follows. The confidence we have in a protected inheritance.

We're going to be looking at that. We're going to be looking at all these. The confidence we have in a proven faith. The confidence we have in a promised honor.

The confidence we have in a personal fellowship with Christ. And then number five, the confidence we have in a present deliverance.

[5 : 55] And the first one of these we're going to examine, again briefly for all of them, is the confidence in a protected inheritance.

And it begins with the passage in 1 Peter 1, verse 6, the very first words of that passage, concerning our sovereign joy.

It begins this way, In this you rejoice. Talking about rejoicing in sovereign joy.

In this you rejoice. Now we experienced some of that rejoicing in last week's lesson. We there studied in chapter 1, verses 3 to 5.

Let me read those again. In their brief, think in terms of rejoicing or sovereign joy. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[7:04] According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, born, or could say reborn, 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.

And we looked at that in some detail last time. This passage speaks to the protection of our eternal inheritance.

I like how the New American Standard Bible puts this verse. It reads, In this you greatly rejoice.

That, if you know the Greek language, which I don't, but I know people that do know it, and I like to read them, that is an intense form of rejoicing.

Nevertheless, we'll continue to utilize the ESV, but both Bible versions use the present tense, meaning the joy being depicted is one of continual rejoicing.

[8:39] That particular tense means it continues, and we're to be continual rejoicing. Probably one reason Paul wrote in Colossians these words, Colossians 3.2, it should come as no surprise that Peter and Paul, in their respective writings, are in lockstep with each other.

The ultimate author of the Word of God, of course, is the Holy Spirit of God. But Paul had this to say in Colossians, Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Now we completed a study of the book of Hebrews, I guess last May, and the author wrote these words concerning our joy. But recall the former days when after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those who were so treated.

For you had compassion of those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what is promised.

[10:38] And by the way, that's Hebrews chapter 10, verses 32 to 36. Well, how is it that followers of the Lord Jesus Christ can rejoice regardless of our circumstances?

And the explanation is found in our future hope contained in these three truths. The Lord has been resurrected, and He's alive.

We serve a risen Savior. The Holy Spirit lives inside every believer. And we have a protected eternal inheritance.

That which we're going to inherit is protected in the heavenlies by the Lord. Now the next aspect of our salvation joy is based upon faith.

We are to have confidence in a proven faith. 1 Peter chapter 1, 2nd part of verse 6, 1st part of verse 7.

[12:00] Though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire.

In spite of the circumstances that we find ourselves or that come upon us, we can rely on and have confidence in a proven faith.

Such faith should be our source of joy. People without such faith, faced with such trial, don't have hope.

They don't have hope and future blessing. But trials for the believer can even add to our joy because as we go through them, we experience faith that brings us through them.

When we get to the other end, we should recognize the faith the Lord gave us, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, faith in His finished work, got us through this.

[13:19] Peter lists four types of trouble that can come upon us, but it's the types of trouble that God will use to bring us through to the other side.

First of all, the knowledge that troubles are transitory. In that verse 6 of chapter 1, second part of verse 6, it says, now for a little while.

The Spirit of God just talks about, well, this is just going to be for a little while. You'll get through it. Sometimes when you're going through things, it doesn't seem like for a little while, does it?

But that's how the Lord describes it. And certainly, if we compare that to eternity, it is a little while. In the Greek language, that means troubles last for a season, and then they're gone.

Sometimes the seasons seem to be drawn out a little bit. But the Apostle Paul had a unique way of describing such afflictions. In 2 Corinthians 4.17, for this light, momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

[14 : 55] No comparison with what we're going to receive in terms of eternity. So troubles are transitory.

Troubles come if God deems them necessary. Maybe He will, maybe He won't, but if He deems them necessary, He can send them. Troubles can come upon us if God deems them necessary and appropriate.

Perhaps to grow us, to teach us something. And such troubles may serve a larger purpose, even though we may not understand the purpose, when the troubles are actually occurring.

God talks elsewhere in this letter that we may have to suffer for a while and later God will deliver us and He will strengthen us. Third thing, troubles can bring distress to our lives.

That's common with the human family. These troubles are a way that God proves our faith, that God says, depend on me. I'll bring you through this.

[16 : 07] It suddenly does not mean they are present at the moment necessarily. And this distress we talk about can be physical, can be mental, can be emotional, take many forms.

Well, we also have confidence in a promised honor. 1 Peter 1, third part of verse 7, we may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

We're going to praise and offer honor and glory to the Lord Jesus. This is the type of faith that will come through all of life's troubles, and all of life's problems doesn't matter how severe because God's with us and He's walking with us.

In the process of coming through life's problems, we experience a promised honor. That's why believers will experience praise and honor and glory when we see Jesus.

we will honor Him and praise Him and glorify Him. Now, the Lord touched on this when He was finishing up the parable of the talents in Matthew chapter 25 verses 21 to 23.

[17 : 50] His master said to him, well done, good and faithful servant. You've been faithful over a little. I will set you over much.

Enter into the joy of your master. the apostle Paul spoke eloquently of this in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verses 10 and following.

According to the grace of God given to me like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation. But listen to this.

And someone else is building on it. There are people out here still building on the foundation that Paul laid down in the 13 books he wrote.

Someone else is building on it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is to say, Christ Jesus.

[19 : 36] Now, if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, some places stubble, each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire.

And the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. You know, let me just say as an aside, wood, hay, and stubble doesn't do too well in fire. It doesn't do a lot of damage to those other things mentioned, gold, silver, precious stone, but it creates havoc with wood, hay, and straw.

If the work that anyone has built on a foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss.

I suspect I'm going to suffer a lot of loss someday. That's personal. We can leave that in here.

Except on Sunday, which I'm in here.

But let me tell you what he goes on to say. He will suffer loss though he himself will be saved. Well, that's comforting.

[21 : 14] He will be saved, but only as through fire. 1 Corinthians 3, 10-15. I think if we're going to be saved, we don't want to necessarily be saved as if by fire, but I'd rather be saved as if by fire

than not at all.

I will say that. And then we have a confidence and a personal fellowship with Christ.

1 Peter 1 verse 8 Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.

None of us have seen the Lord yet, have we? We haven't seen Him. We might see Him this week. We might see Him tonight. We might see Him tomorrow or Wednesday.

If we're to have a meaningful relationship with a person, it must include both love and trust. Without that relationship, we won't survive.

[22 : 43] We need look no further than Judas Iscariot for a real life example of the lack of love and the lack of trust. Peter is another example who exhibited from time to time a breakdown in faith and a lack of trust.

He exhibited that. But we know the story even to the point where he denied the Lord three times. But we also know the Lord confronted Peter three times and he asked him three times, Peter, do you love me?

And three times, Peter said, Lord, you know I love you. but Peter had failed in that instance on the issue of trust and love.

The word love that the Lord used in that first circumstance was agape, the most intense and noblest level of love. That's a sacrificial love.

That's the type of love that a man goes to a cross to die for others. Peter commends his readers for their love and trust in Christ.

[23 : 57] Even though many readers had not seen the Lord, they still loved Him, still believed in Him, and those two traits, love and belief, go hand in hand.

This level of love had an amazing reaction. It caused readers of this epistle to rejoice with joy and glory.

And Peter was a great one to write about that, wasn't he? Finally, sovereign joy leads to confidence in a present deliverance. Verse 9, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Well, that's a good outcome for faith. Salvation of your souls. Peter was not looking to the future. He was looking to the present as he was living in the present back in those days. The outcome of their faith was salvation of their souls.

[25 : 15] God said, here we are 2,000 years later and we obtained the same results. There are people today that read 1 Peter and got saved.

It's amazing. Now, joy was something very important to the Lord. And Jesus did not want his followers losing their joy.

He told the Apostle John this, these things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full.

Very important. In the first opening words of 1 John, the epistle, the Lord talks about joy.

Joy is an important theme. joy. And it's a way joy will come in us. It will be a full joy placed there by the Lord Jesus Christ.

[26 : 24] Thank you, Father, for a joy that's inexpressible, for a joy that results in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ, over the fact that we can believe in Him and rejoice with joy, joy, and it leads to the salvation of our soul.

Lord, may we take what we've talked about tonight and have that joy shining forth from every person here that we can be an expression, an example to both the saved and the lost who need to see that manifested.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.