

Doing Life from Heaven's Resources

Life Lessons from The Writings of Peter

Week 2: Why and How We Can Rejoice in the Midst of Painful Trials



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1 Peter 1:3-12

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Why we can rejoice

"in this you greatly rejoice..." (verse 6) In what do we greatly rejoice?

Six Reasons for Rejoicing

1. *"In his great mercy"* -- we are enjoying the great mercy of God

Mercy is kindness toward the afflicted joined with a desire to relieve them. Mercy assumes need on the part of the recipient and resource adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it. (From Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Vines Expository Dictionary)

2. *"he has given us new birth"* -- God has made us completely new from the inside out

John 3:3

... Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

3. *"he has given us new birth into a living hope"* - we have a hope that is alive, dynamic, vital
 - Our hope is not wishful thinking, it is an assurance of better things
 - Hope looks forward in eager expectation to what God will do

Romans 5:1-5

5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have

gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

The Cycle of Hope and Perseverance

- ⇒ Hope is the fuel for perseverance
- ⇒ Perseverance enables us to endure hardship
- ⇒ Enduring hardship produces proven character
- ⇒ Proven character gives us hope

4. "he has given us new birth into a living hope **through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead**"

- The fact of Jesus' resurrection guarantees our hope in all His promises

5. "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade"

- an inheritance that can never perish - our inheritance is not affected by death
- an inheritance that can never spoil – our inheritance is not stained by evil
- an inheritance that can never fade – our inheritance doesn't diminish by the passing of time

- We are eventually going to God's heavenly dwelling - no more tears, sickness, death, or sorrow
- Because of Christ, this world is the closest we will ever get to hell

Revelation 21:3-5

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

6. "who through faith are shielded by God's power"

- our salvation is guarded by Almighty God Himself

Understanding that painful trials have a good purpose empowers us to rejoice in spite of the pain

- Denial won't help. Our trials are real, and they cause great grief.
- Many trials come because we follow Christ.

John 16:33

...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

- Trials refine our faith like gold is refined in fire, and our faith is far more valuable than gold

1 Peter 1:7

7 These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

- Trials come so that our faith may be proved genuine. Experiencing the genuineness and strength of our faith sustaining us through a trial is a source of great satisfaction and joy.
- Trials come so that our genuine faith will overflow into praise, glory, and honor when Jesus returns

How we can rejoice in the midst of painful trials

- While we don't live in denial about the pain of our trials, we can focus on greater realities that are just as true as our pain

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- We can focus on the living hope we highlighted earlier

- We can focus on the outcomes for our faith we highlighted earlier
- Focusing on the eternal is empowered by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a powerful joy.

1 Peter 1:8

*Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and **are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy**, 9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

Habakkuk 3:17-19 New Living Translation

17 Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, 18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation. 19 The Sovereign LORD is my strength!