

# GREATLY REJOICE

"And though you have not seen Him, you love Him

And though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him

You greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

1 Peter 1:8

The Apostle Peter, knew what the "Diaspora" were enduring, since he, himself, was often persecuted. He knew from experience how easy it was to falter in faith and still receive God's incredible grace and mercy. He wrote these words, wanting to encourage and to testify to them since they themselves had never met Jesus, never saw Him perform miracles, nor ever heard Him teach. Yet, they still loved Him, still believed in Him. The result was that they "greatly rejoiced with joy inexpressible and full of glory." May our days be filled with that same kind of faith, that despite the circumstances, we will love Him, believe Him, and greatly rejoice.

In yesterday's lesson we looked at our God being worthy of words of praise and celebration, may we bless Him daily! Because of His great mercy we have been born again to a living hope, and our salvation sits ready to be unveiled one day. Oh glorious day it will be. But until then, we are to live in the hope of knowing that, and in today's text we find that even in the hardest of times, we can rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you today, and let's begin.

**Read 1 Peter 1:1-9**

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Digging into the words used in the original Koine` that this letter was written in, really expands Peter's teaching to a much deeper meaning. So hang in here as we cover some of the language that he uses.

**Look again at verse 6.** "In this you greatly rejoice..." - The phrase, "In this" is referring to the previous verses, the fact we've been born again into a living confident expectation in Christ. The terminology shows it's totally to our advantage that we are in Christ. Our position in Him is firmly secured by the Holy Spirit and the result is that we will inherit eternal life. We looked at that inheritance yesterday and saw that it's imperishable, undefiled, won't fade away, and is reserved in heaven for us by the very power of God. That's some inheritance!

Peter is reminding them that even if they have to endure some suffering here on earth, it's temporary, considered a "little while" in light of eternity. Because of that hope, they can rejoice even during the suffering. Not FOR the suffering, but for the confident expectation of their future which is secured in Christ and His grace that is always sufficient for the day.

As a believer, our relationship in Christ supersedes everything else! Do you know the definition of supersede? It means "To replace something less efficient." Jesus Christ did just that, He replaced something that was less efficient. The Law could never save, our works could never save, only Christ could save us. And because of that new life we have in Him, we have new eyes to see, and the power and courage needed to face this world. Any one else, or any thing else is less efficient. In fact, totally insufficient. But we have Christ!

As a result, we can keep on rejoicing. This rejoicing means, "keep on leaping as a result of joy."

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When was the last time you were enduring a situation and found yourself leaping for joy? Has that ever happened in your history? No, mine neither, not literally, but it paints a picture, doesn't it? The secret to that kind of joy is found only in the Spirit of Christ. It's a continuous action that we participate in, meaning we keep on cooperating with His Spirit to produce His joy in us, regardless of the situation. The result of that is very much to our benefit, though we may end up looking like a crazy person to this world when we have joy in the middle of chaos, but wouldn't you rather live in joy than sorrow? That's a real question. Too often we get comfortable in our grumbling or sorrow.

**Time for a little honesty before the Lord. Can you think of an issue that you find yourself complaining about a lot?**

My parents used to call them "pity parties" and I could be really good at them. But at some point we have to be willing to let God have it, and allow His Spirit to produce joy in us instead. The sooner the better!

**What will that take on your part?**

**Look at Psalm 42:11, what can you glean from King David's words?**

Is there any greater testimony to those around us that we are able to endure suffering with peace and joy? Though we do not see Him, we love Him, and though we do not see Him

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now we believe. That's the testimony. If you want to be one who greatly rejoices, it all begins with your "want to" and then, by allowing His Spirit to produce His joy in you as you participate by believing and living in the hope you were born for.

**Trials have their benefits, too. Look up the verses below and write the benefits:**

**Romans 5:3-5**

**James 1:2-4**

**2Timothy 4:7-8**

**Moving on to 1 Peter 1:7**, we find that this testing, the trials we endure are designed to approve our faith, which is "more precious than gold." And here Peter reiterates that the things of this world are perishable, but salvation is imperishable. He compares our faith to being more precious in comparison to gold coins or jewelry that lose their intrinsic value when melted in fire.

Think of the refiner, melting down the gold coins and jewelry until it no longer resembles anything it did before. All that remains is the gold itself, which the next firing continues to refine more and more of the impurities. It only makes it more valuable. The same holds for our faith. It is refined as we endure trials, refining it, until it no longer resembles that simple

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faith of a child but has grown into full maturity that only comes through that refining process.

The proof of your faith.

Is it worth it to you, friend, to have that refining in your life? Will you leap for joy at the prospect of change knowing that it may come through fire?

**Read the rest of verse 7**, "...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

*Praise - commendation.* Wouldn't it be incredible on that day when you are standing before the Lord God that you hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant..."? I can't think of anything better.

*Glory - honor or esteem based on a good opinion as a result of one's character.*

Oh, friend, there's a work going on in us in suffering. Peter is saying that whatever trials we find ourselves in, are working in us for both commendation and character. It truly is to our benefit as a follower of Christ to trust Him in all things. There's no need to live joyless. We can greatly rejoice because of our position in Christ. We haven't personally seen Him, but we love Him, we aren't yet with Him but we believe.

**Look at the end of verse 8** Placing our dependency on Christ gives us reason to keep on leaping from joy. Unspeakable, inexpressible joy is ours as we rest in Him, as we depend completely on His grace and all sufficiency to get us through, we can trade our sorrows for joy.

**Read Verse 9 as we close today.** Another result, and a big one!

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### What is at the outcome of your faith?

All praise and glory to our God and Savior who protects us by His power "through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1:5) There's so much to thank Him for. So much to be continuously rejoicing over, "with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

How could we possibly express that kind of joy? We do that by showing it to those around us. Words aren't necessary, just live in the arms of His grace and take joy in letting His character shine out of you. It's the proof of your faith, which is much more precious than gold, for all to see.

For the believer, joy is never based on circumstances, but it's based on their trust of God of all Creation to know and do what will refine us, what will purify us, what will grow us into the image and character of Christ Jesus. The ultimate goal.

Rejoice in the process, because He's got you!

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### Review:

- Text: 1 Peter 1:6-9
- Greatly Rejoice in This (1 Peter 1:5-6)
- Trials have benefits (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4; 2 Timothy 4:7-8)
- Praise & Glory (1 Peter 1:7)
- Joy Inexpressible and Full of Glory (1 Peter 1:8)
- Salvation of our Souls (1 Peter 1:9)