



Connect Discussion Guide

Sunday Message - 11/29/20 | Keith Ehresman | 1 Peter 1:3-9

Anchoring into Jesus allows us to live in wisdom and joy, even when our circumstances are unclear.

Key Scriptures:

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 a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ 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. 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.

- 1 Peter 1:3–9

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- John 1:12–13

Rejoice always...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16, 18

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- Hebrews 12:11

As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

- 2 Corinthians 6:10

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

- 2 Timothy 3:12

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

- John 16:33

Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

- Acts 14:22

Message Highlights:

- Anchoring into Jesus allows us to live wisely in a time when our circumstances are unclear.
- Religion is man pursuing God and hoping to catch Him. Christianity is God pursuing us, saving us, and holding on to us, even when we don't deserve it and never letting go.
- We were created for more than this life...
- There is often confusion among Christians about how we're supposed to deal with suffering.
- The Christ-like response to suffering is not to deny our pain or grief, but to take heart and find joy in Christ even in the midst of our suffering.
- Through Jesus we can have JOYFUL EXPECTATION this Christmas, trusting God to show up in whatever situation we find ourselves in.

Conversation Starter:

- What are you most looking forward to in this unique Advent and Christmas season?

Discuss the Message:

1. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9. What encouragement can we find in this passage?
2. What do you think about the quote from the message highlights: "Religion is man pursuing God and hoping to catch Him. Christianity is God pursuing us, saving us and holding on to us, even when we don't deserve it and never letting go?"
3. How should we understand and deal with personal suffering as Christians? How is the Christian response to suffering different from the response of those who do not follow Jesus?
4. Read Romans 8:28. What does that passage mean? How have you seen this truth work out in your life? Has it ever been difficult for you to believe this promise?
5. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16, 18. What is the difference between happiness and joy? What habits can we develop that strengthen our ability to "rejoice always" and to "give thanks in all circumstances?"

Pray:

- *Heavenly Father, thank you for pursuing us, saving us and holding on to us, even when we don't deserve it. Thank you for your promise to work all things out for our good. Give us the strength to find joy even in the midst of difficult circumstances. When we face trials and loss, grant us the strength through your Spirit to respond as Jesus responded, with gratitude, faith and joy. Help us to live in joyful expectation as we trust in you. Amen.*