

Grieving Saints Gladdened by the Gospel 1 Peter 1:1-12 (Part 2)

Pascal's Patch French mathematician/theologian who died in 1662.

- Until he was 31 he ran from God.
- Then on November 23, 1654 he met Christ and was born anew (1 Pet 1:3). This moment is what he simply called "Fire."
- He left behind a note that was found eighty years after his death sewn into his jacket, near his heart.

Year of grace 1654, Monday 23 November, feast of St. Clement . . . from about half past ten at night to about half an hour after midnight, *fire*. God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob.... Certitude, heartfelt joy, peace. God of Jesus Christ. God of Jesus Christ. "My God and your God." . . . Joy, Joy, Joy, tears of joy . . . Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ. May I never be separated from him.

That's a lot of joy; that's the joy of salvation.

Being born again involves being awakened to joy; being awakened to beauty; being awakened to a whole new world.

- **Augustine (dramatic) and Lewis (slow process) – both from death to life, both experienced life change. "Late have I loved you" said Augustine.**
- So much of his writing occupied with love, affections, desire; as Lewis.
- The critical thing is not being able to mark the precise moment, but to know that you have life now.

1 Peter opens up with mega-joy. We began looking at it last week.

- V. 6 – "greatly rejoice" (NIV) (agalliao from agan = much + hallomai = jump; gush, leap)
- V. 8 – "you rejoice with joy..."

There are several unique aspects of Christian joy, one of which is that we can rejoice even in the midst of trials.

We don't rejoice at trials; but in the midst of them. Last week:

1. Regeneration
2. Inheritance
3. Protection

This week, we add three more: (4) Purification, (5) Affection, (6) Privilege

As we noted it's one big run on sentence of praise.

The next time a teacher of yours deducts points off your paper for a run on sentence, you can tell your teacher that you're trying to be apostolic!

#4: Purification (1:6-7)

∴ "In this" refers to the previous blessings of salvation.

But something is standing in contrast or conflict to this rejoicing: trials/grief.

We're often tempted to think that suffering and grief preclude joy, but Peter says differently.

The Christian can still have joy in the midst of trials for a variety of reasons, and one of them is, we understand God's design for trials: the purification of our faith.

Before we see that in verse 7, consider the first part in verse 6

A. The **Reality** of Trials

- We will have them! (James 1, "when you face trials...")

B. The **Period** of Trials

- Throughout this life! ("for a little while")
- 2 Cor 4:17 ("light and momentary") cf., Rom 8:18

C. The **Necessity** of Trials

- There's a design/purpose
- He isn't calling attention to other factors: sin, Satan, the fall, human choice
- It's a divine necessity

D. The **Grief** of Trials ("grieve")

- While we understand God's sovereignty over and in our trials, this doesn't diminish the real grief we experience.
- "The struggle is real" – yes it is, the grief is real.
- The Bible doesn't gloss over grief but deals with it in detail; and this gives us hope

Psalm 6:6-7

I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
My eye wastes away because of grief;
my strength grows weak because of all my foes.

Phil 2:27: Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

E. The **Purpose** of Trials (v. 7)

'So that'

What's the purpose of trials? **That your faith may be purified and shown to be genuine.**

- Such faith has great **reward** at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- "Glory, honor and praise" could refer to the Christian, Christ, or both.

- We know that our faith will end in sight and we will give glory and honor and praise to the Savior.
- But the way the verse is stated, the emphasis seems to be on the honor that Christ will give to genuine believers who trusted him in their suffering.
- This similar to what Peter says in **2:6-7** – notice the honor of believing in Christ.
- They're being shamed in society, but he's stating, you will be honored. (cf, **5:4**, "unfading crown of glory")
- "Well done good and faithful servant"
- Scripture speaks of the honor bestowed on true believers elsewhere (**Rom 2:6-8**; **1 Cor 4:5** – "commendation from God" [lit, "praise from God"])
- The point is that Jesus takes your faith seriously!
- He takes delight when his people trust him through difficulty.

▸ Your **faith** is valuable.

It's more "valuable than gold" – gold is fleeting and can only do so much.

Like gold, trials refine and purify us.

⁰ For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried. (Ps 66:10)

There is nothing on earth as valuable as your faith in Jesus Christ.

▸ You may lose a ton of money during this pandemic, but if you have saving faith in Jesus Christ, you are rich.

Soon, all trials will cease! "**at the revelation [return] of Jesus Christ**"

And you will be glad you trusted him in the fires of affliction.

James 1 teaches us about the good purpose of trials: they mature us.

Romans 5 teaches us the same thing.

Peter adds his teaching to the mix as well: **My trials today are for the strengthening and purity of my faith.**

What kinds of trials? "**Various** kinds" – all kinds. Believe it.

#5: Affection (1:8-9)

3-9: He still has trials in view, as he speaks about believer's love for Jesus **now (a joyful affection)**, and their anticipation of our future "**not yet**" salvation.

A. The **Now Love/Joy** (8)

3: Joy is not reserved for the future only; it can be experienced **now**.

- We love him (8a)
- We believe in him (8b) though we don't see him
- We rejoice with joy (8c) that is inexpressible and filled with glory.

How can we believe without seeing him?

- Remember, Peter saw him, but his readers had not.
- Scripture speaks of a seeing with the eyes of our hearts (2 Cor 4:6)

⁶ For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

John 20 – blessed are those who believe and haven’t seen!

You don’t have to see Jesus to have passionate love and devotion for him!

nexpressible, Filled with Glory

- If you’re not a Christian see here that the nature of Christianity is not about you adding some rules to your life.
- Nor should you envision Christians as those people who are “strict” goody-goodys.
- What marks a Christian? Love for Jesus Christ.
- We are marked by a profound joy that is unutterable, a joy so magnificent that it is beyond word (inexpressible); it is ineffable, all-consuming, overwhelming, speechless delight.
- The world did not give this joy and the world cannot take it away.

Filled with glory

- That is, future glory has broken into the present!
- Glory in the OT speaks of God’s radiance, brightness, and majesty.
- The good news gives us this kind of joy!

3. The Not-Yet Love/Joy (9)

- This experience of joy will be intensified at the coming of Jesus.
- We are awaiting the “outcome of our faith”
- Have you ever watched a thrilling show, in which the outcome just blows your mind?
- All examples pale in comparison to the outcome of our faith.
- You haven’t seen anything yet! The half hasn’t been told!
- This future outcome inspires hope in trials.
- It also gives us reason to trust, rest.
- ESPN Classic – we’ve been watching replay games.
- IT’s a lot different when you know the outcome!!! (Nats World Champs, but I was pacing the floor)

#6: Privilege (1:10-12)

‘This salvation’ is a privilege; a work of mercy and grace.

And he adds to this that saints today stand in a privileged position in redemptive history:

He says several wondrous things about our *salvation* and about this privilege.

1. The Holy Spirit [Spirit of Christ, Rom 8:9] made *this salvation* known through the OT prophets well in advance (v. 10-11)

- The coming of Christ was planned; it was foreseen; it wasn't an afterthought.
- Rom 1:1-4

2. The glory of this salvation was so remarkable that the prophets had great interest and intense curiosity. (v. 10-11)

- God made it clear that they were serving us, not themselves (v. 11) when they spoke of Christ's advent.
- They didn't know everything just as we don't know everything about Christ's return.

3. *This salvation* can be summed up in one word: "grace" (v. 10)

- This is an umbrella term over all that has been said this far.
- Regeneration: grace. Inheritance: grace. Protection: grace. Pure faith: grace. Future hope: grace.
- Grace is God's favor to hell-deserving people.

4. *This salvation* is made possible through the sufferings of Christ. (v. 11)

- The sufferings that would come upon Christ was foretold by the prophets.
- This suffering would be followed by subsequent glories!
- Psalm 22 – the outline of that Psalm, I used this verse.
- Resurrection, ascension, exaltation at the Father's right hand – glory

5. This salvation has "now been announced" to us in this present age through gospel proclamation.

- It is a privilege to be in the church age.
- But it's not only a privilege historically, we're privileged cosmically....

6. *This salvation* is so marvelous that the angels long to look into it and understand it!

- How great is the gospel? Angels can't stop looking into it!
- They're like guests at a wedding, trying to get a view of the bride.
- Neither the prophets nor angels get to experience what we've experienced and get to enjoy in the gospel.

Therefore, remember this. For the rest of our lives we will be dwelling on the greatness of the gospel, the glory of our salvation.

Conclusion 1:1-12

This passage speaks to us in so many ways, but I would call your attention to three subjects. This text is relevant to every human that has ever lived.

1. The Quest for Joy

- › **Everyone chases it.**
- › **Pascal, “All men seek happiness. This is without exception.”**
- › **Where is it found? Here – our joy comes from our salvation.**

2. The Worship of God

- › **Everyone worships.**
- › **But who do you worship?**
- › **This text calls us to worship our Triune God who has lavished us with grace.**

3. The Sufferings of this Life.

- › **Everyone suffers. How do you respond.**
 - **We have a living hope in suffering.**
 - **We know God is purifying our faith in suffering.**
 - **We know that enduring with faith will be rewarded.**
 - **We know one day suffering will give way to glory! Our path follows the path of the Savior – no crown of glory without first a crown of thorns.**

God’s people are joyful people.

God’s people are worshiping people.

God’s people are hope-filled people.

Made possible through Jesus Christ, the cornerstone.

All who believe in him will not be put to shame.