

The Believers Joy

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 August 2022

Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[0 : 00] hatred, bear to me. Give me not to my enemy's will, for witnesses that lie against me risen are, and such as breathe out cruelty. I fainted had, unless that I believed had to see, the Lord's own goodness in the land of them that living be. Wait on the Lord, and be thou strong, and he shall strength afford unto thine heart. Yea, do thou wait, I say, upon the Lord.

Psalm 27, from verse 9 through to the end. Far from me, hide not thou thy face, put not away from thee. Far from me, hide not thou thy head, turn not away from thee.

Thy servant in thy brotherhood, I have never been to thee.

O God of my salvation, give me not nor forsake, though me my head restful to thee.

The Lord, and be thou thy way. O Lord, and shine me in thy way.

[2 : 09] O Lord, and be thou have never been to thee. O God of my Stevens, body is not falling from me.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[4 : 17] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. For a short time to the passage read, the first epistle general of Peter, chapter 1. And we can read again at verse 8.

And we can read the first epistle letter that any one of the apostles would write to us as a congregation.

You can answer that question. Any one of us can answer it. Any one of us can have an opinion. There's no correct answer. There's no stock answer.

It's something that you have to give thought to. And you do so in light of the kind of epistles that Paul wrote, the kind of epistles that Peter wrote, or John, or James, or Jesus.

[6 : 08] When we can read the letters, the first epistle, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus, or Jesus.

And then, bearing that in mind, how would you answer that question? What do you see as the prevailing need of our congregation?

What are the things that you feel would need to be addressed? Well, any number of answers can be given.

You have to remember that when Peter wrote this epistle he was writing, as is described in the very opening verses, to strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

There was a broad spectrum of different believers who were recipients of this epistle.

- [7 : 30] Probably scattered, as it's described to us. Most of them were converted, probably converted from paganism.
- Sometimes it is thought that because of the description that is used by him, that they were converted Jews.
- Jews who had been dispersed, scattered. It's a favourite designation of the Jews who were separated from their homeland.
- But in all likelihood, they were converted Gentiles. And they had limited knowledge of the scriptures.
- And yet, Peter presents them with the scriptures. And with what the scriptures teaches. But he is writing to predominantly young believers.
- [8 : 36] And you can imagine that, given the background to the opening verses that we have before us here, that they are young in the faith, and yet they are encountering persecution because of their faith.
- And that itself presents challenges. You know, it's probably right to say that most of you are mature believers.
- Most of you, anyway, are of several years professing faith in Christ. And it doesn't make persecution, when it comes your way, any easier to bear.
- Whatever form it takes. Sometimes it can be quite blatant. Sometimes it's overt. And it's less obvious. But you understand that behind it, there is an enmity to the gospel.
- An enmity to Christ. And therefore an enmity towards yourself as one who professes Christ. But you can imagine what it's like if you're a young believer.
- [9 : 56] And you're being persecuted for your faith. How difficult that is. And how much there is a need to be encouraged.
- And that's what Peter is doing. He is encouraging those who are young in the faith, in the face of such persecution. Over the last number of days I've been listening to John Bunyan's book, Pilgrim's Progress, read.
- And it's a lot easier for you to, especially if your mind is tired, to listen to somebody else reading it for you, rather than having to read it yourself.
- But in the part I was reading, it was talking about how Christian was on his way to the Promised Land.
- He was making his escape from the city of Destruction. And he had company. And one of those who was accompanying him on his journey at this time, as he left, directed by evangelists and directed through the narrow door.
- [11 : 21] And he, along with his friend, came upon the slough of Despond. And they both of them were carved up in the slough of Despond.
- And his friend, his friend called Pliable, reacted quite badly to that. And I think in the account that we have, Pliable is arguing, well, we've been told to leave and to set our face upon heaven, as it were.
- And we weren't told that such an experience would come our way. And you can see how Bunyan is describing to us the thought processes of some who, when they first encounter challenges to their faith.
- Especially when they came from an unexpected source. Or when it becomes something that was not expected.
- And that's the kind of scenario that we have in this epistle. Peter is speaking about those who have their faith tried.

[12 : 51] And he reminds them, in the first instance, that the origin of their faith is divine. They didn't create faith in themselves.

It is something that is God-given. In verse 3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.

That regeneration can only take place by reason of God's own initiation. It's God that initiates God that begins it.

And when God begins it, he begins it with the aim to complete it, to conclude it. It's to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that faith is not a way reserved in heaven for you.

All of these things very succinctly put by the apostle. But a reminder to them, who are going to experience and are experiencing the trials and the temptations, that faith necessarily involves.

[14 : 06] That what they have was something that was begun in them with the purpose of it being brought to a successful conclusion.

Theologians tell us that here where Peter is speaking of salvation in verse 5, he is speaking of our future inheritance.

Salvation, very often we hear it spoken of, we speak of it ourselves. We ask the question, are you saved? And we use that question, thinking of it as a completed act, a concluded exercise.

Are you saved? And yet the word, as Peter uses it here, he is looking at salvation as something that will ultimately be concluded, that is yet to be concluded.

It is a future inheritance that he is speaking of. One of the theologians says, you are able, every one of you who believe are able to say this without a shadow of doubt.

[15 : 20] I have been saved from the penalty of my sin. I am being saved from the power of my sin. I shall be saved from the presence of my sin.

Three different tenses. And yet what Peter is looking at is the ultimate end of that salvation. But I want us to think very briefly about the words that we have in verse 8 in particular.

And they are explaining to us the reasons for the trials of the Christian.

And all I am going to say really focuses on what the apostle is saying here in verse 8. But depending really on what he has said before and what will follow on from this.

These trials serve a purpose. And Peter wants them to grasp that truth, a significant truth.

[16 : 30] That the trials and the temptations that the believer encounters are all under the sovereign control of God. They are ordained of God.

They are ordained of God. And even though the machinations of the evil ones, the temptations are designed to destroy the faith of the believer.

And the evil one believes that he can do that. God sovereignly allows these temptations. But only who will have you to them fulfilling what he purposes for them.

He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. God sovereignly allows them to be tempted beyond what you can bear.

And that tells you that he is in control. That he is governing what is happening. We mentioned Pliable. Pliable did not believe that.

[17 : 37] Pliable believed that his trials and his temptations, he probably didn't even think of them in that light.

All he was looking at was this horrible experience. Horrible experience of entering into the slough of despond. And finding that the way ahead was not as easy for him to traverse as he thought.

So he turned back. And he went back to where he came from. And in one sense, these trials are used by God to expose what is false and to bring to light what is superficial.

So that what is genuine and what is lasting can be revealed. The divine A.M. Stibbs in his commentary writes the following concerning what Peter is saying.

The word revealed is not the coming of someone previously absent, but the visible unveiling of someone who has been all the time spiritually and invisibly present.

[19 : 01] The idea being that the presence and power of Christ already present will be one day openly demonstrated on the earth.

The triumph of the veil of your faith, may much more precious than of gold. That perisheth or be tried with fire might be found unto praise, donor, at the glory of the appearing of Jesus Christ.

That appearing is to be seen in that light. Christ is present but not visible. Christ is present but not fully seen in all his glory.

But the day will come and they are moving towards that. Now we understand that Peter is not speaking as somebody who has not personal experience of an encounter with the physical passion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has been with the Lord. He has been with the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The God man. He was with him and he met him face to face.

[20 : 15] He touched him. He embraced him probably. He shared fellowship with him. Unlike most of those that he was writing the epistle to.

However, he is writing to them as those who have believed. He is writing to them as those who have trusted in Christ.

And Christ as the saviour of their soul. And as such, the evidence of their trusting. The evidence of them having him as their saviour.

Is seen in the way that love fills their heart for him. And joy overflows in that same heart that has love for him.

That faith that they display towards Christ.

[21 : 19] A Christ they can't see. A Christ they can't see. But that they have encountered in his word. That the spirit of Christ has revealed to their soul.

Is the Christ that now provides for them. And creates in them. That love that is a testimony to their sight of him.

The same way as it is accompanied with joy in their heart. You try and separate. The love of Christ.

And the joy that is in the heart of the believer. That flows from that love. That they have from Christ. You can't separate them.

And you can't separate either of them. From the faith that they have in Christ. As the saviour of their soul. The preacher.

[22 : 29] The divine WGT Shedd. Speaks about the way faith. In the experience of a believer.

Something that discerns the beauty and the perfections of Christ. Beauty and perfections in his deity.

In his divinity. Beauty and perfections in his humanity. In his person as the God man. Divine and human.

United in one person. He is to the eye of faith. Altogether lovely. As Shedd puts us. He is supremely glorious.

And they see the perfections of that glory. There is no doubt that as believers.

[23 : 30] What we do. We bemoan the quality of our love. We bemoan the enduring nature of our love.

Sometimes our love for Christ. Although we believe it was. It was. A mighty. A grace. We believe that it once.

Flooded our soul. And yet. We have a location to question. Whether it. Remained. In that very soul.

It can. It can. It can. It can. Be. The. Subject. To. The influences. Of.

This world. And what we have to endure in the world. Maybe you're not like that. Maybe your love for Christ. Has remained. Steadfast.

[24 : 28] That it has been a stable. Experience. In your life. From the beginning. Until the present. You've never questioned. Its. Existence.

You never questioned. The reality of it. But. Many. Unfortunately. Have that experience.

Where. Well. The scripture tells us that. The love of many. Will grow cold. And it's not. Saying that it will.

It will. Disappear. Altogether. But that will. Get cold. But. One thing. Is clear. From what the apostle is.

Preaching. Here. And teaching. Is. That if. There is. Faith. And it is to. Those who have faith. That he is speaking. Then that love.

[25 : 27] Must accompany. It. Just as surely. As. The joy. Of which he will come. To speak. While our love. Is not what it could be.

Or should be. It doesn't mean. That there has been any. Diminishing. On the part. Of the love of God. The God. Who has loved. That prompts.

That love. That creates. That love. In it. That creates. That response. In us. Is never. Affected. The way we are. As far as our love is concerned.

If we put it like this. If his love. Depended upon. Our. Constancy.

Our. Abiding. In the same. Quality. Of relationship. To himself. In the same. You know.

[26 : 26] Unmoving. Relationship. To himself. Then. That relationship. Would have perished. A long time ago. Because if we know God.

To be God. We know that God. Knows everything. Just as surely. As we read in the scriptures. That. When Jesus. Was dealing with some people. In the world.

He. Quite plainly. Said about them. He knew. What was in the heart. Of man. And God knows. What is in our heart. And the basis. Of his love.

For us. Is not. Is not. Resting. Upon. The enduring. Nature. Of our love. But the enduring. Nature. Of his own. And it doesn't.

Change. But. Peter. Here. Is convinced. That the people. He is writing to. Need to be reminded. Of this fact.

[27 : 23] That they are. Those. Who have believed. In Christ. And by reason. Of their belief. In Christ. They must. Love that Christ. Whom.

Having not seen. Ye love. In whom. Though now. You see him not. Yet believing. You rejoice.

Even though. They are not. Seeing him. With the eyes. Of their head. They are seeing him. With the eyes. Of faith. And because. They are. The same truth.

Applies. To their love. And. Applies. To the joy. That is in their heart. Paul says. We walk by faith.

And not by sight. In other words. What has been presented. To the eye of faith. Has not. In any way.

[28 : 19] Been distorted. It has not been affected. By circumstances. It says. Our faith. Rests. Upon. A concrete. Concrete.

Entity. Something that is. Unchanging. Something. That is. Forever. The same. And because it does. Our love. Must remain.

And our joy. Must remain. The sight of the eye of faith. Of Christ. Fills the heart.

Not just with love. Peter says. But with joy. Not just joy. But joy. And speakable. What kind of joy.

Is joy. And speakable. Well. You try. And describe. Even to a fellow believer. What your. Unspeakable joy.

[29 : 18] Is like. The joy. That you have. As a believer. That flows. From the sight. That your soul. Has gained.

Of Christ. Maybe your sight. Of him. Is not. As clear. Or as blurred. As it was. What was. But you can go back.

In your experience. To the time. That you first. Gained sight. Of Christ. Christ. Your saviour. Remember. There is a difference.

Between the Christ. That was presented. To your senses. To your intellect. To. The. Faculties.

Of. Your rational. Existence. From a very young age. And yet. Your heart. Was not warmed. By what you saw. Your love.

[30 : 14] Was not kindled. Your. Joy. Was not. Full. And yet.

Peter says. This is what. Accompanies. The sight. That you have. Of Christ. It can be a. You know.

Your joy. Joy. It can be. Obvious. Sometimes. We're happy. And that happiness. Is effervescent. It's.

It's hard to contain. But more often than not. That joy. That we have. As Christian believers. Is more deep-seated. It.

And it is not. Affected. By external. Circumstances. That's the thing. That's what's different. About the joy. Of the believer. You can't be.

[31 : 12] In extreme. Situations. That you would. Normally. Affect. Expect to affect. How you would feel. But.

Because of. Something. Greater. Than you. Something. Greater. Than your experience. That joy. Is not affected. E.W.

Tozer. Uses. An illustration. Which is difficult. To understand. In many respects. He. He. Talks.

About. A girl. Some of you. Will know. The name. Helen Keller. Now. Helen Keller.

Was blind. And deaf. And. She had. A unique. Way. Of. Of. Expressing.

[32 : 06] Her love. To. To those. That she did. Experience. Love. With. She would. Feel them. With her hands. Couldn't see them.

She couldn't. Hear them. But she would. Take her hand. And place her hand. Upon their face. And follow the patterns. Of their face. And. When they spoke.

She would put her hand. To their lips. And. What she felt. Created. Love. In her heart. For them. And.

The illustration. That. Tozer uses. Was that. Helen Keller. Helen Keller. Was introduced. To. To. A very famous.

Opera singer. And. In her own day. And it's quite amazing. You know. How. She was introduced. To somebody.

[33 : 04] She had never. Met. Or could see. Or could hear. But she was introduced. To him. And what she did.

Was. She. Asked. If she could. Place her hand. Upon. His face. And his chest.

When he was singing. And. What she felt. And what she. Touched. Moved her deeply. Because of the power.

Of his voice. And the power. That he possessed. This was a. A man called Caruso. Is quite famous. In. In. In the world. Of opera.

And we can't. Understand that. We can't really. Understand. How. Such. Emotion. Transmitted. It itself. Through her. Fingertips.

[34 : 01] But in the natural realm. If that is possible. It is more possible. Still. In the spiritual realm. Where. What God.

Has designed. To experience. The highest. Zenith. Of his glory. And his love.

And all that is true. About him. If anything. Opens these channels. That sin. Has clogged up. What. Can. Possibly.

Be better. Than that. The joy. That is spoken. Of here. Is not dependent. Upon outward. Experiences. Or circumstances.

It is a joy. That is. Full of glory. The joy. That is. Coming from. The experience.

[34 : 56] Of glory. Mordor McAuley. In his books. Speaks about. Mordor McCloud. Mordigan. In Carlow. Carlow. And.

He does. State. In. In the burning book. In Carlow. That he had to. Emphasize. For others. Who saw him. And listened.

To him. Speak. That he was. An unusual. Character. An exceptionally. Unusual. Character. His experiences. Were unlike. The experiences.

Of an ordinary. Common. Five-eight. Christian. And he had to. Emphasize that. Because his experiences. Would be. Inclined. To make others.

Feel that. Well if this was. What a Christian was. Then. They were nothing like him. Well the truth was. They were nothing like him. But his favorite text.

[35 : 48] Was. From the. Gospel of John. And. The first. First chapter. And in that chapter.

In that verse. He says that. We beheld his glory. As the glory. The glory. Of the only begotten son. And only begotten of the father. Full of grace. And truth.

That was a text. That was precious too. And every time. He heard it. And every time. He quoted it. He just. Burst out into tears.

Either tears. Or laughter. Or both. And both together. It was. In his memory. Of what he saw.

We beheld his glory. The glory. Of the only begotten. Of the father. And in a sense. That. In. Encapsulates.

[36 : 44] The vision. That every Christian. That every Christian. That every Christian. Has of Christ. In some. Whatever. Shape or form. You get that vision. Through the word.

The Christ. You see. Not only. Makes. You experience. Love. That is. Without equal.

You experience. Joy. That is. Without equal. For you. To describe. Either. Of these. Experiences. Is something.

That you. You may. Feel. That you're not. Able. To do. You shouldn't. Tire. Of trying. Whom.

Having not. Seen. You love. In whom. Though now. You see him. Not yet. Believing. You rejoice. With joy. Unspeakable. Full of glory. Because. It takes you.

[37 : 39] To him. And the glory. Is his. You know that. What you're feeling. It's not your. Construction. It's not. Not. Anything.

Of your making. Receiving. The end. Of your faith. Even the salvation. Of your soul. Do you know that. Tonight. Do you know anything. Of that love.

Do you know anything. Of that. Joy. Well that's. What the believer. Possesses. Even. In the midst. Of the challenges. Of this world.

The trials. The temptations. The strivings. The struggles. Whatever it is. That the believer. Must encounter. God has given us. By his grace.

The knowledge. Of Christ. That enables us. To trust him. And the more. We trust him. The more. Our faith. Engenders.

[38 : 34] Love. Love. And love. And love. Accompanied. With joy. Joy. In the Holy Ghost. Joy. That is unspeakable. Joy.

That is. Without measure. Well may God. Allow us to experience it. Again. And again. Until the time comes. When this will be.

Our portion. For time. For eternity. Whatever. Measurement. That is. Offered. Let us pray. Lord. Hear our prayers.

Shall we. Give thanks. That you are indeed. The one who does. Hear prayer. Remember your people. Are praying people. Remember those who are.

Present with us in spirit. And who delight in. The company of your people. Be merciful to those who neglect. The company. The company of your people.

[39 : 30] To the detriment of their soul. Be merciful to those who know nothing of it. And who have yet. To experience. That love. And that joy.

Pour out your spirit upon us. As a people. As a generation. Cleanse us from every sin. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. We'll conclude singing.

Some verses in Gaelic. From Psalm 63. Psalm 63. At the beginning of the psalm. Í essence.

■■■.' each could be a female Thank you.

Thank you.

[41 : 40] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen. Amen.