

Joy, Joy, Joy!

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[0 : 00] It's good to be here again to open the Word of God. I wish that Ellen were moving closer to our church in Gilbert, Arizona.

She's still a distance away. I understand that it's going to take 10 people to replace her. 10, 15 something. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 1.

1 Peter chapter 1. Listen as I read the Word of God.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ, and for sprinkling with his blood, may grace and peace be multiplied to you.

[1 : 24] 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 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, though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the salvation, the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Joy. We all want joy. We want to experience joy. Joy. The celebration of joy. Peter is writing to the elect exiles, reminding them of their salvation, accompanied by the Trinity.

We see in the first three verses, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Based on that salvation, Peter prays that grace and peace will be multiplied to them as they rejoice in the salvation that is presently theirs.

[3 : 27] It is finished. Their salvation is accomplished. Done. Jesus has done it all.

Everything. There is nothing to be added to what Christ has accomplished. And this leads Peter to utter praise to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which overflows to a fuller eulogy, a chain reaction of praise in verses three and following, that consists of one run-on sentence or ten verses related to our salvation.

One idea leads to another. As Peter goes down one trail and runs to another. This sermon is all about joy.

The joy that we should find in the gospel. I'm sure you all have heard about indicatives and imperatives.

The indicatives are the facts of the gospel. The truths about Jesus Christ and what he has done on behalf of his elect exiles.

[4 : 51] We talked this morning in Sunday school about election, about God and his graciousness has elected some, when he may not have elected any.

The imperatives are the commands that express God's will for how we as elect exiles should live. Both relate to our salvation, but the indicative comes first, and then the imperatives follow.

The indicatives are foundational all the time, every time. We're not saved by our works, by the things that God commands us to do.

The commands that he gives us are built on the foundation of what Jesus Christ has done. If we have believed in Jesus Christ, this is how we will act as followers of Jesus Christ, as those who have believed in him.

Imperatives flow from the indicative. But you must remind yourself before obeying. You are not adding anything to your salvation.

[6 : 17] You are saved by what Jesus Christ has done. In his perfect obedience to the law in his life. By his death on the cross, by his resurrection, by his ascension into heaven.

Again, these things are the basis of your salvation. What Jesus Christ has done. Because you are unable to do anything to add to what Jesus Christ has done.

He has done it all. That's the gospel. That is what you as a church proclaim. And you are to daily remind yourself of that.

It's all about Jesus. It's all about what he has done. And what he is doing in your life. For it is Jesus who is enabling you to live the life that you're living.

We see in the passage much about joy. Joy exclaimed. Joy despite suffering.

[7 : 31] Joy anticipating eternity. Joy over our exalted position in the kingdom. But we see first of all.

Joy exclaimed. By Peter. Blessed be the God and Father. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Father.

By calling God Father. Jesus was claiming to be of the same nature. As God. In Matthew 11.27.

All things have been handed over to me by my Father. And no one knows the Son except the Father. And no one knows the Father except the Son.

And anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. In Ephesians 1. Verses 3 through 10. We read.

[8 : 28] Praise be to the God and Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us in the heavenly realms. With every spiritual blessing in Christ. Do you realize that?

Do you understand? That you as a believer have been given. Every spiritual blessing in Jesus Christ. Does that give you joy?

Do you think about it? Do you realize your position? For he chose us in him. Before the creation of the world. To be holy and blameless in his sight.

In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship. Through Jesus Christ. In accordance with his pleasure. And will to the praise of his glorious grace.

Which he has freely given us. In the one he loves. In him we have redemption. Through his blood. The forgiveness of sins.

[9 : 26] In accordance with the riches of God's grace. In which he has lavished upon us. I love that word lavished. He has poured his grace upon us.

Layer upon layer. We can't even imagine. With all wisdom and understanding. He may known to us the mystery of his will. According to his good pleasure.

Which he purposed in Christ. To be put into effect. When the times reach the fulfillment. To bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth.

Under Christ. Joy is being exclaimed here. Our Lord.

Stress is on the intimate relationship that we have. With God through Jesus. With whom we are united by faith. Suffering Christians.

[10 : 23] Need to be. Thus reminded. He who is joined to the Lord. Becomes one spirit with him. 1 Corinthians 6. 17. His father.

Is also our father. Every believer. Has God. As father. It says according to his great mercy. Mercy.

He has caused us. To be born again. To be regenerated. To be given new birth. To move from death. To life. Dead to sin.

Alive to righteousness. Mercy. Not merit. Not getting what we deserve. That's merit. Getting what we deserve. God deals with us in mercy.

He gives us what. We don't deserve. That should cause us joy. Great joy. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.

[11 : 21] That we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds we have been healed. For Christ also once suffered for sins.

The righteous for the unrighteous. That he might bring us to God. Being put to death in the flesh. But made alive in the spirit. In Titus 3.5.

He saved us not because of works. Done by us in righteousness. But according to his own great mercy. By the washing of regeneration. And renewal of the spirit.

He's begotten us what? To a living hope. Our hope of eternal life. Our salvation. Will be fulfilled. When Jesus returns.

Where we go to him. We look forward. To the future that God will bring. Of Jesus Christ. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[12 : 19] From the dead. His resurrection. Secures our resurrection. Every one of us. Will face the same end.

We will die. And for the believer. Every one of us. Will have the same outcome. Because Christ rose.

We will rise. In glorified bodies. Edward Clowney. Who was a professor at Westminster Seminary.

Observes. Quote. Christ's resurrection. Spells hope for us. Not because. Not just because. He lives. But because by God's mercy.

We live. By the resurrection of Christ. God. Has given life. Not only to him. But also. To us. We are given new birth.

[13 : 15] By God. He fathers us. By the resurrection. Of his son. In Christ's triumph. God makes all thing new. Beginning with us. Jesus said.

I am the resurrection. And the life. He who believes in me. Will live. Even if he dies. And everyone who lives. And believes in me.

Will never die. Do you believe this? Or are they just platitudes. That you hear every Sunday. And you just.

Hear them. Without any joy. Without anything. Happening within you. Without any. Incentive. To glorify God. Through Christ.

By your life. I will not leave you. As orphans. I will come to you. And after a little while. The world will no longer see me. But you will see me.

[14 : 13] Because I live. You will live also. Jesus said. In that day. You will know. That I am. In my father. And you and me.

And I in you. John 14. Verses 18 through 20. Verses 4 and 5. Verses 5. We the elect.

Elder. Exiles. Who have been born again. Have an eternal inheritance. And that. Then that inheritance. Is described. And listen to these.

Listen to these attributes. They're your inheritance. If you're a believer. It is imperishable. It won't decay.

These mortal bodies. Will decay. And turn to dust. But our inheritance. Will not. It is unfading. It won't wither.

[15 : 13] Like the flowers do. It won't fade away. As our physical beauty. Will as. As we age. No matter. How handsome.

Or beautiful you are. As a young person. You'll eventually. Wind up like me. It is preserved.

Your inheritance. And kept by the almighty God. In heaven. For us. And not only. Does God keep your inheritance. For you. He guards it. With his power.

According to this passage. The same power. That guards your inheritance. Keeps you. Preserves you. Nothing will ever separate. The true believer.

From God. You're in protective custody. Brothers and sisters. And God will keep you safe. Until you're safely. In the arms of Jesus Christ.

[16 : 16] You can trust that. God says that. In his word. You may be persecuted. Now. You may be oppressed. You may be abused.

But this is what your future holds. Child of God. Look past your trouble. To your glorious eternal inheritance.

God has a rich inheritance. Awaiting you. And the greatest part. Of that inheritance. Is being in his sacred presence. In the companionship.

Of Jesus. In Romans 8. Verses 31. Through. 39.

Are words that I have. Read to. Many believers. On their deathbed. What then shall we say.

[17 : 27] To these things. If God is for us. Who can be against us. He who did not spare. His own son. But gave him up.

For us all. How will he not also. With him graciously. Give us all things. Who shall bring any charge. Against God's elect. It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn. Christ Jesus. Is the one who died. More than that. Who was raised. Who was at the right hand. Of the father. Who indeed is interceding.

For us. Who shall separate us. From the love. Of Christ. Shall tribulation. Or distress. Or persecution. Or famine.

Or nakedness. Or danger. Or sword. As it is written. For your sake. We are being killed. All the day long. We are regarded. As sheep. To be shorter. No.

[18 : 23] In all these things. We are more than conquerors. Through him. Who loved us. For I am sure. That neither death. Nor life. Nor angels. Nor rulers.

Nor things present. Nor things to come. Nor powers. Nor height. Nor depth. Nor anything. In all creation. Will be able to separate us. From the love.

Of God. In Christ Jesus. Our Lord. What precious promises. That God. Gives to us. And imagine.

That these are the last words. That you are going to hear. What comfort. They bring. Do you believe these things?

Amen. Does it make you. Happy enough. To smile. We talk about. Christians being full of joy.

[19 : 32] And sometimes. We're the most miserable looking people. In the world. Do you rejoice. Daily. In the fact.

That you are the richest. Of people. In the world. Do you. Lie in bed at night. And think about. How rich you are. And how much you owe God.

For what he has given you. In Jesus Christ. Christ. Do you savor. The riches. That are yours. In Christ.

Or is your focus. More on the trials. That you're experiencing. Do you think. Of Christ. Often. In song. In prayer. When you're by yourself.

Or with others. Do you talk about him. Is he the focus. Of your existence. In light of everything. That he has given to you.

[20 : 33] And is given to you. We see in verses. Six and seven. In first Peter. In this year rejoice.

Though now. For a little while. If necessary. You've been grieved. By various trials. So that the genuine. Tested. Genuine. Of your faith. More precious.

Than gold. That perishes. Though it's tested. By fire. May be found. To result. In praise. And glory. And honor. At the revelation. Of Jesus Christ. You're to have joy. Despite suffering.

That's what this is saying. In this. Your salvation. And inheritance. You rejoice. And the word means.

Extreme joy. And gladness. The psalmist prayed. Restore to me. The joy. Of your salvation. In Psalm 51.

[21 : 34] 12. You have made known to me. The paths of life. You will make me. Full of gladness. With your presence. Acts.

Chapter 2. Verse 28. From Psalm 16. With the joy. There will be trials. It says. For a little while.

They won't last forever. They won't last long. When you compare time. With eternity. You know. If we live. To be 70. 80.

90. What's that? Nothing. Compared to. Eternity. Where there is no time. If necessary.

The trial. Will serve a purpose. God knows. What he's doing. He knows. What in you.

[22 : 33] Needs refining. And. Shaping. They are a grief. They hurt. You weak. As you're faced.

With the trials. But God sees. Every tear. And Jesus sheds. His tears. With you. When someone persecutes you. They persecute him. Christ identifies.

With his children. With his people. A word to those who. Oppress. Beware. It's a dangerous thing.

To oppress. One of God's elect. Because you persecute. Christ. And I'm aware. Through counseling. That there's much oppression.

And abuse. In the church. Of Jesus Christ. You know. There may be wives. In this congregation. That are. Oppressed. And abused. By their husbands.

[23 : 31] Or children. By their parents. I've seen it. Whether you do it.

Secretly. Or openly. God knows. It may be hidden. From others. But nothing is hidden. From God's eye. And Jesus says. To you. Who oppress. God's elect.

Behold. I am coming soon. Bringing my recompense. With me. To repay everyone. For what he has done. I am the Alpha. And the Omega. The first.

And the last. The beginning. And the end. Revelation 22. 12. Through various trials. Troubles come. In many different forms.

As you know too well. But God is the one. That is picking the trial. That will conform you. To Jesus Christ.

[24 : 26] As you respond. To that trial. Biblically. We talk about. A sovereign God. We believe God is sovereign. That God ordains.

Everything that comes to pass. Well do you believe. That he is ordaining. The trials. That you are in right now. And he is doing it. For a purpose.

To conform you. To make you more like. Jesus Christ. Do you find joy in that? And the trials.

Let me say this. The same trial. That can have one or two purposes. It can build you up. Or tear you down. What makes the difference?

Your reaction to the trial. How you accept the trial. Do you see God's hand in it? How do you respond?

[25 : 32] To the shaping hand of God. And the trials have a purpose. To test.

The genuineness of your faith. The reality of it. And to help you grow. And not for God's benefit. God isn't testing you.

To see whether you are going to. Really make it or not. He has already chosen. His children. His people. He is doing it for you.

For your benefit. So that you can see. The genuineness of your faith. So you don't deceive yourself. James 1 verses 2 and 3. It says. Consider it all joy.

My brethren. When you encounter various trials. Knowing that the testing of your faith. Produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result. So that you may be perfect.

[26 : 32] And complete. Lacking. In nothing. Testing is for your benefit. Not God's. God knows if your faith is genuine or not.

The benefit is that. When you come through a trial. And you still trust in the Lord. You will gain assurance.

That your faith is genuine. A person pointed out to me once.

That trials are also for the benefit. Of those observing. Your response to the trials. Believers or not. Your response is a powerful witness.

To the reality of your faith. When another sees how you're responding to the trials. That you're facing. And you're responding with joy. That is a powerful witness.

[27 : 32] And it says. At the revelation of Jesus Christ. The second coming. Jesus. That's when Jesus calls and recall. And rewards his elect exiles.

In 113. Therefore preparing your minds for action. And being sober minded. Set your hope fully on the grace. That will be brought to you. At the revelation of Jesus Christ.

But rejoice. Insofar as you share Christ's sufferings. That you may also rejoice. And be glad. When his glory is revealed. When you suffer.

Do you think of Christ's suffering? What he suffered for you? Many don't.

But thirdly. We see joy. Anticipating eternity. Already. And not yet. Although you have not seen him.

[28 : 39] You love him. It says. You have not seen Jesus on earth. You do not now see him. But. You shall see Jesus.

The past, present, and future is contrasted. You will praise, glorify, and honor him. At his revelation. At his coming. At his coming. Amen. Amen. The goal of your faith will be obtained.

Your eyes will see the one who has saved you. The one. You have loved and trusted without seeing. One day your faith will be rewarded.

With sight. Your rejoicing though is now. Already. But not yet. Not only do we have faith in Jesus.

And love for Jesus now. We already know the joy that we will experience when we see him. The salvation of our souls in the last day. Is the goal of our faith.

[29 : 45] We wait for the salvation of Christ. That he will bring with him as his appearing. Yet we're already experiencing that salvation. Because Jesus has already come in the flesh.

And in the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God. Has already come. Our hope is realized. We know Jesus. But because the kingdom of God is yet to come.

And the goal of our faith is still future. We live in a future that is already present. Not just in our imagination. Or expectation. But in realization.

The reality of Christ present. In the spirit. And lastly we see joy over. Our exalted position in the kingdom.

In verses 10 and 12. Concerning this salvation. The prophets who prophesied about the grace. That was to. Be yours.

[30 : 46] Searched and inquired carefully. Inquiring what person. Or time. The spirit of Christ. Was indicating. When he predicted. The sufferings of Christ.

And his subsequent glories. In these two verses. Peter is asserting that. This salvation of your souls. Which you as Christians enjoy.

And fervently hope for. Is the same salvation. The Old Testament prophets. Were seeking to understand. But never did. How blessed are your eyes.

Because they see. And your ears. Because they hear. For truly I say to you. That many prophets. And righteous men. Desire to see what you see.

And did not see it. And to hear what you hear. And did not hear it. Matthew 13. Verses 6 and 7. What a privilege. To live in A.D.

[31 : 46] And not B.C. What a privilege. To live in the year of our Lord. After. He was on earth.

After his resurrection. What a privilege. To have the word of God. To be able to. Hear the word of God. Expounded. To be able to have.

Commentaries. And. 2,000 years of church history. To look at. How the saints. Interpreted the word of God. As he revealed himself to us. What joy.

We should have. Because of the privilege. That is ours. The prophets prophesied. About the grace. That was to be. Ours.

It is ours. It is ours now. What the prophets. In the Old Testament. Are looking forward to.

[32 : 45] For us. It is reality. Every day. We have. What they look forward to. Not only the prophets. The angels. Didn't understand. What we understand now.

They searched. And inquired carefully. Do you ever see the movie. American Sniper. Where. The soldiers. Went around.

From house to house. And. These. They are searching. For terrorists. In these various houses. These words. Have that same. Military flavor. The prophets.

Searched diligently. They studied. The Old Testament. Writings. To learn more. About the promise. Salvation. But they couldn't. Understand. What was involved.

In the life. And death. Of the Messiah. Jesus Christ. Yet. Even with. This incomplete. Knowledge. They were saved. Through faith. In what God revealed.

[33 : 43] To them. Up to that point. They weren't saved. In a different fashion. They were saved. By faith. Just like. We're saved. By faith.

It's never been. Any other way. They were saved. Through the sacrificial death. Of Jesus Christ. And that is the only way.

That anyone is. Or has been saved. They had faith. That. The God-given covenant. Would be ultimately. Fulfilled. In Hebrews chapter 11.

It says. These all died in faith. Now this is important. To understand. You know. Some people teach that. In the Old Testament.

You were saved by works. You know. These all died in faith. Old Testament saints. Not having received. The things promised.

[34 : 38] But having seen them. And greeted them. From afar. And having acknowledged. That they were strangers. In exiles. On the earth. And all these. Having gained. Approval.

Through their faith. Did not receive. What was promised. Because God. Had provided something. Better for us. So that apart from us.

They would not be made perfect. What person or time. Were the questions. The prophets were asking. Directed by the Holy Spirit. Of Christ in them.

The Holy Spirit. Guided them. To write. To predict. The sufferings of Christ. And the subsequent glory. Most prominently. In Isaiah. We're going through Isaiah. In our. In our small group.

Not serving. Themselves. But you. Dear elect. Exiles. You on this side. Of the cross.

[35 : 33] They were serving. Those who preach. The good news. The New Testament. Apostles. And preachers. Of the gospel. By the Holy Spirit. Sent from heaven.

Things into which. The angels. Longed. To look into. In verse 12.

The salvation. Provided by Christ. Is so great. That even the angels. Are peeking down. To get a view. As it unfolds.

The word means. To look. To peep into a situation. From vantage point. Of an outsider. Usually one. Who is not seen. By those being watched.

Like Michael. Watching her husband. David. From her window. As he danced. Holy curiosity. To watch. And delight. Delight. In the glories.

[36 : 37] Of Christ's kingdom. As they find. Even. Fuller realization. In the lives. Of individual Christians. Through the history. Of the church. Until Jesus returns.

The angels. Peeking now. As the salvation. Story. Unfolds. In the lives. Of every believer. That is here. Angels.

Are watching. And marveling. At what is being. Unfolded here. As they. Hear the glory. Of Christ. Proclaimed. As they.

Hear the gospel. Set forth. In clear terms. The angels. Are marveling. At what Jesus Christ. Has done. And they're full of joy.

Before the throne. Are you. As you participate. In this. Live drama. That you're part of. You're here.

[37 : 34] This morning. To worship. The triune God. The angels. Are marveling. At what the triune God. Is accomplishing.

How he's saving you. How he's preserving you. The angels. Are marveling. At the great love. That the father. Son. And Holy Spirit. Have for their chosen.

Pilgrims. You. How the salvation story. Continues to unfold. Until the last sheep. Is gathered. Into the fold.

And Jesus. Returns. And for you. The story. Will continue. In the new heavens. And the new earth. Does. Not this. Bring you.

Joy. Joy. Joy. Inexpressible. Amen. If it doesn't. You may be dead. Spiritually.

[38 : 33] And you need to repent. You need to get down. On your knees. Before God. And embrace. The savior. That he has sent.

To be the savior. Doesn't that make you happy? Doesn't it give you. Renewed strength.

To continue the battle. To persevere. Knowing that the almighty God. Is preserving you. Because you are in Christ. Doesn't it bring you joy.

That you. Have this society. Of the elect. Exiles. Around you. Today. For we're all. Elect. Exiles.

This is. This world. Is not our home. We are just passing through. And we're passing through. By God's grace. And we should be.

[39 : 32] Delighting in that. And delighting in one another. And strengthening one another. And holding one another up. And realizing that. We are here. Doesn't it bring you joy.

To know that. You are part of the society. Of elect exiles. That we have each other. To love and support. One another. Until Jesus returns.

And sets all things right. We all can exclaim. Hallelujah.

What a savior. Amen. Amen. Let's pray.

God we praise you. We thank you for. Your promises. That are yay. And they are amen. In Jesus Christ. We thank you. That you. Who have begun.

[40 : 32] A good work in us. Will continue it. Until. That day. When he returns. We thank you. That we have the promise. That you. Will hold us fast.

That it is not. Based on. Any accomplishments. In us. Or any good works. But it's totally. By your grace. We praise you. And we bless you.

We thank you. That you have given us. This time. To express our worship. Toward you. Now receive the blessing. Of the Lord. May the Father. The Son.

And the Holy Spirit. Grant you peace. Long suffering. And perseverance. Until the day. Jesus returns. Go and serve the Lord. Amen.

Go in peace.