

Rejoice In The Glory Of God

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[0 : 00] Well, if you would, please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to the book of 1 Peter. And this is a little bit out of the ordinary for what we normally do. Typically, we preach straight through books of the Bible.

But leading up to the evening of January 29th, when we will covenant together as a church, and then February 5th, when we'll have our first public service together as Seaweed Bay Baptist Church, we are walking through our mission and vision together.

As a church. So last week, if you were here, you heard our mission statement is to magnify the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's the mission of your life, the purpose of your life. That's the purpose of the church, not just this church, but the church. That's God's mission in the gospel is to magnify the glory of his name. And so now, for the next three weeks, Lord willing, we're going to talk about each part of the how, of how we go about that mission.

How do we magnify the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ? And the first way how, that we'll see this morning from 1 Peter 1, verses 3 through 9, is that we magnify the glory of God when we enjoy him.

[1 : 20] We magnify him by enjoying him. And we asked last week, what is the chief end of man? It's to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

You may be familiar with John Piper's popular twist on that answer. He says it's to glorify God by enjoying him forever. So if you would, Bible's open.

Follow along with me as I read. We're going to be in 1 Peter 1, verses 3 through 9. And what we'll see is that we have so much to rejoice in as believers in Christ.

Amen? So follow with me, 1 Peter 1, verses 3 through 9. 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.

[2 : 40] 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.

This is the word of God. Would you please bow and pray with me? Lord, truly we have much to rejoice in. And we thank you for the good news of the gospel.

We thank you for your work in Christ. And we pray, I pray now, that you would speak powerfully through the preaching of your word, for the joy of your people, and the glory of your name.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Well, I try as hard as I can to keep it from happening, but from time to time, every now and then, a Hallmark movie will appear on my television screen.

[4 : 04] It tends to happen more during the Christmas season, and if you're familiar with these films, each one of them tends to follow one of no more than three rotating plot lines. One of the most popular variations includes introducing us to a woman who is engaged to be married.

She's busy planning the wedding, thinking through the details, going through the processes, but as you watch her go through this, you can tell something is just clearly off.

Everyone around her, her mom, and usually a quirky best friend, can tell that despite what she says, she does not truly, truly, really love the man that she is getting ready to marry. She's committed to him. She made a commitment a long time ago, but it's clear she does not really, truly enjoy him. But in her mind, she's made a commitment.

She's gotten this far down the road. Now she's just going to grit her teeth and bear it and go through with it until an unexpected better option happens to show up.

[5 : 12] And although she is reluctant at first, spoiler alert, she winds up getting together with him in the end. And although I'm sure that this is, can you hear me now?

Although I'm sure that this is not what Hallmark had in mind, sadly, sadly, this resembles how many self-professing Christians go about their relationship with Christ.

They have made some sort of verbal commitment years ago and they know in their minds at least that following Christ, being with him is a good option, at least better than what they know of the alternative.

And so they simply go through the motions. They practice the routines. They walk through the practices. They come to church. They say their prayers. But if you take a closer look, something is clearly off.

They do not truly love the man, Jesus Christ. They draw near with their mouth and honor him with their lips, but their hearts are far from him.

[6 : 21] They do not truly delight in the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ. And the reason I share this is because as we move together towards covenanting in this new chapter of this church family, I want to make sure that this is not true of us.

We don't want to be a group of people who simply claim Christ, come here, do church, walk through the routines, practice the habits, and don't truly enjoy the Lord.

Amen? We want to be a people who truly from the bottom of our heart love and enjoy the glory of God. Don't you want that? Our relationship with Christ, as we'll see here in 1 Peter, is not meant to be a joyless marriage.

Far from it. And we of all people have reason to rejoice. And so this morning, as we see in 1 Peter chapter 1, we're going to see four reasons to rejoice this morning.

Four reasons to rejoice. And this will be our outline this morning from 1 Peter chapter 1. If you're taking notes, this will help you to follow along. Four reasons to rejoice.

[7 : 35] And as we rejoice in Him, church, we magnify His glory. We make much of Him. First reason. Reason number one is we are to rejoice in our new life in Christ.

Rejoice in your new life in Christ. Peter here in the book of 1 Peter, he's addressing those who, by the grace of God, are united to Christ by faith.

He's addressing Christians. And so he calls them, in verse 1, elect exiles. Meaning they are those who no longer belong to this present world.

They no longer belong to this present passing world. In this present evil age, they've been plucked out. And they now belong to God. And so their identity is not here in this present world.

Their hope is not here in this present world. And their joy is not rooted here in this present world.

They are, as he says in verse 13, they are to set their hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[8 : 48] It's future-oriented joy. But even so, our lives here and now in this present age as exiles are meant to be marked by rejoicing, marked by delighting and enjoying the glory of God.

So here in verse 3, Peter gives us the first reason why. Look there to verse 3 with me. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. That's this worship, this magnification of the glory of God.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Because we have been given new life in Christ. He says, according to his great mercy, he, God, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

That is reason to rejoice if you have it. This new spiritual life is the basis, this is the root of Christian joy.

To know true and lasting joy, you must be born again. You know, that's not just a Baptist term. I know it's been popularized over the past several decades, but this is a thoroughly biblical requirement for true and lasting joy is that you be born again.

[10:16] I'm sure that you've heard me say before that born again Christian is a redundancy. There is no other type of Christian but a born again Christian.

It's redundant. There's no other type. It's like when we say pin number, right? Personal identification, number, number. Or the Los Angeles angels.

If you know Spanish, you know that means literally the, the, angels, angels. Right? Well, it's the same with born again Christian. Every genuine Christian has truly been born again.

And there are plenty of individuals who call themselves Christian, who attend church, who read their Bibles, who say their prayers, who go through the routines and the rituals and the habits, but have never actually experienced being born again.

But to truly be a Christian and to know the joy that Peter is talking about here, it requires, it means that you have, by the mercy of God, been genuinely born again.

[11:31] You have been regenerated. This is beyond our natural capacity to understand, isn't it? You might remember when Nicodemus came to Jesus in John chapter 3.

He came in the middle of the night to speak with Jesus. And Jesus said to him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is, what? What did he say? Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

And Nicodemus, like us, he thought naturally. His mind immediately went to the physical and the natural, and so he answered with natural thinking. And he said, well, how can a man be born again when he's old?

Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? And you can almost see the wheels turning, and I don't know how Jesus kept a straight face, but he did, and responded and said, no, that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit.

The first birth is into sin. It's into flesh. The second birth is entirely of a different kind. It's spiritual. See, our first birth, we inherited sin.

[12:50] We entered physically into this physical, sinful world. We're born as enemies of God, born as rebels of God, born as His enemies.

But the second birth, the second birth makes us a new creation. And with that new life comes new capacities, and that heart of stone is turned into a heart of flesh.

What was dead to sin, excuse me, what was dead to God and alive to sin is now dead to sin and alive to God. And so when you're born again, all of a sudden, you have these new desires to live a life that's pleasing to God.

Where did that come from? You desire new capacity, new desire to say no to sin, to run from sin, to turn from sin, and to pursue righteousness.

New capacities to see and to be aware that all of your life is a gift from God. It's meant to be directed towards Him and praise for His glory.

[13:51] You have new capacities to trust Him and to thank Him and to love Him and to enjoy Him. See, the Christian life, which begins at the new birth, is one of constant growth and progression and praising and enjoying the glory of God.

So how do we do this? Well, Peter tells us, you don't. It's a work of God. Peter says, it is by His mercy, of His doing, for our good and for our joy, and ultimately for His glory.

But He does give us another piece of crucial information here, which is that it is only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

If we are to be born again, it is only possible through the good news of the gospel, through the resurrection of Christ. The Bible teaches us that Jesus, the eternal Son of God, became man.

The eternal Son of God was born according to the flesh, yet without sin. So He could live in our place, He could die in our place, and then He could get up from the grave and rise up from the grave in our place.

[15:30] So He purchases new spiritual life for His people, for sinners, through His life, death, and resurrection. So now in Him, through His resurrection from the dead, sinners like me and like you who were once dead in our trespasses and sins can be forgiven of our sins, can be given new spiritual life.

that is reason to rejoice this morning if you have it. Have you been born again? Have you been born again?

Is your life marked by bitterness or anger or constant complaining and negativity and just joylessness?

Or does your heart genuinely rejoice in the glory of God? Is your life marked by delight in Him and His glory?

See, we need to constantly remember this gift that we've been given in the new birth and rejoice first in our new life in Christ. But not only that, second, second, Peter says we rejoice in our future hope in Christ.

[16:52] We rejoice in our future hope in Christ. This is the substance of our joy. Something that I think we need to be reminded of is not only what we're saved from but also what we're saved to.

Okay? We need to remember for the sake of our joy not only what we're saved from but also especially what we are saved to.

If we are in Christ we are saved from the wrath of God against our sin. And we said in our first birth we're born as sinners.

We're natural born sinners. And there are two options and only two options for sinners like us. Either God's wrath is poured out against us in our sin and we bear the judgment that we deserve and we bear the wrath of God against our sin.

We bear it in eternity in hell. Or, option number two, a substitute bears the wrath of God in our place.

[18:08] A substitute provided by God himself, Jesus Christ, who bore the wrath of God on the cross for every single one of his people.

See, we need to remember and rejoice in what we've been saved from. That's reason to rejoice but even more so, even more so, I would argue. We need to rejoice in what we've been saved to.

Our future hope is this inexhaustible fountain of everlasting joy for the Christian that we draw from and drink from and rejoice in now in the present and into eternity for the rest of eternity in the presence of God.

You might imagine, just to illustrate this, a poor child who was born into an orphanage. It's understaffed, it's underfunded, it's overwhelmed, it's overlooked, it's broken down.

He was born into it so he doesn't really know anything different. He has no idea what life would be like in a family. He gets a call up to the office and is told to gather up his things because he has been adopted.

[19:24] He knows what that word means, but he can't even wrap his mind around all that that entails. He knows what he's being taken out of, what he's being taken from, but his understanding of what he's going to is partial at best, limited at best.

The words to describe it are insufficient at best, but this child, he's not just being adopted, he's being adopted by the king. He's not just being brought out of the orphanage, he's being brought into a castle, and not just as an outsider, but as a son.

Not just as a visitor, but as one who will one day inherit the entire kingdom. How could he possibly begin to imagine what that would be like? You know, sometimes that's how it might be with us.

We know what we've been taken out of, we know our sin, we know the judgment that is deserved for our sin, we know we're taken out of something terrible and brought into something unspeakably marvelous, but it's so far beyond our capacity to understand and describe that words are just insufficient.

There's no language to help us understand our hope, and even what we know to be true sometimes just seems too good to be true. Peter here, in this chapter, he tries as hard as he can to put into words the glory of what we have to look forward to in Christ.

[21:02] He says there in verse 3, look there again, he says, we are born to a living hope. Because Christ, Jesus, is alive, our hope is alive.

Verse 4, he says, we are born again to an inheritance. As sons and daughters of the king of all the universe, as sons and daughters of God himself, we now have the hope, the certain hope of a future inheritance.

And unlike every treasure in this present age, this inheritance, he says, is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

What can you describe in this world with those three words? What treasure can you imagine that exists here and now that you've enjoyed, that you hope to enjoy one day in your life, that you can describe with these three words?

Imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. You can't do it. If you won the lottery tomorrow, \$300 billion dropped in your bank account, guess what?

[22 : 21] At some point, either the money would run out, the money would perish, or at some point, guess what? You'll perish, and you won't be able to spend it. It'll be gone. Its worth will be lost.

If someone far off in your family were to write you into their will, and you inherited acres upon acres upon acres of land, guess what? It would grow weeds, thorns, and thistles.

It would be an incredible blessing, but imperfect. It would be defiled by sin. If you were able to purchase whatever earthly treasure you could set your mind on, that new vehicle, that truck, that boat, that house, whatever it might be, your joy in it would fade eventually, wouldn't it?

And that item, whatever it is, would decay. It would lose its luster. If you place your pride and your joy in your own physical beauty or in the strength of your physical body, guess what?

One day, it will fade. Your body will break down and your strength will grow weak. It will degenerate. Every earthly treasure is perishable.

[23 : 36] It is defiled and it fades. And if our joy is rooted here in the present, in these things of this present age, then our joy will likewise perish.

Our joy will fade. Our joy will be defiled. We have a diminishing rate of return on the investment of our joy in things of this present age.

But for the Christian, for the Christian, Peter says, we rejoice because our future inheritance is perfect. It's perfect.

It cannot perish. It cannot be defiled. It cannot fade. And so, if our joy is rooted there, then our joy, likewise, cannot perish.

Cannot be defiled. Cannot fade. Fade. All we have to look forward to is ever-increasing joy every moment of the rest of eternity if we are in Christ.

[24 : 46] I wonder how often you meditate on the glory of your future hope. How often do you let your future hope in Christ shape your daily decisions here and now?

How often do you let it shape your thoughts and shape your emotions? You know, the constant refrain of the New Testament for believers is over and over and over again, set your hope there.

Set your joy there. Set your eyes there. Long for that future inheritance. We are waiting for our future hope to be realized.

Christ. Well, you might ask, what is our future inheritance? I don't think it helps anybody to speak of it in general terms.

And again, it's beyond our mind's capacity to fully grasp, but we are given some information here on what we're waiting for. That's a big question, but in short, we are waiting for God to fulfill all of His promises to His people in Christ.

[26 : 01] What are we waiting for? We are waiting for the fulfillment of the promises of God towards us in Christ. So, we are waiting to inherit the promised land.

We are waiting to inherit the promised land. Not a patch of dirt on the earth, but the new heavens and the new earth. As Peter says in 2 Peter 3, according to His promises, we are waiting for a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

Imperishable, undefiled, unfading, a land without thorns and thistles, a land without the presence of death, a land without the curse of sin.

To enjoy this perfect paradise, however, we need to inherit resurrected bodies. We are waiting for our future glorified bodies.

This is another part of our hope. Bodies that are fit for eternity with God. So, we believe that at the return of Christ, the bodies of believers will be remade and glorified and made fit for eternity in the presence of God.

[27 : 18] God. As 1 Corinthians 15 tells us, what is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

body. These bodies that we have here and now are marked by sin and death and decay.

They break down, amen? Amen? But when Christ returns, we will be more alive than we have ever been. John says in 1 John chapter 3, he says, we are God's children now and what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we will see him as he is.

Another part of our hope, we are waiting to inherit final salvation. This is what Peter says in verse 5, the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Final salvation from the presence and the power of sin. Final deliverance, final salvation from every enemy. Final salvation from the worries and the stress of this life and the final realization of our salvation in Christ.

[28 : 59] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away.

Our final salvation is realized. But church, as wonderful, as glorious, as all of these things are, they are absolutely worthless apart from the greatest treasure of our inheritance, which is God himself. God himself is the hope of every Christian's heart to be fully restored, restored, to right relationship with God our Father, to be welcomed in to the kingdom as his beloved son, his beloved daughter, to be welcomed in to enjoy the glory of his presence for the rest of eternity, to be shown the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus, to spend eternity day after day after day, plunging the depths of the wonders of the glory of God, marveling in his presence.

That's the hope of the Christian. Everything else is just icing on the cake. That is the hope that fuels present joy.

As he says in verse 8, 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.

[30 : 55] Do you love him like this? Do you genuinely know that inexpressible rejoicing in your soul at the thought of the presence of the glory of God?

Peter reminds us of this future hope because he knows that future hope breeds present joy. joy. But that rejoicing requires something of us, doesn't it?

Present joy requires persevering faith. This is the third and final reason to rejoice this morning.

Third, rejoice in the gift of faith in Christ.

Ephesians 2.8 tells us by grace you are saved through faith and this is not your own doing, it is a gift of God.

You know, this is what the unbelieving world finds so hard to understand about us. They just can't wrap their minds around how could we possibly have and believe in this unseen future hope with so much confidence that we're willing to stake our lives on this hope.

[32 : 15] How could we possibly believe that someone 2,000 years ago got up from the dead and because he rose from the dead we have this new life, new inheritance, new joy, new purpose, everything is based on that and how could we believe that because he lives he offers forgiveness and salvation and reconciliation with God that we have this glorious future to look forward to to?

The answer is faith and not the empty objectless faith of the world but the rock solid faith, the gift of faith in the promises of God fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

How is it that sinners are brought from spiritual death to spiritual life born again from hopelessness to a living hope? The answer is this gift of faith in Christ.

How is it that millions of individuals throughout the world believe in this unseen invisible hope? The answer is this gift of faith.

Faith is as Hebrews tells us it's the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. You see faith is the anchor of our joy.

[33 : 39] It doesn't let us get swept away by trials or distractions or lesser joys. It anchors us to the source of everlasting joy.

Faith is the adhesive that sticks us so closely to Christ and all that he shares with his own that as hard as the devil might try nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Faith is the rope that comes down out of heaven to wrap us up as we cling to it tightly and are brought safely home at last.

See the link between future hope and present joy is trust. It is faith in the promises of God. God has a promise here for you to be believed for your joy.

This promise of a glorious future inheritance unseen by the human eye but kept in heaven for you. How can we be certain that it is actually there?

[34 : 51] We trust the word of God by faith. And how can we be certain that a ragtag group of sinners like us will make it there to enjoy that future promised inheritance?

Maybe this is real, maybe that hope is there, but how can sinners like us possibly have any confidence that we will reach it in the end? Verse 5 tells us, look there, that you Christian by God's power are being guarded through faith.

when I go somewhere out with my boys and we get ready to walk in the parking lot, nobody knows how to drive, y'all know that, dangers are everywhere.

And they see some of the dangers, but I see all of them, okay? I'm aware of much more than they are, and so I tell them, boys, grab my hand, grab my hand, and they do, and they exercise trust in me by grabbing my hand, and they hold it willingly, they grip it, their hand grips around mine, but their safety ultimately is not in their gripping me.

Their safety is in me gripping them. And even if they were to loosen their grip for a moment, guess what? Mine only gets tighter.

[36 : 24] I hold it firm, even if they yank and try to get away, my children make it safely into that grocery store, I make sure of it, even if I have to pull them with all my might.

Isn't this how God carries us through trials, temptations, sufferings, demands, worries, anxieties of this life?

He guards us through His gift to us of faith as we exercise trust in Him. He's guarding and clinging to us through faith.

We believe, but the believing is from Him. We trust, but the trusting is from Him. We cling to Him, but our confidence that we will make it to the end is that by His mercy, He clings to us and will carry us safely home.

Church, this is unshakable power. This is the stabilizing force for Christian joy in any circumstance.

[37 : 35] You look here to verse 6, it says, in this hope, you rejoice though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that, here's the point, 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.

Do not listen to anyone who would tell you, if you just have enough faith, nothing bad will ever happen to you. If you just had enough faith, if your faith were strong enough, you would not get sick, you would not be poor, you would not suffer, you would not be tempted, you would not be tried, but listen to God's word here in 1 Peter that says, if you have the gift of genuine faith, nothing bad can ever conquer you.

Nothing bad can ever, even in grief, rob you of your eternal joy in Christ Jesus. All it can do is prove the power of God's work in you.

All it can do is lead to the praise and glory and honor of Christ our King as you obtain the outcome of your faith, tested the salvation of your soul.

God's love. There's a song that I love by the Gettys, it's called When Trials Come. When trials come, no longer fear, for in our pain God draws near.

[39 : 26] To fire a faith worth more than gold, and there his faithfulness is told, and there his faithfulness is told. When I am weary with the cost, I see the triumph of the cross, so in its shadow I shall run till you complete the work begun.

Till you complete the work begun. One day all things will be made new. I'll see the hope you've called me to, and in your kingdom paved with gold, I'll praise your faithfulness of old.

I'll praise your faithfulness of old. Is this your hope? Is this the hope that you have?

Is this the source of your joy? I know that there may be some in here who are hearing this and are saying inside your own mind, I just don't have that sort of joy.

I just don't enjoy God like that, and if that's you, you might need to be born again. And it may be that God is even now in hearing this message, convicting you of your need for him, convicting you of your lack of joy in him, and if that's you, I'd invite you to simply pray where you are that the Lord would give you the gift of faith in Christ Jesus, that he would give you the assurance of things hoped for.

[40 : 55] And it may be that you do know the Lord, but just want to grow in enjoying him more. That should, church, that should be all of our desire. would you pray that the Lord would remind you of the hope he's given you in Christ?

Not just now as we gather, but Monday morning. Would he remind you of the hope that you have, remind you of the new life that you've been given, remind you, strengthen this gift of faith in Christ? One day all things will be made new. We'll see the hope he's called us to. Church, we have so much to look forward to, so much to rejoice in.

That joy doesn't have to be entirely future. We can live in rejoicing in the glory of God right now. And as we do so, we will magnify the glory of God.

Would you pray with me? Lord, we thank you and we praise you. Blessed be your name for the hope that you've given us in Christ, for the new life that you've given us in Christ, for the gift of faith that you've given us, that carries us through.

[42 : 11] And Lord, we pray that you would increase our joy and in doing so that you would increase glory to your name. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.