

## **Good Grief**

1 Peter 1:6-9

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In 1:3-5, Peter encouraged these chosen foreigners with some marvelous truths flowing out of the great mercy of God. They had been **Given a new birth, Guaranteed an inheritance, and were being Guarded by the power of God!** In celebrating these truths the believers would bring praise and honor to God and their lord Jesus Christ. Such wonderful present comfort and future anticipation! However, these truths weren't meant to dull or ignore their present griefs. In our section today Peter will address how the various trials we face should be thought of, and that when we are thinking rightly about these difficulties, there is even joy to be had in the midst of them. That there really is "Good Grief".

### **Joy in Grief (1:6, 8d)**

As born again believers, we readily affirm the reality of grief in our world and our lives. We need look no farther than the life and ministry of our lord Jesus to find a perfect example (See Isaiah 53:3-11). We ought not join in our cultures vigorous attempts to avoid, dismiss or numb grief. Also, we recognize that God is at work during times of difficulty in our lives and the lives of those around us, and so we ought not lose ourselves into hopelessness either. The scriptures give us clear guidelines for how we should think about various trials, griefs and difficulties we face, and one concept stands out in particular, both from its numerous uses as well as its seemingly incongruous instruction. Believers are to find joy in the various trials of this life, not because they are enjoyable, but because God would use them in our lives for good. In our study today we will see five reasons believers are able to rejoice during trials.

### **They Are Temporary (1:6)**

First, Peter reminds them that the trials are temporary. No matter how long they might last, they pale in comparison to the eternal life provided to believers in Jesus Christ. What a sharp distinction Peter draws between the trials and the eternal inheritance that awaits believers. In the most difficult times, we can take joy in the temporal nature of our grief, and that there is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

### **They Test Our Faith (1:7)**

Second, trials test our faith. Trials are to our faith as fire is to gold. They help to reveal areas of needed growth and develop our reliance on God, His word, and our church family. As our faith is tested it grows stronger and more pure. I would guess that many of us would testify that those we respect the most in the faith, are often the ones who have endured the hottest fires of testing.

### **They Reveal The Quality Of Our Faith (1:7)**

Another reason to find joy in trials is that they reveal the quality of our faith. This is revealed to ourselves, to our brothers and sisters, to unbelievers, and even to the

heavenly beings. They reveal to all who observe, the genuine nature of faith in God. How we handle the trials in our lives is a visible testimony to the quality of our faith, and that testing can have an incredible result.

### **They Result In Praise And Glory And Honor (1:7)**

When genuine faith triumphs through testing, it will result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. There is some obscurity to whom the praise, glory and honor are directed toward. Is it toward God? Is it bestowed upon the triumphant believer? I believe Peter possibly had in mind both, but with a focus on the recognition being bestowed upon the believer at the revelation of Jesus Christ. If it were only directed toward God, then it wouldn't be bound to the revelation of Jesus. For believers who prove themselves to be faithful through the various trials of life, there awaits incomparable recognition by their merciful savior. This recognition will only be multiplied by the fact that these dear brothers and sisters have shown the quality of their faith, despite never having seen Jesus. Their perseverance is supported entirely by faith in the resurrected Lord.

### **They Are Part Of Our Deliverance (1:9)**

Lastly, Peter reveals to them that these trials are an integral part of the "salvation of their souls". Souls here doesn't mean their spirit, but rather the entirety of their person. Clearly Peter doesn't simply have in mind what will happen after they die or when Jesus returns, but he ties two ideas together: 1, They are able to rejoice in their trials and 2, their rejoicing and faith during trials, is a component of their deliverance in the present age. God uses the various trials in our lives to grow us spiritually, resulting in greater deliverance from the power of sin in our lives while we look forward with joy to the day when we will be fully delivered from the very presence of sin and receive from our merciful Lord his commendation to his faithful suffering servants.

## *Grace News and Needs*

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- **Womens Ministry: Annual Tea Party June 15th. Sign up on the patio**
- **Men's Ministry: Mens Breakfast, June 8th @ 7:30 am. Sign up on the patio**
- **VOM Needs for May: Medical Tape**

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