

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Salvation Joy 1 Peter 1:6-9 Part Two

Should difficulties and trials of various kinds remove joy from our lives? The answer to this question hopefully is “No!!” Clearly the will of God for us in Christ Jesus, according to **Phil. 4:4**, is to **“Rejoice in the Lord always.”** As long as we are able to maintain our focus on the Lord and the Salvation which is ours in Him we have the potential of having constant abiding joy **EVEN IN THE MIDST OF OUR TRIALS.**

But let me ask you another question. If difficulties and trials do not have to remove our joy, if we maintain a proper focus, can difficulties and trials actually be a catalyst for us to experience joy? The answer to this question is YES!! **James 1:2** makes this very clear, **“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials.....** The Modern English Translation by J.B. Philips reads..... **When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends!”** This certainly is not easy to do, but clearly this is what the scripture is teaching us. Does this mean that problems are good? No! Does this mean that problems can produce something good? The answer to this question is, Yes! One of the reasons why we can choose to rejoice in the midst of our trials is found in the next verse of James.

“Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” Trials are not good in and of themselves, but they will test our faith, and the testing of our faith hopefully will produce the quality called “endurance.” We should “consider it all joy” to have the opportunity through trial to have our faith tested, and therefore have the opportunity for endurance to be produced in our lives or in other words to have our **faith strengthened** so that we will be rendered unshakable and immovable.

Trials not only should be incapable of removing joy from our lives, trials, ultimately should become a catalyst for us in experiencing ever increasing , expanding joy as we see the good work that those trials are producing as our faith is being tested.

Trials do not only offer us the opportunity to have something produced but also revealed.

You will hopefully remember that we are in the Epistle of First Peter. Hopefully you remember that the theme of the epistle is a proper response to suffering. In **VV. 3-5** we saw how even in the midst of suffering thanksgiving should be lifted up to our heavenly father for our salvation. We are now examining **VV. 6-9** and in these verses the Apostle Peter is giving to us five different sources of joy all related to our salvation.

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Let us read **1 Peter 1:6-9**.....

The first source of joy that is related to our salvation is found in the very first phrase of **V. 6** **“In this you greatly rejoice.”** As we examined this phrase we determined that the **“in this”** was referring to the basic idea presented in **VV. 4-5** which was related to the certainty of their salvation. Because their imperishable, undefiled and unfading inheritance had been reserved in heaven for them, and because they, as heirs, were being protected by the power of God they could be certain of their salvation and in that certainty was great joy. (OVERHEAD: THE FIRST SOURCE OF JOY WAS FROM THE CERTAINTY OF THEIR SALVATION.)

The next source of joy comes from a proven faith.

PROVEN FAITH

The testing of our faith through trials does not only produce endurance, but it also reveals true faith and this true faith being revealed through trial becomes another source of joy.

How are we saved? It is “By grace, through faith.” It is impossible for us to be saved apart from faith. Not a pseudo faith that we have produced which is self generated and self serving. But rather a true faith that God has produced which is generated through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and is Christ centered. How can we know whether our “faith” is self centered or Christ-centered? How can we know whether our “faith” is self generated or Spirit generated? One of the ways we will be able to know this is as our faith is tested by trials. True faith will endure while a pseudo faith will fade away and cease.

Let us now examine **VV. 6-7** and see what we can discover about trials and ultimately how those trials are used in our lives to reveal true faith.

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT TRIALS?

1. THE FIRST THING WE LEARN IS THAT TRIALS DO NOT LAST. Look at **V. 6** **“In this (the certainty of your salvation) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials.”** Notice the phrase **“even though now for a little while.”** The trials that we are presently experiencing will not last. They are, in light of eternity, only a very brief moment. Peter reemphasizes this in **1 Peter 5:10** **“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”** The apostle Paul also had the very same perspective of trials. In **2 Cor. 4:17** he tells us , **“For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.”** This future hope that troubles will one day pass away to be replaced by the eternal bliss of heaven is a repeated theme in scripture and also in our hymns.

IT WILL BE WORTH IT ALL: There’s a promised land made for all the free, when our race on earth is run, where no broken dreams will mar our memory; it will be worth it all when we get home. There are no sad farewells, there no tear-stained eyes, there no heartache, grief, or woe, there no shattered hopes will ever cloud the skies; it will be worth it all. It will be worth it all just to see His face, when he claims us for His own; then ten million years to sing amazing grace; it will be worth it all when we get home.

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What else do we learn about trials?

2) TRIALS SERVE A PURPOSE. Look at V. 6 again, **“In this (the certainty of their salvation) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while (in comparison to eternity), if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,.....”** Notice the phrase, **“if necessary.”** For the children of God, for those of us who reside as aliens in this world trials do not arbitrarily come upon our lives for no reason. When trials are permitted to come into our lives they are coming for a reason. It is consoling to know that God’s people are never needlessly afflicted. Peter firmly believed in the reality of God’s sovereign presence in the lives of His people.

- 1) Trials may be permitted to come into our lives by the Lord to wean us from earthly things.
- 2) Trials may be permitted to come into our lives in order to help us to look to heaven with a growing anticipation.
- 3) Trials may be permitted to come into our lives in order to reveal what we really love.
- 4) Trials may be permitted to come into our lives in order to provide help for others.
- 5) Trials may come into our lives in order to strengthen our faith.
- 6) Trials may come into our lives in order to chasten us.

3) TROUBLE BRINGS PAIN. Look at V. 6 again, **“In this (the certainty of your salvation) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while (in comparison to eternity), if necessary (if God determines it so), you have been distressed by various trials.”** The word distressed is the translation of the Greek word LUPEO. It refers to the grief that is caused by outward circumstances. It would be a mistake to think that those who are greatly rejoicing are not at the same time experiencing distress. When we are focusing on the trial our distress will increase. As we are focusing on our salvation our joy will increase. But we should never expect as Christians to be able to be totally free of distress when we are being tried even when we are greatly rejoicing. What else do we learn?

4) TRIALS COME IN MANY FORMS. Let us again look at V. 6 , **“In this (the certainty of your salvation) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while (in comparison to eternity), if necessary (if God determines it so), you have been distressed (grieved in spite of your great joy) by various trials.”** Literally it means “many colored” and was used to describe “the skin of a leopard, the different-colored veining of marble, or an embroidered robe.” It denotes the many aspects and appearances of the trials that afflicted the believers, not their number. All believers will suffer trials but the trials, though common to man, will not be identical. The trials that come to our lives will be uniquely suited for the purposes for which God has permitted them to come. They are tailor made for us.

5) TRIALS SHOULD NOT DIMINISH OUR JOY. Those Peter is addressing are presently rejoicing and not just rejoicing but greatly rejoicing. And all this is happening **“even though”** they are presently being distressed by **“various trials.”** How can they do this? How can they continue to rejoice, even greatly rejoice in the certainty of their salvation when they are being so sorely tested. V. 7 explains this to us. **“that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

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They are able to rejoice because the trials they are experiencing give the opportunity for their faith to be tested to see if in fact it is genuine. And as it is shown to be genuine it only serves to enhance their joy because it reinforces what? The certainty of their salvation.

It is not the testing that is important but the result of the testing, which is the proof of our faith. Hopefully after our faith is tested it is found not to be a pseudo faith which we have manufactured but a real, true, genuine faith. A faith that God has produced in our hearts by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

As genuine or true faith goes through the fire of trials it should remain not only intact but growing as we saw in **James 1**. If it is a self generated and self centered faith it will begin to fade away and ultimately fail.

It is a wonderful thing to know that we have an inheritance reserved in heaven for us. It is a wonderful thing to know that we as heirs are being kept by the power of God. The certainty of these things only increases as we see our faith flourishing and becoming stronger in the midst of fiery trials.

This tested and proven faith is more precious than gold, look again at **V. 7 “that the proof of your (genuine and true) faith, being more precious than gold....”** For us to have a proven faith is like having a priceless treasure. Whereas gold will ultimately perish along with the world as we now know it. Our proven faith, this priceless treasure will result in us entering into our eternal inheritance. **OUR PROVEN FAITH THEREFORE BECOMES THE SECOND SOURCE OF JOY THAT IS RELATED TO OUR SALVATION.**

CONCLUSION

If you have placed your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ you will be saved, but not just any kind of faith will save. It is the faith that the Lord Himself generates within our hearts which places Jesus at the center of our lives.

But how do we know that we have exercised saving faith? One of the ways we will know is when we undergo trials, our faith is not weakened but strengthened. One of the ways we will know this is when as our faith is put through the fire, it is not consumed but purified .

We need to come to a point in our lives where we do not see trials as a threat to our joy but as a means by which our joy can be enhanced. **May the Lord give us grace!!**