

Text: 1 Pt 1.6-7

Proposition: Our salvation produces immeasurable joy, despite or because of the trials that challenge us in it.

I said in an earlier message that 1 Peter 1.3-12 is one long sentence in Greek. I gave the illustration of a flower that opens from bud to full bloom.

Tonight's message is the third opening... We had the initial thought, the Blessing of God because we are born again. Next the thought expanded to three results of the new birth, the foundation and ground of our joy in praising God.

Tonight, we are going to unfold the bloom one step further. Tonight, our subject introduces the darker shades of the picture, our joy in this salvation despite trials.

If you think of a flower, say a rose, the whole thing isn't in the light. On a summer day, you go to Butchart and enjoy the rose garden, but the beauty of the rose is set off by the shadows as one part of the bloom blocks the light from another part. It's part of the way things are.

However, the shadow provides contrast and heightens the beauty of the whole.

And that is something of how suffering trials, though a shadow against the joy of salvation, enhances our rejoicing in God's deliverance.

Well, let's read our sentence and focus on our text:

Read 1 Pt 1.3-12, text 6-7

I. The joy salvation brings (6a)

A. Already a theme...

1. Blessed be God
2. Three results

B. Now there is a question about what we are rejoicing in

1. "In this" → what does "this" point to?
 - a. God
 - b. Jesus

- c. The soon revealed salvation (“a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”)
 - d. Or, the whole concept: salvation and its results
2. The distant antecedents (God, Jesus) seem more unlikely
 3. The near antecedent (soon revealed salvation) more grammatical
 4. However, best to point to the whole concept
- C. The idea of rejoicing
1. There is a “usual” word for rejoice in the Gk NT: *chairō* – it shares a root with *charis*, grace
 2. This word occurs less often
 - a. 11 vv. in GNT vs. 74 times for *chairō*
 - b. Three uses in 1 Pt, including one with both words (4.13)
 3. Meaning:
 - a. BDAG: “to be exceedingly joyful, exult, be glad, overjoyed”¹
 - b. The word is a Jewish/Christian word, not used in Gk lit.
 - 1) Has a root, commonly used in the Gk literature, meaning “to make resplendent, to adorn, to plume”
 - 2) This word is a modified form to express the adorning of the spirit with great joy
 - c. In the OT, used of the rejoicing expressed at the great festivals of worship, esp. in Psalms
 - d. We could use the term “jubilation” to translate it
 - e. It seems to have some connection with the realization of ultimate salvation

¹ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

“The word thus characterises the consciousness of the community that it is the community of the last time constituted by the saving act of God.”²

Spurgeon: “We have two heavens; a heaven here and a heaven hereafter. Jesus is with us, and this is heaven: we are soon to be with Jesus, and that is another heaven.”³

I’m belaboring this point, but we begin with the idea that in this great salvation we have through Christ, we rejoice greatly: we jubilate, we are in ecstasy!

II. The necessary distress that shades the joy (6b)

A. The context of our joy: necessary trials

1. There are two interesting ideas that start the discussion of trials
 - a. They are short
 - b. They are necessary

Barnes on shortness: “A short period—ὀλίγον. It would be in fact only for a brief period, even if it should continue through the whole of life.”⁴

2. The necessity of trials

- a. Our trials are *not*
 - 1) Bad luck
 - 2) Bad karma or fate
- b. No, they are necessary, and indeed, the will of God

¹ Pt 4.19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

² Rudolph Bultmann, “Ἀγαλλιάομαι, Ἀγαλλίασις,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed., vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 20.

³ Spurgeon, *1 Peter*, 1 Pt 1.6.

⁴ Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, 115.

- 1) Trials are not retributive (I do something wrong, I get trials)
- 2) Trials produce good in our lives (Jas 1.2-4)

Jas 1.2-4 ¶ Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- 3) Trials are not enjoyable, there is no joy in the trial itself (the joy is in salvation, something separate from the trial)

B. The nature of these trials

1. It is true that our own failings, weaknesses, and sins are a trial to us: not in view here
2. Rather, these trials are those circumstances that come from without
 - a. From enemies (of us or God)
 - b. From circumstances (that might happen to all, or all in our region)
3. We should also note, these are trials God allows, but does not cause (Jas 1.13)

Jas 1.13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

III. The consequent beauty displayed in such Christian faith (7)

A. The proof of our faith is the result of the trial

1. We could translate "proof" with "tested, graded A-1"

In a factory, there are those who test products against the standard. The substandard are rejected, with perhaps a reduced price for "seconds." Those that are proved, they receive the premium price.

2. Approved faith is more precious than perishable gold
 - a. We normally think of gold as having high value

- b. You can heat gold so hot it becomes liquid, but it doesn't perish (you do burn off impurities)
- c. Nevertheless, gold, a physical thing, is less durable than proven faith

3. The proof of your faith occurs through the fires of testing

B. The consequence of proven faith: it is found to result in glory when Jesus comes

- 1. The glory ultimately is with God who saved us (for his salvation)
- 2. The glory is seen in proven faith that endures to the end

On Monday night, my dear aunt passed into heaven. When I first knew her, she was a bright, happy, godly woman. We loved her a great deal.

In 1983, just a few months or weeks after my wife and I were married, we got a call in the middle of the night. A man attacked my aunt, beat her severely about the head with a hammer. We thought she would die, but she survived.

Her personality drastically changed. She lost much motor function, was in a wheel chair, but she lived these 38 years. And she lived in faith in God. You never knew someone who could quote pages and pages of Scripture like she could.

Tonight, she stands up in heaven, with her saviour!

^{1 Pt 1.7} so 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;

Conclusion:

Proposition: Our salvation produces immeasurable joy, despite or because of the trials that challenge us in it.

Our salvation is worth it!