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“Tempted And Tried”

1 PETER 1:6-9

Introduction

1. Many of us have sung the words which form the title to my sermon this morning.
2. They are taken from the hymn titled, *"Father Along,"* which, according to our hymnal was written in 1911 by William Buel Stevens.
3. If you look this hymn up on the internet, you will find various names being mentioned as authors.
4. However, the hardships and heartaches which Mr. Stevens experienced in his life lend greater support to him as its original author.
 - a. His father was falsely accused of mutiny while serving as a soldier and spent a few years in prison before being released.
 - b. His son died of heart disease at the age of 17.
 - c. He outlived all of his children and his wife.
5. This makes the words in the second stanza all the more powerful:

**“When death has come and taken our loved ones,
It leaves our home so lonely and drear”**
6. As I shared with you last week, this first letter of the apostle Peter was written to Christians who were suffering for their faith:
7. Suffering is actually the theme of this letter, and Peter wrote to encourage them in their faith even as they found themselves “distressed by various trials” (v. 6).
8. At the beginning of verse 6, he wrote, “in this you greatly rejoice.” To what was he referring?

9. If we look back at verses 3-5, we find that it was the fact that God . . .
 - a. Had caused them “to be born again to a living hope” (v. 3).
 - b. Had reserved for them in heaven an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled, one which will not fade away (v. 4).
 - c. Was presently protecting them by His power through their faith for His final salvation (v. 5).
10. This morning, I would like for you to consider what Peter said to these “distressed” saints as they struggled with their “various trials.”
11. My goal is for each of us, like these Christians of whom we read, might be able to “greatly rejoice” in spite of our trials in this life.
12. As we work through verses 6-9, I would like for you to meditate upon four things which Peter addresses:
 - a. The nature of our trials.
 - b. The necessity of our trials.
 - c. The strength for our trials.

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I. The Nature Of Our Trials

“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,” (1 Peter 1:6, NASB95)

A. THEY ARE VARIED

1. These Christians were “distressed,” they were experiencing “pain” and “sorrow” as the result of various trials to which they found themselves subjected.
2. As I mentioned in our lesson last week,
 - a. Many were being slandered and intimidated by their former friends (1 Peter 2:12; 3:14, 16).

- b. Some were suffering unjustly for doing what is right (1 Peter 2:19; 3:17).
 - c. Christian wives were being mistreated by their unbelieving husbands (1 Peter 3:1,6).
 - d. Some were apparently losing their lives for the sake of Christ (1 Peter 4:12-13).
3. Like our Christian brothers and sisters to whom Peter wrote, you and I will experience distress as a result of the different kinds of trials we will face in today's world.
 4. The fact that God tells us He created "man in His own image . . . male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27), is not readily accepted in some parts of our culture today.
 5. The fact that God states, "a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24), is now challenged in our country.
 6. As the apostle Paul told Timothy, "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12).
 7. The bottom line is that trials, persecutions and sufferings are a part of what we are promised if we choose to follow Christ.

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8. In Matthew 19:27, we find Peter asking Jesus a question: "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?"
9. In Mark's account of this incident (Mark 10:30), we find Jesus telling Peter that such people "will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life."

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1. Perhaps the most encouraging thing which Paul tells us about these various trials and the distress which accompanies them is that they are “for a little while” (v. 6).
2. For those of us who are Christians, our suffering occurs only in this life, glory lasts forever — we will experience no suffering or sorrow then.
3. In Revelation 21:2, the apostle John tells us of something he saw: “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.”

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4. In verses 3-4, he tells us of a loud voice from the throne and what it said:
“Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them and He will wipe every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away” (Revelation 21:3-4, NASB95).

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5. A similar passage, which I have shared with you on numerous occasions, is found in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. There the apostle Paul wrote:
“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:16–18, NASB95)
 - a. Our suffering momentary. Our glory is eternal.
 - b. Our affliction is “light,” our “glory” has “weight . . . far beyond all comparison.”

- c. Our suffering in no way compares to the glory we will receive.

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II. The Necessity Of Our Trials

“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;” (1 Peter 1:7, NASB95)

A. THEY PROVE THE GENUINENESS OF OUR FAITH

1. In the Book of Deuteronomy we find the Israelites camped in the Plains of Moab waiting for the moment when God would take them across the Jordan River into the promised land.

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2. Before his death, Moses reminded them of how God had tested them through their adversities:

“You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.” (Deuteronomy 8:2, NASB95)

3. In the same way, God uses the trials we experience to examine our hearts and determine how genuine our faith is.

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B. THEY STRENGTHEN AND PURIFY OUR FAITH

1. Our trials help our faith to grow.
2. To illustrate this, Peter used the example of a goldsmith refining gold.
3. In order to melt the solid ore, he must first heat it to a temperature of 1,900 °F.
4. As the gold melts, impurities rise to the surface where the goldsmith skims them off.

5. He knows the gold is ready to be cast into an object when he can see his face reflected in the surface of the liquid gold.
6. In the same way, God works through our trials to strengthen and purify our faith to the point that we reflect more of the character of our Lord in our lives.

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7. Listen to how James describes the process in James 1:2-4:

“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 and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:2–4, NASB95)

8. The result of this process is that you and I will receive “praise and glory and honor” from God when Jesus Christ returns in His glory (cf. Romans 2:9; 1 Corinthians 4:5).
9. There is no greater reward than to hear our Lord say, “well done,” on the last day.

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III. Non-negotiables In Our Trials

“and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,” (1 Peter 1:8, NASB95)

A. FAITH IN CHRIST

1. Faith deals in the unseen.
2. In Hebrews 11:1, the writer tells us, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1, NASB95)
3. Twice in verse 8, Peter writes of Christ as being unseen:

- a. “Though you have not seen Him”
 - 1) None of the Christians to whom Peter wrote had seen Jesus.
 - 2) None of us here today have seen Him.
- b. “Though you do not see Him now”
 - 1) None of them could say they had presently seen Him.
 - 2) Neither can we, yet we believe in One whom we cannot see with our physical eyes.
4. The second time that Jesus appeared to His disciples following His resurrection, Thomas was present.
5. When he saw the scars from the nails and the Roman spear, he said to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:27).
6. Jesus said to Thomas, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:28, ESV).
7. Jesus is the object of our faith — even though we “have not seen Him,” and “do not see Him now,” we “believe in Him.”
8. What does it mean for us to “believe in Him?”
9. It means we “trust Him,” we “put our confidence in Him,” we “depend upon Him.”
10. It is our faith in Christ which gives us strength to withstand our trials.

11a**B. LOVE FOR CHRIST**

1. Peter says that even though we have not seen Christ, we “love Him.”
2. Our love for Jesus Christ as a result of what He did for us on the cross is the central motivation for our Christian life.
3. A love for Him which includes all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind and all of our strength (Mark 12:30) will press on through the most difficult

trials we may face.

4. The result of such “faith” and “love” on our part is great rejoicing, one which involves “joy inexpressible and full of glory” (v. 8).
 - a. “Inexpressible” — a joy so profound that it is beyond the power of any words we might use to express it.
 - b. “Full of glory” — this reminds us of the Old Testament’s mention of God’s glory
 - 1) In Exodus 40:34 we read of God’s glory filling the tabernacle which Moses and the Israelites had built for Him.
 - 2) In the next verse, Moses records that he was not able to enter because “the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.”
 - 3) God’s glory was “that bright shining radiance which surrounded the presence of God Himself.”

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- 4) Joy that is “full of glory” is joy which results from being in the presence of God Himself.

“Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness;

Come before Him with joyful singing.”

(Psalm 100:1-2, NASB95)

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Conclusion

“obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”

(1 Peter 1:9, NASB95)

1. The salvation of our souls is an ongoing process.

2. This is why we are “obtaining as the outcome of [our] faith” (NASB95, ESV) or “receiving the end of [our] faith” (KJV, NKJV, NIV84).
3. This is why Peter says,
 - a. In 1 Peter 2:2, “long for the pure milk of the word, so that you may grow in respect to salvation.”
 - b. In 2 Peter 3:18, “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
4. This is why the apostle Paul, in Philippians 3:12, wrote, “Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12, NASB95).
5. My question for each of you this morning is this: “Have you started the process?”
6. If you haven’t yet been “born again” to that “living hope” of which Peter spoke about in verse 3, you haven’t started the process.
7. Until then, God cannot reserve your inheritance in heaven, nor protect you by His power.
8. It all starts with Christ. Will you come to Him today?