

The Joy of Salvation¹

1 Peter 1:8, 9

Introduction:

The letter of 1 Peter opens with an overview of some glorious facts concerning salvation. In the first chapter, verses six through nine talk about the joy of salvation.

The joy of salvation can be ours even during trials.

Importantly, the trials that distress us.

Does Peter mean to say that we can be glad in times of trials that make us feel sorrowful and unhappy?

Yes, in fact, Peter says that trials or temptations produce a twofold fruit: they increase our faith in God (v. 7), and they increase our love for God (vv. 8 and 9).

“The Christian’s joy is grounded in the fact that God has given him *new life, a living hope, a certainty of receiving God’s rich blessings, and of possession of salvation at the end of time.*”²

Is Christianity a burden or a bridge?

1 Peter 1:8 and 9 say, “And though you have not seen Him (that’s a burden), you love Him (that’s a bridge), and though you do not see Him now (that’s a burden), but believe in Him (that’s a bridge), you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”

Christian joy cannot be expressed in mere words.

It is described as joy so great that the way to explain it is with the same word, joy. Christianity is a *joy*, a reason for gladness.

I. There is a difference between worldly happiness and Christian joy.

The world is seeking happiness; it depends on outward circumstances for happiness, and especially on a change of these outward circumstances.

People of the world are wishy-washy, happy one minute and not the next.

In certain things, Christians are no different.

As best I can determine, it was Benjamin Disraeli who wrote,

“As a rule, a man’s a fool,

When it’s hot, he wants it cool;

When it’s cool, he wants it hot,

And he always wants what’s not.”

How often are we discontent? The world is even more.

If we are on vacation, we want to be home; if we are at home, we want to go on vacation.

If we are young, we want to be old; if we are old, we want to be young.

Happiness—like prosperity—always seems to be just around the corner, just out of a person’s reach, elusively out there.

Even if worldly happiness is realized, and obtained, it can be temporary at best.

¹ Burris Butler, [Sermon Outlines on Christian Living](#), Sermon Outline Series (Cincinnati, OH: Standard, 1962), 63–64.

² Daniel C. Arichea and Eugene Albert Nida, [A Handbook on the First Letter from Peter](#), UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1980), 21.

George Cooper penned words later put to music by Ira Sankey in the song “While the Days Are Going By.”

“Oh, the world is full of sighs,
Full of sad and weeping eyes.”

These words well describe many of the people we cross paths with each day.
Christian joy is different.

It is inward; it does not depend upon outward circumstances.
It is real and present; it does not depend upon the future; it is within our grasp.
It is eternal; we are assured of a joyful future.

The Bible contains many instances of Christian joy.

Many of them are instances of rejoicing because of conversions or the faithfulness of Christians.

The apostles rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41).

Paul and Silas rejoiced in prison by singing hymns to God, even though their backs were bleeding from fresh beatings (Acts 16:25).

In Colossians 1:24, Paul wrote, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.”

Paul was chosen to reveal God’s mystery plan to the Gentiles.

He revealed that Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in His glory (Colossians 1:25-27).

Worldly happiness is hard to find, harder to get, and harder still to keep.

Christian joy is found when Christ is in you (Colossians 1:27), obtained when His word abides in you so that you believe Him (John 5:38), and kept by the keeping of His word (John 15).

The declaration of Jesus in John 15:4 is “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.”

To bear the fruit of the joy of salvation, one must abide in Jesus.

Three verses later, John 15:7, He said, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”

In John 15:11 Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”

Do you know what the next paragraph in John 15 addresses? Suffering.

John 15:18 and 19, Jesus is speaking, “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.”

There is a difference between worldly happiness and Christian joy.

II. Christian joy comes after obedience to Christ.

The Ethiopian eunuch rejoiced after he had been obedient.

The Bible says in Acts 8:39, “When they (Philip and the eunuch) came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing.”

The Philippian jailer rejoiced only after he had been obedient to the gospel.

Acts 16:34 reads, “And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.”

“Having believed in God” is a synecdoche, a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole.

Verse 33 tells us what his belief in God caused him to do.

“He took them (the two prisoners, Paul and Silas) that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.”

Verse 34 continues the list of things that the Philippian jailer did because of he believed in God, “And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly.”

Faith produces misery of a tender conscience which begs, “What must I do?”

Repentance is described as a soul in [violent pain] dying to sin, while in painful effort being born anew.

Only the divine assurance of sins forgiven brings true joy.

Paul reported to the council called by the Jerusalem church, “describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren” (Acts 15:3).

Romans 14:17 talks about the kingdom of God being “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

It was Paul’s prayer that God would fill the Roman church with joy, peace, and hope (Romans 15:13).

Because of obedience, Paul asked in 1 Thessalonians 2:19, “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?”

He answers his question in verse twenty, saying, “For you are our glory and joy.”

Joy was set before Christ, therefore in obedience He “endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).

John mentioned, “I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth” (3 John v. 4).

III. Who rejoices?

The Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and angels in heaven rejoice when one soul is saved.

In Luke 15:7 Jesus tells us just as there is rejoicing over a lost sheep being found, “There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

The tenth verse of Luke 15 says, “In the same way (as a woman rejoices for finding her lost coin), there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

According to 1 Thessalonians 1:6 the Holy Spirit gives Christians the power to suffer with joy.

The church rejoices—Christians give hugs or encouraging words, and rejoice with those who rejoice.

The loved ones such as family and friends of the new Christian usually rejoice.

The person who is saved rejoices.

Application:

The hope of eternal life supports Christians in every trial of faith.

Christians have inward, real, present, and eternal joy that is not based on outward circumstances, momentary wants, or temporary fulfillment.

Christian joy brings rejoicing to everyone involved.

Conclusion:

1 Peter 1:8 and 9 “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, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”

The love we have for Jesus Christ and the belief we have in Him assures us that we will see Him.

For now, “[we] greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of [our] faith the salvation of our [souls].”

This is the joy of our salvation.

Do you have the joy of knowing you are saved with a salvation to be made complete at his second coming?

Have you lost the joy of your salvation?