

“Commendable Joy”

1 Peter 1:6

March 26, 2023

INTRO: Have you ever struggled to understand God?
What do you do when God & His Word
don't seem to make sense?

PRAYER

CONTEXT: “No Matter What!” [1 Peter 1:1-6a](#)

1Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

3Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 **In this you greatly rejoice...**

BIG IDEA: Nothing compares,
or even comes close...

† **to BE-ing** a biblical Chris†ian!

PREVIEW:

- A. Illustration
- B. Explanation
- C. Application

TEXT:

*In this you greatly rejoice,
though now for a little while, if necessary,
you have been grieved by various trials,*

I. ILLUSTRATION

- A. **Wrong** in the world...
- B. **Wars** in the world...
- C. **Witches & Witchdoctors** in the world...
- D. **Wicked** in the world...
- E. **Worse** in the world...

II. EXPLANATION

i. *In this you greatly rejoice*

- 1. *In* = unified... **IN is the key!**
- 2. *This* = 50+ blessing(s) of vv.1-5
- 3. *You* = personal
- 4. *Greatly* = multi-dimensional extremes!

5. *Rejoice*

- a. **R** Respond to joy
- b. **E** Engage joy
- c. **J** Juxtapose (connect) joy
- d. **O** Ooze joy
- e. **I** Inspire joy
- f. **C** Celebrate joy
- g. **E** Exemplify joy

ii. *Though*

- 1. Links back & forward clauses
- 2. **Contrasting** term of “**CAUTION**”
 - a. *Even if...*
 - b. *Notwithstanding...*
- 3. **Acknowledging** term
 - a. Something contrary is coming...
 - b. Denotes an observation

iii. *Now*

- a. Immediate, present tense
- b. Not past, not future, **RIGHT now!**
- c. “Now” underscores **real REALITY**

iv. *For a short while*

- a. Specifies a relative time period
- b. The time period is a form of small
- c. God is minimizing a view of time
- d. What is a **biblical “short while”**?

- i. Scriptural texts abound...
- ii. **Perspectives** too...

- 1. Child
- 2. Christian

Our whole life-span is a "little" while! -JDP

- 3. Creator/Creation

A 1,000 years is like a day...

v. ***If necessary***

- a. *"you must"*
- b. *"even if you must"*
- c. Think of Job... Think of **Jesus!**

vi. ***You***

- a. Back to the ultimate personal...
- b. **No wiggle room...**
- c. Embrace the humility & empathy

vii. ***Have been***

- a. See the past tense...
- b. Again, acknowledging a reality...
- c. Contrast present rejoice & both present AND past tense grieving

viii. ***Grieved***

- a. Deep... real... hurt... **HEART-hurt!**

- b. There is no inherent positive in grief
- c. *Yet God regularly grows gardens of joy out of the fertilizer of grief.* - JDP

ix. ***By various***

- a. Note God's intentional vagueness...
- b. See **God's "catch-all"** designation...
- c. "various" eliminates all exceptions...

x. ***Trials***

- a. Trials are challenges...
- b. Trials and challenges come in many forms, shapes, and sizes...
- c. Trials come with different purposes:
 - i. **Sink**
 - ii. **Stumble**
 - iii. **Spank**
 - iv. ***Strengthen***
- d. Trials come from different sources:
 - i. **Satan**
 - ii. **Sin**
 - iii. **Society**
 - iv. **Self**
 - v. ***Savior***

III. APPLICATION

So the question is... what do you do when God & His Word are hard to swallow?

(Love, Believe, Obey, Rejoice, Repeat)

i. Love

Mark 12:30-31

30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

ii. Believe

2 Corinthians 5:7

We walk by faith and not by sight.

iii. Obey

John 3:36

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

iv. Rejoice

1 Thessalonians 5:17 & Philippians 4:4

Rejoice always!

Rejoice always, and again I say rejoice!

How often is ALWAYS?

How to always rejoice
when God & His Word seem to be:

1) CONFRONTATIONAL:

- a. Kill your pride and humble your heart!
- b. Accept [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)
- c. Surrender to victory thru faithful obedience.

2) HURTFUL:

- a. Revisit #1... & confirm the Word of God
- b. Accept the hurt with love & repentance.
- c. Deliver the hurt with compassionate love.

3) IMPRACTICAL:

- a. *Your ways are not My ways...* Isaiah 55:8
- b. Proverbs 3:5-6
- c. [2 Kings 5:10](#) (Elisha & Naaman)

“and Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean...”

4) IMPROBABLE:

- a. Be like David with his 5 smooth stones...
- b. Remember Gideon & his improbables...
- c. John 6:11 (Jesus + 5 loaves & 2 fish = extra!)

5) NONSENSICAL:

- a. Follow Moses' route to the Promised Land
- b. Join Joshua circling Jericho...
- c. Join Jesus washing the feet of Judas...

6) UNREASONABLE: **BE...**

- a. Matthew 10:16... sheep are sent to wolves.
- b. Matt. 5:41... go the extra 2nd mile.
- c. Matt. 5:44... Love & pray for your enemies.

7) UNSUSTAINABLE:

- a. Trust like Elijah with the oil...
- b. Trust like Stephen with his testimony...
- c. Trust like Paul throughout his persecution...

8) PARADOXICAL:

- a. Embrace both, God's grace & responsibility
- b. Exemplify [John 7:24](#) in full context...
- c. Be a loving Temple-cleanser like Jesus.
- d. Remember: **Rejoice always & Jesus wept**

The fruit of the Spirit is indivisible!

Think about it...

A trial that tests your patience does not eliminate your love... nor would a trial that tests your gentleness erase your peace... or faith... or any other aspect of the fruit of the Spirit. SO... then... why would you think that any other form of trial or testing would justify taking away your joy or rejoicing?

9) UNIMAGINABLE:

- a. [Exodus 14:13](#)

And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again."

- b. Family first? Try [Luke 12:53](#)

They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

c. What do you mean “**come & die?**”

Luke 14:27

“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

The cross of Christ is the most unimaginable & paradoxical pairing of joy & grief ever experienced or put on display...

10) IMPOSSIBLE:

- a. John 3:3 *You must be born again!*
- b. John 6:44 *No one comes to Me unless...*
- c. John 15:5 *Apart from Me you do nothing!*

T/S: Too many people today are ignoring the call of The Gospel & the promise of **Romans 8:28...** choosing instead to live like Noah’s neighbors... just before the flood!

When you realize your **GRACE... LOVE... MERCY...**
“blessing chain” you’ll rejoice while carrying your cross.

Christian... when you realize that your resurrection is bigger than your cross, you'll rejoice carrying it!

- JDP

v. **Repeat --- for the rest of your life!**

REVIEW:

- ~ We've ILLUSTRATED the text
- ~ We've EXPLAINED the text
- ~ We've made APPLICATION of the text

T/S: There's only one thing left... its ENCOURAGEMENT

CLOSE: Let me show you two things to close...

First: Don't miss "The Rejoice Stairway"

REJOICE
OBEY OBEYING
BELIEVE BELIEVING
LOVE LOVING

Second:

Don't miss the fact that this Scripture is an affirmation of

COMMENDABLE JOY!

Christian... you can rejoice **THRU it, if not in it!**

Jesus at Laz tomb...

Jesus looking over Jerusalem...

Jesus in the Garden Gethsemane...

Jesus on the cross!

“For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross.

Consider Him” - Hebrews 12:2-3

Let me leave you with one more uplifting word from God:

2 Corinthians 4:17

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison

Whatever challenges your joy,
strengthens your faith!

- JDP

PRAYER

WORSHIP:

- If God Builds The House
- Build a boat

1163. dei ▶

Strong's Concordance

dei: it is necessary

Original Word: δεῖ

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: dei

Phonetic Spelling: (die)

Definition: it is necessary

Usage: it is necessary, inevitable; less frequently: it is a duty, what is proper.

HELPS Word-studies

1163 *deí* – properly, what *must* happen, i.e. what is *absolutely necessary* ("it behooves that . . .").

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a form of **deó**

Definition

it is necessary

NASB Translation

due (1), had (7), have (2), must (56), necessary (4), needed (1), ought (17), ought to (1), should (9).

NAS Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible with Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek
Dictionaries

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Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1163: δεῖ

δεῖ; subjunctive present **δέη**; imperfect **ἔδει**; an impersonal verb (cf. Buttmann, § 132, 12; cf. § 131, 3; from Homer down); (**δέω**, namely, **τίνος**, to have need of, be in want of; cf. German esbedarf), **it is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper**; followed either by the infinitive alone (cf. our **one ought**), or by the accusative with an infinitive (cf. Buttmann, 147 (129)), it denotes any sort of necessity; as a. necessity lying in the nature of the case: **John 3:30**; **2 Timothy 2:6**.

b. necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us: **Matthew 26:35**(**κἄν δέη με ἀποθανεῖν**), cf. **Mark 14:31**; **John 4:4**; **Acts 27:21**; **2 Corinthians 11:30**; (**2 Corinthians 12:1** L T Tr WH text); or imposed by a condition of mind: **Luke 2:49**; **Luke 19:5**.

c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end: **Luke 12:12**; **John 3:7**; **Acts 9:6**; **Acts 16:30**; **1 Corinthians 11:19**; **Hebrews 9:26**(on this cf. Winers Grammar, 283 (266); (also Buttmann, 216 (187); 225 (195))); **Hebrews 11:6**.

d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity: **Matthew 18:33**; **Matthew 23:23**; **Luke 11:42**; **Luke 13:14**; **Luke 15:32**; **Luke 18:1**; **Luke 22:7**; **John 4:20**; **Acts 5:29**; **Acts 15:5**; **Romans 1:27** (**ἀντιμισθίαν, ἣν ἔδει**, namely, **ἀπολαμβάνεσθαι**, the recompense due by the law of God); **Romans 8:26**; **Romans 12:3**; **1 Corinthians 8:2**, etc. or of office: **Luke 4:43**; **Luke 13:33**; **John 9:4**; **John 10:16**; **Ephesians 6:20**; **Colossians 4:4**; **2 Timothy 2:24**.

e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God, especially by that purpose of his which relates to the salvation of men by the intervention of Christ and which is disclosed in the O. T. prophecies: **Matthew 17:10**; **Matthew 24:6**; **Mark 9:11**; **Acts 4:12**; **1 Corinthians 15:53**; in this use, especially of what Christ was destined finally to undergo, his sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension: **Luke 24:46** (R G Lbrackets); **Matthew 26:54**; **John 3:14**; **Acts 3:21**, etc. (of the necessity of fate in Herodotus 5, 33; with the addition **κατά τό**

θεοπρόπιον, 8, 53; Thucydides 5, 26.) [SYNONYMS: **δεῖ**, **χρή**:

δεῖ seems to be more suggestive of moral obligation, denoting especially that constraint which arises from divine appointment; whereas **χρή** signifies rather the necessity resulting from time and circumstance. Schmidt, chapter 150.]

STRONGS NT 1163: δέονδέον, δεοντος, τό(participle of **δεῖ**, which see), from (Sophocles and) Herodotus down, **that of which there is need, which is requisite, due, proper: δέονέστι** there is need, **1 Peter 1:6** (T Tr text WHomit; Tr marginal reading brackets **έστι**); followed by the

accusative with an infinitive [Acts 19:36](#); **τά μή δέοντα** that are not proper, [1 Timothy 5:13](#).

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Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

needful, ought, should.

3d person singular active present of [deo](#); also deon deh-on'; neuter active participle of the same; both used impersonally; it is (was, etc.) Necessary (as binding) -- behoved, be meet, must (needs), (be) need(-ful), ought, should. see GREEK [deo](#)

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NAS Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible with Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek
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MARCH 19, 2023

What Will Make You Resilient?

Learning from a Living Miracle

Article by

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Staff writer, [desiringGod.org](#)

On a street not far from where I live, there's a pottery studio with an attractive little storefront that displays beautiful clay works for sale by local artisans. Now, let's imagine that you and I are in this little shop browsing and admiring the craftsmanship, when suddenly in walks a grim-faced man wielding a baseball bat.

Before we can respond, he strides up to a beautiful, delicate-looking pot on the central display and takes a hard swing. Both of us wince, expecting the pot to explode into smithereens. Surprisingly, it takes the blow, slams against the back wall, and drops to the floor — intact. The man growls in frustration as he marches over, picks up the pot, and throws it against the entry wall. Again, it refuses to break. After shouting an expletive, the man stomps over and gives the pot a hard parting kick as he storms out. It skids and rolls across the floor, but comes to rest unbroken.

With the bat-man gone, you and I walk over and carefully examine the pot. It's clearly made of clay, but there isn't a crack or even a chip. I ask, "What kind of clay is this thing made of?" You shake your head in wonder and reply, "Who's the potter?"

Indestructible Resilience

Why would you and I find this pot so perplexing? Because everyone knows this kind of pottery is *not* resilient. It's fragile — it breaks easily. Fragility and resilience are antonyms. Something is either fragile *or* resilient, either brittle *or* bendable, not *both*. And yet, resilient pottery is precisely the paradoxical metaphor the apostle Paul chooses when describing Christian resilience:

We have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always

carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. (2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

If you and I are Christians, *we* are such perplexing pots. We are fragile jars of clay that ought to shatter under the blows we receive from the various kinds of destructive afflictions we suffer. And yet we have the capacity to be *indestructibly resilient*, leaving observers wondering what kind of mysterious strength is baked into us. They're left asking, "Who's the potter?"

“Our resilience (or lack thereof) depends on where we look for hope.”

Now, if you're like me, you don't feel indestructibly resilient. But our capacity to be "afflicted in every way, but not crushed" does not depend on our self-perception or self-determination. According to what Paul says just a few verses later, our resilience (or lack thereof) depends on where we look for hope.

Before digging into these verses some more, let's look at a living example of indestructible Christian resilience.

Resilience in Real Life

When Joni Eareckson Tada was only 17, she discovered just how fragile her clay-jar body was when, on a warm summer day in 1967, she dove into Chesapeake Bay and became a quadriplegic. Every day since, her wheelchair, her dependence on others to help her with basic life tasks, her experience of nearly constant chronic pain, as well as additional afflictions like cancer and COVID, have been stark reminders of her bodily weakness. Yet, more than fifty years later, millions around the world would describe Joni as among the most resilient, industrious, fruitful, contagiously joyful Christians they could name. She's an influential author and speaker, she's an accomplished artist, and she's the founder of an international organization that ministers to disabled people and their loved ones all over the world.

When you read what Joni writes, however, or hear her speak, or listen to her sing, or even exchange informal emails with her (as I've been privileged to do), her quadriplegia and her impressive achievements become eclipsed by her unquenchable love for Jesus and her indomitable faith in Jesus. She exhibits an otherworldly strength of heart, enabling her to withstand blows that might send the fiercest soldier or MMA fighter fleeing for dear life. After each blow, she still sits in her wheelchair, radiating joyful hope.

Joni is a personification of that clay pot we imagined at the beginning. After all the blows she's taken, how can she still be in one piece? Who is this Potter that she talks so much about?

Where Do We Find Resilience?

To answer that question, let's first return to 2 Corinthians 4 and hear Paul describe where Christian resilience comes from:

We do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Do you see it? What strengthens a Christian's "inner self" and keeps him from losing heart even though his "outer self" is wasting away? *Where he chooses to focus the gaze of his heart-eyes.*

Paul knows that what Christians choose to look at has the power to either fill or drain the reservoir of hope in their "inner selves." If we focus on the transient, visible realities of futility, sin, and suffering, we will lose hope (lose heart) and not be able to withstand the afflictions we suffer. But if we focus on the eternal, unseen reality, what Paul calls "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians

4:6), then the “God of hope [will] fill [us] with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit [we] may abound in hope,” even while enduring the worst kinds of afflictions (Romans 15:13).

“Indestructible Christian resilience comes from looking to the right reality.”

In fact, this focus has the power to so transform our perspective that even severe afflictions become “light” and “momentary” compared to the glory we will experience. Indestructible Christian resilience comes from looking to the right reality.

Secret of Joni’s Strength

This exercise of faith is why Joni is still in one piece, so to speak. She’s not in some special class of superhero Christians who are simply blessed with extraordinary stamina or an extraordinarily joyful temperament. Read any of her books, listen to any of her talks, and you’ll hear her candidly describe just how dark life can feel for her — how similar she is to you and me. The secret to her resilience is *where she chooses to focus the gaze of her heart-eyes*.

Joni recently wrote a devotional book, *Songs of Suffering: 25 Hymns and Devotions for Weary Souls*. This is not your run-of-the-mill devotional; it is a manual for building Christian resilience. In one of the entries, she writes,

I have lived with quadriplegia for more than half a century and have wrestled with chronic pain for much of that time. I struggle with breathing problems and am in an ongoing battle against cancer. All this makes for a perfect storm of discouragement.

Yet when my hip and back are frozen in pain, or it’s simply another weary day of plain paralysis, I strengthen myself with Jesus’s example [of hymn singing] in the upper room [just before his crucifixion]. My suffering Savior has taught me to always choose a song — a song that fortifies my faith against discouragement and breathes hope into my heart. And so I daily take up my cross to the tune of hymn. (18)

So, Joni's incredible resilience comes from . . . *singing songs*? No. Joni's incredible resilience comes from *seeing her affliction in the context of ultimate reality*. But she uses substantive songs of faith to help her see.

Where Will You Look?

Anyone can admire Joni's resilience, but what we might miss is that her resilience really can be ours, through whatever trials we face. If our afflictions are less severe than hers, that doesn't mean we are less in need of daily spiritual renewal, and that renewal is possible — every day. We share with Joni the same faith and the same hope. The same power from the same Holy Spirit is available to us. Which means we can be as indestructibly resilient in our afflictions as Joni is in hers — and as Paul was in his.

Joni's example of singing her way to gospel hope is a strategy that has been used by millions of saints over the centuries (and why we have a book of Psalms in our Bibles). But that's just one strategy of many available to us. We each must learn ourselves well enough to know which strategies are most effective in helping us *focus the gaze of our heart-eyes* on the unseen, eternal reality revealed to us in Scripture. And then, like Joni, we must cultivate them into habits of grace so we can wield the armor of God in the fight of faith with resilience.

Jon Bloom (@Bloom Jon) serves as teacher and cofounder of Desiring God. He is author of three books, Not by Sight, Things Not Seen, and Don't Follow Your Heart. He and his wife have five children and make their home in the Twin Cities.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2018

The Key to Simultaneous Sorrow and Joy

Bethlehem College & Seminary Preview Day | Minneapolis

- Resource by
John Piper
- Scripture: [Romans 5:1-2](#) Topics: [Christian Hedonism](#), [Hope](#)

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I add my welcome to those of you who are here considering [Bethlehem College & Seminary](#). I love this school — its leaders and faculty and students, and its vision for spreading a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the joy of all peoples through Jesus Christ.

The treasures that we cherish together here of the glory of God above all, and the infallible Scriptures, and the necessity of suffering, and the invincibility of joy make this a very unusual and wonderful place to work and study and worship. I pray that the Lord gives you guidance so that, wherever you go, your life will count for the glory of Christ.

Rejoice Always

My theme is “rejoicing in hope,” and my text is [Romans 5:2](#). If we focus on the most common verb for *rejoicing* in the New Testament (*chairō*), we find eight commands to rejoice. For example:

“Blessed are you when others revile you. . . . *Rejoice* and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.” ([Matthew 5:11-12](#))

“Blessed are you when people hate you. . . . *Rejoice* in that day, and leap for joy.” ([Luke 6:22-23](#))

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ([Philippians 4:4](#))

Rejoice always. ([1 Thessalonians 5:16](#))

Those four examples tell us that Christian joy is not supposed to be a periodic thing, but perpetual in our experience. Twice Paul says rejoice *always*. And if we respond to Paul by saying, “That’s not possible; that’s an emotional contradiction to the reality of pain in this world,” Jesus responds to our objection one way, and Paul responds another way, but both say essentially the same thing.

Joy and Sorrow Mingled

Jesus responds, “No, I don’t speak in contradictions. I will say again, as I said in Matthew 5 and Luke 6, ‘It is precisely when you are being reviled and persecuted that I command you to rejoice and be glad. It is precisely when you are being hated and slandered that I command you to rejoice and leap for joy.’” That’s Jesus’s response.

“Christ is your wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Brag on him.”

Paul’s response is to give us a glimpse into his own experience in [2 Corinthians 6:10](#), where he describes himself as “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.” In other words, Paul won’t let us simplify life by saying that life consists in a sequence of sorrow, then rejoicing, then sorrow, then rejoicing.

At one level of emotional life there is such a sequence: “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning” ([Psalm 30:5](#)). But it is an oversimplification of Christian experience to think that joy in God should be a periodic reality in the Christian life, rather than perpetual. He won’t let us sequence life like that. He says, in order to illustrate his command to “rejoice *always*,” I live in sorrow and yet I’m *always* — even in sorrow — rejoicing.

Emotional Maturity Required

And I would caution you: if you are at the level of maturity in your Christian experience where that sounds like meaningless double-talk, you need to put your hand over your mouth, and walk with Jesus and his word for a few more years until you have grown up into this experience. We don't judge the Bible. The Bible judges us. When we think the Bible is emotionally contradictory, it is probably because of our own emotional immaturity in Christ.

One of my goals in this message is to help you forward into the kind of emotional maturity that Jesus and Paul are calling for. I do not claim to have arrived at age 72, but one thing I do: renouncing all the paralyzing effects of my past failures emotionally, I press on to the goal of experiencing in my life what the Bible commands me to experience, what the Bible illustrates in the saints' experience, and what the Bible provides teaching and grace and power in order to experience. And I hope this message will be part of God's school for your own growing into what the Bible commands and illustrates and empowers.

Unlock Perpetual Joy

So I invite you to turn with me to Romans 5, and our focus will be on verse 2, which I think is one of the many places in Scripture that provide the key to the joy that is uniquely Christian and is supposed to be perpetual not periodic.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and *we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* (Romans 5:1-2)

No Condemnation in Christ

So this message is going to be built around the phrase, "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." But first here are just a few words about the context in verses 1-2.

Verse 1: “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith . . .” Justification by faith apart from works of the law has been the theme of Romans since 3:20 and until the end of chapter 4. Now Paul treats it as accomplished in his readers: “Having been justified . . .”

In his life and death, Jesus Christ provided a sinless obedience and a sinless suffering. His obedience stands before God as a justice-satisfying righteousness. And his suffering stands before God as a punishment-satisfying sacrifice.

And when the Holy Spirit quickens us from our spiritual deadness, and imparts to us the gift of faith, we are united to Christ through that faith, and — wonder of wonders — Christ’s obedience becomes our righteousness, and Christ’s suffering becomes our punishment. Our perfection before God is secured, and our punishment is past, so “there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” ([Romans 8:1](#))

Stand in Grace and Peace

Paul mentions two effects of our justification, one in verse 1 and the other in verse 2. First “*we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Peace* means there is no more wrath from God toward us, and no more rebellion from us toward God ([Romans 5:9-10](#)).

The second effect of justification that Paul mentions is in verse 2: “Through him [Christ] we have *also* obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.” When God’s wrath goes away, and our enmity toward God goes away, it doesn’t leave a vacuum. Where once we stood under wrath, and where once we stood in enmity, we now stand in grace. “We have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.” Nothing comes to us from God that is not grace! *Nothing*. Everything that comes to us is the *undeserved, everlasting, omnipotent good will of God* toward us in Christ Jesus.

Glory Is the Goal

So why doesn't Paul say, "And we rejoice in the peace and grace of God, in which we stand"? Why instead does he say, "And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God?" There are two reasons at least.

One is that in this peace and in this grace where we stand, there are so many afflictions. And the only way we can maintain joy in this afflicted peace and this afflicted grace is hope. He unpacks that in [Romans 5:3-5](#).

“We don't judge the Bible. The Bible judges us.”

The second reason Paul puts the emphasis on *rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God* is that we were not justified *ultimately* to have God's wrath and our enmity taken away. That's not the ultimate goal. We were not justified ultimately to stand in grace where the undeserved, omnipotent, everlasting good will of God works all our afflictions together for our good. That's not the ultimate goal.

Justification, and peace with God, and standing in grace are all glorious, blood-bought means by which God brings us to the ultimate goal of our salvation, namely *the glory of God*. So Paul says, "As we enjoy peace with God now, and as we stand in the grace of God now, we are waiting, longing, *hoping* for the *ultimate good* of the gospel: *the glory of God*."

Boast in Hope

So that's the context of the statement, "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Now let's look more closely at the statement itself.

The first thing to notice here is that little footnote that you see beside the word "rejoice" in the ESV. It says that it can also be translated "boast": "We *boast* in hope of the glory of God." The word really does have that basic meaning: "boast" or "brag." So how does a word that even the New Testament regards as denoting a *sinful* attitude come to be used so positively for rejoicing or boasting in hope of the glory of God?

Boasting really is sinful until something changes it — and yet doesn't change it so much that we stop using the word. Paul says in [1 Corinthians 1:29](#) that God chooses his people in such a way “that no human being might boast in the presence of God.” No boasting in the presence of God! It's bad. Don't do it.

Bragging Transformed

So what has to happen to boasting on its way to such positive use here in [Romans 5:2](#)? The word must be stripped of all connotation of deserving, and earning, and self-exaltation. Boasting as a means of exalting myself has to go. Here's the way Paul strips boasting of self-exaltation:

What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? ([1 Corinthians 4:7](#)).

In other words, if you're going to boast, it will have to connote not that you deserve anything, but that everything good in your life is a free gift. Everything. Boasting of the worldly, self-exalting kind is over for the Christian when you stand in grace.

ALL CREDIT TO CHRIST

Well, what's left of “boasting” if you strip it of a sense of deserving and self-exaltation? How do you use it? The New Testament really does use it over and over again positively. You can hear what's left of boasting in [1 Corinthians 1:30-31](#), right after he says no one should boast in the presence of the Lord.

Because of him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

You think you have wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption? You do. But it is all a gift. Christ is your wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Therefore brag on him. He deserves the credit. He is to be exalted for his achievement. Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.

There is a massive difference between Christ-exalting boasting and self-exalting boasting. But it's still boasting. Paul does not junk the word *boast* (*kauchaomai*) and replace it with the word *rejoice* (*chairō*). There is still a difference between "boasting in the Lord" and "rejoicing in the Lord," no matter how much they overlap.

SWEPT UP INTO GLORY

Boasting still connotes: I am receiving some honor or some privilege or some riches or some glory. Only now, in the mouth of the Christian, there's no connotation of "I deserve them," or "I am the decisive cause of them," or "In receiving them I am the main one being exalted." The word "rejoice" doesn't have built into it the connotation of receiving some honor or privilege or riches or glory. But boasting does.

Which is why in [Romans 5:2](#) it is so natural for Paul to say, "We boast in hope of the glory of God." There's going to be some participation here! Some honor or glory or beauty is going to sweep us up into it in some way. Boasting in *that* means: That glory is going to mark us. That will be our insignia. We get to wear that uniform. And we don't deserve any of it.

BOAST FOR JOY

One more thing to notice about this boasting in [Romans 5:2](#). It really is a joyful emotion. We know this, for example, from [2 Corinthians 12:9](#) where Paul says, "I will *boast* all the more *gladly* of my weaknesses" because Christ's power is made perfect in weakness. The idea is that all boasting is glad, not sullen. But Paul is going to take normal gladness in *all* boasting to a superlative level (*hēdistā*, superlative of *hēdeōs*) when he boasts in his Christ-exalting weaknesses.

So [Romans 5:2](#) really does mean that *we are glad* in our hope. Joyful, happy, thrilled, as we boast in hope of the glory of God. We boast, we exult, we rejoice, we leap for joy (as Jesus said) in hope of the glory of God.

You Can Share in Divine Joy

So what is *the glory of God* that we are confident will be our future?

It could mean that we will, at last, no longer see through a glass darkly, but rather see, as it were, “face to face” ([1 Corinthians 13:12](#)). Finally, we behold the infinite beauty of God as it really is. And it could mean that we will not only see the glory of God, but be glorified by it and share in it. Paul puts both of those back to back in [Romans 8:17–18](#): [We are] heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also *be glorified with him* [that’s being changed into the likeness of Christ and *sharing in God’s glory*]. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us [that is, a glory we will see.] And of course they will be inseparable. John says that when we see him “we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” ([1 John 3:2](#)).

But Paul could have said, “We boast in the hope that we will be glorified.” He could have put the emphasis there. But he didn’t. He put the emphasis on the ultimate reality of the universe. And it is not us, no matter how glorified. It is God — the God of infinite glory.

Of course, we would not be able to glorify God *as God* in the age to come, if we were not made partakers of the joy of God in God ([John 17:24–26](#)). The glorifying of God by his people will depend on us having Godlike capacities to know God and enjoy God. Therefore, the glory of God will not receive its proper, fitting, eternal exaltation apart from our glorification.

The Lord Alone

But when all is said and done, God alone will be God. God’s glory alone will be the ultimate Beauty and Value. Everything about us will be derivative, and God alone will be the Original. Everything about us will be dependent, and God alone will be self-sufficient.

“The Lord alone will be exalted in that day” ([Isaiah 2:11](#), [17](#)). And it will be our joy to have it so. It will be our boast. Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord — so that the glory of the Lord alone might be exalted.

There is a profound sense in which we will share in the glory of God, and a profound sense in which we will *not* share in the glory of God. And it will be our boast that both are true. When we “shine like the sun in the kingdom of [our] Father” ([Matthew 13:43](#)), God’s superior, original brightness will give crystal clear meaning to [Isaiah 48:11](#): “My glory I will not give to another.” That too will be our boast, our insignia.



Williamson Photography

Live in Hope

Let me draw out two implications for your life as we close.

Destined for Glory

I got word on Monday that one of our long-standing members with whom I have been associated for over twenty years was in the hospital, perhaps in the last stages of life

with cancer. I cleared it with Jason Meyer and went to see her. She is younger than I am — probably the age of many of your parents. I sat with this woman who may be weeks away from seeing the glory of God.

“Everything good in your life is a free gift. Everything.”

And do you know what we did for fifteen minutes? We boasted in hope of the glory of God. We exulted in our future together. We rejoiced that we are both so close to seeing and sharing in the glory of God.

Whether you are a pastor or not, you will get a chance to do this. It will be a glorious part of your call. When a person has sat under your ministry for twenty years, the weight of the glory of the sovereign goodness of God in suffering is a precious and powerful presence in the room as you boast together in the glory of God. I looked her in the eye and said, “God has not appointed you for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for you so that whether you wake or sleep you will live with him — and he is your glory” (see [1 Thessalonians 5:9–10](#)). You will do this someday.

Steady-State Joy

Finally, I end where I began. Christians are not called to have periodic joy in God, but perpetual. “Sorrowful, yet *always* rejoicing.” And I am arguing that the key to such steady-state joy in God is hope in the glory of God through the worst sufferings — physical and emotional. This is what Jesus said:

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.” ([Matthew 5:11–12](#))

Rejoice always, even in suffering, because these sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory you will see.

This was the way the early Christians — and all Christians — were able to love others at great cost to themselves. This is the source of compassion when it may cost us our lives.

For you had compassion on those in prison, and you *joyfully* accepted the plundering of your property, *since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.* ([Hebrews 10:34](#))

Infinitely better. Infinitely lasting. The all-satisfying glory of God.

In this message, John Piper addressed a group of prospective students at [Bethlehem College & Seminary](#) in downtown Minneapolis. Students are equipped for joyful lives of high-impact, helping other people be eternally happy, by learning and sharing that God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

*John Piper (@JohnPiper) is founder and teacher of [desiringGod.org](#) and chancellor of Bethlehem College & Seminary. For 33 years, he served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is author of [more than 50 books](#), including *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* and most recently *Come, Lord Jesus*.*

ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED BIBLICAL COUNSELORS

Joy in the Midst of Sorrow

In the midst of sorrow, in the midst of pain, we find help, comfort, and peace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[Travis Formoso](#)

•Mar 25, 2022

Charles Spurgeon once said that “The road to sorrow has been well trodden, it is the regular sheep track to heaven, and all the flock of God have had to pass along it.”¹ How is it that we get through the most difficult and painful of times and circumstances? What do we do in those moments and in those times that we don’t know what to do or we don’t know what to pray?

My wife and I recently went through a miscarriage and experienced pain and sorrow that we have never faced before. There are many questions we ask when we go through a tragic circumstance, when we experience pain that we have never experienced, or go through something unexpected. We may think in these moments that God is absent, that He does not care, that we brought this on ourselves, that God is not for us, but He is against us. And when we cry out to God it seems as if there is no answer and no help.

How do we get through these difficult and painful times? Where do we find hope, how do we find hope, and where do we turn to? In the midst of sorrow, in the midst of pain, we find help, comfort, and peace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Jesus was about to leave the disciples and go back to His Father, the disciples experienced great pain, sorrow, and loss. Jesus comforted His disciples by telling them He will turn their sorrow into joy. As Jesus was leaving the upper room with His disciples and heading toward the Garden of Gethsemane, He spoke these words, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy” ([John 16:20](#)).

Joy in the Holy Spirit

One way we can experience joy in the midst of suffering is by experiencing joy in the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me” ([John 16:16](#)). Jesus was not only

referring to His death and resurrection, that would certainly bring the disciples joy, but He was referring to something more, something better, something greater—He would come to them in the person of the Holy Spirit and be with them forever ([John 14:16](#)). The Holy Spirit is our comforter, helper, and teacher ([John 14:26](#)).

How is it that we can have joy when we are going through a difficult and painful circumstance? Where do we find peace during the many sorrowful times in our lives? Through the Holy Spirit. He will give us joy, a joy that is not temporary, a joy that is not of this world, a joy that is supernatural, a joy that will uphold us and strengthen us during the most difficult of times ([Galatians 5:22](#); [Ephesians 3:16](#)).

Joy in the Cross of Christ

A second way we can experience joy in the midst of sorrow is by remembering and focusing on the cross of Christ. Jesus told the disciples that they will weep and lament and grieve but their sorrow will turn into joy ([John 16:20](#)).

The cross would cause there to be pain and sorrow and sadness for the disciples, but that very same event would be the cause of their rejoicing. It's the cross of Christ that turns our sorrow into joy. The Lord promises us that if we repent of our sins and trust in Christ alone for salvation, we are reconciled to God and have eternal life.

[Hebrews 12:2](#) says that Jesus endured the cross, for the joy that was set before Him, despising the shame. His joy was full, His joy was complete, He went to the cross, fulfilling the purposes of His Father perfectly and completely, knowing that the cross would bring to Himself the redeemed, and He found His joy in doing the will of the Father. Our joy comes from our perfect Savior doing what we could never do for ourselves by providing redemption and reconciliation to God for all who trust in Him.

Our sorrow is turned into joy knowing that our sins have been paid for, knowing that we have eternal life, knowing that we will be with Christ for all eternity, knowing we will be in perfect fellowship and communion with our Lord forever, that is what brings us joy and turns our sorrow into joy.

Joy in Answered Prayer

A final way we can have joy in the midst of sorrow is by having our prayers answered. Jesus said, “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full” [John 16:23-24](#)).

When Jesus leaves His disciples, He tells them to pray and ask the Father for what they need, and the Father will give it to them. They have not asked up until this point because Jesus provided everything they needed, but when He leaves, they are to pray and ask the Father in His name and He will supply all they need. We are to do the same.

What should we pray for? We should pray for God’s glory, that His kingdom is advanced through the preaching of the gospel, that people would repent and turn to Christ for salvation. Additionally, we should pray for our sanctification, that we would become more like Christ on a daily basis, that we would reflect Him in our daily lives ([Romans 8:28-29](#)). Not only should we pray this for ourselves, but we should pray this for one another in the body of Christ. It should be our desire to see each other become more like Christ.

When we see prayer answered this way when we see the kingdom advance, when we see Christ glorified, we rejoice, no one will take our joy from us, and our joy is full and complete all because of Christ and what He has done for us.

We can have joy in the midst of sorrow when we turn to Christ, find satisfaction in Christ, knowing that He provides us with His Spirit who helps us, comforts us, and produces His joy within us.

TOPICS: [Suffering](#)

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