

How Do We Rejoice in Trials? 1 Peter 1:6

1 – A Virtual New Member’s Class next Thursday, the 23rd at 7pm. Call the church office and Debbie will send you the book

2 – Emma Smith trusted Jesus as her Savior. This is our 2nd child at Heritage to become a Christian during this pandemic.

3 – Priscilla Knode led her 80-year old brother to Christ on the telephone and her six-year-old grandson also trusted Jesus.

4 – It looks like we will be doing this at least through April

5 – Thanks to the CG leaders, CGs and deacons for being the church

6 – Keep reading through the Bible

7 – Thank you for being the church – Sign: “*No Church Until Further Notice*”

8 – Thank you for giving. Heritage is doing well financially. Every local and foreign ministry we support has confidence in us and we are proving worthy of their trust. The elders and deacons want to know of any needs that can be met.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 - *For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰For you are our glory and joy.*

Text

I read several articles today that about the psychological effect and mental state of Americans during this pandemic. We all need a word of good news. Peter has just that for us but, at first, it may sound like he has set the bar for mental wellness at an extremely high standard.

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

Peter, once hope-deprived, has become a source of hope for his hope-deprived readers, Christian Jews spread throughout the Roman Empire (1:c) because of persecution in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1).

How did this happen? Peter the denier became Peter the apostle. 1a

Who did this? Jesus Christ. 1b

What is God's purpose behind the dispersion?

- *According to the foreknowledge of God the Father. 2a*
- *In the sanctification of the Spirit 2b*
- *For obedience to Jesus Christ. 2c*
- *And for sprinkling with his blood. 2d*

This is how God multiplies his '*grace and peace*' to them. 2e

Peter introduces himself, demonstrates God's sovereignty and purpose in the suffering of these '*elect exiles*' (1) and then immediately breaks out into a doxology – a song

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." 3

Blessed = eulogetos = to eulogize or praise = to speak well of

How are you 'speaking well' of God during this Covid-19 pandemic? Or are you?

Hebrews 13:15 - *Through him [Jesus] then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.*

Proverbs 12:14 - *From the fruit of his mouth a man is satisfied with good,*

To speak well of God requires that we think about the 'good' (Pr 12:14) that God has done for us through "him" (Hb 13:15).

*When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.*

The optimist thinks on God.
The pessimist thinks on circumstances.

*The worth and excellency of a soul is to be measured by the object of
its love.*

Henry Scougal

This is one of the many benefits of reading through the Bible. We get to see God, to know him, to watch him work and to trust His heart and plan

The Life of God in the Soul of Man by Henry Scougal - <https://ccel.org/ccel/scougal/life/life>

How do I know what I love? What do you think about? You love what you think about.

That eulogy is surrounded by what Peter is thinking about. His song is caused by vs 1-2 and 3-5

- *His great mercy. 3b*
- *He has caused us to be born again. 3c*
- *A living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 3d*
- *An inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. 4*
- *Guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time 5*

No wonder Peter is singing.

Do you want to love Jesus? You really can't love what you don't know. And the more you know God, the more you will love him.

Do you want to love Jesus? Read the Gospels? Read Mark. It's the shortest, It's succinct. It's direct.

8 – *“Though you have not seen him, you love him.”* You have something more than these believers possessed; a completed Bible. You can see Jesus in the Gospels.

As we are reading through the Bible, we see him everywhere, don't we? So that, by the time we come to the Gospels, we 'see' him for whom we have longed throughout the Old Testament.

In Genesis, He's the Breath of life
 In Exodus, the Passover Lamb
 In Leviticus, He's our High Priest
 Numbers, The Fire by night
 Deuteronomy, He's Moses' voice
 In Joshua, He is Salvation's Choice
 Judges, Law Giver
 In Ruth, the Kinsmen-Redeemer
 First and Second Samuel, our Trusted Prophet
 In Kings and Chronicles, He's Sovereign
 Ezra, True and Faithful Scribe
 Nehemiah, He's the Rebuilder of broken walls and lives
 In Esther, He's Mordecai's Courage
 In Job, the timeless Redeemer
 In Psalms, He is our Morning Song
 In Proverbs, Wisdom's Cry
 Ecclesiastes, the Time and Season
 In the Song of Solomon, He is the Lover's Dream
 In Isaiah, He's Prince of Peace
 Jeremiah, the Weeping Prophet
 In Lamentations, the Cry for Israel
 Ezekiel, He's the call from sin
 In Daniel, the Stranger in the fire
 In Hosea, He is Forever Faithful
 In Joel, He's the Spirits power
 In Amos, the Arms that carry us

In Obadiah, He's the Lord our Savior
 In Jonah, He's the Great Missionary
 In Micah, the Promise of Peace
 In Nahum, He is our Strength and our Shield
 In Habakkuk and Zephaniah, He's pleading for revival
 In Haggai, He Restores a lost heritage
 In Zechariah, our Fountain
 In Malachi, He is the Sun of righteousness rising with healing in His wings
 In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, He is God, Man, Messiah
 In the book of Acts, He is Fire from heaven
 In Romans, He's the Grace of God
 In Corinthians, the Power of love
 In Galatians, He is Freedom from the curse of sin
 Ephesians, our Glorious Treasure
 Philippians, the Servants heart
 In Colossians, He's the Godhead Trinity
 Thessalonians, our Coming King
 In Timothy, Titus, Philemon He's our Mediator and our Faithful Pastor
 In Hebrews, the Everlasting Covenant
 In James, the One Who heals the sick.
 In First and Second Peter, He is our Shepherd
 In John and in Jude, He is the Lover coming for His bride
 In the Revelation, He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords

And so we say like Job, *"I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you..."* (Job 42:5).

And what do we see?

To the artist, He is the One altogether lovely—Song of Solomon 5:15
 To the architect, He is the Chief Cornerstone—1 Peter 2:6
 To the astronomer, He is the Sun of Righteousness—Malachi 4:2
 To the baker, He is the Bread of life—John 6:35
 To the banker, He is the Hidden Treasure—Matthew 13:44
 To the builder, He is the Sure Foundation—Isaiah 28:16
 To the carpenter, He is the Door—John 10:7
 To the doctor, He is the Great Physician—Jeremiah 8:22
 To the educator, He is the Great Teacher—John 3:2

To the electrician, He is the Light of the world—John 8:12
 To the engineer, He is the New and Living way—Hebrews 10:20
 To the farmer, He is the Sower and Lord of harvest—Luke 10:2
 To the florist, He is the Rose of Sharon—Song of Solomon 2:1
 To the geologist, He is the Rock of Ages—1 Corinthians 10:4
 To the horticulturist, He is the True Vine—John 15:1
 To the judge, He is the only righteous Judge of man—2 Timothy 4:8
 To the juror, He is the Faithful and True Witness—Revelation 3:14
 To the jeweler, He is the Pearl of great price—Matthew 13:46
 To the lawyer, He is Counselor, Lawgiver, and True Advocate—Isaiah 9:6
 To the newspaper man, He is Good News of great joy—Luke 2:10
 To the oculist, He is the Light of the eyes—Proverbs 29:13
 To the philanthropist, He is the unspeakable Gift—2 Corinthians 9:15
 To the philosopher, He is the Wisdom of God—1 Corinthians 1:24
 To the preacher, He is the Word of God—Revelation 19:13
 To the priest, He is foreshadowed in the Tabernacle—Exodus 25:8**
 To the sculptor, He is the Living Stone—1 Peter 2:4
 To the servant, He is the Good Master—Matthew 23:8–10
 To the sinner, He is the Lamb of God who takes the sin away—John 1:29
 To the statesman, He is the Desire of all nations—Haggai 2:7
 To the student, He is the Incarnate Truth—1 John 5:6
 To the theologian, He is the Author and Finisher of our faith—Hebrews 12:2
 To the toiler, He is the Giver of rest—Matthew 11:28

When Eve birthed Cain, she said, “*I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD*” (Gen 4:1). She thought it was the fulfilment of Gen 3:15.

Ever since then, we have longed for “*a man*” whom the Lord would “*help*” to be that ultimate, man, the 2nd Adam, the Gardener who would make the garden beautiful again. We find him in Jesus.

John 20:15 – [Mary at the garden tomb] *Supposing him to be the gardener...*

It’s the only place in the Bible that the word, ‘*gardener*’ is found. Adam was given dominion in the garden, but he was never really a gardener. Jesus is the true and ultimate gardener.

Now, seeing him, verses 6-9 make great sense.

First: Rejoicing in Trials. 6

a) Trials are for ‘a little while’

Like the tide, God says to trials, “*This far and no more...*”

We see this in Job –

Job 1:12 - Behold, all that he has is in your hand. **Only** *against him do not stretch out your hand*

Job 2:6 - *Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.*

It is God who determines our trials. And they are but for ‘*a little while.*’

The whole Scripture points toward God’s reconciliation of all creation –

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.*

Reconciliation = to be restored – with more

The New Jerusalem will be far better than Eden. Why? Because Jesus is the gardener and not Adam.

b) Trials are ‘necessary’

We do not need to engage the world naively but biblically. We need to acknowledge it’s fallenness. We need to remember that Jesus said, “*In the world you will have tribulation*” (John 16:33) It is only as we see the world from this real perspective that we can ‘have peace” (33). Why? Because

the same verse says, the reason we can have ‘peace’ and ‘take heart’ is because we know that He has ‘*overcome the world.*’

John 16:33 - *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*”

Tribulation = thlipsis = pressure, affliction, distress

Take heart = tharseo = courage (Acts 23:11)

Peace and encouragement don’t come from denying tribulation but knowing that Jesus has overcome the world.

Covid-19 does not get the last word. Even if it kills us, Jesus is the Omega; he has the last word. And his final word will be much akin to what he said standing at Lazarus’s tomb. Lazarus presents all of us with a picture of our future –

John 11:43 – *“Lazarus, come out.”* (Put your name there)

*Ain’t no grave, gonna hold my body down
If you walk out of that grave, I’m walking too!*

Trials are for ‘a little while’

Trials are ‘necessary’

c) Trials are ‘grievous’

Trials are necessary because the world is fallen. They are also grievous. Christians are realists. Trials hurt.

Grievous = lupeo = distressed, sorry. In Mark 10:22 = disheartened

Jesus has taken upon himself the greatest grief

Matthew 26:38 - *My soul is very sorrowful, even to death*

'Sorrowful' = *perilupsos* = *peri* & *lupe* (same word as v 6) except for the prefix, 'peri' which means 'around' or 'surrounded.'

It is because of his sorrow that our sorrow "*will turn into joy*" (John 16:20). Our "*hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you*" (John 16:22).

Trials are grievous. But Jesus has endured the greatest grief, ensuring that

- *goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life* (Ps 23:6a)

And when we die,

- *I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever* (Ps 23:6b)

In his life, death, burial, resurrection and exaltation, Jesus has purchased peace for us

And this means that we do

- *not grieve as others do who have no hope* (1 Thess 4:13).

In his life, death, resurrection and exaltation, Jesus has purchased peace for us a peace that is now and forever.

- a) Death – Romans 5:1 – Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) Resurrection – John 20:19 - *On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."*
- c) Exaltation - Hebrews 1:13 - *Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"*

Trials are for 'a little while'
 Trials are 'necessary'
 Trials are 'grievous'

d) Trials are 'various' = variegated

You know this is true. Put this pandemic in its place by remembering former trials.

Gilda Radner was a talented comic who became famous on Saturday Night Live. She died at 43 of ovarian cancer and titled her memoir after a line from her most famous character, titled, "*It's Always Something.*" And it is.

Generally speaking, we are either going into, in or coming out of a trial. If it isn't Covid-19, something else will be trying to steal your heart from Jesus.

And yet, in the midst of all of this, Peter acknowledges that his readers "*rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory*" (v 8).

How are we able to rejoice in trials? Because of vs 2-3 & 3-5!

Conclusion:

We are all going to endure trials. That is not even in question. But the real question is, "*How will you endure Covid-19, i.e., the trials in your life?*"

How do we rejoice in trials? The answer began in verse 1. Peter's hopelessness was changed into hope by Jesus Christ.

Suffering is like smelling salts; it's very disagreeable but very effective at waking you up. Suffering wakes us up to God so that we can look to him for joy.

Psalm 34:5 - *Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.*

John 20:20 - *Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.*

'glad' = *chairō* = to be well, thrive / 75t in NT

What made the difference in the disciples? "...*they saw the Lord.*"

ILL – Lillias Trotter was born in 1853 (d. 1928) as the child of a wealthy English family and as an adult, became a gifted artist. Her father died when she was 12 and it turned her focus toward an eternal Father. She and her mother became friends and supporters of the American evangelist, D.L. Moody. But John Ruskin, the leading art critic of the Victorian era, told Lilly that she could be the greatest painter of her day if only she would focus on that single thing. But her heart was drawn to missions and, although rejected by the North African Mission Board for poor health, she and two friends left England and founded the Algiers Mission Band, a self-supporting mission agency.

On their first day there, Lilly wrote, *"Three of us stood there, looking at our battle-field, none of us fit to pass a doctor for any society, not knowing a soul in the place, or a sentence of Arabic or a clue for beginning work on untouched ground; we only knew we had to come. Truly if God needed weakness, He had it!"*

In Algiers, Lilly learned Arabic, taught sewing, led Bible classes, and wrote and illustrated Bible tracts to evangelize Muslim women. In one tract, titled, *Focused*, she wrote,

"Turn full your soul's vision to Jesus, and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him.... For "He is worthy" to have all there is to be had in the heart that He has died to win."

Helen Lemmel (1863-1961) read that tract and wrote these words,

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace*

The vision of Jesus will fill your horizon, putting trials in their appropriate place

- a) Temporary – this too shall pass
- b) Necessary – God is working it out for your good
- c) Grievous - Grievous – It still hurts
- d) Variegated – If it is not this, some other trial will plague you

v 7 - so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Note: You should read this book:

https://www.amazon.com/Passion-Impossible-Life-Lilias-Trotter-ebook/dp/B00KWHZDLM/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=lilias+trotter&qid=1586874417&sr=8-3

And your daughters should read this book:

https://www.amazon.com/Lily-Girl-Who-Could-See/dp/1938068084/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&keywords=lilias+trotter&qid=1586874443&sr=8-4