

Joyful In Sorrow

*"In all this you greatly rejoice,
though now for a little while
you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials."
1 Peter 1:6 (NIV)*

A paradox in the Christian life is expressed in our verse today. A paradox is a statement that has conflicting ideas. Peter is speaking about how Christians have sorrow and great joy all at once.

As you read the context of our verse (1 Peter 1:3-9) you see how the apostle separates the things that cause joy and those which create sorrow into two different spheres or categories.

What is it that brings the Christian great joy – you may ask. Is it wealth or fame? Is it power and influence in the world? Never! What is it then – that gives us joy in the context of trouble?

First Peter refers to the resurrection of our Lord from the dead (1 Peter 1:3) as a cause for joy. That historical fact means that our debt of sin from first to last is fully paid. Our sins can never be held against

us in the coming day of judgment. So the resurrection of Jesus in the past has secured our eternal and future destiny in heaven.

Next Peter refers to our inheritance in heaven (1 Peter 1:4) as cause for joy. The glorious things God has prepared for us exceed our wildest imaginations (1 Corinthians 2:9). The glimpses we get of heaven include things like feasting, singing, and celebration. Elsewhere Paul says that the present suffering we endure is unworthy of comparison to what is ahead in heaven for believers (Romans 8:18).

Third, Peter makes mention of our final salvation (1 Peter 1:5). Every believer in Jesus ought to be full of joy at the prospect of leaving behind this sinful, tired and diseased old world. What our Lord has promised us is life in a world where disease, suffering, weeping, and sin are all totally absent. We are to rejoice that what causes us sorrow now

will be totally removed in the future when Jesus returns to take His people to heaven.

Can you take time today to reflect on these three amazing things that fill us with joy? They are Christ's resurrection, our inheritance in heaven and last our deliverance from sin, temptation and all suffering.

Dry those tears with the comfort of your future inheritance. Endure sorrow now because of the endless celebration in that great day. There will be no more frustrated plans, no sorrow, no sickness, no death, in heaven. We shall work and prosper as we fulfil our created purpose in the new Garden of Eden. So be joyful in sorrow!

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