

# Joy of the Fire

## The Life and Letters of Peter

### Bible Text(s):

1 Peter 1:3–9<sup>i</sup>; John 3:1–8<sup>ii</sup>; Romans 5:3–5<sup>iii</sup>; Hebrews 12:2<sup>iv</sup>

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### I. BORN AGAIN – A Radical Salvation

Peter begins by reminding us that salvation in Jesus Christ is radical. It's not about rebranding ourselves, joining a church, or trying harder. To be 'born again' means a complete transformation—a conversion brought about by God's mercy. Jesus told Nicodemus that unless a person is born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God. This is the heart of the Gospel: we are made new through Christ, not by our own efforts. Being born again is not just a label—it is God flipping the switch in our hearts, awakening us to faith in Jesus, and setting us in a brand-new direction.

**Reflection Question:** How do you see God's transforming work in your own story of faith?

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### II. A LIVING HOPE – The Resurrection Promise

We are not just born again—we are born again to a living hope. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have the promise of eternal life and resurrection. This living hope is more than a distant dream; it is a present reality that changes how we view today's struggles. Just as Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him, so we can endure trials knowing the outcome of our faith is secure. Hope is the anchor that allows us to rejoice even when life feels overwhelming. It reshapes our expectations and helps us see the bigger picture of what God is doing.

**Reflection Question:** How does the hope of resurrection give you strength in difficult seasons?

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### III. THERE IS PURPOSE IN YOUR PAIN

Peter assures us that trials have purpose. Joy and pain can exist together because our faith is being refined, like gold tested by fire. God is weaving the story of our lives into a masterpiece—though from our perspective it may look like chaos, He sees the design. Suffering is not wasted; it builds patience, character, and hope. That is why we must build our lives on Christ alone—not on careers, wealth, or even family—because those can be lost. Only a living hope in Jesus will remain unshaken and lead us to eternal joy.

**Reflection Question:** Where in your struggles do you need to trust that God is weaving something beautiful?

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<sup>i</sup> *"Blessed 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,"* (1 Peter 1:3, ESV)

<sup>ii</sup> *"Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews."* (John 3:1, ESV)

<sup>iii</sup> *"Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,"* (Romans 5:3, ESV)

<sup>iv</sup> *"Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Hebrews 12:2, ESV)