

PART TWO HANDOUT ADVERSITY...BURDEN OR BRIDGE

Today we are going to look at What Peter had to say about the Outcome of Adversity. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9

In this epistle, Peter is writing to Christians who because of Persecution in Rome have been scattered and spread throughout Asia Minor, [Modern-Day Turkey]. *These Believers were Being Persecuted for Following Christ; they Were Being Persecuted for Being Different. So...Peter Writes to Encourage Them.*

Verse 6 can be translated "Rejoice In This". Peter Says, It Is Possible for Believers in the Midst of their Trials to have "Both Great Joy and Grief" at the Same Time.

- Some had Lost their Land, Others their loved ones and their careers, and yet Peter says they can still have Great Joy in the Midst of these Many Kinds of Trials.

Peter suggests there is a Secret for a Christian to have Joy while Suffering through Every Adversity...From a Bankruptcy...To Cancer...Or Even a Lost Family Member!

- Yet We Tend to Ask...*Is it Realistic that Both Joy and Grief Can Exist Together?*

In Scripture...Peter is Not the Only Writer who Teaches this Apparent "Paradox". Paul Lived It. 2 Cor. 6:10

- Paul said he was At the Same Time "Sorrowful" and Still "Rejoicing." To have Joy in Trials is NOT to Deny the Pain. It is to Recognize the Fact that, In Christ, they Can Exist Together.
- *Believers Must have the "Right Focus" in order to have JOY Midst Their Trials. Experiencing Jesus Power and Provision and Knowing Eternity is the Goal.*
- With this Right Focus on Adversity every trial will become a BRIDGE to walking closer with Christ.

Peter Makes Clear We Can Live a Joyful Christian Life Even as We Go Through the Various Trials of Life.

In vs 6 Peter Points Back to what he said in verses 3-5 when he says, In All This You "Greatly Rejoice". Read 1 Peter 1:3-5 **Let's Look at the Secrets to Having JOY in the Midst of Trials and Adversity.**

#1-We Rejoice in Our New Birth. Read VS 3 The Greatest Gift Every Believer in Christ has been Given is a New Home! We No longer focus on this temporary life...We focus on our Eternal Heavenly Home!

- EARTH IS NOT OUR FINAL HOME...HEAVEN IS OUR FINAL HOME!
- KEY: Heaven is to be Our Focus While Going Through the Adversities of this Fallen World.
- **Problem...Our Old Nature Seeks to Make Life Here on Earth...HEAVEN!**
- Therefore, We Get Upset...Even Mad at God When things Go Different than We Think they Should.

KEY: In every Trial or Adversity... *We Have a Choice*...Focus on the Problem and Trials We are Facing...Or Focus on the Eternal Promises God Has Provided!

ISSUE: Too Often We Don't Consider Heaven Our Ultimate Prize and Goal. Instead, We Try Make this Life Our #1 Goal and Focus...And When it is Not Perfect...When Things Go Wrong...We Get Discouraged.

- This Incorrect Focus...Makes Every Thing We Face A...BURDEN! It Leaves Us Tired and Exhausted! Emptied of JOY...And Often Disillusioned and BITTER!

#2-We Rejoice in Our Undefined Inheritance. VS-4 Jesus said in John 17:22 that the glory he had in heaven has been shared with us. Rom 8:17 declares we are co-heirs with Christ, and what is the Son's is Ours. **No Matter What Happens in This Life...Our Eternity With Christ is Sure!**

- We Know That Everything in this World Will Pass Away...But Your Eternity in Christ is Secure and it Will Be Better Than Anything You and I Can Even Imagine!

Question to Answer: *Is Heaven My First Love or is it My Temporary Existence here on Planet Earth?*

- When Heaven's Our #1 Priority we benefit from this inheritance Now. Eph. 1:3 says, "*We have every spiritual blessing in heavenly places.* These Spiritual Blessings include: Gods Provision and Protection, His Sovereign Plan to Make Us More Like Christ, We have The Fruit of the Spirit Peace, Joy, Etc. And He Empowers Us To Have a Powerful Holy Spirit Filled Ministry Reaching the Lost!

The Question Each of Us Need to Answer is... *Am I Willing to Surrender to God's Plan for My Life and Enjoy these Spiritual Blessings During My Journey through this Earthly Life?* Read VS-5

- Whatever You Are Facing Now...Pales in Comparison to Your Eternal Inheritance with Christ!
- **KEY:** If you are Born again, You are Kept by God's Power "until the Coming of Salvation" which will be "Revealed" at the Coming of Christ...**NOT by the Power of Your Faith.** Eph 2:8, 9 & Rom 10
- **CONSIDER:** The Promise of Rom 8:28 Is Only True if Our Salvation and Inheritance are Secure; Only then can All things Work Together for the Good of those who Love the Lord.

KEY: *Too many Christians Fail to Focus on the Benefits of their Salvation, and therefore, have Lost Joy when Their Inheritance on Earth is Affected.* Vs-6 says REJOICE IN THIS! Read Phil 3:8

We Can Rejoice in Trials Because They Have Purpose. Trials are NOT haphazard; they are Not by accident—God has Not Forgotten about Us. Vs-6 says, "you may have had to." This can be translated "if necessary" as in the ESV or "if need be" as seen in the KJV.

Listen to what the writer of Hebrews said about trials: *"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father"* (Heb 12:7) The Point the Author is Making, is that God is In Control of Every Hardship a Believer Goes Through (Eph 1:11; Rom 8:28)

Read 1 Cor. 10:13 Paul says not only is God in total control, but He is Controlling the Temperature Gauge on Every Trial. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. He knows exactly what you need and how much you can handle. So...Believers can Rejoice in Trials because--They Have Purpose.

Some Trials are Necessary to Turn Us Away From Sin. Listen to what David said about his experience with discipline: *"Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I obey your word"* (Ps 119:67).

- Trials sometimes are Necessary to Protect Us from Sin. Paul and his thorn in the flesh.
- Paul says 2 Cor 12:7: *"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me"*.
- Likewise, many trials we go through could possibly be a form of God's grace to keep us from sin. The trial given to Paul was a work of grace to keep him from the sin of pride.

Trials are Ultimately Needed in order for Us to Grow in Godly Character. Read Hebrews 12:11

- We are trained by persevering through the trial and seeking the Lord and his Word in the midst of it. However, those who are not trained by it often develop strongholds.

Finally, Trials may be Necessary in order to Further Equip Us for Ministry.

- Paul said: *Who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*
- There are some Christians, especially young Christians, who struggle with how to comfort somebody in the midst of a failure, a loss, or some depression.
- I've found that my experiences have helped me to minister to others.
- God Wants to Use the Trials He Takes You Through to Be a Blessing and Minister to Others.

You'll have Joy in the Midst Trials as you...Focus on the Benefits of Your Great Salvation Your New Birth, Your Inheritance, and Your Eternal Security in Christ. Focus on Eternity...Trials are Brief in Comparison to Eternity. Focus on God's Sovereignty & Purpose in Your Trials...Trials Are Not Accidents! They are necessary for Your growth and maturation in Christ. Focus on Your Faith...Trials Prove the Genuineness of Your Faith. (Actions) Focus on the Eternal Glory...Where Your Faithfulness in Trials Will be Rewarded. Focus on Your Relationship with Christ nowing Your Trials Can Bring Deep Intimacy with Christ.

"LIFE" POINT: IN THE MIDST OF MY TRIALS I WILL CHOOSE TO REJOICE!