

HOPEFUL

Standing Firm in the Hope and Encouragement of the Grace of God

Tales from the Boat Series

Studies in 1 Peter

Lesson Title: Smiling Through Suffering

Introduction:

- A. Of all the disciples, none stands as front and center as does Peter. He dominates every scene he is in.
- B. Peter appears in Scripture in Mark 1:16-18. He is partners with his brother Andrew, James and John, in a lucrative fishing business, when he received his calling from Jesus to follow Him.
- C. It wasn't long until Peter rose to a position of leadership among the disciples (Matthew 10:2).
- D. Peter's life can be graphed with extreme highs and lows.
 - 1. The high would be on the Mount of Transfiguration.
 - 2. The low would be his denial of Christ in the temple courtyard (Mark 14:66-72).
 - 3. That kind of crash ushers in a time of depression – the pain of failure.
- E. Turnaround!
 - 1. Predicted in Mark 16:7).
 - 2. Actual turnaround in John 21.
 - 3. The second chance turned Peter's life around (Book of Acts).

SURVEY OF 1 PETER

- A. **Peter introduces himself as an Apostle.** Apostles are the only office in the early church to be attached to Jesus Christ. Example: the apostle of Jesus Christ.
- B. **The recipients.**
 - 1. *"To the strangers"* or Pilgrims.
 - 2. *"Every foreign land is their native land, and every native land a foreign land...they pass their day upon earth, but their citizenship is in heaven."* William Barclay

3. It was a time of tension, due to interference with State authorities, who saw Christian as treasonable. This created feelings of perplexity and hesitation and Peter wanted to rally them.
4. Peter is writing to remind them of the resources of their faith – his emphasis is **HOPE! STAND FIRM IN THE HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE GRACE OF GOD.**
5. There are only 105 verses in this letter, but the theme of suffering surfaces often.

C. Lessons!

1. Failure does not nullify purpose in the future.
2. A broken heart is good preparation for healing fractured lives.
3. One word of hope brings more encouragement than 1000's of thought not expressed.

HOW WE CAN SMILE THROUGH SUFFERING (1 Peter 1:1-12)

A. ***The one thing we all have in common – we are hurt.***

1. Tears are the same for all of us.
2. Since pain is such a pervasive problem, we need a potent prescription, and we have it in 1 Peter.
3. Peter's failure and restoration prepared him to write this book. He attempts to put pain in perspective by focusing on our position on position in Christ.
4. This is strong biblical doctrine that needs to be "fleshed out".

B. ***Peter's perspective on Hope.*** (v.2)

1. We are chosen.
2. We are being sanctified.
3. We have a full measure of God's grace and peace available to us.
4. God the Father chooses. God the Holy Spirit brings us to the acts of faith. God the Son cleanses us with His precious blood.
5. Grace is an enablement for daily living and peace produced by the Holy Spirit.

C. Why Christians can rejoice in suffering. (vs. 3-9)

1. James tells us to "***consider it all joy when we encounter various trials.***" (1:2)

2. God is the author of ACTS OF MERCY in CHRIST! This assures us of a sure hope of possessing a heavenly inheritance and being brought safely to the time of its enjoyment.
3. 1. W

HERE IS A LIST OF SIX REASONS WE HAVE FOR REJOICING

A. *We have a lively hope.* (v.3)

1. God made Jesus to be Lord when He raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:36), and that is where **our Hope** takes its rise – **hope**, which like the risen Lord is **Living** and **Undying**.
2. This is not only **our expectation** but also **our life** because through that resurrection we are born again and now share in His undying life.
3. Peter's contemplation of this caused him to respond with **simply praise**.
4. All **God's goodness** to us **begins with mercy**. "It is from mercy of God that all our hopes begin." Charles Spurgeon

B. *We have a permanent inheritance.* (v.4)

1. Our inheritance is like that of Aaron in Numbers 18:20 and like that of the Psalmist in 16:5-6, which is the gift of God Himself.
2. We cannot experience this inheritance without being born again.
3. Our inheritance includes the idea of a fully realized possession. It cannot be ravaged or polluted, not will it ever wear out or waste away, because it belongs to our future life.
4. It has been set aside or reserved and is waiting for our enjoyment. The Holy Spirit guarantees it.

C. *We have divine protection.* (v.5)

1. Our inheritance is certain because "***we are kept by the power of God.***"
2. Our security is maintained through our faith – we are abiding in a continuing fellowship with God.
3. No disorder, no disease, not even death itself can steal God's protection over our lives.

D. *We have a developing faith.* (vs. 6-7)

1. This is the first reference in Peter's letter to rejoicing. The words, "***even though***" means it is unconditional and does not depend on surrounding circumstances.
2. Three reasons: (1) to prove the genuineness of our faith and teach us humility. (2) to teach us compassion, and (3) to show us their variety.

E. ***We have an unseen Savior.*** (8)

1. The context of this verse is suffering, so Peter is not giving us some inconsequential, theological verbiage. He gives us something we can sink our teeth in.
2. There is a contrast here between the sight of Jesus and the knowledge of Him by faith.
3. Joy so profound that it is beyond the power of words to express.

F. ***We have a guaranteed deliverance.*** (9)

1. This is not only a deliverance from present sin but a glorification of our physical bodies.
2. Never let anyone convince you that we shall not rise.

WHY PROPHETS WERE CURIOUS (vs. 10-12)

A. ***Apostles verified their teachings by prophetic testimony.***

B. ***Two critical privileges afford to us that they did not have.***

1. They did not have the full plan.
2. They did not have the Holy Spirit living within them as we do today.

Conclusion: Only Christ's perspective can replace resentment with rejoicing. Jesus is the central piece of the puzzle. Fit Him in place and the rest of the puzzle makes sense.