

## 1 Peter 1:1-2 Rejoicing in Suffering Part 1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:

**Grace to you and peace be multiplied.**

**Set the Scene: Peter writes this letter about 30 years after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**

**A)The followers of Jesus have been emboldened to take the gospel all over the Roman Empire**

**B)The message of Jesus was met with Joy and excitement by many**

1)Who discovered through a relationship with the Risen Christ they could experience peace with God –

2)forgiveness of sin, Freedom from guilt

3) Hope for the future and purpose in the present.

**C)So the message of Jesus was met with Joy and excitement by many,**

1)but it was met by hostility from others – **the majority**

**A great deal of that hostility came from Rome and its crazy emperor Newsome! 😊 Nero**

**A)Nero was so wicked and hostile toward Christians he makes Newsome look like a boy scout in comparison.**

**B)Nero was so bad that even the Romans disliked him –**

**C)He raised the taxes to help fund his extravagant empire and building programs –**

1)which made him resented even by the upper classes.

**D)but there were no recall Nero opportunities in those days. – Stuck**

**Nero saw the growing Christianity as a threat to his power –**

**A)It is widely believed that Nero himself started “The Great Fire of Rome” in order to clear the way for a him to build himself a new palace.**

**B)However - He blamed the fire on the Christians**

1)because of that Rome was growing more and more Hostile toward followers of Jesus.

**C)Nero’s hatred of Christians was so great that would take them and tie them up in his garden – cover in wax**

1)Light them on fire and let them burn while he road naked on horseback shouting obscenities at the top of his lungs

**D)Peter saw the storm clouds looming and sensing the growing hostility was going to spread throughout the Rome empire**

**Peter identifies an Apostle - a messenger of Jesus Christ –**

**A)writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit**

**B)Writes this letter to believers to teach them how NOT to AVOID suffering –**

**1)But how to ENDURE suffering**

**My purpose in writing is to encourage you and assure you that what you are experiencing is truly part of God’s grace for you. Stand firm in this grace.”**

1 Peter 5:12 NLT

**Bb)This letter is much, much more than a hymn of comfort.**

1) It really is a call to action. These are marching orders; that Peter writes.

**C)And maybe that’s exactly what suffering people need to hear.**

**Think about it what is it that suffering does to you?**

**A)When you're disappointed, when you're discouraged, when you're hurt,**

**B)when you're fearful, when you're sick, what is the temptation?**

**C)The temptation is to turn inward; the temptation to become all too self-focused**

**1)and all too self-possessed, all too self-aware.**

**D) Peter seeks to take suffering people and blow them beyond the walls of their suffering**

1) By giving them a vision of something that's greater than the things that they're going through.

**Relevance for us?**

A) We are living in a world that is growing more and more hostile toward the gospel & Jesus followers.

B) Did you notice how many in the media were blaming Christians for what happened at the capitol on Wednesday?

C) Note this: Barring a Revival – (which is what we are praying for) but barring a revival – **the hostility against Christians is only going to grow**

1) That growing hostility might even be the precursor to the Revival that God sends.

**Here is the truth: Whether or not severe persecution comes/ we all know that living in this world as a Jesus follower = trials**

A) Trials are a normal part of the Christian life

B) Truth:

- You just came out of a trial
- You are in trial right now
- You are about to go into one

C) And as Peter opens his epistle he is going to give us some great insight into why we can rejoice

1) in the midst of our trials and suffering

D) We know that is what he is doing because of what he says in V.6 **In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials.**

**Now at first glance that sounds crazy –**

A) I am going through this trial that is so significant that I am broken hearted and grieving

B) But you are saying that I am to rejoice?

C) Not just rejoice – GREATLY REJOICE –

1) Jumping for Joy

D) Moments Jumping for Joy – The time I Hit the winning shot

1) My kids were born – Grandson – news of grand daughter

E) Today jumping for Joy looks a little different –

**In the opening verses of the book/ Peter is going to give us 7 reasons why we can greatly rejoice in the midst of trials – while - living hostile world**

A) We will look at 3 today and 4 next week.

**B) The reasons are connected to our identity in Jesus**

C) Peter does something in these first verses that is a theme throughout this letter.

1) He again and again is going to remind these people of who they are.

**Suffering people sometimes forget.**

A) Sometimes your pain, at whatever we are going through, looms so large that it produces in us 'identity amnesia' –

B) We just forget who we are in Christ

C) And so Peter starts by reminding these people, who are facing growing persecution

1) who they are as the children of God.

**In order to rejoice in suffering we need to remember this about our identity in Jesus**

**#1 This world is not our home our home!**

A) Note V.1 Peter calls them the **Pilgrims of the dispersion** -

B) Because when persecution started in Israel – believers in JC were dispersed all over the Roman empire.

C) I like that word Dispersed because it is deliberate and intentional

**The farmer disperses the seed on the farm – planting a crop – deliberate and intentional – plowed rows**

A) A General disperses his troops in a battle – take the enemy fortress

B) Investors disperse funds – they are wanting to build something and grow something

**God disperses his people like seeds in neighborhoods, schools, places of employment –**

A) He is seeking to build something – His kingdom

Aa) He seeking to take back ground that the enemy has taken

B) See When God disperses his people - it is an assignment

C) Listen change in thinking – Move new house - Assignment

1) New Job – assignment – new school- assignment

D) God has dispersed you -new place to do something with you and in you.

**But I want you to note that Peter also describes them as pilgrims**

A vagabond has no home; a fugitive is running from home; a stranger is away from home; a **pilgrim is heading home.** Warren Wiersbe

**NKJV version uses the term pilgrims – the NIV uses the term strangers –**

A) We are away from our home- heading home

B) Where is your home? – Oceanside – partially accurate –

1) Real home is in heaven

C) Philippians dual citizenship - USA – and Heaven

**Idea is don't get too comfortable here**

A) When our family moved here 24 years ago – when I became lead pastor at CV –

Aa) the house we bought in OCS D wasn't going to be ready few weeks

B) George and Debbi Bryson graciously allowed us to stay in a couple of bedrooms in their home.

C) Knowing that it was going to be temporary – we didn't get to comfortable

**I didn't say to Debbie – I really don't like the color of these walls – I am going to paint**

A) I didn't tell George that he needed to put a pool in because I like to swim

B) I didn't buy a TV for our bedroom and order cable so I could watch the games

**C) See when you believe that something is temporary it affects the way that you approach it**

1) You can put up with things you don't like because you know – this is only temporary

**When we are going through trials and suffering – we can rejoice because we know they are temporary – not going to last forever.**

A) It might feel like it at times –

B) Favorite phrases in the Bible - And it came to pass – all trials come to pass

1) One day the trial of living in this world is going to come to pass

C) One day King Jesus is going to come back to earth and set up a Perfect Kingdom –

1) Everything is right – pure – righteous  
His Kingdom will have no end

**So In order to rejoice in suffering we need to remember this about our identity in Jesus -**

**#1 This world is not our home our home!**

**#2 We belong to God**

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father

**B) Peter says we are the elect of God –**

1) Some translations use the word chosen – we were chosen according to the foreknowledge of God

C) Note: This the word election is always used in conjunction with salvation.

1) In other words – The Bible never mentions that someone is elected to damnation.

D) It is always in the positive God choosing you to be his child.

**This is such an amazing concept – magnifies the greatness of God - All Knowing**

A) God placed his love on you before the foundations of the world were set into place

B) I think, too often, when we think of God's foreknowledge, we just think of our salvation,

1) but listen: the work of God is progressive,

C)It covers my whole life as his child culminating with my glorification in his presence

**Everything I ever face, I can say to myself, "My Father knows this."**

A)Every place I'm in, my Father knows this location; my Father knows the situation;

B)my Father knows the circumstance; my Father knows what's going on with me,

**C)Because all that I am, all that I face, has been written into His book.**

D)But this is where we get hung up so often hung up

E)We say that if God loves me and God chose me to be his child –

1)why does he allow bad things to happen to me?

**We forget -we do the same thing as parents Teaching my kids to ride a bike:**

A)I knew that they were going to fall down – hurt and get scrapes

B)Amy at the dirt track fell twice – Denise lets go.... Bike

Bb)That day Amy learned to ride her bike – All my kids fell – hurt and was scary

1)But none of them remember that – You know what they remember – I taught them to ride a bike

C)They all really enjoy riding bikes –

**Another example: When my girls reached the age where boys started to take an interest in them –**

A)I saw the prognosis – Heart – hurt

B)We didn't allow them to date until 16 or 17 –

1)but I remember Amanda was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade – crush – this boy

**C)Boy was a jerk – mean to her- really hurt her feelings- I was so mad.**

1)But I am the Pastor – I have to play it cool – school at our church too. **BUT I WAS TICKED**

**Well my son – Aaron who was like 17 Jr. big guy–**

A)He went up to that boy one day and said – hurt my sister again – hurt you real bad!

B)I Heard about his threat – Pastor had – you did what?

1)Dad hat- Big hug – I am so proud of you son.

C)Great too. – It took a while for any boys to take an interest in his sisters after that.

**Here is my point -Knowing that boys were going to come into my daughter's lives and break their hearts**

A)I could have locked them up and isolated them until they were 30yrs old – **believe me I thought about it**

B)But you can't do that – not healthy –I KNOW that heartbreak is a part of life

1)It becomes a part of their story – it becomes a part of their testimony of how God is going to use them

**C)I can warn them – but then I have to wait and watch how things play out**

1)Be there to comfort in the aftermath

**IN the same way God could chose to take you to heaven the minute you get saved but he doesn't –**

A)He has designed that his way of working in this world is to use people to reach people.

**B)God could isolate you and shield you from all of the effects of living in a broken world plagued by sin**

1) **and sinners who hurt each other**

C)But that would hinder your effectiveness –

D)So God allows us to suffer and experience hurt and difficulty – make us relatable / useful

E)The Bible says **we are able to comfort others with the comfort that we receive from God.**

**I was talking this week with a brother who's wife died of cancer – a little over a year ago – she was in her mid 50's**

A)I was sharing with him how that is now a part of his story/for his assignment that God is going to use.

B)He is going to have the opportunity to minister to other widowers and widows

1)in a far greater way than I EVER could

C) His kids are going to have the opportunity to minister to other kids

1) in a way that someone else couldn't

**D) See it really boils down to this- how do you see God –**

1) If you only see him as the author of your story – you will be disillusioned

**You will look at the difficulties and only ask why? Why did that happen? That is unfair**

A) Many are looking back at 2020 and only asking why? – Disillusioned

**B) Stumbling in their faith**

1) See God only as the Author- the story you are writing stinks?

**C) The Bible says he puts people in power – Why them? –**

1) Lord the story you are writing is wrong

**But we need to see God not only as the Author of our story but also as the Hero.**

A) He allows these difficult things to happen in our lives – for a reason and purpose

B) A reason and a purpose that that GOES along with his glorious plan for his Kingdom –

C) We have a role to play in his kingdom – in his plan – **You are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works**

**Here is what is interesting about these people Peter is writing to**

A) It tells us that when they were dispersed they went preaching the gospel

B) The message of Jesus went throughout the Roman Empire

C) The Book of Acts says – they turned the world upside down

1) Transforming power of the gospel.

D) What the Devil meant for evil and to destroy the work of Christ – **God TURNED it for good –**

1) the gospel spread radically.

**So God in his foreknowledge allowed that trial to take place to do a greater work IN them and through them.**

**That brings us to the 3<sup>rd</sup> thing we need to remember about our identity if we are going to greatly rejoice in our trials**

**#3 We have been given the Holy Spirit**

A) Jesus said- I am not going to leave you orphans – send you the helper – the Holy Spirit

B) Peter here gives us some insight into one of the works that the Holy Spirit is doing in our lives

1) He refers to believers as the- I like the way this reads in the ESV

**<sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ.**

**The word Sanctification means to be set apart.**

A) So in the special assignment that God has elected you for – assigned you and dispersed you to

B) The Holy Spirit is working in your life to set you apart – to walk in obedience to that assignment –

1) Walk in obedience to God's special and unique plan for your life

C) You can either respond by leaning into that – trusting that God knows what he is doing

D) He is not just the Author of the story – **but he is the Hero and He is going to show up –**

**Like that new song we sang today –**

A) You can look back in hindsight – EVIDENCE – He didn't abandon me when that happened

B) He showed up – He upheld me – he is the author and the Hero of this story.

1) He did SHOWED UP that time/

C) He is going to SHOW UP this time too!

**A great example of this is seen in the life of Joseph.**

A) That dude endured a lot of hardship but never lost his faith in God

**B)At 17 his brothers sell him into Slavery – Midianites take him to Egypt**

1)at that point Joseph could have said - God why did you let this happen

**Bb)But he didn't he trusted God – Stayed faithful**

**C)The Midianites sell him to a man named Potiphar – captain of the Palace guard.**

1)Even though a slave – he has a pretty good position – and he serves well.

**D)Potiphar sees that Joseph has a great attitude, good worker, he is trust worthy –**

1)Potiphar makes Joseph his top servant over the others.

**E)Joseph is still a slave but – God is blessing him**

**But then Potiphar's wife takes a liking to Joseph – he is handsome**

**A)She repeatedly tries to seduce him –**

**B)Now Joseph could have rationalized – God has abandoned me – Who will know?**

**C)He doesn't - He tells her I can't commit this sin against God –**

1)Far away from Home – family -friends – church –  
**Joseph is still practicing the presence of God**

**D)Potiphar's wife doesn't like being turned down so she accuses Joseph of trying to sexually assault her.**

1)Potiphar doesn't believe his wife but in order to appease her –

2)he has Joseph thrown in prison where he will spend several years

**Once again – Joseph could have said – why God? Not fair – forget you - DONE**

**A)But he didn't he trusted God – He leans into his imprisonment – becomes a model prisoner**

**B)After years and a series of events – Joseph whom God gave a gift of interpreting dreams**

1)Get's brought before Pharaoh to interpret his dream when no one else can

**C)Joseph gives Pharaoh the interpretation that 7 years of plenty is going to come upon Egypt –**

**1)followed by 7 years of famine**

**D)This advice store up in the 7 years of plenty – you will be set to help others in the seven years of famine**

**E)Pharaoh is so impressed with Joseph he puts him in charge of the project**

**Now Joseph didn't know that was going happen when he bros sold him into Slavery but God did. –**

**A)God in his foreknowledge was orchestrating an amazing story**

**Aa)So during the seven years of famine – everyone is coming to Egypt to buy grain –**

**B)Egypt is helping others and getting richer at the same time**

**C)Low and behold – Joseph's brothers come to buy grain –**

1)they are brought before Joseph – don't recognize in his Egyptian garb

**D)When he finally reveals himself to them –**

1)they are freaking out thinking that Joseph is going to take revenge - Have them killed or imprisoned –

**Joseph forgives them and says: you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.**

**A)Joseph understood in that moment he had been set apart by the Lord to walk in obedience to God's plan**

**B)He didn't know what the plan was but he believed that God was faithful.**

**C)I know what you are thinking - that is great for Joseph he is obviously more spiritual than me –**

**1)My faith falters – I mess up - I get in the flesh**

**Well that is why what Peter says next is so AWESOME – Again ESV**

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and **for sprinkling with his blood:**

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

**You are a person who has been sprinkled by his blood**

A)The idea of being sprinkled by his blood is an OT image of cleansing and forgiveness –

B)On the day of atonement the blood of the Sacrificial lamb was sprinkled on the mercy seat

C)Jesus is the final sacrificial lamb -he died in our place –

1)When we fail –his blood is still available to cleanse us

**D)When we fail – don't need to get saved again – We just need to apply the blood - how ?**

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

E)Confess – own it – say the same as – He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us –

1)The blood of Jesus covers all our sin

**And what a wonderful hope that is, that no matter how deep my struggle is,**

A)No matter how great my failure is,

B)No matter how strong my weaknesses, there is ongoing forgiveness, and there is ongoing cleansing

C)I do not have to run in fear from God's presence; but because of the shed blood of Christ,

1)**I can run toward Him** and once again receive His forgiveness, and once again receive His cleansing.

D)His grace and peace is multiplied to me.

**So listen friends:**

A)Whether you are in a trial presently – just got out of one – or you are going into one SOON

B)We can greatly rejoice today – Because we know that this world is not our home

**C)We can we rejoice because God is a good father – who is actively working in our lives**

D)We can rejoice because he has given us the Holy Spirit who is committed to set us apart for God's plan and purpose

E)And when we fail – The Blood of Jesus can still cleanse us

**We can rejoice because what Paul said is true that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ-** Philippians 1:6

**Listen:**

A)Not a follower of Jesus here today - Live for this life – soak it up – get all you can

B)This life is as close to heaven as you will get

1)All downhill from here -

C)But if are a believer - trusted Jesus – Endure suffering, mockery, trials, difficulty -why?

**D)This life is as close to hell as you will ever get.**

1)This world is not your home -all upward onward