

“Living Hope: Grieved Yet Rejoicing”

1 Peter 1:6-9

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April 18, 2010

Main Idea: The Living Hope we have in Jesus is strong enough to endure the reality of trials and suffering.

The Reality of Trials (verse 6)

1. We live in a fallen, broken world that is the opposite of our heavenly inheritance: a world where things perish, are defiled and fade. Most suffering fits into one of these categories. Our health or the health of someone we love grows weak. Something we value is taken from us and defiled. Our best dreams and greatest successes fade.
2. The common element of trials is that they are experiences that grieve us. Peter is very honest about the reality of suffering. He doesn't say, "If you have faith you never grieve" or "Living hope can never be touched by trials." Instead he tells us that the living hope we have in Jesus occurs in the midst of the trial and difficulty. Christians are people whose hope is so real and so powerful that it remains even in the face of various trials.
3. The reason we can rejoice and have hope in the midst of trial, even though we've been grieved, is that Jesus has overcome the world through his death and victory over the grave. (see John 16:33)
4. Grief has an expiration date. Peter tells us that even though we face grieving trials, it is only, *"for a little while, if necessary."* A lifetime of suffering in this world is only *"a little while"* compared to the everlasting joy of heaven. (see Rom. 8:18)

The Purpose of Trials (verse 7)

1. The purpose of trials is to test and prove the genuine nature of our faith. Trials reveal the depth and solidity of our faith. Trials also purify and strengthen our faith. God does this so that our genuine faith can be rewarded with praise, glory and honor.
2. If faith in Jesus led to perfect health, wealth and a problem-free life, how could anyone tell if a person's faith was real or just a ticket to an easy life? But if we trust in Jesus even when it's hard, if we cling to faith even when we suffer, even when it costs us, then our faith has been tested and proved genuine

3. When Jesus is revealed, he will celebrate and reward every act of our weak faith, every loyalty, every moment of trust. Jesus will praise the faith of Christians who faced trial and continued to trust him.

Our Hope In Trials (verses 8-9)

1. Peter ends this passage by fixing our attention on Jesus. Our hope is not in an idea; it's not in a future moment; it's not in a concept. Our hope is a person.
...remember that there isn't a thing, a substance, or a "quasi-substance" called 'grace.' All there is, is the person of the Lord Jesus — "Christ clothed in the gospel," as Calvin loved to put it. Grace is the grace of Jesus....there is no "thing" that Jesus takes from Himself and then, as it were, hands over to me. There is only Jesus Himself...It is not a thing that was crucified to give us a thing called grace. It was the person of the Lord Jesus that was crucified in order that He might give Himself to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit."- Sinclair Ferguson
2. The inexpressible joy—the joy we can't explain in the midst of trial – is because we believe in and trust Jesus. It is Jesus' blood sprinkled on us that gives us a new relationship of peace with God. It is Jesus' resurrection that has caused us to be born again to a living hope. It is the revelation of Jesus on the final day when our faith will be rewarded. It is Jesus who is our inheritance and our great reward! Our living hope is the living Jesus Christ. There is no hope apart from him.
3. The outcome of our faith is not an easy life, perfect health, respect of the world or wealth in this world. The outcome of our faith, won by Jesus' death and resurrection, is the salvation of our souls. It is this salvation that allows us to rejoice and gives us a living hope even in a world of dying hope.

Fellowship Starters:

1. Josh taught us that Christians are people whose hope is so real and powerful that it remains even in the face of various trials. When you face trials, what erodes your hope and tempts you to unbelief? How can the eternal perspectives of 1 Peter 1:3-5 rekindle your "living hope" and bolster your faith?
2. Josh shared that the grief of trials has an expiration date. How can a meditation on the joy of heaven sustain your hope and faith in the midst of suffering?
3. What is God's purpose in trials (1 Peter 1:7)? (See also James 1:2-4, Heb. 12:10-11, Rom. 5:1-5; 8:28-29, 2 Cor. 4:16-18). Why is a "genuine" faith so critical when walking through suffering?

4. In 1 Peter 1:8-9, Peter points those who are suffering back to Jesus. How can you turn to Jesus in the midst of your trials and tears to find hope and inexpressible joy in Him?
5. Take time as a care group to pray for and minister to those who are suffering.