

TITLE: Satisfaction in the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (Part 8)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:7-9

THEME: The Sovereign mercy of God fuels the sovereign joy of our salvation

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Read Passage

This AM we complete our study in this particular passage which we've entitled {read}. Past few weeks we've specifically been looking at t/relationship between joy & affliction & how our hope in X & our joy in God doesn't wither away in spite of what we may experience in this life.

Apostle Peter speaks not only w/authority, but he speaks from experience. Peter's life is exemplified by personal struggle & pain. If there was one who would say t/wrong thing at t/wrong time, it was Peter // do t/wrong thing at wrong time, it was Peter. It was Peter who thrice denied His Lord, it was Peter of whom Jesus said that Satan demanded permission to sift as wheat.

But God was faithful. God preserved Peter's faith & Peter persevered & became t/key leader of t/early CH. He remained faithful to t/very end & God gave him t/grace to endure t/ultimate sacrifice as he was crucified upside down as one unworthy to die as did his Lord.

Peter knew and lived t/truth of James 1:12 ==>

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

What was true for him is true for us. We are heirs whom God has saved to His glory and He will preserve us through faith unto t/finality of our redemption.

True Joy is sovereign joy & that's been our main point t/past several weeks==>

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

Many of you know I sometimes have weird ideas about things. Esp. food. I'm not really a dessert person, but I have two ideas as it relates to baking pies. I'd like to bake two different kinds that, to my knowledge, no one else has ever baked. 1) Maraschino cherry pie; 2) Black Olive pie (my wife shares a similar reaction).

I guess that begs t/? that to make something, esp. something edible, you need t/right ingredients.

Far greater way, one of t/things that we can glean from this passage is that sovereign joy has its right ingredients in keeping w/God's design.

Over t/past sev. weeks of our study we've been examining some of those components or ingredients of all that is salvation joy.

Such as t/fact that==>

A. SJ was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again . . .

Peter begins in fam. Jewish form w/a benediction. Pointing us to t/past work that God has done on our behalf [^]

Why we've said that our main idea from t/entirety of this passage is==>
"The Sovereign mercy of God fuels the sovereign joy of our salvation"

We function in a world of power & energy. Can't run a car on H₂O (be nice) - need right fuel (gasoline). Sovereign joy needs t/right fuel, in this case it's sovereign mercy. We reflect on what God has done for us & we unleash t/new man that God has created in us, and we experience t/joy of our salvation.

B. SJ is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

. . . caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . .

C. SJ of our Salvation is Preserved by God's Power (5a)

[you] who are being guarded by the power of God, through faith, for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our last point is where we've been camped for t/past 3 weeks of our study==>

D. The Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation will be Evidenced by Persevering Faith (6-9)

Genuine salvation & t/accompanying new life in X will evidence itself in our persevering in t/faith once for all delivered to t/saints. Key part of our salvation joy, that God preserves us in order that we may persevere.

As it relates to suffering, sometimes it's like a drowning man who cannot be killed. That's our faith/hope. It may be ravaged by t/raging waves of a tempest as a level 1 hurricane, but it cannot be finally and completely drowned. We bob up and down gasping for air, and God makes us to survive until his hand comes and gently lifts us from the stormy sea.

Five characteristics of this persevering faith. Your saving faith is ==>

1. A Persevering Faith That:

a. Results in Joy (6a)

In this you rejoice . . .

In what? The entire context of vv. 3-5 {restate}

In [all of] this you (Pres. tense) are rejoicing . . .

(1) ἀγαλλιαω (Not more expected word χαρα)

A word that's always used in NT to describe great or lively joy. "salvation joy."

Secondly, your saving faith is a faith that ==>

b. Stands the Test of Trials (6b-7)

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

(1) We find ourselves looking backward and forward

In this you rejoice (*looking back to the blessings of vv. 3,4,5*) **though now** (*in the present*) . . . **you [suffer grief with] various trials,**

Few weeks ago I have you FIVE principles related to suffering from this passage (vv. 6-7)

1) Suffering is Unavoidable; 2) Suffering Doesn't Last Forever; 3) Suffering is Many-Faceted; 4) Suffering Can't Preclude Rejoicing; 5) Suffering Has a Purpose.

In order that the testing of your faith being more precious than fine gold which is perishable, being purified through fire, might pass the test and be found [true] . . .

V. 7 starts w/a ἵνα clause in the Greek text (purpose or result clause). "In order that," "so that," "for the purpose of." What's t/purpose here? It's t/testing of your faith. A faith that is precious, a faith that might be: **purified through fire, being found true to the praise and to the praise and glory and honor of Jesus Christ at his coming.**

"for as silver is without honor or value before it be refined, so . . . our faith is not to be honored and crowned by God until it be duly proved." [Calvin, 34]

1. A Persevering Faith That:

a. Results in Joy (6a)

b. Stands the Test of Trials (6b-7)

(2) Add one More Thing on this Point Before we Move on

Many diff. reasons why we go through trials and afflictions. Peter is focusing on a specific issue here:

They were struggling through lots of different kinds of affliction, much of it related to t/persecution of their faith. But it was so that their faith might be tested, purified and found true.

(a) Might be helpful to ask the question

"What other reasons might there be that cause people to go through difficult times?" After all, it might be easy for someone to just write off their problems on God's sov. & leave it at that. Really not that simple.

I want to give you FOUR reasons why we go through times of suffering. These reasons encompass t/fact that God is sov. at work in our lives, but each puts a little different perspective on t/difficulties in this race we call "life" and our responsibility before God in that race.

These points aren't mutually exclusive to each other (there's some overlap). This isn't meant to be an exhaustive list (categorical).

One reason why we go through difficult times (we've mentioned this before) is ==>

i. Direct result of living in a fallen world

We're all a by-product of the fall. When our first parents fell into sin they brought t/entire creation down w/them.

All of us are sinful; all of us live in a fallen world; all of us will experience times of great sorrow and pain. Life hurts // can be painful.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, |||| but take courage; I have overcome the world."

This is one of t/central questions of life: "Why does God allow suffering?" We ask that question when we experience personal tragedy // national tragedy. Remember 9-11? People were asking t/"where was God?" God's sovereignty & His glory & His faithfulness are not trumped by tragedy. He remains sov. // glorious // faithful.

Interesting twist in t/way we look at things. Today when bad things happen we tend to ask, "What's wrong with God?" ("Where was God when such & such happened?") We're beyond asking t/question "What's wrong w/us?" No, somehow we've convinced ourselves that we're okay, so t/problem must be God's! Indicative of our arrogance.

Generations ago it was diff. Focus of t/question was on man. Weren't as brazen as we are today in laying t/blame at God. When tragedy struck, people generally asked, "What's wrong with me?" Or if it happened to someone else: "What's wrong with him?" Our fault focus shifted from man to God!

* Remember Luke 13:1-5?

Some people came to Jesus & asked him about some fellow Galileans whom Pilate had murdered, mixing their blood w/their sacrifices. Jesus, no doubt knowing their thoughts, replied==>

“Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater* sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered this *fate*? “I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Then He brings up another tragic accident w/which they were familiar=>

“Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, were *worse* culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem?

“I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

What's t/point? It's not always about personal sin, it's about living in a fallen world. Suffering and death is inevitable. It's just a matter of when. If you die in a tragic accident at t/age of 25 or you die of natural causes at age of 85 you still die & have to face an eternal destiny in either heaven or hell. So, repent that you don't likewise perish.

Here's a second reason. Sometimes suffering is a direct result of ==>

ii. Personal Sin and Foolishness

Someone, reflecting on t/fact that there exists no lack of foolish people, once said, t/problem w/the gene pool is that there's no lifeguard.

I collect stories and quotes. I have a large database of these on my computer. Among my files are true stories about foolishness. Several of them are about foolish crooks ==>

Such as one 20 year old woman, was arrested in Lake City, Florida, for robbery of a Howard Johnson's motel. She was armed with only an electric chainsaw, which was not plugged in.

A man attempting to siphon gasoline from a motor home parked on a Seattle street, he got much more than he bargained for. Police arrived at the scene to find an ill man curled up next to a motor home near spilled sewage. A police spokesman said that the man admitted to trying to steal gasoline and plugged his hose into the motor home's sewage tank by mistake. The owner of the vehicle declined to press charges, saying that it was the best laugh he'd ever had. [True story received Sept. 1997]

A bank robber in Canada was arrested after heisting 6,000 dollars . . . police later informed him that the gun he had used was a rare collectors item worth \$100,000 dollars.

A man burst into a gun store and attempted to rob it with a knife . . . he was immediately shot by the store's owner.

And my favorite ==>

A couple of thieves attempted to break into a van parked along a city street during the night. After attempts to break-in by picking the lock failed, they left and returned with an axe and broke a window . . . they were greeted by 7 undercover police officers inside during a stake-out. [True Stories (taken from The Tonight Show on July 21, 1992)]

That's pretty foolish isn't it? Of course, there's a greater fool. The Bible talks about it in Psalm 14:1 {quote}

Atheists are fools according to God! How much worse are we when we, who know Him, act like an atheist! WDYM? Every time we willfully sin we act as if God is not.

Listen: Don't ask God to bless you if you are harboring sin in your life! He's saying to you, "Deal with that sin first!"

We can't play it both ways, "dabble in sin" and "expect God's blessing." There is a principle of reaping what we sow. If we sow stupidity we're not going to reap peace and righteousness.

Can't forsake t/spiritual disciplines of being in t/Word // involved in life of t/CH // worship // prayer and t/like & expect t/fulness of God's blessing.

Like my mother used to say, "you've made your bed, now go lie in it" (problem was I never made my bed so that analogy at t/time didn't make sense to me!)

Can't dabble in sin, pride, lust, greed, selfishness & expect t/fulness of God's blessing.

You can't be like the man who has all of his priorities out of whack & his family is a mess, he has little joy, he's depressed & wonders why God is doing this to him? C'mon man! Look in t/mirror!

God's grace is sufficient to cover our ignorance yet his patience runs thin w/willful foolishness.

iii. God's Hand of Discipline

In fact, I would say that all we experience as Xns is related to God's disciplining or training us. We're all in process & God is working on a finished product.

We're told in Heb. 12 that God deals w/us as his sons, his children. He disciplines us as a wise and loving father. In fact, if God isn't disciplining you then, acc. to Heb. 12:8, you are an illegitimate child.

Writer to Hebrews (Barnabas) also says that ==>

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

For t/moment it certainly doesn't seem to be joyful does it? I'm not saying that there can't be a silver lining of joy on t/clouds of despair, but as Hebrews 12:11 says, it's sorrowful.

In my own life I have experienced 3 periods of personal brokenness. Many of you are familiar w/my window of affliction that opened in 1999 and lasted through t/year 2000.

During that 2 yr. period I completely burned out in ministry & went into a dark time of depression. To add insult to injury, at same time a power-play ensued in t/CH & a small group of men forced me out of t/CH.

Also had a car fire (not a good thing in any case, but even worse when you, your wife & your parents are in it), my dad suffered what could have been a fatal injury at work, I pulled a dead kid from an irrigation canal & unsuccessfully performed CPR on his lifeless body.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

I know that both Lois and I grew through that period. God blessed us in so many ways, among t/greatest blessing was t/birth of a baby that we never thought we'd have. Great learning experience.

"The best lessons are learnt in affliction. A man never learns anything to profit while standing upon a lofty mountain. It is in the valley of humiliation, it is in the season of distress, trouble, anxiety, perplexity, and temptation, that a man learns the secrets of heavenly wisdom, for in them he learns his own folly, and that 'the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.'" [English preacher J.C. Philpot, in a sermon preached on July 8, 1841, cited in "Spiritual Times and Seasons," Sermons by the late J.C. Philpot (Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 7 Brackendale Grove, Harpenden, Herts AL5 3EL, England, n.d.). 1:95-96.]

That's life. But it's more than just life. God could have created us perfect, but because of our sin He is sov. involved in a continual process of

molding us into His image. Because of t/sin w/i us we rebel, we fall back into old patterns, old molds. So again, God breaks us & remakes us again and again to look more like that perfect image of JC.

"Charles Haddon Spurgeon, well-known as the Prince of Preachers, was severely afflicted with gout, a condition which sometimes brings on excruciating pain. In a sermon published in 1881 he wrote, 'Were you ever in the melting pot, dear friends? I have been there, and my sermons with me. . . . The result of melting is that we arrive at a true valuation of things [and] we are poured out into a new and better fashion. And, oh, we may almost wish for the melting-pot if we may but get rid of the dross, if we may but be pure, if we may but be fashioned more completely like unto our Lord!'

"I am certain that I never did grow in grace one-half as much anywhere as I have upon the bed of pain." [cited in Hanegraaff, Christianity in Crisis, 267]

ROM 5:3-4a **And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint . . .**

iv. Demonic Attack

Some time yet future, we will take an in-depth look at 1 Peter 5:8

Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Again, you have to go back to Luke 22:31-32 ==>

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

I genuinely believe that there are times when we walk t/same road as Peter. When t/forces of hell demand permission to rail against our souls. Like Peter we can have t/confidence that our Lord intercedes for us that our faith not fail.

So, here's my list==>

1. Suffering is a Direct Result of Living in a Fallen World

2. Sometimes Suffering is a Direct Result of Personal Sin & Foolishness

3. Suffering is Related to God's Hand of Discipline

4. Sometimes Suffering is a Result of Demonic Attack

Again, this list isn't meant to be exhaustive. These aren't hard-&-fast categories. IOW - there may be overlap. The categories can sort of bleed into each other in t/workings of God's providence. God knows we live in a fallen world, yet he works in our lives. God Disciplines us in our foolishness and sometimes he may even use demonic attack to do so. Job is a perfect example of that.

Keep in mind that this side of heaven we may never know all of t/reasons // behind t/scenes activities that surround our lives. Again, I would point out Job. There's no indication from Scripture that Job ever learned about why he was put to the test t/way he was // knew about Satan coming to God asking permission to try him, taking away all he had w/the exception of his life. So we, too, may not know, this side of heaven, or ever, all of t/details behind our afflictions. Faith/Faithfulness.

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

D. A Sovereign Joy That will be Evidenced by ==>

1. A Persevering Faith That:

a. Results in Joy (6a)

b. Stands the Test of Trials (6b-7)

Finally get to move on to verse 8. We have a persevering faith that==>

c. Loves The Lord (whom we have not seen) (8a)

Though you have not seen him, you love him.

Lit. "of whom not having had a glimpse" [Wuest, 27]

(1) This causes me to ponder those who claim to have seen Christ, visibly

Heard about one guy who said that every AM Jesus appears to him while he's shaving, which begs t/? what do you do? Do you go on shaving?

As a new Xn I had an older man tell me about an experience he had where Jesus appeared to him in his living room and sat down w/him and chatted for a while. That same man hasn't found a church good enough for him in 20 years, so I would think that if his experience were true, one of t/first things Jesus would have told him was where to find a good CH to attend, and get your lazy body involved in t/body.

You see, I don't put much stock in these sorts of claims, whether it be that God spoke to someone in an audible voice or appeared to someone because almost exclusively these claims come from people who have abhorrent theology. Listen, if God's going to appear or speak to someone he's not going to do it to a professed Xn who's completely off track in his/her understanding of Scripture.

Here's John Doe Xn. John has all sorts of whacky beliefs. He thinks Jesus & t/H.S. are brother & sister. He believes that t/Bible can mean whatever God tells him it means. He thinks that Jesus was ½ God & ½ man, divided down t/middle. Claims that Jesus appears to him & talks to him in an audible voice. I don't know what he's seeing or hearing, but it's not Jesus. He can't even hear God's Word! IF J. did appear to him t/first thing he would say is "Why are you perverting the truth?"

You see, it's not normative to expect God to talk to us or appear to us. The blessing is that ==>

Though you have not seen him, you love him.

Can't help but wonder if Peter had in mind Jesus' words to doubting Thomas as recorded by John (20:29)==>

Jesus **said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."* (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:7)

Profound! We love him whom we have never personally seen! I'll never forget as a rebellious 18 y/o teenager hearing my dad, a man abused by his father, a man once unable to express genuine love, say to me after he was wonderfully saved, "I can honestly say to you that I love JC." That's profound! We love him whom we have not seen.

But of course there is a very real sense in which we have seen him! Not visibly but spiritually as t/HS has painted t/depth of his image on t/canvas of our hearts!

Yet to love someone requires that you know them. That's t/point of true Xnty. As imp. as are t/doctrines, t/truth on a page, it isn't until that truth is painted onto our hearts that it becomes alive with saving power.

(2) Do you know him in this way?

Diff. between knowing about X & knowing Him. Knowing about Him does not result in joy thru trials, eternal life, imperishable & undefiled inheritance. You see, we must truly know him. Do you know him? If you don't simply even now where you sit turn from your sin & believe in Him as your Savior & Lord. . . If you do know him as your Master, give thanks, fill up to t/top t/joy of your salvation!

This knowledge should fill us w/joy and excitement. It should breathe t/breath of revival into our hearts. Yet we're so dead to it all. Sometimes it's all a big yawn.

"Consider how the news of some trivial outward pleasure that we are about to enjoy makes our hearts leap within us. And yet this news of the kingdom prepared for us, if we are indeed believers, does not stir us. Our hearts are left unaffected as if it had nothing to do with us at all. People who concentrate on worthless things are in a fool's paradise. How often people go over in their minds all the things they are about to enjoy. But we who say we have hopes of the glory to come can spend many days without taking one hour to rejoice in our thoughts and future. If any one poor person became very rich and was greatly honored with the space of a week, enjoying all the health and pleasure imaginable, think how much time he would think about all those welcome changes. There is no comparison between that and everything we can imagine about the hope we speak of, and yet how infrequent are our thoughts on these things, and how feebly we rejoice over them. Are we able to deny that this is caused by our unbelief in these things? This is the reason for our neglecting them. The words of men and angels cannot bring about belief in future happiness. Only the One who gives us faith enables us to understand it and take hold of it and, as we belief, fill us with its joy and hope." [Robert Leighton, 1 Peter, 29]

"To know him is to love him." To know him better is to love him all the more." How do you know him better? Through spiritual discipline. Walking by the spirit, not the flesh, spending time in the word and prayer, being involved in the ministry of the church.

I saw a new Xn book on t/market, "Why Men Don't Like Going to Church" - I can tell you why - because they're not regenerate, that's why!

Something is wrong if there is no motivation in your heart to be in the assembly of believers! Apathy isn't from the Holy Spirit and if the Holy Spirit dwells within you there can be no total apathy.

1. The Perseverance of our Faith not only

c. Loves The Lord (whom we have not seen) (8a)

But the 2nd half of the verse, it also ==>

d. Believes in The Lord (whom we don't see) (8b)

Though you do not see him now, you believe in him

Not only have we not seen in the past, we don't see him in t/present. In having not seen him we love him. In not seeing him now we believe.

(1) Both verbs (participles) are in the present tense

Though you are not seeing him you are believing in him

And not only that, the end of the verse==>

and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

(2) Brought full-circle back to joy

Here it's "unspeakable joy." We could call it, "Full-dimensional joy." Implication is that it looks backward, present, and forward (backward to the fact of our salvation, present to the experience of our salvation and persevering faith, and forward to our inheritance, specifically, the coming of JC in glory).

Our last point. This==>

I. Persevering Faith not only

c. Loves The Lord (whom we have not seen) (8a)

and ==>

d. Believes in The Lord (whom we don't see) (8b)

It's also ==>

e. The Means to Final Salvation (9)

obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

(1) Reflexive Middle Voice

obtaining for yourselves the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

The ptcp., from t/verb $\kappa\alpha\mu\iota\zeta\omega$ - (to obtain), "κ. implies that already they are receiving what is due to them (cf. v. 4) and therefore they rejoice . . . " [Expositor's, 45]

It's a salvation we have, the finalization of which lies yet future. In this v. we have faith (cf. v. 5, 7, 8). In this v. we have salvation (brings us back to v. 3). In this v. we have the obtaining for ourselves t/promised inheritance (goes back to v. 4).

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

A. It was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

B. It is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

C. It is Preserved by God's Power (5a)

D. It will be Evidenced by Persevering Faith (6-9)
