

Please take your Bibles and turn to 1 Peter 1:6-9. We continue to move verse by verse through this wonderful epistle and understand Peter's words to the beleaguered, persecuted saints of the first century. We will look at five reasons we have to rejoice. Our hearts have been stirred to new levels of excitement and praise as we have been contemplating the mysteries of our salvation. In verses 1-5, the salutation, we were reminded of our election, the triumphant hope that we have as spiritual aliens, that we have been chosen, sanctified, sealed and blessed. Then Peter continues on with his doxology of hope, speaking of the source of our hope—the Father who has drawn us, literally dragged us to Himself. Also, the power of our hope, that we have been born again, the power of regeneration and the miracle of new birth. We learned of the promise of our hope, an eternal inheritance we have that is imperishable, undefiled and will never fade away. And the certainty of our hope, that our inheritance is reserved, literally guarded, in heaven. Our salvation is protected by God Himself. We have been given eternal life as a present possession.

These astounding truths should cause the heart of every Christian to transcend the relentless tragedies of life on this sin-cursed earth. We should soar above the fray of earthly battles into the heavens of spiritual peace and rest in our salvation, which Peter says is “ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Now, as if Peter cannot contain himself, he continues his doxology of praise in verses 6-9, our focus today. He says, “In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”

This precious text describes the exact opposite of what most people experience in their life, even though we do not suffer like those that he's writing to in the first century, and even though we have many wonderful benefits, especially here in the United States. Still, most people do not experience the type of joy that we just heard. For most people, life is a never ending pursuit of fleeting pleasures—miniscule pleasures that can never be sustained. Apart from Christ there can be no lasting joy. For the unsaved, happiness is directly linked to circumstances. If things are going well, they're happy. If things are not going well, they're sad. Like dope fiends craving their next fix, most people crave something that will fill that void within them. People today are walking around with iPods, listening to their music. They're pursuing food, alcohol, entertainment, drugs. They worship at “temples” called malls. They worship the god of materialism—a never ending pursuit to find some kind of happiness. It's like a vapor; they reach up to grab it, but it's not there.

But not so for the Christian. Having been in Africa myself, and knowing what's going on in many other parts of the world, especially as I interact with our Russian brethren, you have Christian people that have virtually nothing that the world has to offer and yet they are filled with joy and happiness because they are filled with the joy of Christ. Unfortunately, many Christians, especially in our society where we seem to have everything, really don't have that joy because, in most cases, they do not understand the nature and benefits of true saving faith.

The other day I was watching Bill O'Riley. I enjoy his show “The Factor.” He's a popular news analyst. He was interviewing a pastor most of us have heard of, Rick Warren, whose book The Purpose Driven Life has, according to O'Riley, inspired millions. I would argue that book and movement has

deceived millions. Be that as it may, he says that Rick Warren is now on a mission to reach souls around the world. He asked Warren how he maintains optimism in today's world with its "terrible crimes against children, terrorism, war in the Middle East and overwhelming negativity." Warren responded that his answer is "faith." He said, "I don't think you can change human nature on its own, you need an outside force to do that. I believe the Bible and God's Word is the answer—people need faith to anchor them. When I believe there is a purpose greater than the pain I'm going through or the problems I'm going through, when I believe that good can overcome evil, that's the only thing that gives me hope." Certainly there are elements of truth to that, but O'Riley was visibly frustrated with such a trite, platitudinous answer, as he should be. What a great question. How can anyone be optimistic about anything given the overwhelming negativity and all the problems in the world?

Imagine if our pastor friend had said, "Bill, that's a great question. Let me answer it this way. There is only one answer, and that is faith. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Savior of the world. Bill, you must understand that many times God's saving purposes are concealed in calamity. People need to understand that these calamities can cause people to seek God. Then as they seek God they begin to understand, through His Word the Bible, that God is holy and that man is sinful, and there is absolutely no way for man to bridge that chasm between God's holiness and his sinfulness apart from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And then when a person places their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a radical transformation. The old things pass away and the new things come. Then they have a living hope that causes them to transcend all the problems in this life because they know whom they have believed, and they know that He is able to keep them, and preserve them and to bring them ultimately to the great joys of heaven. Because of the Word of God, we can understand that God is sovereign. He is in control of all things, and ultimately all of the wickedness that has been brought upon the world through Satan and sin will be taken care of when He comes again as the Judge of this world." My, what an opportunity Rick Warren had that day.

This is the living hope, the paradox of Peter's doxology that we read about here in this text. "In this you greatly rejoice," that's what he was telling these suffering saints. Remember, what O'Reilly was talking about in terms of negativity absolutely pales into utter insignificance compared to what these dear saints were experiencing, and what other saints are experiencing around the world, and what we may someday experience should things continue. What a paradox of the Christian life: we can rejoice in the midst of great distress. In James 1:2 we read that we can "Count it all joy when we encounter various trials." And the apostle Paul said in Romans 5:3-5, "And not only this, but we also exalt in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:8 that we as believers "wear the hope of salvation." Jude speaks of this in terms of the blessedness of the One that is someday coming in his doxology in Jude 24. Likewise, Paul said to Titus in Titus 2:13 that we are "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us." We need to always be ready to answer the O'Reilly's of the world with the truth of the gospel. Peter will later on tell us in chapter 3:15 we should "...always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you."

I hope that if you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, but if you have somehow allowed the perils of this life to drag you down, to distract you from the joy of your salvation, I hope and pray that this text

will grab your heart and ignite once again the flames of joy that are your rightful possession as a child of God as you understand what it means to be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. There are five reasons to rejoice that we see in this text. We have:

1. A salvation that is secure
2. A faith that is proven
3. A commendation that is inevitable
4. A love that is unseen
5. A deliverance that is in progress

What does it mean – *a salvation that is secure*? This is the first reason we have to rejoice that Peter gives. Verse 6 says, “In this you greatly rejoice.” The word in the original language speaks of a deep, profound, overwhelming type of gladness, a happiness, a bliss that gushes forth from the wellspring of a keen understanding of the love and mercy and grace of God in our salvation. The grammar indicates this is in the present tense, which means it’s an ongoing, never ending, perpetual joy that we have. What are we rejoicing in verse 6? It’s referring back to verse 5, that we are “protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” There is no greater power than the power of God, and as we have learned, it is His power that guards the inheritance that He has given us and secures the ransomed soul He has saved, as the Father adopts His children.

How sad, those who say, “No one can have assurance of salvation. You’ll never know until you die.” If that’s the case, then please tell me what this verse means. Tell me what Jesus meant in John 6:37 when He said that, “All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” That is referring to the fact that God the Father has chosen in eternity past the ones whom He would save, then He drew them to Himself as a love gift, a redeemed humanity that He promised to give to the Son, as we read in Titus 1:2 and other passages. The Son graciously receives what the Father gives to Him. And in John 6:37 it goes on to say, “...and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” In other words, I’m going to hold on to every believer that’s given to Me by the Father. Then in verse 39 it says, “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.”

This is the source of our rejoicing. This is why Peter could say, “In this you greatly rejoice.” Why? Because if it was up to us to keep our salvation, we would fail. But the same gracious, merciful God that has saved us has secured us. It’s so sad, this notion that God may have enough power to save you but it’s up to you to stay saved. It’s simply incompatible with what Scripture teaches. So much for rejoicing. Imagine how silly this would be if we were to paraphrase it in verse 5 and Peter would say, “You who were protected only by the power of the human will, through faith plus works for a salvation that hopefully will be revealed in the last time. You can’t really be sure, I hope you can find something to rejoice about here.” That’s not what he’s saying. He’s saying our salvation is protected by the power of God. The indwelling Holy Spirit has been given to us as a seal, a guarantee, a pledge of our inheritance. That’s why Paul said in Ephesians 1:13-14, “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”

Thus we’re told in Ephesians 4:30, “not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” I’ve often thought that if there was any way I could lose my salvation, I would be the first one to do it. I look at my life and I think of the countless times I have—and continue to—

struggled with sin and discouragement. I'm just so thankful for the securing work of the Spirit of God, otherwise it wouldn't be long before my life would begin to lead to compromise, then apathy, then eventually apostasy. There's no rejoicing in that prospect. I do rejoice in the knowledge that the same One who saved me has also secured me, and continues to do that. Peter continues his profound words of encouragement by saying, in essence, "Your salvation is secure, in this you greatly rejoice."

Secondly, we are to rejoice because we have a *faith that is proven*. In verses 6-7 it says, "(In this you greatly rejoice,) even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire." Let's stop here. Peter reminds us, as he did them, of the difficulties of life we face. Those heartbreaking times of life that steal our joy, and for them it was severe persecution, martyrdom, inhumane torture inflicted upon their children, unimaginable suffering. Peter is asserting here that even in these trials you must understand that they have a purpose, and that is to prove your faith.

The word "proof" (*dokimion*) is a Greek term used in the science of metallurgy, or the assaying of metals where heat is used to refine a metal by burning away impurities, leaving only the most precious and purest of metal. What he's saying is that the trials of life, or the fire God uses to burn away the impurities of spiritual immaturity and of doubt, leave only the most precious faith, "...being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire."

Let me ask you to think of some trial you are now going through. Think of something you are upset by right now. Maybe it's a health issue, a relational problem, a financial problem, a problem at work or at church. Maybe you've been falsely accused or cheated by someone, overlooked, persecuted for your faith, whatever it may be. What you must understand is that God is using this trial to prove the genuineness of your faith. In the midst of your trial you have an option. You can, on the one hand, shake your puny little fist in God's face and say He's being unfair and unkind. You can deny Him, you can walk away from Him, you can throw a little tantrum, or you can do what most of us do and sulk, whine and give everybody a cue why they need to feel sorry for us, and make everybody miserable around us.

Or, on the other hand, you can say, "God, this is a great difficulty in my life, but I will trust You, come what may. I will relax in Your sovereign purposes in my life. I know that You are a good and loving God that even ordains my afflictions, and so I'm going to pray that You will teach me in the midst of this great adversity a valuable lesson that can make me a more fruitful servant for Your kingdom." If that is your character, if that is the attitude of your heart, if that is your conduct, do you know what the result will be? Great rejoicing! We know that even as God was in the midst of that crucible of grace in the fires of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego, so too will He reveal Himself when we're in the furnace. Many of us that have been there, or perhaps are there now, know what that's like. We know the joy that can be there even when life seems to be falling apart. We have that internal awareness of the presence and power of the triune God. That's the stuff of the assurance of salvation. That's the stuff of a faith that's proven.

Peter gives us further insight into this by giving us four aspects of trials. Briefly, we see that trials are: short-lived, purposeful, painful and diverse. Let me elaborate for a moment. In verse 6 he says, "even though now, for a little while." This is the idea of trials being *short-lived*. Literally, in the original language, this is referring to a season or a short period of time. Even the greatest trial will only last the rest of our life, and in relation to eternity, that's a very, very short period of time. That's why the

Psalmist would say in 30:5, “Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning.” Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:16, as he speaks to the suffering saints about persecution, and there he reminds them, “do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.”

Our trials also have a *purpose*. Peter says in verse 6, “if necessary.” In other words, God has seen that at times it is necessary to bring about affliction in our life. That’s when we must learn not to ask why, but what. God owes us no explanation. We could not understand it if He were to give it to us. We should not shake our fist at Him and say, “Why, why are You doing this to me?” But we should say, “What do I need to do to give You glory in the midst of this great trial?” This is what Paul described in the context of his suffering along with Silas in 1 Thessalonians 3:3. He spoke of their afflictions as “afflictions for which...we have been destined.”

Think about this. When we experience a trial, it has a purpose. That purpose may be to expose our pride and produce humility. Maybe that trial is to reveal some blind spot. Maybe we need to use that trial to examine our heart and repent of something. Perhaps that trial is one that God is using to loosen our grip on the things in this world. All it takes is one phone call, with one tragic message, and suddenly our priorities will change forever. Many of us know what that’s about. Maybe that trial is to chasten us for some life-dominating sin. Maybe it’s to demonstrate to others the genuineness of our faith, what it looks like to trust God in the midst of adversity, in the midst of the crucible of grace, because other people are always watching. Maybe that’s what God is doing. Or maybe it’s to teach us patience and perseverance. The list goes on. Whether we know what God is up to or not, and most of the time we don’t fully know, the key is how we respond. When we respond in a way that demonstrates our trust in a sovereign and loving God, then the experience that we have is joy, the joy of a proven faith.

Our trials are also *painful*. In verse 6 he acknowledges that, “you have been distressed.” The term distressed in the original language means to cause great sorrow. To put something to grief. It has the idea of an anguish that affects both the body and the mind, the physical, mental and emotional pain that we can experience. You know what that’s like. He’s speaking here of that gut-wrenching, heart-breaking, “I wish I could die” type of pain. That’s what he’s talking about. The Christian life is filled with that. Suffering is inevitable, and it is painful. This idea that “God wants us all to be happy all the time, and enjoy heaven this side of heaven,” that we’re all to be “prosperous and pain free,” all that’s a dangerous lie that has seduced many. But Paul reminds us in 2 Timothy 3:12 that, “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” It’s part of living in a fallen world. Routinely in life God finds it necessary for us to be “distressed by various trials” to prove our faith.

Fourthly we see that our trials are *diverse*. At the end of verse 6 it speaks of “various trials.” Various means diverse, manifold, literally at times it’s translated many-colored. In other words, trouble comes in any size and shape. It usually comes when you least expect it. Suffering and trials are short-lived, purposeful, painful and diverse, but God uses them to separate genuine faith from superficial faith. Because of this, when we trust God in the midst of our trials, we experience His divine presence. True believers, as a result of this, experience that ineffable joy of genuine saving faith that is, as Hebrews 11:1 says, “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Now, back to our text, Peter reminds us that we can greatly rejoice because we have *a salvation that is secure*, and secondly *a faith that is proven*, but thirdly we have a *commendation that is inevitable*. We can greatly rejoice when we understand what this means. And what he's saying in essence is that we can anticipate the acclamations of praise and honor from the triune God who has sanctified us. This is an inconceivable thought to me. I wish I had more time to elaborate upon it. In verse 7 he says, "(that the proof of your faith)...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

We are to faithfully serve and praise God in this life. And what he's saying here, and in other texts, is that when we stand before Him someday, He is going to reciprocate: He is going to praise and honor us. Unimaginable! I ask you to savor this thought for a moment. To think that someday, we will stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy, as Jude 24 tells us, and then in reverent awe we are going to look upon His face, humbled and overwhelmed at the resplendent light of his glorious Shekinah. And as we stand there clothed in the robes of righteousness that He has given to us, consumed with speechless delight, standing before our Creator, the Lover of our souls, He is going to honor us? As the text says here, "with praise and glory and honor." In thinking of this my heart was overflowed with the reality of it and I jotted this down. Perhaps it can summarize my heart here, and what the text is saying.

Oh the bliss of heaven's light,
The scene of His dear face!
Our soul cannot conceive the sight
Nor song our joy relay!

Yet stand we will, by grace alone,
Blameless with great joy.
Though undeserved, His mercy shone
All praise our tongue employ.

But nay, that day when we must shout,
The glories of His name!
Our Savior then will turn about
And praise us just the same!

Oh, child of God, this is going to happen when the Lord Jesus Christ reveals Himself to us, He says here, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. The *apokalupsei*: the unveiling of Jesus Christ, when we see Him in all of His glory. That will be the time, as the Lord reminds us in Matthew 25, when He will declare to His faithful servants, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." This will be that time, according to Paul's words to us in Romans 2:6-7 when God "will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life...glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good."

Can you imagine the joy that must have flooded the souls of these saints who have seen their children torn apart by animals, who have seen their loved ones dipped in wax and burned alive? Those who have lost their jobs, who are hungry and starving. Here they have a threefold commendation that is inevitable, that is coming from the Lord. That He is going to give you praise and glory and honor. An

amazing thought. What a motivation for holy living! It reminds me of our Lord's parables, especially the one of the expectant steward in Luke 12:37 where he says, "Blessed are those slaves who the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait upon them." Amazing!

Beloved, please remember, you will never be able to transcend the sufferings of the temporal unless you are able to fix your mind upon the eternal. And you cannot do that unless you understand the Word of God, especially with respect to the living hope that we have in Christ Jesus in our salvation. That's why the doctrine of salvation is so important. To understand from beginning to end, it's all of grace. This was the heart of Peter's message to these suffering saints. Later on in verse 13 he says, "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." We've got to learn to live for the future as we walk by the Spirit of God, which literally means to submit to the Spirit of God as He has revealed Himself to us through His Word; to surrender to Him on a moment by moment basis. It means that we don't get preoccupied with life. We don't get hung up with politics, materialism, consumed with our retirement, or entertainment.

I see a bumper sticker sometimes that says, "He who has the most toys when he dies WINS!" No he doesn't, he loses. If you want to gain your life you have to be willing to lose it. We don't lay up our treasures here on earth, we lay them up in heaven. We've got to learn to live consistently with that great truth. For those of you who truly know Christ, I hope you will learn to visualize that moment when you suddenly stand face to face with the Lover of your souls; when you stand face to face with the triune God who has chosen, sanctified, sealed and blessed you (as Peter has reminded us earlier). These are the thoughts that need to govern our life.

For those of you who don't know Christ, I would challenge you, as a servant of God, to visualize Him not as your Savior but as your Judge. May you see the penetrating eyes of omniscient holiness peering into your sinful heart and exposing your rebellion against Him. I pray you will hear His voice, because unless you repent, someday you will hear, "depart from Me, you worker of iniquity. I never knew you."

Not only do we rejoice because we possess *a salvation that is secure, a faith that is proven, a commendation that is inevitable*, we also have *a love that is unseen*. In verse 8 it says, "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory." Sometimes we like to excuse our disobedience and lack of spiritual discipline by saying all of it is so hard. It would have been so much easier if we could have been with the Savior, if we could only see Him. If we were to see Him and walk with Him then things would go much better. Friends, that's not so. Peter is a perfect example of this. I believe that's why he's writing that here. He was the leader of the apostles, the closest one to the Lord. Imagine living closely to and learning from the Lord Jesus Christ those three years. Three years of intimate mentoring. And yet what did he do? He denied the Lord three times. Folks, we would have done the same, or if not that, then something worse. Later on Jesus even asked him, "Peter, do you love me?"

Here, Peter, being aware of his own failures, and yet recognizing the power of the Spirit of God in the life of an obedient Christian whose faith has been tested, here he praises these dear saints for their ongoing, *agape* love for the Lord. That love of the will. That love of choice that sometimes may not

have all of the emotion with it, but nevertheless chooses to love even as God loves. This is the kind of love that he's saying is yet another proof of genuine, saving faith. This is more than some shallow, schmaltzy, sentimental love. This is the love that engages the mind, that engages the will. With the mind we believe in Him, and with the will we choose to obey Him and to persevere. Because of this he's saying, "you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

Inexpressible is an interesting word. *Aneklalétos* in the original language, it means that it's something that is unspeakable, it is inexpressible. It is one of my favorite words: ineffable. It's too wondrous to even speak from the lips. It's the type of joy that causes you to be silent. You just don't know what to say. It's when the mind is so overwhelmed with a sense of divine mystery that it cannot employ the tongue to speak. It's when the thoughts of the glories of our salvation exceed our ability to communicate. That's what he's saying here.

Why would anybody have this? It's because of the unseen love that is the possession of true believers. Those of us who truly know Christ (and I hope all of you truly do) understand what it means to have a secret devotion to God. You understand what it means to long to be in the presence of God in prayer, and long to immerse yourself in His Word and to hear His voice. You long for that personal fellowship, because it is so sweet, so real. There is nothing on earth that compares to it. That's what genuine worship is. This is that supernatural love, and because we enjoy this ineffable fellowship, we experience a transcended joy. We "greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

Glory is from the word *doxozo*. We get the word doxology from that. It means an overflow of praise to God from within our heart. Let me make this practical. I don't need some screaming preacher with manipulative music to conjure up a sense of worship and joy in my heart. All I need is to hear the voice of my Savior through the preaching of His Word, through the teaching of His Word, through the praying of His Word and through the singing of His Word. I don't care about all the other things. I know the Savior and I know the sound of His voice. He is the object of my faith, the object of my love. When we hear His voice our hearts overflow with joy. That's why it's so hollow to go to some services or read books where it's just emotion and fluff and pontification.

We have a living hope, not a dead one that has to be revived every Sunday. I don't need some revival every year to get my spiritual motor going again. I can understand what it means to enjoy the presence of the living God as I live out my faith. As we live out our faith we understand more of the hope and joy that is ours. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. If you want faith, which means you want hope and joy, you've got to listen to the Word of God. You've got to learn the Word of God. Let me hear the voice of my Savior. Then and then only can I worship Him in spirit and in truth—when the *subjective* is regulated by the *objective*.

Finally, as we examine Peter's reasoning for rejoicing, as if it weren't enough to have a salvation that is *secure, a faith that is proven, a commendation that is inevitable and a love that is unseen*, finally we have *a deliverance that is in progress*. Look at verse 9, "obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls." The word obtaining here is so important. It comes from a root word that means "to receive what is due or what is deserved." Here, what it's literally saying, as we understand the grammar of the text, is that we're "presently receiving for ourselves as the outcome of our faith the salvation of our souls." Child of God, do not miss this! This is so precious. Right now, at this very moment, every one of you who has placed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is experiencing a process of salvation, a deliverance that is in progress. It will continue until you enter into the presence of His

glory, and on from there. Our deliverance is in progress. It says we are “presently receiving for ourselves as the outcome of our faith the salvation of our souls.”

What is involved in this process? We could go on for hours with all that is involved in this process right now. Suffice it to say that He is sanctifying us by the Word of God. The Lord Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17, “Sanctify them in the truth, Thy Word is Truth.” There is a process whereby God uses His Word to conform us to the image of Christ. That’s what’s happening right now and all during the week. Not only that, the Father is faithful to love us and to protect us and to provide for us. We read that the Holy Spirit on an ongoing basis is sanctifying us. He instructs us and empowers us for service. He seals us for the day of redemption. He even intercedes for us in prayer, according to Romans 8. Moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ, right now, sits at the right hand of the Father and mediates for us as our advocate before God’s bar of justice. He continues to make intercession for us as our faithful High Priest. We have a deliverance that is in progress.

Currently, we are being delivered from the power of sin until that day in which we will be delivered from the very presence of sin. That’s something to rejoice about. I pray that the next time your heart grows heavy with the cares of this world that you will remember these divine reasons for rejoicing, reasons summarized so perfectly by Charles Spurgeon. Let me close with his words.

“Ah! Even when the Christian is most ‘in heaviness through manifold temptations,’ what a mercy it is that he can know that he is still elect of God! Any man who is assured that God has ‘chosen him from before the foundation of the world’ may well say, ‘Wherein we greatly rejoice.’

‘When flesh and heart faileth, God is the strength of my life, and my portion for ever.’

‘I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.’”

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