

# Ministry of Grace Church

## 1 Peter 1:6-12 - Speaker Notes

### Introduction

Do you remember from our study of James, where he said:

Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. (James 1:2-3)

Well, I think Peter and James were singing from the same song book. Here's what Peter had to say about difficult times:

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

So, whether you're reading from James or 1 Peter, among other things, you should be rejoicing because even in the midst of difficult times we know that God has secured our salvation, forever! Peter is also going to teach us that difficult times in our lives strengthen our faith which results in praise, honor, and glory to God. Stop and think about these two things for a minute. When you encounter difficult times, whether it's short-term or long-term, if you endure these situations keeping your focus on God, not only will it build up your endurance and strengthen your faith in God –it brings glory to God. But why should we rejoice? Because we know that God has chosen us for a salvation that we don't deserve, and we will live forever in the most amazing place that God ever created! Here's how Peter expressed it.

### 1 Peter 1:6-7

**In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so 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.**

To fully appreciate verses six and seven, we need to look back at verses three through five:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, having been kept in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

And – in this you greatly rejoice. In what do we greatly rejoice? Our salvation, which we don't deserve and which is ready to be revealed in the last time (or in the last days). What exactly does Peter mean that we rejoice? The word "rejoice" is translated from the Greek word *agalliaō*, which is a compound of *agan*, meaning "much" and a form of *hallomai*, meaning "to leap." Hence, it literally means "much leaping." By application, it refers to abundant joyful celebration. The word is used here in the present tense, active voice, and

indicative mood, indicating current, ongoing action. Therefore, we could translate this as, “you are currently greatly rejoicing.”

Peter is saying, “In this new birth, which can’t be lost, this guaranteed salvation which you have, which you don’t deserve, you are greatly rejoicing ...” He is not so much making a doctrinal statement as he is making a statement of fact. Apparently, the people to whom he was writing had already demonstrated their rejoicing in their salvation and inheritance. And this is made even more noteworthy considering the trials that they were undergoing at that time.

So what Peter is saying is that these people were rejoicing in the assurances they had from God in spite of the fact that they were currently undergoing distress or sadness from the temptations and adversities that they were suffering. It is clear from the next verse that they were not saddened as a result of being tempted to do evil. They were saddened by the pain of the adversity they were undergoing, even though this adversity was causing their faith to be strengthened.

As Paul said:

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (2 Corinthians 4:17)

What Peter is telling us can be confusing if not analyzed carefully. Let’s look at it phrase by phrase:

“**that the proof of your faith**” - The word translated “proof” is *dokimion*, which is an expression of worth and is thus translated “genuineness” or “worthiness.” It is related to the verb translated here as “tested.” This verb is *dokimadzō*, which means “to test for the purpose of finding value,” not for the purpose of finding fault. The intent of the various trials that we undergo is to assay or evaluate our faith. It is an evaluation whose purpose is to determine the goodness, or value of our faith, not the badness or weakness of our faith.

“**being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire**” - Peter is not saying that your faith is much more precious than gold (though that may well be true), rather he is saying that **the proof of your faith** is more precious. God values a stronger, more genuine faith over a weak, ineffective faith, especially a faith that grows through the trials of life.

But, why does Peter refer to Gold as perishable? Isn’t gold a metal that doesn’t corrode? Isn’t it enduring? We have all heard the explanation of the golden ring in a wedding ceremony as a symbol of the eternal love that exists between Christ and His bride, the church. It is a “symbol” of this eternal love, but gold is not eternal itself. In fact, gold is a soft metal that wears away easily and which will disappear with the rest of creation at the end of time. The trial of our faith will produce eternal results and the genuineness of our faith can only be ascertained through trial.

“**may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**” - The reason for our rejoicing and the reason for the proving of our faith is that it might result in praise and honor and glory, not to us, but to the author and finisher of our faith when he comes back to claim us as His own.

## **1 Peter 1:8-9**

**And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**

Since this epistle is believed to have been written sometime between AD 58 and 65, some of those reading it would might have been alive when Christ was alive. It is unlikely, however, that very many of them, if any, actually saw Jesus. This letter was written to the chosen ones scattered throughout Asia Minor and, therefore, Peter can confidently say that they had not seen him.

The point that Peter is making is that in spite of the fact that they had not seen Jesus, they loved Him. This same message is clearly given to us today. Though none of us has seen him we still love him. A common expression in the world today is “seeing is believing,” but Peter is saying, in effect, “believing is seeing.” The result of this belief, as he has said in several of the previous verses, is that we rejoice with a joy that is both glorious and indescribable. Have you ever tried to explain the joy of salvation to an unbeliever? It’s impossible, isn’t it? The joy we have, even in the midst of trials, is difficult for us to explain and impossible for an unbeliever to understand.

This verse ties back to the last part of verse 7, “the appearing of Jesus Christ.” If you look at the key verbs that follow this phrase you find, “having not seen,” “believing,” and “receiving.” If we consider these together, we can see what Peter is saying regarding the coming of Jesus Christ. Even though we have not seen Him, we believe in Him, and will, as the final result of that faith, receive salvation. Here Peter tells us that the ultimate result of our faith is the salvation of our souls.

But, wait a minute! I thought that the moment we accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior we got saved. Well, in a positional sense we have already received salvation, that is, in God’s record book we are already marked as righteous (saved). But that salvation isn’t fully consummated until He comes back to take us home. At the rapture of the church, the salvation of our souls will be completed when we receive our immortal bodies:

**Behold, I tell you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For this corruptible must put on the incorruptible, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)**

This concludes Peter’s first lesson for us: we rejoice in the trials which refine and purify our faith because it is that faith which guarantees our salvation which will be received at the coming of Jesus.

What Peter is **not** saying in this passage, and it’s important to note it here, is that we have to “hold on to our faith and keep it so that we don’t lose it” because he already made it abundantly clear that we were chosen to salvation by God Himself, and the preponderance of scriptural evidence makes it very clear that He will not lose us. For example, Jesus said:

**“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish—ever; and no one will snatch them out of My**

hand. “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. “I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30)

I’ve heard some people argue about this, saying that a person can retract their faith, they can voluntarily give up their faith. But Jesus said that “**no one** will snatch them out of My hand” and “**no one** is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.” Listen my friends, you cannot give up your salvation and you cannot lose your salvation. Your salvation is secure forever!

### **1 Peter 1:10-12**

**Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, made careful searches and inquiries, inquiring to know what time or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He was predicting the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been declared to you through those who proclaimed the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.**

Now, concerning this salvation which Peter has just described, he goes on to impress upon his readers its rarity and preciousness. It is of such rare value that the prophets themselves have earnestly sought out its meaning. They even searched the Scriptures to understand the truth of this salvation. It is a salvation that they were promised but had not received. It is a salvation that we are promised and are in the process of receiving. Now, don’t get me wrong. I am not saying that salvation is a process. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then in God’s legal system you are now saved!

Now, getting back to the prophets, the Greek construction does not say that they sought “after it” but “concerning it.” They were not looking for salvation, they were trying to understand salvation in the very messages they were delivering through the Spirit of God. According to Albert Barnes in his *Notes on the Bible*:

they perceived that in their communications there were some great and glorious truths which they did not fully comprehend, and that they diligently employed their natural faculties to understand that which they were appointed to impart to succeeding generations.

The prophets, who were the channel of God’s revelation to the Israelites and to us, were themselves constantly seeking the meaning of their messages, even digging through other scripture to get deeper meaning. An excellent example of this is portrayed in **Daniel 9:2**, where Daniel searched the Scriptures for how long the exile of the Jews in Babylon was going to last:

in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

Daniel obviously spent a lot of time searching the scriptures of his day, especially the prophesies of those who came before him. It was through this study of God’s Word and mining for information in “the books” (actually scrolls) that the Spirit of God revealed to him the time when the Israelites would be allowed to return to Jerusalem.

Peter's use of the words "careful searches" and "inquiries," are both in their intensive form, emphasizes the effort and care that was put into understanding the details of this salvation that we have. Isn't it a shame that we, with the entire revelation of God in our hands, take the reading of His Word and this salvation so lightly?

In **1 Peter 1:10**, he gives us particular insight into another thing the prophets looked closely at, namely the Savior Himself. These prophets were inquiring about the person, who He would be, what would be His character, and what would be the nature of the work that He would perform. They were also trying to understand when He would come. That is, they wanted to know what would characterize the time of His coming, in the same way that we want to understand the nature of the time when Christ will return again.

The thing that they were most curious about, however, seems to have been the fact that the Messiah would suffer. It was clear to them that the prophecies taught that the Messiah would suffer, but it was difficult to reconcile the sufferings with the descriptions of His glory and triumphs which would follow. The most significant thing about Peter's mention of the prophets is not so much that they believed their messages, but that they constantly studied the scriptures to learn more about the God they served!

The purpose of Peter's message is to impress upon those to whom he was writing in the 1<sup>st</sup> century (and to us who read these words today) not only the value of the message contained in the scriptures, but also the very privileged position that we are in, being able to understand what was written in a way that saints of old were not permitted. The prophets of the Old Testament searched with effort for the true meaning of the message, which was inspired by the Holy Spirit, in order to understand the things of the Messiah and this salvation that we have. Now Peter tells us that even the angelic beings have an intense desire to know more about these things as well.

Do you get the full impact of that? Angels are watching us to learn about salvation! An angel cannot experience salvation as we can. Each angelic being is a separate creation and is responsible to God for his own actions. It is because of the procreation of mankind from a single created being that Christ was able to atone for the sins of Adam's entire race. Since angels can't experience salvation themselves, they have to understand it by studying those of us who are experiencing it.

So, the next time you feel like someone is watching you (other than the omnipresent God we serve) it may well be that it is an angel, trying to better understand more about the salvation so freely offered to us, even though we don't deserve it. The only way the angels can understand God's grace and mercy is by observing us.

### **So What?**

We all undergo adversities and trials in our Christian walk. One of the keys to peace and happiness is the realization that these are only temporary, and they may result in even greater glory as we allow them to refine our faith and give the glory to God alone. Are you undergoing adversities which are producing sadness in your life? Peter says, "Rejoice!"

Compare this testing that Peter talks about with what James said about this very subject in **James 1:2**, "My brothers, count it all joy when you encounter various trials." We can count it all joy because we know that through these trials our faith is being purified, made stronger

and more valuable. And - these trials will ultimately result in praise to God! After all, isn't that what we all want?

We may not be able to see our Savior today, but that doesn't stop us from believing in Him and in the gift of eternal life through His blood. That salvation should give joy to us all. Let us express that joy in our worship and our praise of Him!

Let me urge each of you to renew your commitment to God and to the understanding of His message for us. Let us search the scriptures daily and let us lock His Word in our hearts to be meditated on and shared with others.

Do you realize how much information God has made available to us in His Word? There is information about who our God really is, what kind of a relationship He has provided for us, what kind of a future He has prepared for us, and how we can know without a doubt that we are His. We have more information at our fingertips about our God and His plans for us, than anyone throughout history, including the very prophets that God sent to give us His word. We even have more information available to us about our God and this salvation that any angel has!

Knowing how much God has made available to us in the Holy Bible, how much time and effort do you put into learning it? How much time and effort do you put into reading it.

My friends, our God wants a close, personal relationship with you. The more you read your Bible, the more you can understand about God's relationship with you. Are you daily learning more about God or are you getting in His way?

Now, that's something to think about!

Let's pray.