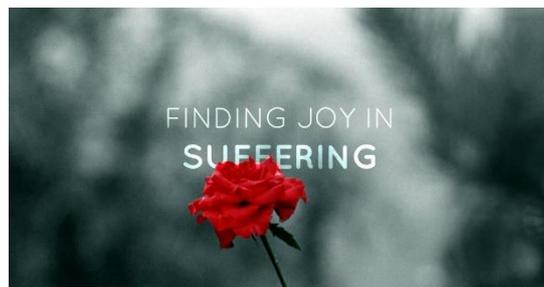


PATHFINDERS

ST. LAWRENCE

JOY IN A SUFFERING WORLD, 1 PETER 1:3-12



Intro	Suffering... It's not really something we like to talk about, is it? We all have endured, or will endure, suffering at some point in our lives. What keeps us going? What gives us hope to endure the hardness of suffering when the pain feels like too much?
Read	<p>1 Peter 1:3-12 (NIV UK)</p> <p>³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.</p> <p>¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.</p>

Watch



This video shows us a really touching example of someone who has suffered a great deal, but has seen Jesus in the midst of their suffering helping them through it.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_DNJIvazBI

Think

Right at the beginning of this passage, Peter praises God for something. What does he praise God for?

Notice what the beginning of the passage says, it says the hope that we have been born into is a *living* hope! It's a hope that's grounded in the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead. Death can't touch our hope because it's hope that comes from Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

What does Peter say is special about the "inheritance" that we've received? Where does Peter say our inheritance is being kept for us?

This may sound confusing when you first read it, but the message is essentially this: God's given us a special kind of hope. Why is it special? It's special because it can't ever "perish, spoil or fade." Have you ever hoped for something, only to have your hope killed by something else that happens? The amazing thing about the hope that Jesus gives is that it won't ever die. It's a hope that stays firm and remains strong forever, just like Jesus will. That's the inheritance that we've been promised: the fact that just like Jesus was, we will one day be raised along with Him to our heavenly home with the Lord.

Why is it comforting to know that our inheritance is kept in *heaven* for us?

When I think about this, I think it's comforting to know that because it's in heaven, nothing can get to it. There's nothing that can harm my hope in Jesus. There's nothing on earth that can hurt me so badly or crush my spirits so completely that it can even cause my promise from Jesus to stray a centimetre!

What does Peter say we are being "shielded" by until the final day of our salvation comes?

Why is this comforting? Because nothing can stand against God. If it is God that is keeping my inheritance for me, nothing can pry it from His fingers. I am completely secure in God because it's His power that keeps me there. It's His power that keeps *you* there when you're in the middle of suffering.

Peter acknowledges that even though we've been given this great salvation, and we rejoice in it, we experience trial (vs 6). But the trials do something for our faith.

What does Peter say the purpose of the trials that the people endured were for (vs. 7)?

Peter encourages the Christian believers that these trials aren't meaningless. It's so easy to just feel like a puppet in a puppet show when trials come. If we're honest with ourselves, sometimes it feels totally meaningless, like it's just a bit of bad luck that's come our way. But Peter encourages the Christian believers in the letter to have a different perspective. He says that the purpose of the trials was to show the genuineness of their faith. He says that the "proven genuineness" of our faith will result in "praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed." (vs. 8). This means that for all our trials, no matter what we face, they will be turned to pure worship and joy at the coming of Jesus one day. When we've gone through trial and seen how bitter the world is, Jesus' glory will shine all the greater to us, who've been tested by all the darkness that this world can throw at us.

Trials show us that faith in Jesus is a *real* thing; it's something that can withstand all the attacks of the world and the devil, because it's a faith that's founded in the **hope** of Jesus and the salvation he's keeping in heaven for us. Nothing can steal that hope!

Listen



This song is a great one to remember. It teaches us that when we endure suffering, we must always remind ourselves that Jesus is still sovereign over everything, and we can rest in that!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq59iE3MhXM>

Pray

- Use the song above to help you pray, asking God to help your soul to be still, to remember that He is still God and that He doesn't leave you when you suffer.
- Ask God to help you remember that your hope in Him can never pass away. Pray that when you suffer, you'd be able to remember that nothing can stand against the hope you have in Jesus.