

1 PETER 1:3-9 (NKJV)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

- **When Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, they were undergoing persecution and were suffering for Christ's sake (Phil. 1:28-30). Paul told these suffering Christians:**
 - *"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1).*
 - *"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).*
- **How could they rejoice when they were suffering?**
 - *"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).*
 - *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20).*

**“IN THIS YOU
GREATLY REJOICE”**

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IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE THAT YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN

SALVATION BRINGS JOY.

- “*Restore to me the joy of Your salvation*” (**Psalm 51:12a**).
- “*Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls*” (**1 Pet. 1:8-9**)
- The very act of coming into Christ is a joyous occasion.
 - . . . *both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing* (**Acts 8:39**).
- Even after coming into Christ, when the need to confess our faults arises (**1 John 1:9; James 5:16**), there is joy on earth (**Rom. 12:15**) and in Heaven (**Luke 15:1-7, 11-32**).

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD'S HELP, PROVISION, & PROTECTION

IF WE SEEK HIM FIRST, THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

- We are completely dependent on God (**Psalm 23:1**), and He will provide for our need.
 - *“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”* (**Matt. 6:31-33**).
 - ❖ God also provides for us indirectly through other people (**Phil. 4:14-20; James 2:15-16; etc.**).
- The Lord is our protector.
 - Physically (**Psalm 63:7, NET; Acts 9:23-25**), when it is according to His will.
 - And spiritually (**Heb. 13:5-6; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 John 5:18, ESV; 1 Cor. 10:13**), ALWAYS.

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN TRIALS, TESTINGS, AND PERSECUTIONS

- Do we count it all joy when we face various trials and testings (**James 1:2-4, 12; Rom. 5:3-5**)?
- Do we rejoice when we are persecuted (**Matt. 5:11-12; Luke 6:22-23**)?
- Do we rejoice when we share in Christ's sufferings (**1 Pet. 4:12-13; Col. 1:24**)?
 - We can suffer when standing alone for the truth, even among brethren.
 - This will happen to individual Christians (**Jude 3**) and teachers/preachers (**2 Tim. 4:3-4**).
- Jesus is our perfect example.
 - . . . *let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured . . .* (**Heb. 12:1-2**).

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD'S WORK

DO WE ENJOY OBEYING THE LORD?

- *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:9-11).*

DO WE ENJOY THE BYPRODUCT OF BRINGING GLORY TO GOD THROUGH OUR GOOD DEEDS?

- *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).*

Do we view these commands as mere obligations, or do we actually find joy in obeying the lord?

Is your Christianity a “have-to” religion, or is your Christianity a “want-to” religion?

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD'S WORK

I **want** to be a worker for the Lord,
I **want** to love and trust his holy word,
I **want** to sing and pray, and be busy ev'ry day
In the vineyard of the Lord. (**verse 1**)

CAN WE TRUTHFULLY SING
THESE WORDS?

I **want** to be a worker ev'ry day,
I **want** to lead the erring in the way
That leads to heav'n above, where all is peace and love,
In the kingdom of the Lord. (**verse 2**)

“I Want to Be a Worker” – Isaiah Baltzell, 1880

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD'S WORK

DO WE REALLY WANT TO BE A WORKER FOR THE LORD?

- *“There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God” (Ecc. 2:24, ESV).*
- *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34).*
 - Food is the very thing that sustains us and keeps us physically alive.
 - Is our food (doing the Father's will) the same as Christ's food?

DO WE FIND JOY IN HEARING AND SPREADING THE GOSPEL?

- *“What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice” (Phil. 1:18).*
- *. . . Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did . . . and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:4-8).*

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN WORSHIP

- Are we actually glad to go into the house of the Lord?
 - *“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord’” (Psalm 122:1).*
 - *“This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).*
 - ❖ Do we rejoice on Sundays and Wednesdays?
- Do we find enough joy in worship that we would praise God while in chains?
 - *“Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:22-25)?*

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN ANTICIPATION OF HEAVEN

- We can rejoice knowing the faithful's names are written in Heaven.
 - *“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:19-20).*
 - *“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels” (Rev. 3:5).*
- Our reward is reserved in Heaven.
 - *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:3-4).*

IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE IN ANTICIPATION OF HEAVEN

- We can rejoice in knowing other faithful people around us have the same hope.
 - *“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?” (1 Thess. 2:19).*
- If we are living as we ought, we should find comfort knowing the Lord will return.
 - *“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:13-18).*

GOD'S CHILDREN CAN REJOICE KNOWING . . .

- . . . Our past sins are forgiven.**
- . . . The Lord helps, provides for, and protects us.**
- . . . The end result if we endure our trials, testings, and persecutions.**
- . . . We are doing the Lord's work.**
- . . . The effect of our worship.**
- . . . Heaven is our eternal home if we remain steadfast to the Lord.**

BUT these assurances and the joy we can have in them are only available to people who have submitted to God in full obedience.

WON'T YOU PUT YOURSELF IN A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD TODAY?