

WORDS OF
JOY

Jeremiah 15:16



FIRST MELISSA

What If?

- What if you had people who longed for true spiritual joy while living in a culture that rejects Jesus and biblical values?
- What if God had chosen to give grace to a group of people so they would shine the light of the gospel in a dark world?
- What if followers of Jesus faced difficult struggles that were designed to deepen and strengthen their faith?
- What if the all-knowing God gave specific action steps that could be obeyed by His children as they await the arrival of Messiah?
- What if God's people were asked to live holy lives in the present because they believed His promises about the future?
- What if God gave people new hearts so they could truly love one another?

Joy of Salvation

1 Peter

Theme verse for this teaching series

Your words were found and I ate them,
and **Your words became for me a joy**
and the delight of my heart; for I have
been called by Your name, O Lord God of
hosts. Jeremiah 15:16

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Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **to those who reside as aliens**, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia... 1 Peter 1:1

*Do you sometimes feel like a stranger in today's world?

What if you had people who longed for true spiritual joy while living in a culture that rejects Jesus and biblical values?

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who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, **to obey Jesus Christ** and be sprinkled with His blood: may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. 1 Peter 1:1-2

- The Trinity... God the Father in His grace had chosen them and God the Spirit had sanctified them through the atoning blood of God the Son, Jesus Christ.
- Bible Knowledge Commentary
- When God made the covenant with Moses, the promise of obedience by God's people was sealed by the sprinkling of the blood of the covenant sacrifice on the altar and on the people (Exodus 24:1–11). – New Bible Commentary

What if God had chosen to give grace to a group of people so they would shine the light of the gospel in a dark world?

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[Praise be to] 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, 1 Peter 1:3

- When I surrender my heart to Jesus as Savior, I begin a new spiritual life that offers living hope.
- “Living” means that the believer’s hope is sure, certain, and real, as opposed to the deceptive, empty, false hope the world offers.
- Because Jesus overcame death, He is qualified to be the Savior.

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to obtain an inheritance which is **imperishable** and **undefiled** and **will not fade away**, reserved 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** [return of Messiah Jesus].

1 Peter 1:4-5

- Does it seem like everything of value and truth is fading away in today's culture?
- Our inheritance cannot be destroyed by hostile elements, cannot be defiled by pollution from outside and cannot fade by wasting from within. – New Bible Commentary
- Our protection is not human strength or intellect, but God's power.

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In this [our imperishable spiritual inheritance] you greatly **rejoice** [ἀγαλλιάω *agalliao*... to exult, rejoice exceedingly, be exceeding glad], even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed 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;

1 Peter 1:6-7

What if followers of Jesus faced difficult struggles that were designed to deepen and strengthen their faith?

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(earlier in this teaching series)

Consider it all **joy**, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. James 1:2-3

The purpose of earthly trials is to sift out what is genuine in our faith. – New Bible Commentary

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Real growth comes through a variety of workouts



“various trials”

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Various Personal Trials This Week

- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Medical
- Financial
- Relationships
- Social groups
- Employment

In this you greatly rejoice,
even though now for a
little while, if necessary,
you have been distressed
by **various trials**,
1 Peter 1:6

Various National Trials This Week

- 2 dead, 14 hurt in a shooting at a grocery store in Tennessee
- Turkey builds a wall to keep out Afghan refugees
- White House budget office tells agencies to prepare for government shutdown
- Iran's Foreign Minister vows to eliminate Zionism at U.N. Anti-Racism conference
- Four teenagers have been charged with a plot to attack a Pennsylvania high school in 2024, on the 25th anniversary of the massacre at Colorado's Columbine High School
- Taliban hang a dead body in public to signal their governing tactics
- Amtrak train derails in Montana, killing three and injuring dozens
- A woman in the UK with Down syndrome lost a court challenge against the British government over a law allowing the abortion up until birth of an unborn child with that condition

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 [χαρά chara] inexpressible and full of glory, 1 Peter 1:8**

*Peter, the author, had seen Jesus in person. His readers had likely not.

*As people who love and follow Jesus, our privilege is to:

- Greatly rejoice
- Experience joy inexpressible (unspeakable)
- Experience joy full of glory

*Jesus said, “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:12

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obtaining [receiving] as the outcome of your faith the **salvation of your souls.** 1 Peter 1:9

For those who love and believe in Jesus, salvation is:

- past (“He has given us new birth,” v. 3)
- present (“through faith are shielded by God’s power,” v. 5)
- future (it is their “inheritance,” v. 4, which will “be revealed in the last time,” v. 5, and is “the goal of your faith,” v. 9).

– Bible Knowledge Commentary

God allows us to know Him NOW and offers us eternity in heaven THEN.

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As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you [human writers of the Old Testament] made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 1 Peter 1:10-11

*Peter writes that the writers of the Old Testament (Tanakh) were filled with the Spirit of Christ (Messiah). See Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:25–27, 44–47; John 5:39, 45–47.

*For messianic prophecies of suffering, see Psalms 22:7–8; Psalms 22:17–18; Isaiah 53; Lamentations 1:12.

It was revealed to them [human writers of the Old Testament] that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look. 1 Peter 1:12

*God spoke His Word to writers centuries ago to give people spiritual encouragement in every generation

*Angels, as limited created beings, also look ahead to the unfolding events of the Last Days

Therefore [because of the amazing spiritual gifts provided to followers of Yeshua], 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. 1 Peter 1:13

* Previously, spiritual ignorance had allowed Peter's readers to give way to uncontrolled desires, but God's pattern of behavior for His people is based on His revealed character. – New Bible Commentary

What if the all-knowing God gave specific action steps that could be obeyed by His children as they await the arrival of Messiah?

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Assignments for Followers of Jesus in 1 Peter 1:13

Prepare your minds for action

Obedience is a conscious act of the will. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

Be mentally prepared for opposition, distractions, temptations and unexpected setbacks. – Jewish New Testament Commentary

Keep sober in spirit

Rather than being controlled by outside circumstances, believers should be directed from within. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

Fix your hope completely on the grace of Jesus

“My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.”

Holy living demands determination. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

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Have a Mind focused on the things of God

- “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.” 1 Chronicles 28:9
- So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. Ephesians 4:17-19
- And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but alike the Holy One who called you, **be holy yourselves also in all your behavior**; because it is written [see Leviticus 11:44, 19:2, 20:7] ,
“You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:14-16

What if God's people were asked to live holy lives in the present because they believed His promises about the future?

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What happens when a nation is led by minds not fixed on the revelation of Jesus Christ but fixed on the evil and depraved strategies of people?

On 9/24/21, U.S. House passed H. R. 3755 “Women’s Health Protection Act of 2021”

(a) GENERAL RULE.—A health care provider has a statutory right under this Act to provide abortion services, and may provide abortion services, and that provider’s patient has a corresponding right to receive such services, without any of the following limitations or requirements:

...

(8) A prohibition on abortion at any point or points in time prior to fetal viability, including a prohibition or restriction on a particular abortion procedure.

(9) A prohibition on abortion after fetal viability when, in the good-faith medical judgment of the treating health care provider, continuation of the pregnancy would pose a risk to the pregnant patient’s life or health.

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(8) The terms “woman” and “women” are used in this bill to reflect the identity of the majority of people targeted and affected by restrictions on abortion services, and to address squarely the targeted restrictions on abortion, which are rooted in misogyny. However, access to abortion services is critical to the health of every person capable of becoming pregnant. This Act is intended to protect all people with the capacity for pregnancy—cisgender women, transgender men, non-binary individuals, those who identify with a different gender, and others—who are unjustly harmed by restrictions on abortion services.

If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile [worthless] way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. 1 Peter 1:17-19

- *How people live “post-salvation” matters to God.
- *Does my spiritual walk with Jesus, received as a gift THEN, still guide my choices and actions NOW?
- *In fear of whom do we live?

For He [Messiah Jesus] was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. 1 Peter 1:20-21

*God the Father sends Jesus, who is eternally God the Son, to the earth in the divinely perfect timing, in His first coming AND second coming

- But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Galatians 4:4-5
- Jesus said, “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.” Matthew 24:42

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere [without hypocrisy] love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for **you have been born again** not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 1 Peter 1:22-23

*We are to love others ἐκτενῶς *ektenos* “fervently” or “deeply.” See this word in Luke 22:44 and Acts 12:5. It denotes supreme effort, literally “with every muscle strained.” – New Bible Commentary

What if God gave people new hearts so they could truly love one another?

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For, “All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, but the word of the Lord endures forever.” [Isaiah 40:6] And this is the word which was preached to you. 1 Peter 1:24-25

Karl Barth notes that the eternal Word comes to followers of Jesus in three forms:

1. **Yeshua the Messiah.** You have been born again through ... the living Word of God that lasts forever. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning The Word became a human being and lived with us” (John 1:1–2, 14).
2. **Scripture**, which Peter quotes (Isaiah 40:6–8) as authenticating itself: The grass withers, and the flower falls off; but the Word of the Lord lasts forever. See Hebrews 4:12–13; James 1:10–11, 4:14.
3. **The preachings of God’s people**, equated with the first two forms. Moreover, this “Word” is the Good News which has been proclaimed to you. See Romans 10:17.

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***What if our hearts were
changed by the gospel of
Jesus and we lived like
that every day?***

***What if you surrendered
your heart to Jesus today?***

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