

TITLE: Satisfaction in the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (Part 2)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:3

THEME: The Sovereign mercy of God fuels the sovereign joy of our salvation

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Read Passage

Thought we'd go back to v. 2 & spend one more week reviewing the doctrine of t/Trinity (Late April fools joke).

What we are looking at this week and next is {title}

In this section which begins in v. 3 we find first direct words of this letter (following t/opening greeting).

One of t/things that's striking to me in this section are t/twin themes of joy and praise. Begins w/doxology (v. 1 - "blessed be God"); speaks of joy (v. 6 - "in this you rejoice"); goes back to praise (v. 7 - "proof of your faith may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at rev. of JC"); back to joy (v. 8 - "you greatly rejoice with joy") and ends with doxology ("full of glory"). Back and forth - praise, joy; praise, joy; praise. Section that begins w/doxology "Blessed be God" and ends w/that same note ("full of glory").

In t/original text, t/entire section all the way to v. 12 is really one long paragraph that's intro. w/a Jewish benediction "blessed be God . . ."

Rem. - we spend sev. weeks in v. 2 looking not only at t/Trinity, but also t/fact and source of our salvation. As believers in JC we have been==>

I. Selected by the Father

II. Sanctified by the Spirit

III. Saved by the Son

"Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation"

Peter now moves on to expand upon t/concept of salvation from v. 2, specifically focusing on t/hope and joy that's ours in X.

If vv. 1-2 focus on t/source of our satisfaction: Namely t/Triune God, vv. 3-9 focus on t/joy that comes from that sovereign source.

That joy is grounded in a living hope and, in spite of sufferings of this present world, your faith will persevere resulting in your final salvation, even your glorification w/X (v. 9).

John Calvin echoes this theme when he writes of this letter==>

". . . the main object of this epistle is to raise us above the world in order that we may be prepared and encouraged to sustain the spiritual contests of our warfare. For this end, the knowledge of God's benefits avails much; for when their value appears to us all other things will be deemed worthless, especially when we consider what Christ and his blessings are; for everything without him is but dross. For this reason he highly extols the wonderful grace of God in Christ, that is, that we may not deem it much to give up the world in order that we may enjoy the invaluable treasure of a future life; and also that we may not be broken down by present troubles but patiently endure them, being satisfied with eternal happiness." [Calvin, 27]

There is hope for the hurting in the sovereign joy of our salvation. It comes by God's sovereign mercy unto God's sovereign glory resulting in the sovereign joy of our salvation.

To put it concisely:

"The Sovereign mercy of God fuels the sovereign joy of our salvation"

By God's design our salvation is to be enjoyed by us to God's greatest glory and praise. Because JC satisfied t/wrath of t/Father on our behalf, we can be satisfied in JC and His life that courses thru our veins.

Since that truth rests in an omnipotent, sovereign source (God) it transcends t/temporal (our circumstances).

Over the next couple of weeks we will be looking at ==>

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

All that is our salvation, God's rescuing us from our sin through JC, is to bring us joy.

The first element of t/sovereign joy of our salvation ==>

A. It was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

That's where it starts: God's Mercy moved Him to act on our behalf for our sov. joy.

1. Peter begins with a doxology - a word of praise to God

Blessed be the God . . .

a. Very Jewish in form (familiar in the OT)

It is called a "berakah" - a Jewish form of blessing that regularly began w/the statement "Blessed be God . . . "

1KI 8:15 . . . "Blessed be the \Lord\, the God of Israel . . .

1CH 29:10 . . . David blessed the \Lord\ in the sight of all the assembly . . .

PSA 72:18 Blessed be the \Lord\ God, the God of Israel . . .

PSA 72:19 . . . blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. . .

[Very common in the LXX used 24 times (Michaels, 17)]

See it also in t/NT (in same form we see it here)==>

In both 2 Cor. & Eph. 1:3 **Blessed {be} the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

b. Lit. "Blessed the God" "Be" isn't in t/original, it's implied

From t/word εὐλογητος (eulogy)

From the Gk. εὖ (good) and λέγω (to speak or say). To speak or say good about someone.

That's what a "eulogy" is - a good word about someone else. I've often

wondered why we wait until people are dead to tell them so.

Of course, the other side of that is this mystery: No matter how rotten someone was, people say good things about him at the funeral (ever notice that?). Everyone looks great, too. People stand there & say, "Oh look how great he looks." What do you mean he looks great; he's dead. If it takes my death for me to look great something's wrong!

c. Here is a living eulogy to a living God

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

OT/Old Covt. Doxology	NT/New Covt. Doxology

Most of the time in NT (esp. true in Paul), word "God" refers to t/Father, "Lord" to t/Son. Even here we continue to have trinitarian overtones.

In fact, this extended section follows a trinitarian formula (vv. 3-5 focus on t/Father; vv. 6-9, focus on t/Son, vv. 10-12, focus on t/H.S.).

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .

Sounds a bit like John 20:17 where Jesus said to Mary immed. after His Res. ==>

". . . go to My brethren, and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

1. Peter begins with a doxology - a word of praise to God

Reminder that we are those who worship. John 4 says that God seeks true worshipers. Luke 19 says that Jesus has come to seek and save that which was lost. Put t/two together and what do you have? We who were lost who were found by X to be worshipers of t/Living God.

Phil. 3:3==> for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

d. Put it in the context:

Peter writes to those who are hurting and weary. Worship is medicine to a weary soul.

I think of t/OT Patriarch Job. In Job chapter one Job loses his livestock, his camels, his servants, and, worst of all his sons and daughters – all in the course of a few hours. And you think you've had a bad day! Talk to Job about it! His response was two-fold (1:20): He grieved and he worshiped. "How could he do both?" First of all, I would say he could do both because t/Spirit of God resided within him. Secondly, He could do both because he knew what worship really was.

True worship transcends circumstances. How often do we say, "Praise God. I got a new job." "Praise God. I got a new house." "Praise God, the tests were negative." Not that there's anything wrong with that. But true worship can grieve and praise at the same time. True worship can say, "Praise God in spite of not getting the new house // not getting t/new job // the test results.

True worship can do this because God inhabits the praises of his people. True worship is medicine to a weary soul.

" . . . to lead the mind to praise God is one of the surest ways of uplifting it from depression. The wild beasts of anxiety and discontent which surround our [camp ground] in the wilderness, will be driven away by the fire of our gratitude and the song of our praise." [C.H. Spurgeon, Sermon: "A String of Pearls" No. 948, delivered on the Lord's Day Morning, August 28, 1870]

Here Peter thanks God for what He has done, first of all, in our salvation. Rem. that's what we're talking about==>

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

A. It was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who ACCORDING TO HIS GREAT MERCY has caused us to be born again . . .

We can experience sovereign joy because of God's sovereign mercy!

e. Wasn't just mercy, it was great mercy

"Great sins and great miseries need great mercy, and many sins and miseries need many mercies." [St. Bernard, cited in Leighton, 21]

Is it not by great mercy that t/children of Satan, children of wrath, can become children of a thrice-holy God? Cf. 2:10.

We need mercy. In fact, no other attribute of God could have saved us if his mercy had refused to do so. It is from the fountain of God's mercy that our hope springs forth.

In Eph. 2:4-5 **But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)**

God is in t/mercy business. He is the "God of all mercies" (2 Cor. 1:3)

(1) Mercy isn't the same as grace (both work together)

Rem. grace is getting what you don't deserve, mercy is not getting what you do deserve. M. focuses on our lost, sinful condition, grace focuses on our guilt M. takes us from misery to glory, grace from guilt to acquittal.

We are never too bad to be outside the reach of God's mercy and we are never too good to no longer need God's mercy.

This is an element of t/sovereign joy of our salvation. Mercy of God poured out at the cross of JC for us.

"Will you, my fellow debtor, stand still a while and contemplate the abundant mercy of our blessed God A river deep and broad is before you. Track it to its fountain head; see it welling up . . . in the eternal purposes of infinite wisdom. The secret source is no small spring, no mere bubbling pond, it is a very Geyser, therewith. Not even an angel could fathom the springs of eternal life or measure the depth of infinite grace. Follow now the stream; mark it in all its course. See how it widens and deepens, how at the [foot of the cross] it

expands into a measureless river! Mark how the filthy come and wash; see how each polluted one comes up milk-white from the washing. Note how the dead are brought to be bathed in this sacred stream, and mark how they live in the moment that they touch its wave . . . " [C.H. Spurgeon, Sermon: "A String of Pearls" No. 948, delivered on the Lord's Day Morning, August 28, 1870]

Blessed be the God who acts in history . . . God has acted on your behalf. One thing to say God created t/universe (certainly a big accomplishment & pictures God's transcendence). But God also created you and recreated you in JC (immanence). That's our second point.

I. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-9)

A. It was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

that was in eternity when he chose us & at t/cross when he provided salvation for us. Brings us to t/present.

B. It is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

This is t/moment of our regeneration // justification. When we are born again to new life in X.

...according to his great mercy [he] has caused us to be born again...

1. Note that: He has "caused us to be born again"

That's a doctrine of grace - He caused us to be born again (why it's grace)

a. Word is ἀναγενναω -

ἀνα (again) + γενναω (to beget or cause to be born). In t/Gk. text, t/active voice gives t/word almost t/sense of a title. Sort of like saying, "God the Birther" (points to his parentage). Like 1 John 5:1 ("**whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God**")

"God's sovereign mercy unto God's sovereign glory resulting in the sovereign joy of our salvation."

2. As someone once said, "Born once die twice, born twice die once"

Our 1st birth gave us t/image of the 1st Adam, a fallen man. Our 2nd birth gives us t/image of the 2nd Adam, JC t/righteous. To be born once is to be born into a curse of death. To be born again is to be born unto a blessing: a living hope and an eternal inheritance (v. 4).

3. Expanding on this doctrine of new birth (7ideas)

a. #1 - We are born-again by God's will

He birthed us; He found us. People will say, "I found God!" Well, I didn't know he was lost. No, you didn't find God, he found you.

Religion is people trying to find God. Xnty is God finding His people. Why Peter begins by saying, "Blessed be God!"

(1) Remember Romans 9?

Paul is dealing w/issue of God's sovereignty - that fact that God is in control over his creation as the potter has control over t/clay.

14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 15 For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." 16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. (note the word "mercy" cf. "prompted by God's great mercy").

John 1:12-13 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Same thing in James 1:18==>

In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.

In Jeremiah 13:23 OT prophet Jeremiah asks a rhetorical question ==> "Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? (what's the

answer class?).

ISW - Sinful man cannot of his own will change his sinful nature. Not any more than he can change the color of his skin or the fact that he is a man or a woman (I know what you are thinking - listen: surgery doesn't make a man a woman or vice-versa. Genetically you are what you are & it is blasphemous to t/Creator to attempt to change that which only he can do).

ISW - We who are sinful cannot change our nature. We are born into sin // fallen // depraved. We can't change that, only God can do that. This is regeneration; New Birth.

b. # 2 - We are born again by God's Spirit

(1) John 3:1-15 No such thing as a non-born again Xn

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit

c. #3 - We are born again through the Word of Truth

James 1:18; In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures

Think about God's creative activity for a moment. God created the world by the power of his word. God spoke and it existed. God recreated you in Christ through that same power - the power of His Word. Cf. 1 Peter 1:23

d. #4 We are born again to righteousness

Born to a new/transformed life. We are cleansed from ourselves, the shackle of sin, we are united w/Christ in his death and Res.

When someone comes to saving faith in JC a change so radical occurs that the best way to put it is that life has begun all over for him or her. A new life, a better life. 2 Cor. 5:17.

This was predicted in the OT in passages such as Ezek. 36==>

25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.26 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.27 “And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

1JO 2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

1JO 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Every time we fall there is grace and power to get up in victory.

e. #5 - We are born again to love

1JO 4:7-8 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

f. #6 - We are born again to victory

1JO 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.

g. # 7 - Because of the above {cite} We are born again to a living hope

Leads us right into point #1 under the heading

B. It is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

1. A New Birth that Gives us Hope for the Present (3c)

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 . . .

a. Every time this word ἐλπίς is used in NT it always relates to a future good

This is our future good==>

... his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope ...

b. Note that it's just that:

... a living hope . . .

Not a dead hope, but a living one. Living hope can only come from a living source (God) through a living relationship (being born again). We can have a living hope because we are a people who are alive spiritually.

c. There is no hope outside of Jesus Christ

JOB 8:13-14 . . . the hope of the godless will perish, Whose confidence is fragile, And whose trust a spider's web.

That was us==>

EPH 2:12 {remember} that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

d. We have a hope that is alive/living

BTW - things that are alive grow. Growth is a sign of life. Stagnation is a sign of death. Living hope implies a growing hope. Is your hope growing? As you grow in X does your hope grow also? Each day you live brings you one day closer to a face-to-face encounter w/JC. Is your hope for that encounter growing as t/days progress?

I remember as a young Xn asking an older pastor-friend the question, "Have you ever known a dear old Christian who was just ready to go home? Not

because of illness or despair, just because he or she had lived their life & was homesick to be w/Jesus. He thought a moment and recalled one or more dear old saints who he had known who felt exactly that way.

I suppose that's the way it should be. If our hope is alive and if it's growing, by the time we are in the deepest winter season of our lives our hope should be ready to explode in expectation of the reality of eternity w/JC. As Paul said, "for me to live is X, to die, gain."

e. As a Christian you can never say, "my life is hopeless"

To be a hopeless Xn is a contradiction in terms. It's like jumbo shrimp or a Terrific Headache (New and Improved Anarchy Rules!)

In fact, don't even pray for God to give you hope. You already have it!

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B. It is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

1. A New Birth that Gives us Hope for the Present (3c)

We can go through all sorts of difficulties in this life, but nothing in this life is t/final chapter. It's not like Jack Kervorkian, Dr. Drip (double-meaning there if you're quick enough to catch it) who when asked what happens to us when we die replied, "you rot." No, for Dr. Drip t/final chapter is death. For us, there is no final chapter. The book of our lives will continue to be written, even in eternity.

"Who can mind the journey when the road leads home?" asked the great Bible teacher James M. Gray.

How can we concern ourselves so much over the trivial matters of this life lived on this little rock, 3rd from the sun, when we know that all of this leads to our eternal destination?

All based upon Res. of JC. God brought His own Son thru t/most painful trials anyone could endure—even from death itself. Can he not

bring us through whatever valley we happen to find ourselves in?

Our hope isn't grounded in sentimentality // based on "the pathological belief in the impossible" (H.L. Mencken, American newspaperman who lived during the earlier part of t/20th c.). It's not wishful thinking or possibility thinking. All of those things are like grounding a skyscraper in quicksand.

"Our hope is like an anchor. Our hope in Christ stabilizes us in the storms of life, but unlike an anchor, it does not hold us back."

As John tells us in his first epistle, the 3rd chapter==>

... everyone who has this hope fixed on Him (Christ) purifies himself, just as He is pure.

f. What Kind of Hope is this? (living hope)

Why is it a living hope? Because it's a ==>

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . .

kind of hope!

(1) In this one verse we have life, life, and life

We have been born again (one life) to a living hope (another life), through the Res. (still another life). Three lives that all relate to one another and this is the foundation for them all.

John 11:25 Jesus said . . . "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies"

"In these words we have Peter's own account of what the resurrection of Christ did for him and for the first disciples. . . . Peter was writing out of a personal experience. He was thinking of the past, of [his] first meeting with Jesus, of the mystic and marvelous influence he felt when his Lord looked into his eyes and said to him, 'Thou art Simon. . . thou shalt be called Rock.' He was remembering who, there and then, he yielded himself to the irresistible glamor of that personality and went blunderingly but courageously after Jesus. He was remembering all the days that followed, the weeks and the months, the wonders and the teachings, the dreams, the revelations, and the aspirations; he was remembering the gathering of the shadows, and the darkness that settled on him, and the dull despair, and then that strange and mystic light which

broke on his astonished spirit when—we know not where or when—his Lord, having risen from the dead, found him all alone and talked to him. In that hour, he now declared, we were born again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." [G. Campbell Morgan, 101-02]

What else could have changed this band of frightened men into bold spokesmen for the faith. Add to that the church t/o it's history. Add to that you and me, transformed by t/Res. of JC.

The act of God's greatest wrath has become the means of His greatest mercy.

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1. A New Birth that Gives us Hope for the Present (3c)

2. A New Birth that Gives us an Inheritance for the Future (4)