

Sermon Series: Living with Hope in a Broken World
To be used with: The Joy Arising from Our Hope
Sermon Title: Rejoicing in Hope
Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-2, 12-19

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “*The Joy Arising from Our Hope*,” this sermon explores how believers can maintain joy in the midst of trials because of our hope. This joy does not come from the world but comes from our relationship to God.

Introduction: Many of us have heard and sung the words, “this joy I have, the world didn’t give it to me, and the world can’t take it away.” These words affirm that our faith finds its source and fulfillment in God. The world often seems to try its best to take our joy away, however. Threats of economic and medical emergencies can weigh upon our minds.

In the midst of this, we can still have joy. When we seriously consider the fact that our hope is in God, our attitudes are not dependent upon our circumstances. Rather, we bear the fruit of joy (Galatians 5:22) by the power of the Holy Spirit as we keep our attention on Christ.

1. Have the mindset of Christ. (v. 1-2)

The method we use to respond to circumstances begins in our minds. When facing a situation, we make a decision about how to handle it. As Christians, we must think (and behave) in consideration of Christ.

Christ became human and suffered as a human being. He understands what we are going through and because of this we can always pray for help (Hebrews 4:15-16). In addition to being our Savior, He is also our example in how to deal with suffering. He is our model for enduring suffering and not giving in to sin. We should desire that God’s will be done, just as Christ did (Luke 22:42). Yielding to God’s will enables us to resist yielding to sin.

2. Share in the suffering of Christ. (v. 12-14)

There is a misconception among some people that the Christian life will be easy. Since servants are not greater than their master (John 13:16), those of us who follow Christ should expect to share in His suffering.

Sharing in Christ’s suffering should bring us joy, because we have the hope of celebrating in His glory as well. If we can rejoice in the midst of suffering, imagine how much greater our joy will be when we reach our eternal reward. Our present suffering cannot be compared to what is in store for us (Romans 8:18). At times we may be ridiculed for our faith. Even this can bring us joy, however, because the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.

3. Identify yourself with Christ. (v. 15-19)

Recognizing that we will experience suffering should not cause us to think we can do what is wrong. Suffering for our own wrongdoing is deserved punishment. Looking to Christ as our example, we see how to approach undeserved suffering. While sin offers a temporary pleasure in exchange for longer suffering later, following Christ involves temporary suffering for an eternal reward.

Suffering as a Christian identifies us with Christ. It is an honor to be associated with His name. Being considered worthy to suffer for His name (Acts 5:41) is a reason to give God glory and praise. Knowing that we are being purified like gold should cause us to trust ourselves to God's refining process while we continue to do what is right.

Conclusion: Periods of suffering will arise in our lives. We have our own experience and the example of Christ to demonstrate this fact. However, we also have the knowledge that God is with us during our suffering. Trials enable us to know Christ more deeply in His suffering and resurrection (Philippians 3:10) and embrace the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

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