

1st Peter #1 - Finding Blessings in Your Burdens

- Whoa, hey, welcome back to church. Very nice to see you. Isn't it weird to go to church in clothes? I mean, you're not on your couch, you're not in your pajamas. The nine o'clock didn't know this. Let me tell you, you could clap, you could cheer, you could say amen, but you can't throw anything. Those are the rules here for live service. And I'm really excited 'cause we're starting a brand new book of the Bible today. If you got a Bible, go to the book of 1 Peter and I put together a study guide for you, 110 pages for individuals groups, and families. It'll help you learn God's Word this summer. And if you've got a family, there's even devotional discussion questions for your family at night. So let me set up the book of 1 Peter, as you find the first page. It is set in the ancient Roman empire. Tell me if this sounds familiar. The Roman empire was in its day, the world's superpower, the strongest economy, the most powerful military. And it was in the process as a nation of self-destructing. I don't know if this sounds familiar. What was happening is the Roman empire, despite its wealth and despite its power, it was a geographically large nation, and it was comprised of people from lots of different ethnicities and cultures and races and languages and backgrounds and ideologies. And all of this was competing and people were conflicted and the teams were divided and the guns were drawn and the opposition was real. And then the middle was the new movement of Christianity. The church of Jesus Christ. They were a smaller group feeling lots of pressure to join one of these groups that was having this massive national collision and compromise over how life was to be lived in that nation. And what was happening is as the nation was divided and in the process of self-destructing that division and destruction was starting to creep into the church. And so Peter being their distant, overseeing, epistolic leader, he writes a letter to all the churches because the problems out there shouldn't be the problems in here. The divisions out there should not be the divisions in here. The conversation out there should not be the conversation in here because Jesus is the solution and out there are all the problems. And we want to invite people to come to know Jesus, not bring the problems to replace Jesus, amen.

- Amen.

- And so we are the children of God. This is the church of Jesus Christ. This is an outpost in embassy, if you will, for the kingdom of God. And we are to bring the hope and the help and the healing of Jesus Christ from the church to the nations, not allow the death and the destruction of the nation to come into the church. So does this sound familiar?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Does any you have the internet? Have you seen that we have some problems? I also am happy to report. We're gonna talk about the solution. His name is Jesus.

- Jesus.

- It's always about Jesus. It's only about Jesus and some will say, "Oh, that's too simple. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." Let me tell you, most of us aren't smart. I'm grateful that God keeps it simple. There's one guy who can fix everything for everybody. And I'll give you a little chart, okay. Now I've been at home like you, I haven't been in trouble for a while and I wanna fix that. So I made a chart to show you a little bit of what we're dealing with because the Bible isn't about what happened, it's about what always happens. The same pressures and problems and pains that they were facing are the ones that we do. Here are some of the issues that we're dealing with. And so we're gonna talk today, he talks about various trials. This would be an example of the various trials. Later in chapter four verse 12, he's gonna talk about the fiery trials, as things are getting hotter and worse. But how many of you are feeling this today? There are different groups in our nation, divided, right, divided. We know that God loves unity and Satan works through division. There are some people who right now their thing is we need justice for all people, others, public health. These are the wearing the mask people. And this is the economy. And these are the people in the street. These are the wearing the mask people. These are the people who believe in Jesus and math. They're like, "Hey, hey, hey, the economy is going down. "We need money." And then there's some people who fear government overreaction. Right now, they're all in Prescott and they're scared. Some people are really concerned for the wellbeing of good cops and others wants the church of Jesus Christ to open 'cause in a lot of places it closed. So there's all these teams and tribes and conflicts and divisions. How many of you feel like me? You're like, "Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes." I believe in justice for all people 'cause we're made in the image likes of God and we're all under God's laws. I believe in public health. I like being alive, I'm for it. Economy, yeah, I believe in paying your bills and having something to eat and the economy is not going that great. And I have concern for small business owners that are trying to open, but now all the circumstances make it very hard. I'm really scared of government overreach 'cause government is a Greek word for demon. It scares me. I love good cops and first responders and all the complexities that they're dealing with. And I want the churches to be open so that people can hear about Jesus. They talk about anything else. So, you know what, all of this means we're here, but as these people are divided and shooting one another. If you're in the middle, who do you get shot by? Everybody welcome to team Jesus. Welcome to team Jesus. And that's what's happening in the age of 1 Peter. So let me go to 1 Peter five, just give you the summary of why he writes the book and then we'll jump into chapter one. So he tells us, here's the whole reason he's writing the book. "My purpose in writing 1 Peter 5:12, "is to encourage you." How many of you encouragement would be nice today? Amen. How many of you all you get is bad news, bad news, bad news, bad news, bad news, bad news. And then even if you say anything, then it's more bad news. It's just bad, and encourage is this to encourage someone is to put courage in them. Fear is contagious and so is courage. And there are times and seasons that the children of God need to starve, fear and feed courage. And to encourage is to put courage in you, nine weeks, 1 Peter still in your spine, courage in your soul. That's what we're going for. To encourage you and to assure you, this is a guaranteed promise that what you are experiencing and it's a mess, it's truly part of God's grace for you. What it means is this, that everyone's going through the same things, but the children of God gets something in addition. And that is the grace of God to endure it and overcome it. I'm not saying that life is good, but I'm saying that God is good. And I believe that God's grace will

empower you to find a blessing in the middle of your burden. And that's where we're gonna go today. There is grace, opportunity, presence of God, learning about Jesus, deepening of faith that comes to us through suffering, hardship, trouble and trial. If we will look for the grace of God in the midst of it. So he says this, "Stand what? "Firm." You know what, the left is gonna push you. The right is gonna push you. Groups, causes, movements are going to push you. You got to find Jesus, your biblical convictions, you've got to plant your feet. You've got to stand your ground. You've got to preach your gospel. You've got to love your enemy and you need to stand your ground, amen. Stand your ground. That's the whole point. So we'll jump right in to 1 Peter. I'm excited. I'm really excited. It's so good to see you. It's so good to see you. And if you're joining us online, we love you as well. Okay, you're ready? I don't care. I'm doing it either way, that's what I'm doing. All right, 1 Peter chapter one, God does perfect work through imperfect people. 1 Peter 1:1-2 Peter, we're talking about him, an apostle, epistolic leader, pastor, spiritual father, movement leader, theologian, lightening rod for controversy. That's apostolic leadership of Jesus Christ. That's who we're talking about to those who are elect exiles, we'll get into that of the dispersion. What this means is these people lived in one place. Persecution opposition came in, they were scattered to many places. There is a great myth that says that the church only grows and strengthens during persecution and crisis. That is true to a point. And then historically, when it reaches a certain level of persecution and opposition, God's people move 'cause they may love their city. They may love their nation, but their first responsibility is to their family. For example, in Iraq, Iraq had one of the highest percentages of Christian people in the Middle East. And now it's among the least church, persecution came and God's people fled. In the same way, we are seeing this dispersion, right now there are certain cities in our own country where faith is under fire. Where family is under fire. Where freedom is under fire. And as a result, people who love God are saying, "I don't know how long we can live here." It's frustrating to give my money to a government that opposes everything I believe in and is trying to brainwash by kids and recruit them for the enemies against God anti-Christ. And so right now, even God's people are sensing and feeling this, do we hang in there? But if it gets worse, is this a place that we can practice our faith, raise our family and enjoy our freedom? Many of you are here for that reason. It's why Arizona's one of the fastest growing states, and Phoenix is one of the fastest growing county or Maricopa is one of the fastest growing counties and Phoenix is one of the fastest growing cities. People are relocating 'cause they're looking for a healthy lifestyle for their family. That's what happened. So if you're one of the new people to the Valley and many of you are new and let me just tell you, it's gonna get hot. If your new, little spoiler alert, it's gonna get hot, it's gonna get real hot, okay. There's a little joke that we tell all the new visitors to Arizona and that is yeah, one guy died and went to hell, And then he asked for a blanket and they're like, "What do you need a blanket for?" He said, "I'm from Phoenix, I'm freezing." So it's gonna get hot. But many of you are here because of a dispersion, economic, social, political, spiritual. You're looking for opportunity. The dispersion of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asian and Bithynia. This is a region in what is modern day Turkey geographically, it's about the same size as the state of Arizona, is writing to all the churches under his leadership. According to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood, may grace and peace be multiplied to you. Let me unpack this. This is an ancient letter. It was written to a church, we'd

have a great day. We got a letter from Peter, yay! All right, everybody comes together. Probably the pastor reads it. And it starts by telling us who God is and who we are. These are arguably two of the most important things you're ever gonna learn, until you learn these two things, you really don't understand anything. Who is God, who am I? Once you figure those two things out, you can start to figure out the rest of life. And the first thing he tells us is that God is Father, Son and Spirit. Shocker, you're at the Trinity Church, we believe in the Trinity, one, God, three persons. This is the distinct teaching of Christians throughout church history. One God, three persons who live together in perfect love and unity with no division or animosity. When you see division and animosity, Satan and demons are at work. When you see love and unity, God is at work. Hey, that's why, we wanna be a place of love and unity in the midst of a culture that is experiencing a lot of division and animosity. And I'll show it to you right here. God the Father, Jesus Christ, God, the Son and God, the Holy spirit, the whole Trinity is right there. So he says, "Okay, here's who God is. Father, Son and Spirit loving unity, "perfect relationship, no division." That's the precedent pattern and prototype for the church. Because if the problems are out here, out there, rather the hope of God and the answer of God needs to be in here. And then he tells us who we are. And this is kind of exciting for me. We tend to identify ourselves by our relationship with our income or our race or our gender or our generation, or our life stage, or our ancestors or our city, or our nation. God wants you to understand your identity in relation to him, in relation to him. And he uses two words here to explain who you are, if you are a Christian. Number one, elect, number two exile. So let's talk about this. What does it mean that in relationship to God, you're elect? What does that mean? It's not a trick question. You can speak freely. You're chosen, you're picked. How many of you, PE, you're in elementary school. Everybody got picked, you're like, "Is anybody gonna pick me?" Nope, nobody picked you. How many of you prom came and did get picked? I'm sorry, I'll give you a hug later. Homecoming came, you didn't get picked. You didn't get picked. You know what, God picked you. Oh, that's awesome. If you're on team Jesus it's 'cause God picked you. It's 'cause he picked you. Some people, they think this is somehow a bad thing. I'll tell you the only way you get on team Jesus is if Jesus picks you. In verse three, he's gonna talk about being born again. He's gonna talk about God, the Father. He's using this language of family. Let me give you an example of how this works. How many of you were adopted or have adopted a child, right? Is that amazing? You're like, "I pick you, you're gonna be with us. "I'm gonna be for you." God's a Father, he picked you to adopt you into his family. What he's decided is I'm gonna love you. I'm gonna do life with you. I'm gonna bring you into my family. I'm gonna bless you, I'm gonna take care of you. You're my kid now. That's awesome, amen, that's awesome. That God would pick us to be his kids. Now, not only that here's the other side, exiles. What does that mean? See, this is your dual identity, with God you're elect, yay! In the world, you're an exile, whoo! What's exile mean? Kicked out, rejected, don't fit, unwelcome. not home, doesn't work, never feels right. totally frustrating, constantly disappointing. You feel that? Today we call that, America. Amen? So which is it? So you know what, this is a blessing, these are the burdens. It's true, both are simultaneously continually true. God says, you're elect, yay! The world says, you're an exile. Let me ask you this. Does this world feel like home? You know why it's not home. This world is broken, needs to be fixed. It's evil, it needs to be changed. It's frustrating, it needs a savior. Now we may disagree on a lot of things, but right now everyone would say, "I don't like this planet." And the truth is it's

because we're exiles that we're far away from home. And here's the truth. A lot of people want heaven, but hardly anybody wants Jesus. I want justice, so you say wanna Jesus? No. I want people to be treated well, but you want Jesus? No. I want generosity, you want Jesus? No. Do you want heaven? Yes. Do you want Jesus? No. Here's the point, heaven isn't just a place. It's a place ruled by a person named Jesus. There's no heaven without Jesus, okay. And we as exiles know that. What this means is the longer you walk with Jesus, the more this planet doesn't feel like home. How many of you, the longer you walk with Jesus, the more this place sucks.

- Amen?

- Amen.

- Can we just be honest? I mean, we got nothing else to do. The Bible actually makes sense of our experience. So you're elect and exiles, God loves you. The world doesn't accept you. God blesses you, the world burdens you. This is the dual identity and practical experience of every child of God. And what he tells us is while we are here, until we get home, that we are to be covered by Jesus' blood. He lived and died for you, he rose for you. Your answer is Jesus. Your hope is Jesus. Your joy is Jesus. Your priority is Jesus. Your message is Jesus. Your mission is Jesus. Amen?

- Amen.

- For that to happen, you're gonna need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, led by the supernatural power source of God as Jesus did to live a life of obedience. Let me say this. I am sick of public morality from people who have no private morality, because all that is hypocrisy, okay. It's really easy to say, "I like the right cars and I post the right hashtag. "I'm a good person, whoop, whoop for me." Clicking and posting is much harder than loving and obeying. There are people who do horrific things and post the right thing on social media. And as a result, others think that they are moral. God cares not just about your public perception, but your private discipline. That's obedience, that's obedience. You cannot fix the world and you will not give an account for the world, but you will give an account for you. How do you behave privately? How do you treat others privately? How do you worship God privately? For those who seek to be living in obedience by the spirit they get extra grace. Grace is the power of the Holy Spirit unleashed in the life of the Christian, who's trying to obey God and do the right thing. How many of you even recently, you've gone through things that you would have not thought you would have made it through, but what you did. Homeschool moms sorta came in and said, "You're gonna homeschool." And you're like, "That is impossible. "I believe dead people rise "and Jesus water skied without a boat. "But I don't have faith to believe "that I can homeschool. "I don't have that kind of faith." Some of you have been through very tough times and you would have thought that it would have destroyed you, but God has sustained you by his grace. For those who seek to be obedient, God gives extra grace. And the result is this, that grace and peace are multiplied to you. This is the peace with God. This is the peace of God. Do know what our world lacks right now? Peace, because it knows not the Prince of peace. The fruit of the spirit includes peace.

Your team winning won't bring you peace. Only God gives peace to those who seek to live in obedience to him. That's a peace that God gives. Here's what I'm telling you. I know that there's problems out here. I just want their peace to be in here. I love you, I'm your pastor. I love you with all my heart. I love you, like I love my kids. And I know that this world is a dumpster fire. It's a prison right. In here though we have peace. Jesus says, "In the world, you will have trouble, "but in me you will have peace." The Bible talks about a peace that surpasses understanding. And that's the presence of God to sustain you through the problems of life, okay. That's yours, that's yours in Christ. Now who writes all of this? This is not a trick question. Okay, back to here, okay. Who writes all of this? Peter. Is he a great guy or a really weird bad guy? Yes, he is. He is a hot mess minus the hot. He is a reality television show waiting to be filmed, this guy. I shouldn't say it, but of course I will. His whole life looks like drunk driving, his whole life. Where is that guy going? What is he doing? Okay, on his good days, he confesses that Jesus is the Christ. On his bad days, Jesus calls him Satan. Jesus looks at Peter, "Get behind me, Satan." So Peter is like, "Not real." You know you've crossed the line when Jesus takes off your name tag and puts a new one on that says Satan with a sharpie, you know you've really done a naughty thing, when you get that nickname. How about Peter? Does he ever boss Jesus around and tell him what to do? He does. "Well, Jesus, let me tell you what to do." Jesus is like, We don't do, that's not how this works. Is there a day where Peter, the leader of the disciples always named first in the list of the disciples denies being a Christian publicly. he does. See, he was in a fishing business. His brother introduced him to Jesus. He was one of the 12, got three years with Jesus. He was one of the inner circle of three Jesus nearest and dearest, best friends. And then Jesus needs him at the moment of greatest crisis. Jesus is arrested, Jesus is gonna be crucified. A young girl comes up to Peter, says, "Do you know him?" He's like, "I don't." And he starts cussing. Imagine TD Jakes, Billy Graham when he was alive, Rick Warren, so what do think about Jesus? F bomb, I'm not a Christian. That would trend on Twitter. The Pope, "Yeah, I'm over it." And they were like, "Well, then give us the hat back ." And then a few days later he's like, "I changed my mind, I'm back." That's Peter. How many of you can relate to Peter? And then if you can't you're lying. How many of you, when you read the Bible, there certain people that you're like, I can't relate to them. They're too perfect. Jesus mother, Mary, teenager, poor rural engaged to be married, "You're gonna be pregnant. "The old town's gonna not think it was a virgin birth. "Your husband to be is probably not going to marry you." What does she do? Well, sing a worship song to the Lord. How many of you girls, that would not be your thing? How many of you when we were in Daniel, he's a teenager and they castrated him. How many of you you're like, one, two, three, not it, all right. I wasn't gonna serve God, now, I'm not. No I'm not even gonna pray about it. Like that's, I'm out. Sometimes we read the Bible and we're like, "Those people are amazing, I'm not like that." How about Peter? Can you relate to him? Oh, yeah. Peter's a normal Christian, there's only one perfect Christian. His name is Jesus. The rest of us Jesus are working on. Peter's a typical Christian two steps forward, one step back. Marching forward, whoop, got off course, corrected. If there's hope for Peter, there's hope for you. If there's a second, third, fourth chance, 'cause Peter. Some people say, we always get a second chance, Not with, Jesus, you get an infinite number of chances. That's Peter's story. Yeah, I'm glad it's not just two. Otherwise I'd be on fire not preaching right now. The point is, if there's hope for Peter, there's hope for you. If God can use Peter, God can use you. And what

Peter is writing by the power of the Holy spirit is a perfect letter. This means it's a perfect work done through an imperfect person. Some have been way too concerned about your perfection to serve the Lord. You'll never be perfect, but the Lord will do perfect work through you. All you need to do is love him and step out in faith and be willing to serve. That's the story of Peter, amen. His life is encouraging and enduring. Okay, God, I could follow Peter, he's not perfect and neither am I. And you did perfect work through him and that gives hope to me, amen. Okay, now what we're gonna deal with next, the next two sections, amazing. He's gonna talk about blessings from God and burdens from the world. You are elect, that's the source of your blessings. You're in the world, exiles, that is the source of your burdens, okay. So let me start with a simple analogy, as we get into both of these. It was some years ago, I was with Pastor Rick Warren, we were driving around in this truck. It was after his son died. He's a great man and I love Pastor Rick very much. And I was covering the pulpit for him. He was taking a break after his son died. We were driving in his truck and I've shared this story before, but it was really meaningful and powerful to me. And he said, I used to think that life was good seasons and bad seasons. He said, now I realized that good and bad seasons are always happening constantly and concurrently. How many of you that's your experience? Like, this is awesome, that's awful. Yay, urgh! All the time. It's like two train tracks. Some of you were optimists, yay! Some of you are pessimists, urgh! Some of you are married, And usually one marries the other, okay. So I wanna deal with the track of blessing and then the track of burden. Okay, so here's what he says. Blessings come from God. I'm not making this up. Blessed, we bless the God who blesses us. We love the God who loves us. We pursue the God who pursues us. God initiates, we respond. Blessed, be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, emphasis, exclamation point, yay! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again. This just is amazing to a living hope. Well, how in the world? Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Wow, is there more? I'll tell them what they get Bob to an inheritance that is imperishable undefiled, unfading where is that Bob? Kept in heaven for you. Who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time in this you rejoice. Amen.

- Amen.

- Whoo, there it is, there's your blessing. Let's unpack it. Number one, great mercy. Wow, how many of us love great mercy? What this means is there's a God who loves you and cares for you and empathizes with you and sympathizes with you and has compassion for you. He has been where you have been and he is gone where you are going, that's awesome. Jesus is a God who has been here. He understands here. He has made it through here. He is now seated there and he comforts us here and he leads us there. He has great mercy. Some of you think I have done too much to separate myself from God. I have wasted opportunity, There is mercy for you. God's mercy is infinite. It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter what you've done. If you turn to and trust in Jesus Christ, there is great buckets, inexhaustible source of mercy for you, amen. Amen. That's good news. Second thing he talks about born again. You're born physically, but you're still spiritually dead. And you need to be born again of the Spirit of God. And what this means is that God, the Holy Spirit changes your nature at the deepest level of

your being, and the way you see this work itself out is with new desires. How many of you have become a Christian? You're like, I love Jesus, I wanna learn the Bible, I'm gonna sing. And all of that's new for you. Like I'm gonna be nice to people and apologize, additional miracles. You're born something in here changes at the level of nature and desire. You're not perfect, but you're new. And you're in a process of being perfected. That's what it means to be born again to a living hope, urgh! You know his world lacks right now, hope. People will say you need food, water, air, and shelter to live and hope. 'Cause I've seen people with food, water, air, and shelter take their own life, 'cause they didn't have any hope. You need hope. Your hope can't be in your nation. Your hope can't be in your job. Your hope can't be in your marriage. Your hope can't be in your kids. Your hope can't be in the election. Just a little spoiler alert. Your hope has to be in someone and something bigger and better than everything else, his name is Jesus. And the living hope means this. That the hope of Jesus comes to you in this life. So you can what? You can live. And then when you die, because it's a living hope it continues. What I like to say is heaven doesn't begin the day you die, it begins the day you meet Jesus. And that's the living hope. That's the living hope of Jesus Christ, it talks about the resurrection, urgh! Okay, this is awesome. This is God coming back calling you by name, fixing everyone, fixing everything. We just talked about this in the heaven series. Resurrection is when Jesus comes back, the dead are raised. The fight is over. The divisions are over. The elections are over. The wars are over. The anger is over. The suffering is over. Can you just imagine a day when everyone and everything is okay and it's over, like it's all over and it's all over forever. Just imagine the day, literally you're standing on the earth and there's the Lord Jesus. And it's over, like it's all over. Like everybody's okay. And everything is okay. And everybody on the earth just acts like a big family because we have the same big brother and the same father. Oh my gosh, I don't even know what to post on the internet. Like yay, smiley face. We only got one emoji. It's a smiley face. Like I got some posted. What's it gonna be like when it's over? That's resurrection, that's restoration. Imperishable inheritance. How many of you? Financially it's not going so good. Some of you, 0708, you're like, "You know what, I'm gonna put my money in real estate, "cause that's secure." What bro? Okay, fast forward, I'll put it in the stock market . I'm gonna put it in guns and gold. Welcome to Arizona, right? That's our love language, guns and gold, guns, gold and God, that's our Trinity, welcome Arizona. Here's the problem, it doesn't matter where you put your wealth. Eventually someone or something takes it. Some of you are young. There's something called an inheritance tax. You're like my parents have a lot of money. I can't wait to get it. Let me just tell you this. The government will cut in line. There's nowhere that you can put your wealth and have a guaranteed secure future. What he's talking about here is that the inheritance that God has for his children forever is secured because God is the one who guards. That's good news, amen. 'Cause you know what? I don't know if you're gonna be rich or poor in this life, but I know that there is an eternal inheritance that cannot be taken that God has for his children forever. He goes on to talk about heaven, which is another world. It's where everyone and everything is perfect and loving, and under the jurisdiction of Jesus, he talks about living by God's power. That means you're not alone. You're not alone in this life. God is for you. God is with you. God's power is available to you. You can endure things that by yourself, you cannot endure. You can accomplish things that by yourself, you cannot accomplish. And that your faith is guarded and protected and safe. We live in a world now where there's this great sense of fear

and lack of safety. Well, God is the one to protect you ultimately. And I'm saying be wise with your life, but then leave ultimately some room for the provision of God. The God's heart for you is a father's heart, the kids are in the back right now. They're having a great time. We have water slides, squirt guns, ice cream, popsicles. We have a canon filled with foam. I'm just telling you right now, all of your kids wanna move here, they don't want to leave. But what's gonna happen is you're gonna pick up your kid, and those of you who are parents, are you concerned to guard and protect them and to create an environment that is safe for them and protect them from harm or evil? Yes or no? And you're God's child. And the Father's heart is to guard and protect you. It doesn't matter how old you are, you still need your dad. And it talks about a salvation. This is when Jesus comes back, the struggle is over. And then he talks about rejoicing, rejoicing in God's blessing, rejoicing in God's electing. And he's gonna keep talking about rejoicing, rejoicing, rejoicing in the world, no, in spite of the world that for us in defiance of this world, we have joy and rejoicing in God's love for us. God's presence with us. God's provision for us. God's power through us, amen. I'm not saying that out here is okay, but I'm saying that in here can be okay. And I believe that my rejoicing is in the one who is over this world. And my rejoicing is secure regardless of what is going on in this world. This is not a denial of reality. This is a superseding of reality. This is not ignoring the problems. This is trusting the solution. God loves you. God chooses you. God blesses you, amen. Amen?

- Amen.

- All right, you clap for that. And life sucks. Okay, now we'll deal with the next point. Some of you pessimists are like, "He's too positive. "He seems like one of those positive preachers "trying to make us happy. "What's wrong with that boy?" Okay, well now have your verses now, old guy with a pointy finger. All right, we got some verses for you too. God's blessing outweighs the world's burdens. In this you rejoice though now, today is now, tomorrow is now, yesterday and the future are now. Now that means life for what? A little while. How long is that? Your life. Your life is a little while it doesn't feel like a little while, does it? Feels like the long while. Let me ask you this. Do you remember your 17th day of kindergarten? If you do, you're a weird kid or had a bad day. One of those two things. Why do we not? We remember the first day of kindergarten, not the 17th day of kindergarten. Why? When you had your 17th day of kindergarten that day, did it feel like it was a big day, and there was a lot? It did. And now some of us more years than others, I don't know, there's been a lot since then. That was a long time ago. It felt like a big day, but today it doesn't. When you are in the kingdom of God and the presence of Jesus for 10 million years, your life will feel like the 17th day of kindergarten. You're like, "Yeah, that was a while." What happened when you were alive? I don't know, I've been playing tennis with angels and eating ice cream, taking naps. I don't remember, that was a long time ago. A little while, it's keeping your perspective that you are an eternal being to be with God eternally, and this life is your little while. And this is for people who aren't patient. How many of you are not patient? Do you think I'm patient? No, no. I yell at the microwave. That's right. This is patience. If necessary, you have been grieved, grieved. We'll talk about that, by various trials so that the test of genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold, that perishes though it is tested by fire may be found a result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. When Jesus

comes back, no, you have not seen him, you love him. And we do, we love you Jesus. Though you do not see him, you believe in him. We do, we believe in you Jesus and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. You were elect and blessed. You were exiles and burdened. Both of these are simultaneously continuously true. What he's talking about here is being grieved. Anyone experienced that recently? Anyone grieves, some people it's depression. Some people it's anxiety. Some people it is irritability. Some people it is anger and rage, grieved. Right now I would say that the national international mood is grieved and various people are expressing emotion in various ways. The Bible is not about what happened, it's about what always happens. The Bible is not old, it's eternal. It's not about the past, it's about every day and it's over every age, grieve. Godly people experienced grief because our God experiences grief. Let's talk about this, by various trials. Does that sound familiar? Okay, what this is this is one problem on top of another problem on top of another problem. This is one crisis on top of another crisis, on top of another crisis. There's something that the counselors will call a complex grief. This is where you get hit with something and hit with something else and hit was something else, and hit was something else like I didn't even have time to process, the first thing it's an avalanche. I'm buried under all of these pains, problems and perils. So give me the categories that people are grieving because they're now experiencing various trials. What are the various categories? Isolation. Bible says it's not good to be alone. For months many of you have been relatively alone. Addicts are relapsing 'cause they can't get out for normal life and relationship, they're self-medicating and self-destructing. Rates of depression are at record high, especially among those who are single, and those who are elderly and alone. Social isolation, that is a trial. Some of you have family and friends that you wanna see and you wanna go check on and you can't. What other categories contribute presently to our various trials? Unemployment finances, record unemployment, not like the great depression that was a little bit at a time. This was all at once, this was a tsunami. People are unemployed. Businesses are shut down. Some are trying to reopen. And now all the complex variables make it very difficult than small business owners are in peril. And many of you are unemployed and lost your jobs and looking into the future. You're like, I don't know how to ride out the hurricane, that is my economic future. What else? Everything falling apart at once. Someone said, relationally, you've already got problems with your spouse, with your kids, with your coworkers, with your extended family. And this isn't helping. You're like, well, I'll go on social media. Now that I'm home by myself so that I could connect with people to find mutual encouragement. Oh, that's not happening. The fruit of the spirit is not on social media. What other categories fit under various trials? Death in the family. Some of you have lost loved ones. You can't even go to their funeral. I had a buddy of mine die during all of this. Someone I love very much and I've known him for multiple decades. I can't go to his memorial. I can't hug his wife and say, "I am sorry." I can't look his kids in the eye and say, "Your dad was a great man." What other various trials are you seeing and suffering? Physical health. Some of you have physical problems. Some of you are in a high risk category and you have concerns, understandably so. Some of you, you've not been able to get into the doctor to even see what's wrong, or you've not been able to get the procedure that you were hoping for because everything is complicated. Can we just say that lots of people are grieving and we all have various trials. What this allows us to be is sympathetic and compassionate, like our God

not to say, "Suck it up, my thing is worse than yours." We've all got our thing and we need to love one another and be compassionate and sympathetic for the burdens that others are carrying. Grieved by various trials. When he talks about our faith. And what he says is that your faith is more precious than gold. We talk about the gold standard. We talk about the golden age. We talk about gold and gold is of highest value. And what happens is when troubled times come, people tend to grab their income for their hope. And I'm not against an income and cash runway and being a good steward. But I am telling you that ultimately, apart from your faith in Jesus Christ, you don't have any secure foundation for your hope that ultimately, there is something more precious than gold. Most people don't believe this. Right now, grieve by various trials. If you ask the average American, if I could give you one thing to make it all better, they would say, "Tons of money so that I don't have anything to worry about." and I could just have economic security." But if you don't have faith in Jesus, there's no peace from Jesus. The result is your finances and your wealth cannot produce what your faith and your worship can. If someone came to you and said, "What's the most precious thing you have?" you should say the faith that God has given me to trust in his Son, Jesus Christ. Everything may come and go, but that is guarded and safeguarded. It is safe and secure. And what he talks about is this fiery, he's gonna talk about trials and fire. How many of you right now life feels like, man, it's painful. I feel like I'm in a fire. It feels really hot. This is very difficult. My pain threshold is sort of in its max. This is about what I can handle, or at least I thought maybe I've superseded that. What he's talking about is that the burdens of this life are like the flames of hell that come up and start to singe and cause suffering for the children of God. For some of you, it literally feels like, man, I'm getting a little bit of hell in my life right now. That's the flames. And what that is, that's the burden from the world. But in it, there's a blessing from the Lord. This is the secret for the saints. That the burden can be a blessing, if you bring it to the Lord and process it with the Lord and he uses this analogy of gold. So let me talk a little bit about gold. How many of you watch the television show "Gold Rush? Do you? I'm not saying you should, I'm saying I do. I find that show fascinating. I like going from dirt to money. That's amazing, that's amazing. So what they do, they put dirt in a wash plant. They run it through a sluice box and then they run it down, into a gold retrieval machine and they separate out all the gold. So you started with a lot of dirt, you get a little bit of gold, but at the end is the gold quite yet pure and ready? No. So what do they do? They put it in a kiln. Heat it up to maybe a few thousand degrees and the impurities rise to the top. They clean those off so that eventually the gold is pure, meaning it's more valuable. That's your life. Your life is a kiln. You're in it. And you're like, this hurts. This is painful. This feels like the flames of hell. And it's burning off bad habits, lack of faith, wrong understanding, bitterness, self-righteousness and doubt. And it makes you more and more like Jesus Christ in your character. For those of you that have literally been through hell. If you have allowed it to be a blessing and not just curse God for the burden, the rest of us are astonished by you because your faith is something that is so pure and so precious and so profound that we admire you, that we are encouraged by you, that we borrow hope from you because we see the Spirit of God at work in you, amen. This is why people who have been through the worst suffering sometimes have the greatest deepest, richest, purest faith. And I'm sure the gold would say, I wish there was a way to get pure without the kiln. Just like the child of God says, "I wish I could be like Jesus, "without the pains of this life." And God uses the burden to be the blessing. He uses the

heat to purify. That's what he's saying. Now he talks about two things. Salvation, the struggle ends. And I love this. It talks about the revelation of Jesus Christ. Right now, everybody's looking forward. Well, as soon as we can get back to the new normal, and if you say the word new normal, I'm gonna throw up in my mouth. I'm so, okay. All right, when Jesus comes back, we're gonna do the new normal. All right. Right now, some people, "I can't wait till we get back to normal." I'll tell you normal ain't that great. I want better than that. Some people are, I can't wait until the election. I can. Some people are, I can't wait till we have the V shaped economic rebound. May not happen. What are you looking forward to? What he talks about is the revelation of Jesus Christ. You know what that literally is? You see Jesus, on your horizon, there needs to be someone or something to look forward that there can be a number of small things along the way. But the big thing on the horizon has to be Jesus. You know what, even if you die, Jesus is gonna return, he's gonna call you by name, like he did his buddy Lazarus. You're gonna get out of your grave and your faith is going to become sight. And the Bible says that you will see him face to face. That's the revelation of Jesus Christ. For the Christian, that's our finish line. That's the goal on our horizon. That's the end that we're running toward. We have a longer view of things. Everything will be okay when Jesus gets back, until then, I'm telling you we can work for improvements, but heaven doesn't come until Jesus returns. The revelation of Jesus Christ. So knowing this, he says, "You'll receive the outcome, the salvation of your souls." Meaning you are not disappointed. And the result he says, "Will be a joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory." Glory means heavy or weighty. And what he's saying here is, that the burdens are heavy, but the blessing is heavier. And so the blessings of God outweigh the burdens of this world. That being an exile far away from home is a burden, but that ultimately being elected by God is a blessing that is heavier. The only way to make it through this life is to have something and someone that is heavier, greater, more grand, more glorious, more significant, more prominent, more powerful, more hopeful than this world. And his name is Jesus Christ. And when you see him, you will be filled with a joy and rejoicing. That is inexpressible, inexpressible. How many of you have ever had that you're so excited, you couldn't even make words. You're like, "Whoo, yeah, wow, yes, cowabunga!" You don't even have a word for it, amen?

- Amen.

- Really, I don't have any college football fans in the house today. You've never been there? I tell you our wedding day, we opened the doors. My thought was Grace, please don't leave. Please don't leave, please don't leave. There she is. I was just like, You ever held your baby for the first time? What do we do? What do we do? There are days in life. There are moments in life that are so sacred and so special and so supernatural. We don't even have words. What he's talking about is heaven visiting you so that you can rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible until you see the revelation of Jesus Christ and the outcome of your salvation. And you're filled with the joy and the peace that surpasses understanding, and you're shouting and clapping and rejoicing. And somebody asks you, "Explain why?" You're like, "The words aren't big enough." The joy is bigger than language. So this is why we sing, this is why we clap, this is why we cheer. And it's not because there's not problems out there, but because there's hope in here, it's not because

this world doesn't need work, it means that rather, the only way the work begins is if we start with worshiping the God who can do all the work. And then he closes with this, your blessings outlast your burdens. Concerning this salvation, you've got blessings from God, you're elect. You've got burdens from the world, you're an exile. It feels like the two are in a race. Which one wins? The blessings. Eventually the burdens cease and the blessings continue. The blessings of God outrun the burdens of this life. Concerning this salvation, 1 Peter 1:10-12, the prophets. These are the guys in the Old Testament. They write and speak the Word of God. You know what this world needs? A Word from God, so it needs the Word of God, right. This is so significant. He talks about the prophets who prophesied about the grace. Some people say Old Testament by law, and New Testament about grace. He says, "Whole Bible is about grace." It's about Jesus and love and forgiveness of sin and eternal life, mercy that never ends from the Father, heart of God. Prophesied about the grace that was to be yours, searched and inquired carefully inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them. It was the Holy Spirit who in dwelt and empowered the perfect life of Jesus. And then Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to empower the servants of God, to write the scriptures. And then Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to fill the children of God, to open the Word of God, to receive a Word from God. When you open the Bible, something supernatural happens that the same God who wrote this indwells you and informs and enlightens you, opens your eyes to Jesus and makes you more like Jesus. This is the only perfect thing on earth. And in a world that is filled with bad news, it is the source of good news. In a world that is filled with lots of division, it is the source of unity. In a world that is filled with lots of lies, this is filled with nothing but truth. Amen?

- Amen.

- That's how we believe. This is why I want you to learn, study, know the Word of God. I wrote 110 page introduction and overview. It's for you to study, to study with your group and also with your family. It's free. I want you to learn God's Word. You can only take so much toxic news in social media until your soul is sick and has no hope. You can only turn on the latest crisis or global rage and anger for so long until you need to tap into God's truth. And have the Holy Spirit give you some perspective so that you are responding to him and not just reacting to them. That's the prophets. When he predicted the sufferings of Christ, the whole Old Testament is about Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and the subsequent glories, his conquering of death is coming again to establish a kingdom. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you. These people thousands of years ago were writing scripture, including Peter for you. This is a gift for you. This is God's Word for you. This is God's direction, instruction, correction, and affection for you. In the things that have been announced to you through those who preached. I love the preaching part, the good news. We got a lot of bad news. The Bible is filled with good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Things into which crazy line. Angels long to look and angel is a divine being. Angel means messenger. When God would have a message to deliver, he'd grab an angel. He put a brown uniform on him. He'd put them in a brown truck and he'd send them to earth to deliver a message. That's a joke. And they would deliver a message. And then there were times that the angels would convene and God be like, "Okay, I have another message." Angels are like, "Okay, tell us what the message is" and

who to deliver it to." The Holy Spirit said, "I'm gonna deliver this one myself." I mean, it says that the law was mediated to Moses through angels. That's what says. There were times that the Holy Spirit said, "You know what, I'm gonna deliver this mail myself." "I'm gonna pick this servant "and I'm gonna fill them. "And I'm gonna speak through them or write through them. "This message is about Jesus, "it's so important that I'm gonna deliver it myself." Wow, that would include the book of 1 Peter. And it says that the angels were in heaven. Like, what does that mean? What does that mean? And when you do a Bible study, you learn things that the angels wished they could have understood. That's amazing, amen. I'll tell you something. I've been a preacher for 25 years, two things I've seen. Number one, I've never met a Christian that regrets meeting Jesus. I've met people that have all kinds of regrets. I've never met, somebody says, "My life was awesome, I met Jesus, "worst decision I ever made." Let me tell you if that's you, you were in a cult, they didn't tell you about the real Jesus. Second thing, I know the power of God's Word. That's why we're gonna be in the book of the Bible for the next nine weeks. That the way that it works is that if you open the Word of God, you receive a Word from God and it brings the hope, help, and healing of the Holy Spirit to the children of God who opened the Word of God and are ministered to by the Spirit of God. Something supernatural happens when you and I open the word of God, that's what Peter is saying. And the angels are back in heaven going, "Wow, that would be amazing." But it's a gift for you. That they get to observe, but you get to enjoy. Let me close with this, maybe. The prophets were they blessed by God? Yes. Were they loved by the world? No. That's you, that's you. The prophets were hated, they were despised. They were rejected, they were outcast. They were maligned. They were murdered. They didn't have to worry about a retirement account. They weren't going to make it to that age. But eternity has vindicated those whom history vilified. Don't worry about your approval ratings. Don't worry about your likes. Don't worry about history affirming you, worry about eternity vindicating you. That's the message of the prophets, amen. Well, we should have fun. So I'm gonna bring the band up and we are going to sing and we're gonna worship and we're gonna clap and we're gonna cheer because his name is,

- Jesus.

- Jesus. So I'm gonna ask you to stand. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. I wanna just speak the Word of God over you. And then I want you to respond in worship. So I need a little noise from the bed. Come on, jump on the kid, brother, give me a little background noise. We can't go to heaven without a groove. All right, you ready? Listen to this church. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading kept in heaven for you who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. In this you rejoice. Though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, in worship, you give him your burdens, you receive his blessings, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire may be found a result in praise, glory, honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you, you love him. Though you did not see him, you believe in him and rejoice.

Rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith. The salvation of your souls. Now is the time for you to give God your blessings. And now is the time to give God your burdens. Now is the time to allow the fact that you are elect to give you hope, to overcome your role in this world as exile and as we sing and as we shout, and as we cheer, I want you to express the joy that is inexpressible, as you are filled with rejoicing, that is inexpressible in the name of Jesus Christ.