

A Celebration of Salvation – Part 2

1 Peter 1:6-9

Pastor John Miller

I want you to follow with me in your Bible. We're going to read the entire text, verse 6 down to verse 9. Peter says, "Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold trials" or testings. My King James Bible has "temptations," but I think it's better translated "trials" or "testings." And verse 7 says, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto the praise and the honor and the glory at the appearing..."—the word is "apocalypse," "the unveiling"—"...of Jesus Christ. Whom having not seen..."—that is, Jesus—"...you love; in Whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

Peter is writing to Christians who were going through a time of trials and testings, and a season of heaviness. In verse 6, he says, "you are in heaviness through manifold trials" or testings. So he began his letter outlining God's plan of salvation. He wanted them to rejoice in the salvation that was theirs in Christ.

You think, "How can we encourage someone through suffering? How can we encourage someone who's facing trials and troubles and opposition in this world?" Well, you can bring them back to their election. Peter said there in verse 2 that they were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." To remember God has chosen you for salvation. And then, secondly, he said the Spirit has sanctified you, through the "sanctification..."—verse 2—"...of the Spirit, unto obedience of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." So the Father has chosen us, the Spirit has sanctified us and the Son has died for us on the cross shedding His own precious blood.

Then Peter moves into their hope of heaven. And when Peter begins to speak about heaven, he said, verse 3, that we've been born again, verse 3, "to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And that it is "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away." It's "reserved" or kept for us "in heaven." And that we too, verse 5, "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Now why did I read all that when it's not my text? Because many times when you're doing Bible study, you need to realize that the context of a text is very important. We never want to take a text or a set of text out of its context. Because then we don't know the setting or purpose or the meaning. And in the Greek, by the way, a little different than the English language, where we put periods every so often—in the Greek, they just run on and on and on and on. And it's more logical and more connective. So in the Greek, from verse 3, all the way down to verse 12, is one long sentence in the Greek. And that's why for these few weeks, it's been kind of hard to chop them up or break them up. Last Sunday we looked at a celebration of salvation. This Sunday we look at a celebration of salvation. Next Sunday we're going to look at a celebration of salvation. Because it's all one, big, glorious text.

Where Peter starts with a doctrinal foundation, that we know who we are in Christ, we know what our hope is in Christ and we have focus on the doctrinal truth. Then we can live it out in our daily life. How better to strengthen and encourage suffering Christians than laying a doctrinal foundation; that we were born again to a “living hope,” verse 3, to a heavenly hope, verse 4, to a secure hope, in verse 5. Is it any wonder that in verse 3 he says, “Blessed...”—praise be or to eulogize or worship—“...God the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” So Peter wants us to consider salvation’s future glory, heaven, in light now—in our passage, verses 6 to 9—in light of present-day adversity. So in light of our adversity and persecution, we need to be grounded and growing in our knowledge of who we are in Jesus Christ.

Peter says we are born for glory, we are being kept for glory, but he also tells us two more things. And this is our text. Number 1, we are going to learn that we are being prepared for glory, and number 2, that we can enjoy glory now. So from verse 3 to verse 12, Peter says this: You were born for glory, you are being kept for glory, you are being prepared for glory and you are going to enjoy glory right now all the way to heaven.

Christian philosophy is not “pie in the sky in the sweet by and by.” That’s not the Christian philosophy or Biblical truth. Biblical truth is we are going to go to heaven when we die; we do have a future hope. But, guess what? God wants to bring heaven to your soul right now. God wants you to have joy unspeakable that is full of glory. You find a repeated phrase through these verses, and that’s a repeated phrase of joy and rejoicing. Joy and rejoicing, along with trouble, trial and tribulation. So I want to look at some of these facts about trials, what they are and why God allows them.

But first, from verse 6 to 7, we see salvation means that we are being prepared for glory. Now I want you to go back with me and let’s unpack these verses. Look at verse 6. He says “wherein.” That draws from what has gone before in context. He says you are being “kept by the power of God...”—verse 5—“...through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time” or when the Lord returns, which is, by the way, the theme he ends on in verse 9, “...the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” And he talks about “joy unspeakable” and rejoicing, in verse 8. And he opens with that there in verse 6. So because you have been born for glory, because you are being kept for glory, because you will one day enjoy glory in heaven and you have it right now, he says we “greatly rejoice...”—verse 6—“...though now for a season, if need be, you are in...”—what?—“...heaviness...”—in my Bible, or you are in trouble—“...through manifold temptations” trials or testing.

So Peter tells us in verse 6 that you’re going to heaven; you’re going to be in heaven, you’re going to have glory. And that’s all great, but right now we can still rejoice. God wants to bring heaven to your souls. I like that statement “A little faith will take your soul to heaven; a lot of faith will bring heaven to your soul.” So you can enjoy heaven now. A lot of people are going to heaven, but they look like hell. You ever seen Christians—they’re just all messed up. Talk about baptizing them? They’ve been baptized in lemon juice, you know. “Isn’t Jesus won-der-ful. Isn’t life dif-fi-cult. Isn’t the Christian life a bummer, but we’re hanging on to Jesus.” Oh, what joy.

Now we're going to learn from this passage that we will go through sorrow, we will go through suffering. There are no Christian fallout shelters. God never promised you immunity from the trials and cares of life. But in the midst of that, we have joy right now in Jesus; amen? We have heaven in our soul. And we may sorrow, but we don't sorrow as others who have no hope. We may weep, but "weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes..."—when?—"...in the morning." Amen? So we have hope in Jesus. We don't go through life without purpose or the meaning of joy in our lives.

Now, he mentions the word, in verse 6—my King James, I said, has "temptations," but it should be rendered "trials" or "testings." And the word indicates trials and testings of all kinds. In the ancient world whenever they would winnow the grain, they would bring it to the threshing floor, and they would lay out the grain. And you had to separate the husk from the chaff. You have the core, the grain, but it was covered with a thin layer of skin called the "chaff." And so what they would do is they would use a winnowing fork, but it would only be so good. But they would have this large piece of wood, and they would put metal and steel and just, you know, hard objects on it. And then they would roll it. Many times it would be taken by an ox and rolled around the threshing floor to winnow the grain, just separate the wheat from the chaff. To separate the wheat. That item that they would use to winnow that wheat was actually called a "tribulum." It was called a "tribulum." And we get our word "tribulation" from it. "Tribulation" or "trouble" from this ancient thing that they used to winnow the grain.

It is a picture of what God does in our lives. God wants in your life to separate the good from the bad. He wants to winnow the wheat from the chaff. So what does He do? He threshes you. He puts you through the tribulum. He puts you through trouble and tribulation. Not the Great Tribulation, which comes from God, but the trouble that comes from the world, the flesh and the Devil. "In the world..." Jesus said, "...you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer..."—what did He say?—"...I have overcome the world." Amen? So we're all going to go through this trouble or this tribulation or this difficulty.

Now in the context of 1 Peter, what was their trouble? Their trouble was primarily persecution. They were being ostracized, they were being beat up, they were mocked and laughed at, ridiculed, they weren't given jobs or employment, so they were ostracized. Why? Because they were, verse 1 of chapter 1, "strangers scattered." They were strangers living in a strange land. They were the elect strangers scattered. You and I are elect strangers scattered in this world, which is not our home. And since this world is not our home, it's not going to be favorable to us, who have a home in heaven. We're going to experience opposition. You let your light shine for Jesus at work, what happens? You get persecuted. You let your light shine in a home, maybe with other unbelievers in your home, they may persecute you or put you down.

Now there's five facts about trials in verse 6 that I want to point out. I went way too long first service, so I got to try to burn a little quicker through this. But get your pen and paper ready, and I want to share some facts—five facts about tribulations or trials that God allows in the life of a Christian. Number 1, trials are needed in our lives. Trials are needed in our lives. Yes, you heard me correctly. Some of you are going, "I don't know that I want to hear this sermon. Did

you just say 'needed' in our lives?" "That's exactly what I said." It's taken from verse 6 where the phrase is found "if need be." You see that little phrase, "if need be"? In other words, God knows if you need a trial. Now the word there says that they are "manifold" trials. You know what the word "manifold" means? It means "various" or "variegated" or literally, "many colors." Reminds us of the coat of Joseph. Joseph had a coat with many colors; right? He had trials. But our life takes on different trials, different hues and different colors. God knows that there are special times when we actually need to go through trials. We sometimes need to go through trials to silence Satan, like Job did. Sometimes we need to go through trials to glorify God, like Lazarus when he died, and Jesus said his death—his sickness is "not unto death but for the glory of God." John 4:11 [wrong Scripture verse]. Or sometimes we go through trials to make us more like Jesus. You ever think about that? You go, "I don't want to be more like Jesus." You ever sing, "Make me like You, Jesus. Make me like You. You are a Servant.

Make me one too." What happens? Trials, trouble, adversity, because God is tumbling you and winnowing you and trying to make you more like Jesus. He's trying to cut away from your life what isn't like Jesus. When you go through a hard time, guess what God is trying to do? Make you like Jesus. That's the goal of the sanctified life. God is trying to make you more like Jesus. And all those areas in our lives where we're not like Jesus, God's trying to get rid of it. He wants to separate the wheat from the chaff.

And then I would also say trials are allowed to make us thankful. You know, you don't really appreciate what you have until you lose certain things. You lose your health, you lose some friends, you lose the loved one, you learn to value and appreciate the good things God has given you. Or we might learn to depend on God. That's why God would allow trials; to teach us trust and dependence.

Here's a good one. You know why God allows trials? To teach us patience. Don't you love that word "patience"? The minute I hear it, I get mad. I had to preach this sermon this week, so everybody driving in front of me was going too slow. "Why are they going so slow?" Patience. All week long. And I knew I was going to have to preach this text. It just drove me crazy. Thought maybe I could skip over it or something like that. You know why trials come into our lives? God's trying to teach us patience and endurance.

He also wants us to be more sympathetic. God's wants us to learn to be sympathetic. So He gives us different trials, different colors. He gives us trials in which He teaches us sympathy, to be compassionate. You know who the best counselors are? People who've been through fire. You ever try to go to somebody when you have a problem who's never had a problem? And they just kind of look at you and "I can't believe you did that. I can't believe you're thinking that." "Well, thank you very much." You know, you're pouring your heart out to them, and you're really struggling and they're going, "I don't struggle with that. What's your problem?" The world has been most helped and most blessed by those who have bled and suffered. People who have never suffered are very shallow. They have very little to contribute. You want your life to be strong and deep, you want your life to have a powerful impact on others? Then allow the suffering to mold you and shape you and make you into what God wants you to be.

The problem is we value comfort over character. And we want to go through life without any bumps in the road, without anyone driving slow in front of us. Everything just goes perfectly. It's those little irritants that really get to me. You know the house could burn down. I'll "praise God. I trust the Lord." But if a light switch is broken, I just lose my sanctification. Like this is so stupid, but it's the little irritants, you know, that just, uuh, drive me crazy. And sometimes you have those days—Murphy's Law—just where everything that can go wrong goes wrong. Why is it whenever you drop the peanut butter bread, it always lands peanut butter down? Why? "God, I want to know!" Sometimes I not only have those weeks, I have those months, you know. Every day is so bad! Nothing's going right; everything's going wrong! Nothing's going right. And those little irritants trying to teach me patience and thankfulness, to be sympathetic toward others.

God allows trials, different colors, to humble us, to teach us to pray and, yes, to discipline us. "Whom the Lord loves He..."—what?—"...chastens." Fancy Bible word for "spanks." You go to jail for spanking children today. That's one of the problems with our culture. I don't know how many times I've been in a shopping mall and "Would you like me to spank your child for you? I could fix it right now! In the Name of Jesus!" But you'd be reading in the paper, "Pastor Miller arrested. Gone to jail." You don't spank other people's kids, but you sure want to sometimes. It's like, man, if you love them, spank them sometimes, chasten them. Do it in love for their good.

And then last but not least, I wrote this down. God allows trials in our lives to help us think more about heaven. I love that. You know when the problems with the church today—a lot of Christians today? They don't think about heaven. They're so earthly minded, they're no heavenly good. All they think about is now and things and relationships here. They don't think about heaven. You want to go through life with joy in your heart? Think more about heaven. You're born for heaven, you're being kept for heaven, you're being prepared for heaven and heaven can come down to your soul right now. You can go through this dark and troubled world. And this world is dark and troubled. Getting darker and more troubled every day. But heaven can come down to your soul. And you can live with the joy unspeakable. It's full of glory. I think we need to think more about heaven, and that's what trials have a tendency to do. They make us long for heaven. The more friends we have that die in the Lord, the more we long to go to heaven. You lose your parents, you lose siblings, you lose children—one of the most painful things for me to do is conduct a funeral service for young children. And to watch parents grieve. I've seen so many little caskets. So many little caskets where people have to bury their child. I've had parents weeping, "Pastor, this is not the way it's supposed to be. Children are supposed to bury their parents; parents aren't supposed to bury their children."

We live in a troubled, hard world. But God wants to bring peace to your troubled heart. He wants to bring joy into your life. As Peter said in this passage, it's a joy that is "unspeakable." It's full of glory.

Trials, secondly, I would say, verse 6, are varied, the "manifold" or variegated or many colored. Maybe they're physical, maybe you've lost your health, maybe they're financial, maybe you've

lost your wealth, maybe they're emotional, maybe you have a blue day or a blue week or a blue month or maybe you're in a valley of discouragement or depression. Maybe they're just spiritual. I believe that the Devil wants to attack us, get us to doubt, get us to fear, get us to worry. The Bible says that we "resist the Devil, and he will flee from us." So these temptations or trials are "manifold," they're varied, they come in different shapes and different colors.

The church I formerly pastured for many years—there was an elderly gentleman there, dear saint of God. His name was Frank Dolan. He used to volunteer around the church, and he had such a servant's heart. But he would weekly listen to my sermons and then write poems based on my text. And every week, he'd come up and say, "Pastor John, here's a poem, based on your sermon from last Sunday." And some were better than others, but he had a real gift of writing poetry. Well, I preached from this text, that your faith is more precious than gold and tried in the fire, that God allows varied, colored, manifold trials or testings. And he wrote this poem, and he called it "God's Palette." Listen to what he wrote.

Life's colors come in various hues,

Brightest golds and deepest blues.

Pastels of contentment,

Burning reds and yellows of pain.

As one fades away,

Another comes back again.

And there is black, no color at all;

A hole of depression, as if in a fall.

Perfect colors come from God alone,

Exactly selected from His place on the throne.

The color He uses to confirm or replace,

Are applied precisely using His palette of grace.

God has a grace to match each color of trial. Whatever you're going through, God's grace is sufficient. "His strength will be made perfect in your weakness." I can say from my own life that the weaknesses God has allowed in my life, suffering—physically, spiritually, emotionally, challenges, at times, of finances—that God has used that to make me more like Jesus Christ. God uses that to winnow the husk from the wheat. God is in process; He's perfecting you. He's not done. And if you go home today, look in the mirror, tell yourself, "God's not done with you."

God is not done with you; He's still working in you. And it's a life-long process. You go, "Well, when will He be done? Because I'm gettin' tired of me!" I'll tell you when He'll be done. You ready for this? When you get to heaven. Even in old age, Satan's not going to leave you alone. Trials will come; trouble will come. Man is born for adversity. But God has His palette of grace.

Let me point out a third truth from verse 6. Trials are often not easy. Notice the word "heaviness." Heaviness. You know, the same word was used of Jesus in Gethsemane? In Gethsemane, He began to be "heavy." And He sweat, as it were, "great drops of blood." We get this idea that as Christians we should be stoic, and we should just show no expression, that we should endure our trials and kind of grit our teeth. "God, help us" to persevere and to trust in Him. Many times we go through heaviness.

And fourthly, notice verse 6, trials are controlled by God. Notice the little phrase "for a season." For a season. You know, sometimes we get the idea that our lives are just all problems, all troubles and all pain. Well, first of all, you know the places where there's all sunshine? They're deserts. If you want to go where the sun is always shining, it's going to be a desert. If you want fruit to grow, it grows in the valleys, and there has to be rain; right? So God brings the storms into our life to produce character. That's what God is doing. And He does it for just a season. When God puts us in the oven of affliction, He keeps His hand on the thermostat and watches us.

My wife used to ask me to take food out of the oven when she would set the timer and go off. Very dangerous. You'd think a grown man could do that; right? How hard is that? "John, when the timer dings—'ding,' this is the sound, 'ding, ding'—when you hear that sound, turn the oven off, take the casserole out and set it on the counter." "Okay; no problem." And then she leaves and "Okay! Now I can watch the game!" And I'm watching the game, I'm yelling and screaming. I'm watching the game, and I hear a ding. I go, "That's a weird noise. I don't know what that is." "Come on, get 'im!" I'm watching the game. And then about 30 minutes later [sniffing], something's burning. I smell smoke, and I see smoke and the fire truck pulls up in front of the house. And it's like, "Oh, I forgot! It's in the oven!" It's all burnt, fried and wasted. Aren't you glad I'm not God? You'd all be fried right now. Can you imagine, "Oh, I forgot! Pastor John's still in the oven. He's all messed up. Just throw him away." Smoke coming off, all fried.

When you're going through affliction, when you're going through trials, God keeps His eye on you and His hand on the thermostat. Someone said, "When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, will be your supply. The flames shall not hurt thee. I only design thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine." It's God's refining process. It's for our good and for God's glory, and it's just for a season.

And then, verse 7. We finally get out of verse 6. Verse 7, God rewards the faithful sufferer. He says that—here's the reason God allows suffering in our life—"That the trial of your faith..."—it's a test to approve the genuineness and purity of your faith—"...being much more precious than

gold....” Now gold is a precious metal. But your faith being tried is “more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried...”—or tested—“...and to be proved with fire, that it might be found...”—unto what?—“...unto the praise, and the honor and the glory at the appearing, the apocalypse...”—the unveiling—“...of Jesus Christ.” So he uses this image of gold in the crucible being purified, and that the goldsmith skims the dross until there’s a perfect reflection of Himself in the crucible in the gold. God working to make us more like Jesus. So it’s the approval of your faith. It’s the proving that your faith is genuine and real.

And then verse 7. It brings praise and honor and glory to God. So tested and proven faith brings glory to God. When? When Jesus Christ returns. F. B. Meyers said, “Be patient o sufferer. He must love you or He would not chasten you. You must be His, or He would not take such pains with you. You must be capable of some high service, which only He can secure through pain, or He would not plunge you into the furnace of affliction. You must be able to bear the fire, or He would not pass you through it.” How true that is. You know, sometimes when people will come to me, and they’re going through suffering, maybe financial or physical or emotional or spiritual, and I pray for them, sometimes it’s with a little joy in my heart I say, “God must really love you to be working in your life so. God must really care about you to let you go through this, because He wants to make you a vessel unto honor.”

You know, when you go out in your yard and you find a big weed, how many of you take pruning shears and prune your weed real delicately so it’ll grow bigger? You don’t do that; do you? You don’t go, “Oh, that’s a beautiful weed. Oh, It’s going to get so pretty. I just want to trim it a little bit. I don’t want to hurt it. I just want to trim it, so it’ll produce more flowers.” No. The weeds are just pulled out. What do we prune? Beautiful roses. Roses are beautiful, but roses need a lot of tender, loving care. They need to be pruned just the right way, at just the right time, to just the right degree. Jesus said it like this in John 15. He said, “My Father is the Husbandman, and you are the vine.” And He says, “My Father prunes those who bear fruit in order that they might bear more fruit and much fruit. So abide in Me, and you will bear fruit.” So God the Father is the Husbandman, and He’s pruning you. Can you imagine if a rose bush could talk? And you were coming at your prized rose bush with your shears and “Ahhh!” And they’d be freaking out. And you’d go clip, and they’d go, “Ah, that hurts. I thought you loved me. Why did you cut that off?” Whack, whack, whack, and you cut a few more off. And they would be unaware of the fact that you’re trying to produce more beautiful flowers—roses on that bush. So God is pruning you. He’s cutting back in order that you might bear more fruit.

Now, second and last point, verses 8 and 9. Salvation means that we can enjoy glory now. So we’re not only being prepared for glory, verses 6 and 7, but we are enjoying glory right now, verses 8 and 9. I want you to read them again, or follow me as I read them. Peter says, “Of whom...”—now he’s referring to Jesus Christ, who’s coming back, in His unveiling, verse 7. It’s “Of whom you have not seen Him, but you love Him. Though now you see Him not, you believe in Him, and you rejoice in Him, and your joy is unspeakable.” That word “unspeakable” literally means you can’t explain it. You can’t express it. When Christians are going through the fire, and unbelievers looking at him, they go, “How can you have such peace? How can you have so much joy? How can you have so much contentment?” You just go, “Well, I don’t know. It’s just

the Lord sustaining me.” You can’t put it into words. And the joy that you have in your soul is joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

And then he says, verse 9, that you receive the end of your salvation. “...the end of your faith, even your salvation...” — “...the salvation of your souls.” Don’t miss this. The word “souls” there means your whole being. It’s not talking about God’s not going to save your body, just your soul. The whole person’s going to be saved—body, soul and spirit.

Now I want you to note the marks of a true Christian. And I want you to note four things that you can do to enjoy heaven right now while you pass through trouble, trial and suffering. Number 1, love Jesus. Love Jesus. Notice it, verse 8. “Whom having not seen, you love. And though you see Him not, you believe and you rejoice.” Not seeing Jesus, yet you love Him. Now Peter wrote these words, but, guess what? Peter had seen Jesus. I’ve never seen Jesus, and I’d venture to believe, none of you have seen Jesus. I’m not going to ask you to raise your hand if you’ve seen Jesus, because I don’t think you’ve seen Jesus. Listen, I don’t want to even go there. I’ll stop right there. But I’ve seen Him through the eyes of faith. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—I love that old song, Tell Me the Story of Jesus. Sweetest I have ever heard. Right on my heart every line. What a blessing to love Jesus. And think about this. As I was studying this passage this week, I was alone in the car driving, and I started to think about loving Jesus, even though you’ve never seen Him. Loving Jesus even though you’ve never seen Him. Do you love Jesus? Even though we’ve never seen Him, we love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, with all our mind. Let me tell you something. I share this with all my heart. Loving Jesus supremely will extract the poisons: the bitterness, and hardness, and difficulties and trials and troubles of life bring into your heart. Loving Jesus will take all the poison of bitterness and hatred and unforgiveness out of your heart. When you are passing through a sorrow or through a grief or are experiencing bereavement or pain or loss, loving Jesus Christ with all of your soul, with all of your strength, with all of your mind, will help you through those times of difficulty. If you can just grow in your love for Jesus Christ, nothing much can go wrong with you. And ask yourself right now; I want you to ask yourself. You have to do a little soul searching. Do I love Jesus Christ with all my heart, all my soul, all my strength and all my mind? Do you? If so, you’re going to be fine. God will take care of you. That extracts all the poisons out of our lives.

Second thing we need to do when we’re going through sorrow and suffering and trials, in verse 8, is trust Jesus. Notice that in verse 8 “believing.” “...believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable...” So we love Him; we believe in Him, which means we trust Him; we live by faith, not by feeling; we live by faith, not by sight. Romans 8:28 says, “For we know all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.” How do we know that? How do we know all things work together for good? We don’t know it by sight. We don’t know it by feeling. We know it by faith. So here’s the second thing you need to do to go through life without being bitter or hardened or turning stale. You need to love Jesus; secondly, you need to trust Jesus. You need to trust Jesus. Put it in His hands. Trust Him. Trusting in God alone.

And there's a third thing we do in verse 8. We rejoice in Jesus. In verse 8, he says, "...rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory." It's joy that is unspeakable. It's full of glory.

So we love Jesus, trust Jesus, rejoice in Jesus, and here's the fourth and last, verse 9. We look for Jesus. "...receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls." What's he talking about? Salvation has three tenses. I've shared it a million times; I'll share it a million and one. Three tenses: past, present and future. I have been saved. Sin's penalty. I've been saved; I've been forgiven. Present tense; I'm being saved. Sin's power. And future tense; I will be saved. Sin's very presence. So I've been saved, I'm being saved, I will be saved. Past tense; I've been saved. Justification. Present tense; being saved. Sanctification. Future tense; will be saved. Glorification. Guess what Peter is talking about in verse 9? The future tense. When he says you're going to "...receive the end..."—or the outcome or the goal—"...of your faith..." what is the end or the outcome or the goal of loving Jesus, trusting Jesus, rejoicing in Jesus and looking in Jesus? You know what it is? That you'll be completely saved. Sin's presence will be gone. No more sorrow, no more sickness, no more sin, no more suffering, no more sadness. You go, "Isn't that pie in the sky in the sweet by and by?" Yes, but you can start eating the pie right now. You can start tasting the goodness of God. A little faith will take your soul to heaven; a lot of faith will bring heaven to your soul. Right now.

Go back with me to verse 6. He says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice." "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season..." if God sees fit that you need it, "...you are in heaviness through manifold testings" and trials. Then jump back with me to verse 9. But there's coming a day when you'll "receive the end of your faith...the salvation of your souls."

So we are born for glory, we are kept for glory, we're prepared for glory and we can experience the glory of God right now in our walk and relationship with Jesus Christ. Amen?

Let's pray.