

# Outrageous Hope...Extravagant Joy

## A Study in I Peter

### Introduction

The Apostle Peter, one of the twelve disciples, wrote 1 Peter. He names himself in the opening of the letter and claims to be an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 5:1). Peter was the one who was restored by Jesus and chosen to preach on the Day of Pentecost when 3,000 people were saved. Peter and Paul were the leading apostles of the early church. Peter primarily preached to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles.

Understanding Peter's background gives greater insight into his writings. The Holy Spirit had transformed this brash, impulsive former fisherman. He apparently wrote this epistle from Rome (Babylon – 1 Peter 5:13, Revelation 17:5 & 18:10) where he would later be martyred (AD64, under Nero) after the Apostle Paul was beheaded.

### 1 Peter 1

Because He Lives  
In Pursuit of Holiness

### 1 Peter 2

As Living Stones  
For All to See

### 1 Peter 3

Win Those We Love  
Despite a Hostile World

### 1 Peter 4

Until He Comes  
When Life is Hard

### 1 Peter 5

While We Wait –  
Shepherd the flock  
Submit to God  
Resist the devil  
Peace to all

The illustration used by Phillip Yancey is his book, *What Good is God*, so beautifully depicts the lure of the world, the flesh and our enemy. The election of the president in Ukraine in 2004 is considered the most significant event in the country since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. This story is recorded in the Introduction on page 13.

As Dallas Willard says in his book, *The Divine Conspiracy*, it is as if the entire world is flying upside down while thinking they are right side up and wondering why Christians don't see life as they do.

Only those who are rightly related to the Creator and live according to His design are flying right side up. The natural man lives life backwards and upside down. The Spiritual man lives life from the inside out and right side up.

Dallas goes on to say,

Yet, in the gloom a light glimmers and glows. We have received an invitation. We are invited to make a pilgrimage— into the heart and life of God. The invitation has long been on public record. You can hardly look anywhere across the human scene and not encounter it. It is literally “blowing in the wind.” A door of welcome seems open to everyone without exception. No person or circumstance other than our own decision can keep us away. “Whosoever will may come.”<sup>1</sup>

A.W. Tozer wrote, “The decline of the knowledge of the holy has brought on our troubles. A rediscovery of the majesty of God will go a long way toward curing them. It is impossible to keep our moral practices sound and our inward attitudes right while our idea of God is erroneous or inadequate. If we would bring back spiritual power to our lives, we must begin to think of God more nearly as He is.”<sup>2</sup>

The lies are so compelling, which incite desire. As we gain what we think we have to have, it loses it’s luster and no longer satisfies. Any time I think I need something other than Christ; I am trying to fill a void that can only be filled by Him. Materialism and the lust for more is forced on us. As we listen to the voice of the enemy we fall prey to his lies.

***Eve’s Lament***  
***A Home and a Hunger: Songs of Kingdom Hope***  
*(Lies in Genesis 3, promise of Genesis 3:15)*

I wandered far away with my love  
I feel the tall grass on my legs  
The sun is warm, the birds are singing  
I should’ve run when I had the chance

I felt him sliding up beside me  
His words they played upon my pride  
I felt the lie wrap all around me  
I let his whisper hypnotize

Did He really say it? Why is He keeping you down?  
Don’t you want to taste it? Freedom without Him around?  
Don’t you want to know? Don’t you want to choose?  
You want it, don’t you? Don’t you?

I took the fruit of my desire  
Sweet the poison in my mouth  
Awake, awake the fall, the fire  
The lie constricts, the curse clamps down

Shame the venom running through my veins  
A curse, a cancer and my death  
And every child of mine, will feel the serpent's bite  
But one will crush his head  
Oh come and crush his head  
Oh come and crush his head!  
Crush his head!<sup>3</sup>

Robby Gallaty's message the last night of Awesome August inspired us all to memorize scripture. He contrasted Eve's temptation and Christ's temptation. Eve questioned the Word of God and Jesus quoted the Word of God.

**Present joy is based on past promises and future hope.**

Samuel Ward, an English Puritan minister said, "Keep your faith, and it will keep your joy. It keeps you even without ebb and flow, turning ever upon the hinges of heavenly joys.... Is it not fitting for the righteous to rejoice? What is a Christian but one who is joyful? Does not the kingdom of heaven consist in joy?... Show me your faith by your joy. Use your faith, and have joy; increase your faith and increase your joy."<sup>4</sup>

In the midst of "what is", I see the small screen and hear the still small voice, "Follow Me". Are you following Christ? Have you become His disciple? Are you learning from Him through His Word and listening for His voice with the intent to obey? It is "in Him" that you will find true joy!

<sup>1</sup> Willard, D. (2009). *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life In God*, pp. 17-18. HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Tozer, A.W. (1961) *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p.viii. Publisher

<sup>3</sup> Cobb, C, (2017) *Sing the Story Music*.

<sup>4</sup> Kruger, M. (2018). *In All Things: A Nine-Week Devotional Bible Study on Unshakeable Joy*, p. 4. The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

