

HOW TO KEEP SMILING WHILE SUFFERING

PASTOR TIMOTHY GREEN

1 PETER 1:1-9

We are all unique. None of us are exactly the same. However, we do all have something in common and that is, we know how it feels to hurt. We've all experienced pain. Suffering is a universal language.

When we suffer pain, we might express it in different ways but we all know what it feels like to have heartache and pain. We've had to deal with disease and disaster. Most of us have had our share of trials and suffering. Either you yourself or someone you know is suffering right now, either spiritually, physically, emotionally or socially.

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, the human race has had to deal with pain and suffering.

In this text of Scripture, Peter is writing to fellow believers that are scattered throughout the world. His focus is on the one thing that they can all relate to. Suffering. Persecution had scattered the early church and many Christians had already been killed and Peter himself was one of those whose name was at the top of the list.

When writing his letter, Peter didn't try to pump the people up with positive thinking, but what he did do, was try to get those suffering, looking upward, beyond their circumstances.

He reminds us that we have a lively hope. Hope that is alive because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Even in the midst of suffering and difficult times, we have a hope that is alive! Our hope is not in this world and it is not based on our circumstances, it's based on the resurrection of Jesus!

We can also smile while suffering because we have an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, that doesn't fade away, reserved in heaven for those who have been saved.

We can also smile while suffering when we remember that we have Divine protection. God knows exactly where we are and what we are going through and His grace is sufficient to get us through.

In verse 6 Peter talks about rejoicing. Even though we might be in a season of suffering, even though there may be trials and temptations, we can still rejoice!

Our joy should not depend upon the circumstances surrounding us. As a child of God, we know that our Heavenly Father is an ever present help in the time of trouble.

It is possible to keep smiling, even while we are suffering.