

Living As God Intended

1 Peter 1:6–9 (NKJV)

⁶In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

⁷that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

⁸whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

⁹receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

- *These verses intertwine the ideas of great joy and grief from various trials together seamlessly.*
- *“In this you greatly rejoice” – The “in this” that produces the great joy is in reference to our salvation which is being perfected by the various trials that we experience in this life.*
- *“though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials” - There are three main points in this phrase:*
 - *“though now for a little while” – Our trials are temporary and not eternal.*
 - *“if need be” – The trials we experience have a vital purpose in our lives.*
 - *“grieved by various trials” – Our trials come in various forms and cause us sorrow and sometimes even distress.*
- *The genuineness of our faith is tested by fire with the result that it produces praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ – thus our temporal trials and sufferings have the potential to produce an eternal glory.*
- *However, our response to these trials is a vital key to determine if we will grow better or bitter through these experiences.*
- *de“whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” – While we are on this earth in these temporary corruptible bodies we are not able to see Him or the Heavenly realm.*

- “yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” - *However, even though we experience various trials that grieve us and we are not able to see the One Whom we love, we are able to rejoice with joy inexpressible and fully of glory through our faith in Christ.*
- “receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls” – *The ultimate result of these trials will be the sanctification of our souls set free from the power of sin.*
- *How can we learn to go through this life as we experience grievous trials with an attitude of thanksgiving and overflowing joyfulness?*

Colossians 3:1–3 (NKJV)

¹If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

- “seek those things which are above” – *Our aspirations must be for heavenly things.*
- “Set your mind on things above, not things on the earth” – *If we are always thinking about earthly things, then the trials of this life will become our focus and dominate our thoughts and feelings and soon we will be overwhelmed.*
- “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” – *The reason we can set our minds, our desires, and our aspirations upon heavenly things is because we have a new identity in Christ and a new destination – Heaven.*

1 Corinthians 15:45 (NKJV)

⁴⁵And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

- *The first Adam – our natural identity before we received Christ was as a living soul.*
- *The last Adam – our new identity after we received Christ is as a life-giving spirit.*
- *Before we were born again we were a soul that lived in a body.*
- *After we are born again we are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body.*
- *We must learn to change our pattern of thinking to reflect what has happened to us once we have received Christ.*

- *We changed from having a soulish identity to a spiritual identity.*

Romans 7:5 (NKJV)

⁵For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

- *Before we received Christ we were in the flesh and we were led by our sinful passions, which produced death.*

Galatians 5:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

- *Once we received Christ we have a new life in our reborn spirits, but we now must choose daily to walk in that new life and that new identity.*
- *The Old Testament only contains a few verses that even allude to or speak about the resurrection and almost no verses that speak about Heaven.*
- *The New Testament is saturated with verses that speak about the resurrection and Heaven.*
- *The purpose of the Old Testament and the Law was not to lead us to Heaven, but to lead us to Christ who made a way for us to receive eternal life and to have a new citizenship in Heaven.*
- *One of the central themes of the New Testament is our new identity in Christ.*
- *The key for us to live a successful life is to fully recognize that we have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and we now belong to Him and we are secure in Him.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- *We do not have to be tied down to our past, because in Christ we are a new creation and everything has become new.*

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

²⁰For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- ***“your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit” – Once a person has received Jesus Christ he or she is now God's dwelling place on this earth.***
- ***“you are not your own” – We have been purchased by Christ's own sacrifice and now we belong to Him.***
- ***If it is true that once we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour and are born again we belong to God, then why do so many Christians struggle and even fall back into old patterns and sinful habits?***

John 8:31–34 (NKJV)

³¹Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

³²And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

³³They answered Him, “We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free’?”

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

- ***“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him” – Jesus is addressing those Jews who believed Him, but it does not mean that they believed in Him. Perhaps they saw Him only as a good teacher or a prophet.***
- ***“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.” - Jesus then spoke about the key element in discipleship - abiding in His Word.***
- ***Abiding in His Word is more than just reading or studying the Bible, but making His Word part of our very lives and fully obeying His Word.***
- ***How do we abide in the Word when our selfishness is beginning to rise up? The way we deal with that is by applying the truth from Philippians 1:21, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”***

- **“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” - *The key for us to be free is to know the truth. The Greek word for “know” used here is γινώσκω ginōskō and it conveys the idea of knowledge acquired through experience, relationship, or intimacy.***
- ***Knowing the truth is more than just intellectual knowledge, but a relationship with the truth so it becomes our ever abiding companion.***
- ***We must know the truth, be convinced of the truth, obey the truth, and abide in the truth.***
- **“We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’” – *For us to experience freedom it is essential for us to acknowledge our sins and desire to be free.***
- ***There a number of reasons why we may not think we are in bondage:***
 - ***1. We are simply unaware that our actions and thoughts are sinful.***
 - ***2. We are aware of our sins, but we don’t want to give them up.***
 - ***3. We are ashamed of our sins and refuse to face them.***
- ***The New Testament is filled with so many Scriptures that state and reinforce the truth that all who have received Christ are now in Christ, that they are too numerous to list here.***
- ***A good exercise is to write down the Scripture verses that speak about being in Christ.***

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NKJV)

³⁰But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Romans 8:6–8 (NKJV)

⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

⁸So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- ***“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God” – When we are carnally minded our thoughts, desires, and even our feelings will be in opposition to God.***
- ***“for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.” – When we are carnally minded we are not able to submit to God and even if we do desire to submit to God it will be impossible.***

“So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” – No matter how hard we try, if we are carnally minded our thoughts will never be pleasing to God.

- ***The solution to being carnally minded is not trying to rehabilitate it, but to crucify it and make no provision for the flesh.***
- ***The way we stop being carnally minded is to become spiritually minded.***
- ***“but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” – How do we discern when we are being carnally minded or spiritually minded? By the fruit in our lives.***

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- ***“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God” – The Greek word for “receive” means, “to receive, welcome, take hold of, to believe.”***

- *The natural man thinks that the things of the Holy Spirit are foolishness because the natural man is blind to the spiritual realm.*
- *When this Scripture speaks about “the natural man” it is not only speaking about non-believers, but believers who are carnally minded.*

Matthew 5:8 (NKJV)

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

- *What does it mean, “The pure in heart will see God?”*
- *One possible meaning is that not even the blackness of the sin and corruption is in this world will obscure our view of the goodness of God.*

John 8:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

- *The devil is the father of lies and the great battle for a Christian in spiritual warfare is the battle for truth.*
- *Jesus Christ IS the Truth.*
- *The devil has no power over a Believer who holds onto truth. Only when a Believer begins to believe lies will they begin to walk in defeat and sin.*

Romans 1:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

- *“the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith” – God’s righteousness is revealed by faith. Fear, worry, doubt, unbelief and acts of the flesh are enemies that prevent us from walking in victory, because they hinder us from trusting in Christ.*

- **“from faith to faith” – *Our faith is to be a growing experience as we learn to trust God each day.***
- **“The just shall live by faith.” - *Our life is to be a life where we constantly trust in God and His Word.***

Hebrews 10:24 (NKJV)

²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

- *We need to remind one another daily to stay in prayer, in the Word, and in fellowship.*
- *We are to be heavenly minded so that we can live this earthly life in victory.*
- *Justice may have not been done on earth that day in the eyes of men, but justice was done in the eyes of God, because the Christian lady was able to allow the Divine nature of Christ in her to be expressed as she chose to forgive that man, because she believed that Jesus had even died for that man’s sins.*
- *Her act of forgiveness and love were superhuman because it was not of this world but of another realm – Heaven.*

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- *God wants to remove the veil of the flesh so we can behold God’s glory and in the processes be transformed into His image.*
- *Today is an opportunity to receive Christ for those who have never done so before.*
- *For those believers who are carnally minded and allow compromise in their lives, today is an opportunity to repent and ask God to open their eyes to the things in their lives that need to change.*
- *For those believers who have been experiencing a greater reality of God in their lives, today is an opportunity to give thanks and to ask Him to continue to deepen their relationship with God.*