

1 Peter 4:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Analysis

This remarkable verse commands joy amid suffering by connecting present trials to future glory. The imperative "rejoice" (*chairete, χαίρετε*) is stunning—not merely "endure" but actively celebrate. The causal phrase "inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (*kathō koinōneite tois tou Christou pathēmasin, καθὸ κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν*) employs *koinōneite* (fellowship, partnership, participation) indicating genuine sharing in Christ's own sufferings—not identical (Christ's atoning suffering was unique) but analogous: suffering for righteousness, bearing reproach for His name, facing world's hatred. This participation isn't punishment but privilege, forging deeper union with Christ and conformity to His image (Philippians 3:10). The purpose clause "that, when his glory shall be revealed" (*hina kai en tē apokalypsei tēs doxēs autou, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ*) looks forward to Christ's second coming when hidden realities become visible. The phrase "ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (*charēte agalliōmenoi, χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι*) intensifies joy—not mild contentment but ecstatic celebration. Present suffering correlates with future joy: those who share Christ's reproach will share His glory (Romans 8:17). This eschatological perspective transforms suffering from meaningless tragedy to meaningful participation in God's redemptive purposes.

Historical Context

Peter writes to Christians facing mockery, economic loss, imprisonment, and martyrdom for faith. Roman culture valued honor and despised shame—public disgrace for Christian confession felt devastating. Peter radically reinterprets shame: suffering for Christ isn't disgrace but honor, not loss but investment yielding eternal dividends. This countercultural perspective sustained persecuted believers through centuries of opposition. The phrase "when his glory shall be revealed" anticipates Christ's parousia (second coming), transforming suffering from ultimate reality to temporary circumstance. Early Christian martyrs exhibited inexplicable joy facing death—perplexing Roman observers—because they believed present suffering guaranteed future glory. Church father Ignatius of Antioch, martyred c. AD 110, wrote to churches, "I am God's wheat, and I am being ground by the teeth of wild beasts so that I may prove to be pure bread," exemplifying joyful embrace of suffering as participation in Christ.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does understanding your suffering as 'participation in Christ's sufferings' rather than divine punishment or abandonment change your emotional response to trials?
2. In what ways can you cultivate joy now by focusing on future glory to be revealed at Christ's return, and how does this eternal perspective affect daily decisions?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλὰ καθὸ κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν
But **inasmuch as** ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings

G235

G2526

κοινωνεῖτε
ye are partakers

G2841

τοῖς

τοῦ
of Christ's

G3588

G5547

Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν
of Christ's sufferings

G3804

χαρῆτε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
rejoice that also when shall be revealed glory his

G5463

G2443

G2532 G1722

G3588

shall be revealed

G3588 G602

G602

G1391

G1391

G846

χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι
rejoice with exceeding joy

G5463

G21

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:17 (Glory): And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 5:3 (Glory): And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Philippians 3:10 (Parallel theme): That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

2 Corinthians 1:7 (Parallel theme): And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

2 Corinthians 4:10 (Parallel theme): Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

1 Peter 5:10 (Glory): But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you.

2 Corinthians 4:17 (Glory): For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

2 Timothy 2:12 (Parallel theme): If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Revelation 1:9 (References Christ): I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 35:10 (Parallel theme): And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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