

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”, Message #46 –
“Suffering and Glory”, Presented in the Adult Sunday School Class by
Pastor Paul Rendall, on July 30th, 2017.**

Paragraph 2 – God, having all (r) life, (s) glory, (t) goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself, is alone in and unto himself all sufficient, not (u) standing in need of any creature which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them; He is the alone fountain of all being, (x) of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and He hath most sovereign (y) dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever Himself pleaseth; in his sight (z) all things are open and manifest, His knowledge is (a) infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain; He is most holy in all his counsels, in (b)all his works, and in all his commands; to him is due (c) from angels and men, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever He is further pleased to require of them.

(r) John 5: 26; (s) Psalm 148:13; (t) Psalm 119: 68; (u) Job 22 2-3; (x) Rom 11: 34-36; (y) Dan 4: 25, 34-35;

(z) Hebrews 4:13; (a) Ezekiel 11: 5; Acts 15: 18; (b) Psalm 145:17; (c) Rev 5:12-14

1st Peter 4: 12-14 – “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.”

There is glory bound up together with suffering for Christ’s sake; for suffering for truth’s sake, suffering for righteousness sake.

1. We are instructed to remind ourselves of the joy of God’s eternal glory when we are suffering for Christ. Indeed when we are suffering or being reproached, we should remember that the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us.

1st Peter 1: 3-9 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that 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, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”

You can see here that the pattern for our transformation into godly people follows that which Christ underwent in His earthly ministry. First came suffering, and then glory. The life of the Christian will at times involve suffering and then glory will follow in God’s good time. But if you will look carefully, you will see that there is a glory which is experienced by the Christian now which is found in rejoicing in the inheritance which is laid up for them in heaven, joying and rejoicing with joy inexpressible and full of glory, knowing that your continued faith in Christ will bring you to know the joyful reality of the salvation of your soul.

John Gill says – “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; with a joy in believing on him, which is better experienced than expressed; a joy that not only strangers intermeddle not with, know

nothing of, which entirely passes their understanding, but is such as saints themselves cannot speak out, or give a full and distinct account of; they want words to express it, and convey proper ideas of it to others: and it is a joy that is glorious; there is a rejoicing that is evil and scandalous; but this is honorable, and of which none need be ashamed; it is solid and substantial, and the matter of it is always abiding, when the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; it is a joy on account of the glory of God, which the believer lives in the hope and faith of; and it is a beginning, a presage and pledge of it; it is a glory begun here; it is the firstfruits, and a part also of it; and by it saints may know a little what heaven itself will be.”

Psalms 149:4-5 – “For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds.”

Charles Spurgeon says in his Treasury of David – ““Let the saints be joyful in glory.” God has honoured them, and put a rare glory upon them; therefore let them exult therein. Shall those to whom God is their glory be cast down and troubled? Nay, let their joy proclaim their honorable estate. “Let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Their exultation should express itself in shouts and songs, for it is not a feeling of which they have any need to be ashamed. That which is so fully justified by fact, may well be loudly proclaimed. Even in their quietest retreats let them burst into song; when no one hears them, let them sing aloud unto God. If confined by sickness let them joy in God. In the night watches let them not lie awake and weep, but like nightingales let them charm the midnight hours. Their shouts are not now for the battlefield, but for the places of their rest, they can peacefully lie down and yet enjoy the victory with which the Lord has beautified them. Without fighting, faith wins and sings the victory. What a blessing to have our beds made into thrones, and our retirements turned into triumphs!”

John Gill says – “Let the saints be joyful in glory,.... In the glory put upon them now, being beautified with salvation; in the righteousness of Christ on them, and the grace of Christ in them, which makes them all glorious within; and in the glory they expect to have hereafter, both upon their bodies and souls, and in the hope of that, Romans 5: 2. Some copies of the Ethiopic version render it, "in his glory"; in the glory of Christ, as a divine Person and as Mediator, seen now in the glass of the Gospel, and will be the object of the beautiful vision hereafter; and now is, and then will be, matter of joy unspeakable, 2nd Corinthians 3: 18. Or “gloriously”, in a glorious manner; as saints do rejoice, when they ascribe all the glory of salvation to the free grace of God and death of Christ, and rejoice on that account; saints have reason to rejoice, and indeed none but they; who being regenerated and sanctified, are meet for and shall partake of eternal glory;

3. The final transformation of the Believer awaits the day of the resurrection when Christ will raise all the dead to the glory of God the Father.

The glory of God is seen in Jesus’ power to raise the dead, to bring eternal hope and good comfort, and eternal life for His people in giving them glorified bodies on the day of His return.

Philippians 3: 20 – “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”

1st Corinthians 15: 35-49 – “But someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?’ Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain--perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, "THE FIRST MAN ADAM BECAME A LIVING BEING." The last Adam became a

life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.”

Timothy Dwight says in his sermon on Psalm 14:1 – The Comparative Influence of Atheism and Christianity – “The Fool Hath Said In His Heart, there Is No God.” “They Are corrupt; they have done abominable works: There Is none that doeth good... “On The only instance in which Infidels (Unbelieving; disbelieving the inspiration of the Scriptures, or the divine institution of Christianity) of any description have possessed the supreme power and government of a country, and have attempted to dispose of human happiness according to their own doctrines and wishes, is that of France, since the beginning of the Revolution. If we consider this government as established over a nation, educated for ages to the belief and obedience of many doctrines of Christianity, and retaining, as to a great majority of the people, the habits formed by that education, the state of that nation will evince, beyond a question, that all which I have said is true without exaggeration. France, during this period, has been a theatre of crimes, which after all preceding perpetrations, have excited in the mind of every spectator, amazement and horror. The miseries suffered by that single nation, have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced and multiplied, without a precedent, without number, and without a name. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great prison, the inhabitants converted into felons, and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and the bayonet, and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season, as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its execution and its funeral. Within the short time of ten years, not less than three millions of human beings are supposed to have perished in that single country, by the influence of Atheism. Were the world to adopt and be governed by the doctrines of France, what crimes would not mankind perpetrate; what agonies would they not suffer?

Let us now turn our view from this prospect of guilt and desolation, this dark and final abyss of sin and ruin, where no solitary virtue gleams, where no ray of hope or comfort trembles through the profound midnight; and refresh the wearied sight by casting a momentary glance over the moral world of the Christian. Here, at the head of the vast chain of moral being, reaching like Jacob’s ladder from earth to heaven, sits on the throne of infinite dominion the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob; the God of all, who like them believe, worship, and obey their Creator. In him, the Self-existent and Infinite Mind, the Christian beholds unceasingly, an object of boundless sublimity, grandeur, beauty, and loveliness; commanding by the disclosure of his character, and exhausting, all finite admiration, complacency, love, and praise; expanding every view, refining every affection, and ennobling every attribute. From the immediate contemplation of this glorious Being, raised to a superiority and distinction, of which he could otherwise have never conceived, he casts his eyes abroad into the universe, which that Being has created. There he beholds an endless train of intelligent minds, reflecting, with no unhappy lustre, the beauty and glory of their Maker. From the pre-eminent dignity of the, Archangel, through the glowing zeal of the Seraph, and the milder wisdom of the Cherub; through the high endowments of Moses, Isaiah, and Paul; down to the humble but virtuous inhabitant of a cottage, one spirit lives, and breathes, and actuates, in all; and that spirit is divine. Each wears and exhibits in his own manner, and that manner a delightful and useful one, the image and beauty of Jehovah. All, though of different magnitudes, diffuse a real light; all are stars, though ‘one star differs from another star in glory.’ All are the subjects of virtuous affections, all are fitted to admire and adore, to glorify and enjoy their Creator; all are formed and disposed voluntarily to fill up their existence with doing good, with promoting individual enjoyment, and increasing universal happiness: all are bound together, as children of one God, and brethren of each other, by ‘love, the bond of perfection.’ Every one therefore is lovely in the sight of his Maker.”