

Parenting a Child with Special Needs “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing”

When have you found yourself fighting for faith to trust God’s promises? What “fake hopes” did you find yourself clinging to?

Fake hope vs. Real hope:

“Our faith needs to be strengthened with real hope – not fake hope. If you’re anything like me, you’ve already had enough taste tests of the fake stuff to know that you don’t have time for fake hope. All of the flimsy inspirations and fake hope the world offers can’t hold the weight of stress, fatigue, sin, labor pain, or grief.” (Furman, p. 25)

“As we taste more and more of the real hope of the gospel, our appetite for fake hope will start to disappear. We need to remember that this kind of growing pain, while painful, is ultimately a *joy*. God creates each of our days with opportunities to be glad-hearted, life-giving, glory bearers. Only Christ is strong enough to accomplish this work in and through us.” (Furman, p. 26)

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Redemption:

Biblical redemption is accomplished by the atonement of Jesus; the work of Jesus on the cross by which he took our place, paid for our sins and took on God’s wrath so that those who are in Christ never have to. The person and work of Jesus in his life, death and resurrection accomplishes a freedom from bondage, drawing one from darkness to light and from death to life.

Creation → Fall → Redemption → Consummation

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. (Gen. 3:16)

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. (Rom. 3:23-25)

Life in the “in-between time”:

“But for now, we live in an in-between time – in between the Devil being defeated through Christ’s resurrection, and the Devil and curse being destroyed when Christ returns. So for now, the curse is an ongoing reality in our lives.” (Guthrie, p. 84)

“...sorrowful, yet always rejoicing” (2 Cor. 6:10)

“The Christ-exalting miracle is not just the suffering, but the joy in the suffering. And we are meant to pursue it. In 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7 Paul says, “You... received the word in much affliction, with the *joy of the Holy Spirit*, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.” Notice two crucial things: First joy in tribulation is the work of the Holy Spirit; second, it is an example for others to follow. Beware of those who belittle the miracles of the Spirit of God by saying that they are good gifts, but not good goals.” (Piper, 283)

The pursuit of joy:

For what are you sorrowful? How have the effects of the fall caused you to grieve?

Refer to Romans 8:16-39 to answer the following questions:

What reasons does a Christian have for rejoicing?

Equipped by the power of the Holy Spirit, how do you pursue joy in suffering? What means do you use?

Conclusion:

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

Resources used to prepare this study:

1. *Desiring God* by John Piper
2. *Missional Motherhood* by Gloria Furman
3. *The Life We Never Expected* by Andrew & Rachel Wilson
4. *The Promised One: Seeing Jesus in Genesis* by Nancy Guthrie