

# (1 Peter - Part 6): rejoice...though now...ye Are in Heaviness

by A.W. Tozer

---

*A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the paradox of rejoicing amidst suffering and the hope of future salvation and redemption for both humanity and the earth.*

**Duration:** 33:10

**Scripture:** Isaiah 11:9, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 2:21-22, 1 Peter 1:3-6

**Topics:** "Rejoice"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the four aspects of life that will be transformed when the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord. These aspects include the physical body, the mind, the soul, and society. The speaker emphasizes that in this future state, there will be no labor troubles or inequality, as everyone will be a landowner and live in their own houses. Additionally, the speaker highlights the paradoxical nature of the Christian faith, where one becomes highest when feeling lowest and most sinless when feeling the most sinful. The sermon also references the expectation of creation for the sons of God to be revealed and the eventual freedom of nature from corruption.

---

## Transcript

We have been going along with the Apostle Peter, listening to what he would say to us in the Spirit, not trying to add anything to what he says, trying by every way we know to make what he says clear. And you'll remember that in that first chapter, Peter saluted God, gave a eulogy to the Father who has begotten us again unto a living hope. This he did through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And this begetting is unto an inheritance which has the three qualities of being undefiled, unfading, and incorruptible. And that those for whom this inheritance is kept are also kept by the power of God through faith. Unto the salvation that's ready to be revealed in the last time.

Then verse 6 is the one that will occupy our thought for the day. Wherein, he says, ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season it may be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptation. Now he says here that salvation is ready to be revealed.

These Christians, to whom Peter wrote, looked for a state of things immeasurably better than any present state of things. There are two mistakes which Christians habitually make. That is, it's a mistake of

emphasis more than anything else.

Some Christians emphasize the, what they call, sweet now and now, you hear it. They emphasize so they're not satisfied with the sweet by and by. They want something in the sweet now and now.

And then there are those who seem to be altogether taking up the little boy whose mother says, Johnny, here's a piece of bread and butter. It'll be an hour yet before we eat. So Johnny is forced with a piece of bread and butter to piece out his ravenous appetite until the great feast comes.

He seems satisfied to make it not only a slice, but a bare crumb, putting all the emphasis upon the sweet by and by. Others, again I say, make the mistake of making it altogether the sweet now, thinking very little about the world to come. Of course, the right thing to do is to put the emphasis where God puts it.

Some things you can have now and some you can't have now. Some things you have now fully and other things you have now only in part. And we ought to be good Bible students so that we would not be surrendering anything that is for us now or demanding anything that is for us then.

We'd take away a lot of tension and a lot of nervous pressure and a lot of misunderstanding if we studied our Bible with that thought in mind. The Christians look for a state of things, I say, immeasurably better than anything that they then enjoy. And that state of things ought to be perfect and complete.

There is no such thing as absolute perfection now, as only relative perfection. And there is no such thing as completion now. God hasn't completed a thing with you yet.

And there isn't any perfection found in you yet unless you want to have it understood that when we use the word perfect, we mean relatively perfect, not absolutely perfect. Absolute perfection is for the time when the sons of God shall be revealed. And completeness is for the time when we shall look upon the Son and shall become indeed grown-up sons.

Now, this state of completion and perfection, perfect completeness and complete perfection, will affect four things that relate to us. It will affect the body. It's good to keep this in mind.

I don't often read, but I want to read a little. Not from a book, but from the book. And this is from the book of 1 Corinthians, the 15th chapter.

And the man of God is telling us the best he can tell us. He knew the best he could know by divine inspiration. But when you're trying to get to somebody, an idea that's in your heart, you are limited by the imperfection of language.

So the man of God was, but he did the best he could. And so we have it here in Holy Writ, these words. I'm reading from another translation, not the RSV.

In order that you may understand it a bit better. The man of God says, perhaps someone will ask, how can the dead rise up? Well, they'll say, what kind of body will they be wearing when they appear? Paul wasn't as patient as he could then. He said, poor fool, when thou sawest seed in the ground, it must die before it can be brought to life.

And what thou sawest is not the full body that is one day to be. It is only bare grain, a wheat it may be, or some other crop. It is for God to embody it according to his will.

Each grain is a body that belongs to it. Nature is not all one. Men have one nature, the beasts another, the birds another, the fish is another.

So too there are bodies that belong on earth and bodies that belong to heaven. And heavenly bodies have one kind of beauty, earthly bodies another. The sun has its own beauty, the moon has hers, and the stars have theirs.

One star even differs from another star in its beauty. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown corruptible rises incorruptible.

What is sown unhonored rises in glory. What is sown in weakness is raised in power. What is sown in natural body rises a spiritual body.

If there is such a thing as a natural body, there must be a spiritual body too. Mankind begins with Adam, who became, the scripture tells us, a living soul. But mankind is fulfilled in that Adam who has become a life-giving spirit, that is Christ.

It was not the principle of spiritual life that came first. Natural life came first, then spiritual life. The man who came first came from earth, fashioned of dust.

The man who came afterward came from heaven, and his fashion is heavenly. The nature of that earth-born man is shared by his earthly sons. And the nature of the heaven-born man, by his heavenly sons.

So it remains for us who once bore the stamp of the earth, to bear this stamp of the heaven. Now that's what the man of God said, trying the best he could to tell us what he meant, what Peter meant, when he said that we were looking for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, that should introduce us into a state of perfect completeness and complete perfection, affecting our bodies. But it not only affects our body, it affects our mind and soul.

1 John 3, 2, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when we shall appear, we shall be like him, and shall see him as he is. And then it affects this state of completeness which we're waiting for.

It affects not only the mind and the soul, but it affects also the earth and all nature and the surroundings about us. Now here is what the man of God says in trying to tell us what nature is going to be like when we come, reading this time from Romans. Not that I count these present sufferings as the nature of that joy which is to be revealed in us.

If creation is full of expectancy, that is, because it is waiting for the sons of God to be made known, created nature has been condemned to frustration, not for some deliberate fault of its own, but for the sake of him who so condemned it. Namely, that nature in its turn will be set free from the tyranny of corruption, to share in the glorious freedom of God's sons. The whole of nature, as we know, groans in a common travail all the while.

Not only do we see that, but we ourselves do the same. We ourselves, although we have already begun to reap our spiritual harvest, yet groan in our hearts, waiting for that adoption which is the ransoming of our bodies from their slavery. Now, what he teaches there, and I'm through reading, what he teaches there is that mankind is so related to the earth that when the Lord comes in triumph and glorifies mankind, he will

also glorify the earth and nature, so that the earth and nature will share in the glorification with the sons of Adam, or the sons of God, who were once sons of Adam, but are now children of the King.

The old earth, as we know it now, went down in a collapse with the sons of Adam when we all went down together. And so floods, and typhoons, and earthquakes, and tornadoes, and all the rest, are a result of the distorted state of affairs, fallen nature, illnesses, insanity, and all that gets wrong with us is the result of a fallen state of affairs, for we are still pretty much a part of the earth and of nature. There are those who even claim we are affected by the sunspots, though I am not going to oppress that because they'll probably change their mind after tomorrow.

But man and his home, the earth, are very much alike. And so God redeems the earth by redeeming people. And when he comes to glorify mankind, that is, redeem mankind, he will also let that redemption overflow and glorification overflow to touch the whole earth.

We stand on a mountain peak, as I did at Ben Lippin last week, and look out over miles and miles of the old, smoky mountain, and it's always beautiful. Somebody said, Mr. Tozer, this is beautiful because it changes so often. I said, I suppose it changes every week.

Naive I was. They said, every hour, Mr. Tozer. This changes, and I saw what they meant.

Blue smoke now clears the bell again, great clouds coming the next time, clear sunshine. Constantly changing, and it's a beautiful people. Simply stand on the porch and watch it.

It's all lovely. But there's death out there over those hills, there are bones buried there in those mountains, and danger walks everywhere there as it does all over the earth. But when our Lord comes and redeems or glorifies mankind, he will also take all the bones out and remove all the dangers and glorify the earth.

Now that's what these Christians were waiting for. Unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein we greatly rejoice. And not only the earth, but society.

I said there were four, body, mind, and soul. The earth and society. And I could read for the next hour and a half from the Old Testament, showing how the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

And there will be no problem of labor and unions, because no man will build and another inhabit. There'll be no landlords then, and no rent ceilings or absence of them. No living in rat holes and being charged high prices for it.

Because everybody will live in his own house. Everybody will be a landowner. It'll all belong to God.

And there'll be no labor troubles, because one will not plant another wreath, but the man will reap what he plants. God will take care of that. Because the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

So I have an optimistic outlook toward this earth upon which we live. All kinds of pessimistic and horrible predictions of a comet sweeping the earth away and destroying it, or wind falling into the sun and being burned up. Don't you worry about that.

Don't you worry about it a bit. Because this earth is yet to be the home of a redeemed people. Now, Christians, these Christians you will notice, were, as a result of this outlook, optimistic and cheerful and

alert, wherein you greatly rejoice, waiting for the salvation which shall be revealed in the last time.

And you greatly rejoice. You will notice that rejoicing, the note of rejoicing, is very clear throughout the entire Bible. In the New Testament, the note of rejoicing rings like a silver bell.

And in the historic Church, it has always been so. There have been some Christians, and there will be in every age, whose conception of Christianity is a kind of a gloomy resignation to the inevitable. But they're born that way, and they can't help it.

But the average and normal Christian is not gloomy. He is serious, and he can weep. But he is alert and optimistic, and has a cheerful hope, because he's looking for a state of affairs immeasurably improved, over even the best that this world has to offer.

And so the Holy Ghost says, wherein ye greatly rejoice. And that rejoicing has overflowed into Christian hymns. I wish they'd elect me editor of all the hymn books in Christendom, and give me full authority to go into the hymn books and make such changes as I desire.

I would go in and take all the gloomy ones out. The heavy-hearted, lumbering, heavy-footed, tear-stained hymns that make the kingdom of God out to be a morgue. And the only music to be found would be the bell-tolling, the bell of parting days.

And I would remove all such hymns. At least I'd put them in the footnotes for the temperamentally gloomy to cry over occasionally. But I'd have my hymn books full of joyous expectation, for that is the spirit of the New Testament.

God's people know that things aren't all they ought to be, but they haven't time to worry too much about it, for they are looking forward to something vastly improved. And they're expecting it, and in the meantime they're rejoicing in it. And then, Peter, you know these writers can't go five minutes until they start to contradict themselves.

And yet it's a glorious contradiction, and it's that which makes the Christian the funny fellow he is in the earth. I'll explain later. He says, He greatly rejoiced, though now he are in great heaviness.

Now you ask me, how's that? He greatly rejoiced, but he are in great heaviness. You're rejoicing in heaviness. Now that's an odd situation.

The Williams, that is the British Williams translation, says, Even though for a little time, if it is necessary, you are pained by troubles of many kinds. There is no one of you here above the age of thirteen that don't know what I'm talking about, dear Christian. Even now, for a little time, we are pained by troubles of many kinds.

So we have this odd thing, rejoicing, though pained and in trouble. Strange beings, these Christians. I won't be long now.

But I want to bring this short talk to a close by pointing out what a strange person the true Christian is. Now I use the adjective true here to indicate not only a born-again Christian, but one who is living according to his new birth. He's a strange person.

And if you want to become a Christian, let me remind you, sir, that you must agree to be very much different, so different that you will be considered somewhat disturbed mentally. Because I notice the true

Christian has these qualifications. Now I'm sure this will only be a tenth of what could be said.

Somebody can work it out at his leisure. But I thought of these things about the true Christian. He is dead, and yet he lives forever.

He died, and yet he lives in Christ, and he lives by the death of another. And if another hadn't died, he couldn't live. And he saves his life by losing it.

And he's in danger of losing it by trying to save it. Now that's in the Bible, too. You say, this Christian, he saves his life by losing it, and in trying to save it, he will lose it.

That's exactly what Jesus said in the 16th of Matthew. And this strange fellow, the true Christian, when he wants to get up, he always starts down. For God's way up is always down.

Now that's contrary to common sense, and it's contrary to the finest wisdom of the earth. But the foolish things of God are wiser than anything on this earth. Another thing about the true Christian is that when he wants to win, he always surrenders.

That instead of standing up, slugging it out, he surrenders to a third party, and then wins without firing a shot or brooding his fists. He surrenders to God and wins over everybody else. And another strange thing about this true Christian is that he's strongest when he is weakest, and weakest when he is strongest.

And that his strength lies in his weakness, and his weakness lies in his strength. And when he gets up thinking he's strong, he's always weak, and when he gets down on his knees thinking he's weak, then he's always strong. Again, he is poor, and if he's a real Christian, he usually is, and yet he makes others rich.

Paul was a poor man in prison, but he immeasurably enriched the entire Christian world. John Bunyan was a poor man in Bedford jail, but he gave us a pilgrim's progress. So you could go on down this scale, following through history, and find out where the rich Christian was poor, and the poor Christian made everybody rich.

And this strange fellow, the true Christian, is highest when he feels lowest, and lowest when he feels highest. And he's in the least danger when he is fearful and trusting God, and in the most danger when he gets self-confident. And he is most sinless when he feels the most sinful, and he is the most sinful when he feels the most sinless.

And that this strange fellow, the Christian, he has most when he's giving most away, and he has less when he's keeping more. Now that's contrary to all common sense. That's why we're such a bunch of people.

They don't know us. They say, well, it's all right now to believe in the Lord and go to church on, basically, Mother's Day and Christmas. But this fanaticism, yes, that's strange, this fanaticism, because this religious fanatic, he has the most when he's giving the most.

And God multiplies his nine tenths more than he would his ten tenths. And this strange fellow sometimes does the most when he isn't doing anything at all. Sometimes to get the most done, God calls him aside and says, sit down there.

And sometimes he goes the fastest when he's standing still. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. And I want you to notice, too, that this strange fellow, the true Christian, is saved now, and he's ready to declare it with shining face, I'm saved.

And yet he expects to be saved later, for he is looking for a salvation ready to be revealed unto the last time. Now you say, make up your mind, make up your mind. Is he saved now? Or is he anticipating salvation? The answer is both.

He is saved now, but he's also looking to be saved. And he has life now, and he's also looking for life. And somebody says, now that's what I mean, these fanatical Christians that go to the Alliance, down there at Seventh-Day Communion, in some ways they're nice people, and they must be prosperous, there are big cars out in front, and no jalopies.

They seem to be all right, but there's something weird about them. They say, I'm saved, and the fact is nobody can know that he's saved in this life. And those fanatics say, I'm saved.

Yes, sir. And another one says, yeah, not only say I'm saved, but I actually heard him say that they're expecting to be saved. You can't understand people like that.

They're true Christians. I notice another thing is that this true Christian was born on earth, and has never been anywhere else. And yet he's a citizen of another country, which he never visited.

He is born on earth, and he's a citizen of heaven. Now, that isn't dangling out. Why, remember that he's walking on earth, and yet seated in heaven.

For the Bible tells us that we're walking down here, but it also tells us that we are seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, our Lord, and it doesn't mean firmly. It means that we're seated in the heavenly places. Now, that's strange.

Then another thing is that he is nothing. And he's telling God he's nothing, and yet at the same time, he knows he's the apple of God's eye. One of the faults they blame us for is, they say, you talk about yourself as if you were God's very pets, and nobody else matters.

Well, the very Christian that believes that he's the apple of God's eye is the same Christian that'll give up his money, send his sons and daughters, or go himself to preach the gospel to the least thought of. So while he knows he's nothing, yet at the same time, he's willing to believe that he's the apple of God's eye. Now, isn't that strange? That's what it means here when it says that you are in great heaviness, and yet you are rejoicing greatly.

Rejoicing in heaviness, there's the contradiction. Again, I note that this good Christian loves one that he's never seen, and he fears God, and yet isn't afraid of God. They say, oh, don't be afraid of God.

He's a good fellow and will all be well. That was the way the poor carnal poet put it. But the Christian fears God with trembling reverence, and yet isn't afraid of God at all.

He draws nigh to God with full assurance of faith, yet at the same time is trembling with holy fear. To not be afraid, and yet fear. To fear, and yet draw near, and makes him a fanatic too.

And so now in heaviness, yet greatly rejoicing. I just thought you'd like to see what kind of person you are. You know, that's so much different from just church membership.

What church membership doesn't make too much difference. I asked somebody the other day, are you a member of our church? Yes, I am. And I felt bad about it, and apologized for asking it, because I suppose But what is the difference, anyhow, what local church I am a member of? I've got to at least say something

about where I've been last week.

I wouldn't be a good preacher. And down at Ben-Levitt and out of Asheville, where our good friend Jim Derren will come from, I had a wonderful week there, a wonderful week. And mostly there were Presbyterians and Baptists.

And unless I asked them, I didn't know. A man would come down and start to sit off beside me and start to talk about God. And people we'd heard and songs we knew and spiritual things.

Then maybe after a long conversation I'd say, are you a Baptist preacher? No, I'm a Presbyterian preacher. And maybe next I'd talk to somebody and say, are you a Presbyterian? No, no, I'm Baptist. Or else occasionally one would say, I'm an Alliance.

But I never, I got so I didn't care. No, everybody looked alike and everybody sounded alike. And believe this or not, the hungriest person that I met on the ground was a Plymouth Brethren woman, Mrs. Smith.

Anonymous that would be, more or less. You will never know who I mean, but she just followed me around. Mr. Tozer, I'd like to ask you this.

Mr. Tozer, I'd like to ask you this. And just hungry, because she'd met God. So it doesn't make much difference what denomination you belong to, or whether you're proud of the fact that you don't belong to any.

If we're true Christians, we're an enigma to the world, a thorn in the flesh of Adam, a pebble to angels, the delight of God and the habitation of the Holy Ghost. So that's better than joining a church, isn't it? Better than getting baptized the way of your choice. I told the Presbyterian preacher, and he almost fell over me with delight.

I said, in the Alliance, we practice immersion, but we take in members who've been sprinkled. He grabbed me. He said, that's it, brother.

That was fine. Well, what's the difference about your mode of baptism? Now, you baptize, of course, in the Christian church, you'll say, there goes poor Brother Tozer. He's not a woman.

Brother, if you turn a flashlight on, and if the time ever comes that I see that any mode of baptism will save you, I'll preach it all up and down the country. You can pay my expenses. If you pray for me, that God will illuminate me, I'll preach it, and you'll pay his bills, and we'll convert the church.

But in the meantime, my fellowship takes in the children of God, regardless of who and where and what. If they're washed in the blood, born of the Spirit, walked with God the Father, begotten unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, rejoicing in a salvation ready to be revealed, and yet in great heaviness, sometimes through the many pains and temptations that take them while they live here below. So, regardless.

Well, God's good to us. We run into people we didn't know existed. A couple came to me down there and said, We're some delinquent members of your church.

And I said, That's so? I didn't recognize them. I regret to say. But they had joined here some years back when they were attending Northern Baptist Seminary in Moody's.

Now what do you suppose they're doing? Teaching in a college, Columbia Bible College. So we have our members all scattered around. And you know what I hope? I hope that we have infected them sufficiently with this broad, ecumenical, Catholic, charitable, godly outlook, so that every one of them will have the same idea.

Nominal lines mean nothing but the Holy Ghost means everything. And wherever the Holy Ghost dwells, there is his temple. And all those temples are, so to speak, stones in the great temple.

And so we're all one. And we're all alive. But if you can't take it, and you can't take this contradiction, and you're not ready to be considered foolish, for Christ's sake, then the only thing you can do is to become a once-a-week Christian, go into church enough to satisfy your conscience and your ancestors' conscience, but don't make too much of it.

But if you want to follow on to know the Lord, you'll find yourself in the middle of this strange, contradictory, wonderful world of the Trinity. You won't be able to understand yourself, and you won't try it. And the world won't understand you, and they'll think you're a fanatic.

And dead church members won't be able to understand you, but you and the Lord will understand each other. And you'll know the Lord better than you know yourself, because you'll spend more time thinking about him than you do yourself. Well, the text again.

Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season it need be. Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2059.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/1-peter-part-6-rejoicethough-nowye-are-in-heaviness/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**