

Our Glory and Joy

Scripture Reading — 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

Indeed, you are our glory and joy.
—1 Thessalonians 2:20—

Brutus, our son's aging dog, was lost in the inner-city neighborhood where our son's family lives. We searched in the dark—but it's hard to try to find a black dog at night. At morning light, we scoured the nearby yards again. Then we drove toward the animal shelter to see if Brutus had been found. Five blocks from home John saw Brutus in a vacant lot, wearily resting in a muddy puddle. He picked Brutus up to put him in the car. "Watch out for the seats with that mud," I said. "Who cares about mud on the seats?!" John said as he happily gathered his dog in. Who cares, indeed! We were too happy to have found him.

Paul expects to be happy when the Lord returns, because the people he has worked with and has prayed for will be there: they are his glory and joy.

Some people do not like Paul; they find him too theological and blame him for some biblical teachings they do not care for. But they overlook Paul's tender concern for the eternal well-being of people who have a hard time finding Jesus. Paul sounds just like the good shepherd here. And he acts like the angels who rejoice when a sinner comes to repentance. (See Luke 15.)

We rejoiced that we found Brutus. Paul joins with heaven in rejoicing over lost sinners who are found—and that gives me an encouraging image of the Lord's return.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I marvel at your concern for each of us. Thank you for missionaries and neighbors who work and pray so that no one may miss the joy of salvation. Amen.

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