

# 1 Peter (Quality: Average)

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Date: 18 June 2000

Preacher: Ashworth, David

[ 0 : 00 ] Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

Goes on to speak also in the thirteenth verse about rejoicing, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

For if you had to speak to some people today in the things of God, and you were speaking unto them about the trial of faith, you might not get a satisfactory answer from many people.

Because there are people that are around today that believe, but once they have believed upon the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that is the end of their problems in this life that we are living.

And people might turn round to you and say, well, you are the true believer, you have professed the name of Jesus, where is your faith?

[ 1 : 48 ] Where is your faith? Maybe a circumstance has come upon you, or maybe a cross providence in the home or in the family, or in your place of employment, or maybe something bodily in affliction upon yourself, or a member of your family, or maybe one of your children has to enter into a hospital, and you may be speaking to a fellow believer, and they might say, well, you don't seem to have any faith, or very little faith, at this present moment of time.

And they would be exactly right in saying that, because, beloved friends, faith is the gift of God.

I have not got faith at my fingertips this morning. I cannot turn that faith on like I turned the tap on in the home.

And I believe, from the very depths of my heart this morning, that God's people have living faith.

You may feel, and I can tell you now, you might feel this morning, that in your life, at this present moment of time, you do not seem to have any faith.

[ 3 : 37 ] And that is why we have read together this morning, of this word, beloved, think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial, as some strange thing has happened unto you.

You know, we were speaking last week, about the children of Israel, being delivered, from the household of Egypt, the bondage of Egypt.

And really, you know, they were in an impossible situation. Moses had been into Pharaoh many, many times, with one word, let my people go.

And God had said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, and he will not let you go from the land of Egypt.

And you know, if you understand, and read your Bibles, the many plagues, that came on the land of Egypt, and none of them, had any impression, upon the heart of Pharaoh.

- [ 4 : 57 ]     What a solemn thing it is, when our heart, is hardened, against the gospel, of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friends, we need to be very careful.
- People may have said, well the gospel hardened, hardened, they're hardened, against the gospel. Friends, it was God, that hardened, the heart of Pharaoh.
- And if your heart, is hardened, against the gospel, of the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to pray, that it might be unhardened.
- We need to pray, that it might be made, receptive, to the Lord, and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ, that God, hardened, the heart of Pharaoh.
- And beloved friends, if your heart, is hardened, or any member, of your family, is hardened, against the gospel, of Jesus, it's the most, solemn, preposition, that any sinner, of this side, of eternity, can be in.
- [ 6 : 03 ]     Whether you are, a young man, or a young woman, whether you are, middle aged, or whatever, it matters now. God said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart, is on.
- And God, had, wrote this event. And Moses himself, at the end of the exercise, he came to the end, of it all. He said, since, thou hast sent me, to speak in thy name, thou hast not delivered, this people at all.
- What a solemn thing, that was. That Moses, was the man, that the Lord, had appointed, to lead the children, of Israel, to the borders, of the promised land.
- And they even, spoke of stoning Moses, at the end of the exercise, what did they say? It were better for us, when we were down, in the land of Egypt.
- Wonder whether, we've spoken that language, of recent days, it were better for me, when I was down, in the land of Egypt, when I was back, in the world.
- [ 7 : 28 ]     I wonder, whether any of us, this morning, it has hit a raw nerve, when we have read together, of the past, time of our life.
- Now think of that, this morning, the past time, of our life, when we spent it, in abominable, idolatries, in revelings, an excess, and yet, we have been exhorted, this morning, by Peter, to be sober, and watch him, to prayer.
- Why? Because the end, of all things, is at hand. The end, of all things, is at hand. And I believe, from the very depths, of my heart, this morning, that we are truly, living, at the end of time, before the return, of the triumphant return, of our blessed Savior.
- And I believe this, that as John the Baptist, was the forerunner of Christ, God's servants, will be preparing, for the final, coming again, of the Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Beloved friends, we are ambassadors, for the King of Heaven. and we have, an urgent message, to proclaim, to men and women, this morning, that are living, in the world.
- [ 8 : 58 ]     We mention, briefly in prayer, what a glorious witness, our forefathers had, when the whole, of the community, used to witness, the baptizing, of believers.
- It was not unusual, for four to five thousand, being gathered, round the river, as the, calm today, were going down, into the water, and God's servants, and the church, they were witnessing, to the world, that they believed, in the Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- And you know, they haven't got, the technology, that we have today, in those days. I don't suppose, they'd ever had, anything like, a microphone, as they preached, the gospel.
- But you know, they could hear, their voice, one mile away, or a mile and a half away, as they proclaimed, the finished work, of Jesus. And you and I, have sung it many times, but do we believe it, his institutions, would I prize, take up my cross, the shame despise.
- And I believe, this morning, friends, they were witnessing, and I don't know, which way, the Lord will lead me, in the days before us, it may be, that once again, we have to take, the gospel, outside of the building, and preach, the word of God.

[ 10 : 39 ] Oh, beloved friends, this morning, do men and women, that live in your neighborhood, or your next door neighbors, do they know, why you have come, to the house of God, of this morning?

Do they know, why, you're going, to the house of God, if you're spared tonight? Do they know, why, you went, they were, you went, you went, to the prayer meeting, or the preaching, of the gospel, in the middle, do they know, why?

Now you go, into the office, on a Monday morning, or you go, into the factory, on a Monday morning, and the world, will let you know, what they have been doing, since Friday night.

But what about you? And what about I? As we meet, with the world, on a Monday morning, do they know? Do they know, that you have been, rejoicing in the Lord Jesus?

Do they know, of that faith, that has been given unto you, when you were, convicted of sin, by the Lord himself? It's a wonderful hymn, isn't it?

[ 11 : 58 ] Convince us of our sin, that lead to Jesus' blood, until our warming eyes, reveal, the secret love of God.

There is no substitute, for this. You can't get to heaven, without the love of Jesus, being shed abroad, in your heart.

There is no substitute, for it. When you come, to the end of your life, it will be this, beloved friends, how tamest thou, in hither?

You'll have to have, a wedding garment on. You know, when we are invited, to a wedding, it is a special invitation, isn't it?

If you hadn't the invitation, you would never go, would you? You wouldn't be let in, unless you had an invitation. I say this, this morning, the invitations, have gone out, for this wedding, that is going to take place, in the near, sweet by and by, and I can tell you, it's in the Bible, concerning those, that are invited, blessed, are they, that are called, to the marriage supper, of the Lamb.

[ 13 : 25 ] There's going to be, a marriage supper, of the Lamb. There's going to be, a gathering in, of all God's people, from the beginning of time, to the end of time, and I don't think, it is going to be long off.

You read that, in the revelations of John, blessed are they, that are called, to the marriage supper, of the Lamb. Many of these, beloved ones, are now with the Lord Jesus, which is far better.

I want to say this, to you this morning, whether you are young, or old, matters not. Have you ever, had that, true desire, to be with Christ, which is far better, not to get out, of the responsibilities, of the family, not to get out, of the responsibilities, of our place, on earth, this morning.

But beloved friends, has that desire, ever been wrote, in your heart, I have a desire, to depart, to be with Christ, which is far better.

Oh you know, many times, in our life, these things, seem far away, don't they? We get involved, with the world, don't we too much?

[ 14 : 53 ] We get involved, with the pressures, of this world. I'm convinced, of this, you know, that the word, tribulation, simply means, pressure. It doesn't matter, where you go today, people are under, pressure.

The young people, at school, they're under, tremendous pressure. You might be, starting out on life, and looking for a place, you're under, terrific pressure.

You go to the, doctor, he's under, great pressure. That's why, you only get, about five minutes, in that surgery, he's under, terrific pressure. It doesn't matter, where you look, the world, is under pressure.

Why? Because Jesus said, in the world, ye shall have, tribulation. But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

It's this word, this morning, that I want to bring, before you really. Beloved, think it not strange, concerning, the fiery trial, as some strange thing, has happened unto you.

[ 16 : 02 ] Listen, I want you to look back, this morning, and remember, that before, the Lord, intervened in your life, you didn't seem, to have this pressure.

You didn't seem, to have these trials, of course you didn't. You don't have a trial, a spiritual trial, until you are born again, of the Holy Spirit of God.

It's no mark, against you, this morning, if you fail, under the trial, of the Lord, it's no mark, against you, this morning, if everything, seems to be turned, upside down, and inside out, in your life, it isn't a mark, against you.

It's a mark, for you. You think, of the word, that was addressed, to these people, in Asia, these believers, that were scattered, throughout, Pontius, of Galatia, of Bithynia, what were they?

They were elect. Who had elected them? God had elected them, before the foundation, of the world, and that's what God, has been doing, since the world began.

[ 17 : 16 ] He has been calling, his people, by divine grace, and that word, is still going on. Is it going on, in your church, this morning?

Is it going on, in my church, this morning? Are the men, and women, that have been born again, of the Holy Spirit, of God? You know, this addition, to the church, it was, a regular thing, less than, hundred years ago, there were many, that said, we will go with you, for we perceive, that the Lord, is with you.

I was thinking, last night, later on, in the night, really, about Ruth, the Moabitess daughter. She had heard, in the land of Moab, she was a long way, off Bethlehem, but tidings, had reached Ruth, that she had heard, in the land of Moab, that the Lord, had visited, his people, in giving them bread.

When was the last time, you and I, had a spiritual meal? When was the last time, you and I, sat at the feet, of Jesus, and learning, of him?

When was the last time, your heart, was affected, by the gospel? Well, Ruth's heart, was affected, and she was down, in Moab.

[ 18 : 50 ] But Nehemiah, had heard, in the land of Moab, that God had visited, his people, in giving them bread, and there they were, the three of them.

And they were, in an idolatrous country. We live, in an idolatrous, country today, don't we? We are, to worship, the God, of entertainment, or the God, of sport, or the God, of money, or the God, of business.

Oh, my beloved friends, there is no difference, between someone, worshipping, the God of sport, and the God, of business. Oh, my friends, let us not separate.

You might see, someone, you say, well, I could not do this, and I could not do the other, but you might be doing, far worse, and you're not even, aware of it.

Now, there were three people, down in Moab. People have said, what was Neomai, doing down in Moab? She had no right, to be there.

[ 19 : 59 ] Well, nothing happened, by chance. She had to go down, into Moab, beloved friends, to bring Ruth back. But before they departed, Moab, she stood over three, open, sepulchre.

You think about that, this morning. You think about it, this morning, Neomai, went through great trial, down in the land of Moab.

Beloved friends, she was there, for a purpose, there was nothing happening, by chance. You might say, this morning, well, I cannot understand, what is happening, to my life, this morning.

You're in good company, neither can I. I cannot understand, what is happening, at this very moment, of time, in my life. It is being turned, upside down, and inside out, when I have to rest here.

He knows, the way that I did. He knows, the way that I did. And when he hath tried me, I shall come forth, as gold.

[ 21 : 08 ] You see, when Ruth, and Neomai, and Orpah, left that land of Moab, those two girls left, with good intentions, of reaching Bethlehem, but Orpah never left.

Why did Orpah not land, into the land of Bethlehem? Because, she loved, her gods, more than the God, of Neomai.

You think how they began, to step back. They all began, to come back, to the land of Bethlehem, tied into Greece, Neomai, that God, was in Bethlehem, God had visited his people.

But you see, Franz Orpah, kissed her mother-in-law, and she went back. Ruth, slave unto her, and you know, the wonderful language, that she spoke, intrigue me not, to leave thee, nor from following after thee.

This people, shall be my people, their God, shall be my God, where thou diest, I will die. There was an identification. And so, they began their journey.

[ 22 : 28 ] Oh, beloved friends, think of it this morning. You and I, began our journey, when it pleased God, to separate us, from our mother's womb. What's so blessed, to me the other day, was that?

I choose thee, from thy mother's womb. What a wonderful thought, that is. When we're born, into the world, it never ceases, to amaze me. The birth of a child, I'm sure, you dear people here, you've got many children, and you've seen it, time and time again.

It's a miracle, every time a child, is born into the world. When it pleased God, who separated me, from my mother's womb.

Well, there's something more vital, than that. It's this revelation, of Jesus. Oh, beloved friends, this morning, do see, for the revelation, of the dear son of God, in your life, this morning.

Beloved, it's a wonderful title, you know, if you're reading, the song of Solomon, you read these words, my beloved is mine, my beloved is mine, and I am his.

[ 23 : 41 ] I remember, not many years ago, the late pastor of Bradford, Mr. Walshaw, maybe many of you knew him, and I remember, coming to a service, at Haslington, and at the end of the service, he had to go back home, but he said, I sat down, under the shadow of his wing, and his fruit, was sweet to my taste.

I wonder how many of us here, shall go home, at the end of our services tonight, and say, I sat down, under the shadow of his wing, and his fruit, was sweet to my taste.

Beloved friends, there'll be those six, by the wayside. You know, not him, but Samuel Rutherford's song. He speaks about the streams, on earth I've tasted, but it was only, as he was passing through, there was something better, before him.

Oh, beloved friends, this morning, there's something better, for the believer, that's not on this earth. We're journeying to it, you know. You and I, this morning, we are nearer, our eternal destiny, than we have ever been.

Than we have ever been. But that man, that wrote that beautiful hymn, he speaks about, the streams on earth, I've tasted, more deep, I'll drink above.

[ 25 : 15 ] There too, an ocean fullness, of everlasting love. Beloved, think it not strange, concerning, the fiery trial, as some strange thing, has happened unto you, but rejoice in this.

I wonder, how many of us here, have prayed that prayer, from the very depths, of our heart, that I might know him, and the fellowship, of his sufferings, and then the Lord says, follow me.

You know, over the last six months, that 22nd Psalm, has never been more blessed, to my soul, in all my life. the prophetic psalm, of the sufferings, of the Lord Jesus.

And there was I, and still on, with so-called, joints out of place, but all his joints, was out of place, when he hung upon that cross, for my precious soul.

His way, was much rougher, and darker than mine. I'm sadly friends, who is still replying. You know, I had two hymns, this morning, and I said to my dear brother, on the car park, I will have this 132, for our last hymn.

[ 26 : 35 ] I had another hymn, you know, this morning. In fact, it's on my little paper, it's 1010. A father's hand, prepares the cup.

And what he wills, is best. You know, that man, or that woman, was it Miss Steele? I'm not sure who wrote it, but she must, or he must have been, in the spirit of God.

Let the sweet hope, that thou art mine, my life and death attend. We're journeying, brethren. The time will come, you know, when you and I, will have our last service, on this earth.

When we'll attend, our last prayer meeting, our last preaching service. And you know, there's so much, really, that's not of God, in our gatherings today.

Sometimes, it's whether you got on, with the minister, or whether you didn't, get on with the minister. Beloved friends, the great point is, has it done you, God? Has it done you, God?

[ 27 : 45 ] Christ's comfortable hope, that calms my stormy breath. You know, I didn't realise, it's a wonderful thought, to realise, that we have a Father, in heaven.

Many of us here, have had wonderful fathers, as we look back. Well, beloved friends, this morning, if you are one of God's dear children, you have a Father, in heaven, this morning, and He will never, ever let us down.

Father, whate'er, of earthly bliss, Thy sovereign, well denies, accepted, at Thy throne of grace, let this petition rise.

But it's a Father's hand, prepares the cup, you know. It's a Father's hand, that prepares the cup, for God's dear children, this morning.

It was a Father's hand, that was preparing, Moses' cup, in the 33rd chapter of Exodus, if Thy presence, go not with us, carry us not of hands.

[ 28 : 59 ] It was rather remarkable, this morning, that hand, that was chosen, 1101. You know, I can remember, the first time, I probably took a service, outside of Havlinden, in 1978, it was an anniversary, and what a mountain, it was before me.

Three services, and a stranger, in the area, and that him, in the afternoon, it was given out, and many people, had come, you know, because it was Mr. Newman.

and that him, was given out, in thy presence, I can conquer, in thy presence, I am secure, and I was, more or less, on my hands, and knees, in the pulpit, when that hymn, was being sung, fearing, and traveling, and before the end, of that hymn, that word, was given, my presence, shall go with thee, and I will, give thee rest.

Oh, my beloved friends, everything was removed. Everything was removed. My presence, shall go with thee. Remember once, driving over to Crosshills, in West Yorkshire, near Keithley, and I'd come to a, situation possibly, that we get in at times, and I wondered, where the scene would end, it was a beautiful morning, something like this morning, and I looked across those hills, and that voice came, the cattle, and upon a thousand hills, are behind.

Is anything too hard, for me to do? Now that'll break you down. The Lord will be driving your car, every village, as you're driving them.

[ 30 : 52 ] The cattle, upon a thousand hills, are behind. The gold, and the silver, is mine. Why do we ever doubt him?

Why? You know, there's a dear, minister, who's now in glory, was a pastor, a little church, at Thurlston, for 23 years. And by trade, he was a roofer.

So he had that, broad, North Yorkshire accent. A bit different than my accent, from Lancashire, we are different, don't we, in our accents. But I used to love him.

And he used to address his congregation, or wherever he was preaching, and he addressed them, a sinner friend. Sinner friend. Well, that's what the Lord Jesus is, friends.

He's a, he's a friend to sinners. And that's probably why we've chosen, for our last hymn this morning, about this friend, that is always nice. Well, you see, we've got to prove this friend, like the children of Israel.

[ 32 : 04 ] You know, it was no use them staying on the borders of the Red Sea. They couldn't go back into Egypt. Pharaoh was pursuing that. Moses had given them the direction.

Why criest thou unto me? Did the children of Israel go for it? That's what God said to Moses. But first, Moses spoke, this was a man of faith, this is faith. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.

For the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall see them no more forever. Do you know, it's the hardest thing in the world to stand still when we're in trouble. When all around our soul is giving way, and we have to be still, and look unto the Lord.

Be still, stand still. You know, that was a word given, wasn't it, in the book of Ruth? Sit still, my daughter, and see how the matter will fall.

So oft times we're like Peter, aren't we? We want things done in a hurry. We want to do it our way. We know we're brought to realise we haven't got the key.

[ 33 : 19 ] But we'll unlock the future. We haven't got it. God holds the key to all the unknown.

And you might be looking to the future this morning with fuller apprehension. You see things in the future, and you just come to that place, Lord, what shall the end of all these things be?

Last night, I was just looking through our hymn book, and there was a little hymn resting on my spirit, and I wasn't just sure where it was, you know.

But it was this. Rest in the promise God has spoke in all things ordered well for thee, whose sacred words he'll not be woke, nor alter his confirmed decree.

You see, you and I, we are subject to changes. Of course we're changeable. We're sinners. Things do not remain the same from day to day, and week to week, and month to month in our lives.

[ 34 : 34 ] Things alter. We don't mind change. But you see, beloved friends, this morning, that word that Peter is addressing the people with, it's a beautiful word, isn't it, beloved?

Beloved. You see, there's this special relationship between God's people and the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou art all fair, my love.

There is no spot in thee. That's what the Lord says to a sinner who is loved with an everlasting love. There is no spot in thee. You might feel as black as hell.

You might feel this morning out of the secret even. But God says, Thou art all fair, my love. There is no spot in me.

Have you ever been amazed at those words in the Bible? Come and let us raise them together. The God of the old earth is speaking to a sinner.

[ 35 : 39 ] Come and let us raise them together. Though your sins be as scarred, they shall be as white as snow. Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial that some strange thing has happened unto you.

Now, it might be this morning. I don't know any one of you here or your circumstances. I don't know what's been happening to you in the last six months or whatever.

But I do know this. The Lord knows. And that's why Job could say he knows the way that I see you know, beloved friends, there's one thing you and I haven't got this morning.

We haven't got foreknowledge. We haven't got any knowledge of the future. You know the Apostle Paul. He was a wonderful man by the grace of God.

But he did not know from one day to the next what lay before him. Because he said, I go bound to Jerusalem not knowing what shall befall me there.

[ 36 : 48 ] But here was his testimony of you and I a testimony this morning. But none of these things moved me. Now, that wasn't an arrogant statement.

It meant he wasn't shaken from the wrath of ages of his Lord and Saviour. None of these things moved me. Neither am I my life dear unto myself.

I wonder how many of us here this morning are holding things too dear of this world's goods. Neither can't I my life dear unto myself.

You see, there's an end to these things. We live as if we're here forever, don't we? that I might finish my course with joy.

You see, there's a finishing of the course. There's the end of this life. There's a heaven prepared for the people of God. I was reading last night about an inheritance uncorrupted and undefiled reserved in heaven for you.

[ 38 : 00 ] You know what it is when you go on an appointment in business and you go up to a car park and you can't park. Someone's name's on it. It's reserved for that man.

Whether it be a sales director or whatever his occupation or title, it's reserved for him. You can't park there. Well, we have that in the Bible.

To an inheritance undefiled reserved in heaven for you. That's how personal this salvation is. It's a personal salvation.

It's a personal knowledge of the Lord. It's a personal knowledge of ourselves as well. And you might say this morning, well, no one knows much about my life.

God does. You read that psalm, is it 139? Oh, friends. We may deceive one another in this little government here this morning, but God will see the Lord.

[ 39 : 04 ] You see, David said, whither shall I flee from thy presence? How many times have Christian people said, what I need is to get away from it all?

You can't get away from anything. You can't get away from anything. If you do take the wings of the morning and you fly to the...

You'd have almost thought David was living in this generation. If I take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, even there, my right hands will find me.

What a wonderful thought that is. Beloved friends, this morning, don't think it's strange concerning the fiery trial.



Don't be amazed if you have a trial. Be amazed if you haven't. Be amazed if you have no trials. Be amazed if you have no thought in the flesh.

[ 40 : 06 ] Be amazed if, you know, you seem to be going on on a very smooth path. dare be amazed at that. But don't be amazed at the fiery trial of some strange thing happening to you.

God does this not to destroy us. The flame shall not hurt the I only divine. Thy drafts to consume and thy gold to refine.

Even there, thy right hand shall find me. Oh, my dear friends, this morning, do not be amazed. Do not think it's strange if everything is going wrong in your life this morning.

Do not think it's strange. My friends, the Lord, know the way that you take. I'm convinced of this.

If you'd have said to me 25 years ago that I would have been here this morning, I would have given you if I had it in the back, another million pounds.

[ 41 : 19 ] You see, God moves in a mysterious way. His wonders to perform. And you, dear children, when you go down to the beach, you cannot see the footsteps in the sun, in the sea.

You can only see them on the sun, can't you? His footsteps are in the great waters. He, God, moves in a mysterious way.

His wonders to perform. Plants his footsteps in the sea. and rides upon the sun. Oh, my friends, have you been in a storm?

Are you in a storm this morning? Is the waves roaring? Is the bellows roaring? Is Satan roaring in your ear this morning? The devil won't be roaring in your ear if you're on his side.

You would have no opposition whatsoever. if you were not one of God's dear children. It is because you have been singled out.

[ 42 : 30 ] It is because you have been loved with an everlasting love. And you see, if you've been loved with an everlasting love, you're his.

You belong to him. And he'll bring you safely through. Oh, think of it this morning. Think of these words in Psalm 107, verse 7.

He led them forth by the right way. I think that is a wonderful thing. Even in view of the hymns that are being chosen this morning where divine guidance being led by the right way.

He led them forth by the right way. Do not think it's strange concerning what is happening because the Lord knows the way that we take.

Amen. The collections taken last Lord's Day for the church fund amounted to £126.05 and for the gyra fund £17.

[ 43 : 52 ] Subject to the Lord's will, Mr. Pack will preach here on Friday evening. And that will be followed by a short church meeting. Mr. Crane is engaged to preach here next Lord's Day.

Hymn 132 tune 171 A friend there is your voice is joined ye saints to praise his name whose truth and kindness are divine whose love are constant play in 132 tune 171 The song ringing square and who used to about spring And kindness of your heart is on the constant way.

When a dream is the Re■■■■ hydrogen, He's firm is always here.

Keep our love in full life.

He waits for us. Amen.

[ 46 : 28 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.