

# The trial of your faith more precious than gold.

## (Quality: Average)

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[ 0 : 00 ] The words that I hope the Lord may be pleased to help me speak from, you'll find in the first chapter, the first epistle of Peter, verse 7.

The seventh verse, the first chapter, the first epistle of Peter, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

we read, all men have not faith.

And as faith is a gift of God, we realize our utter dependence upon God for the least grain of it.

But I have often said, and I say so again, if we have real faith, it will be tried. In fact, the very trial of faith is that which will prove it to be genuine, God-given.

[ 2 : 12 ] And it will stand the test, whatever test is put upon it. So we have here before us this evening for our consideration, in the first place, the trial of faith.

And then we have, secondly, the great value that is put upon it. Not just merely and alone, because Peter was led to write it, but it is among the old scripture that is given by inspiration of God, and it's profitable.

And what a mercy, my friends, if our consideration of this particular passage of scripture shall be profitable to us, and we might have the sweet realization as we consider these things, that we are among those who are in possession of living faith.

How beautifully does James, in the last chapter of his epistle, speak of it, when, as I have noticed it, here above the chapter we read, he speaks of a prayer of faith.

And how often we come into those spots and places in our experience where the Lord does try our faith.

[ 3 : 58 ] In that respect, he brings afflictions to lay upon the loins of those that are near and dear to us, and some not very old, and how we need the Lord to give us that prayer of faith that shall save the sick, and to know that yet, as at other times, the Lord will raise them up, and if they have committed sins, forgive them.

The trial of your faith. And the value of it is here, that being much more precious than a gold that perishes.

If you and I have this faith, our God's elect, we have something with us which is imperishable. It cannot perish.

It is something that will, like love, it will live. Yea, as the poet speaks, of faith, lives and labours under load, though damned, it never dies.

What a wonderful blessing, my friends. And if you and I have a grain of living faith, we shall often be coming to the Lord, as did the apostles, in the days of his flesh, when he was with them, and they came to him.

[ 5 : 43 ] I noticed on the current, calendar of the day, in the friend's house, where I had my, the day meal, that word, where Christ said, have faith, in God.

And if you and I have faith in God, we shall often be coming to him with that prayer, Lord, increase our faith.

And I often speak of that as, by way of encouragement, to the Lord's people, and tell them that, if they ever pray that prayer, it is a proof, an unmistakable proof, that they already receive, have received faith.

Because you can't have a thing increased, that you have not already got. And if you've ever asked the Lord to increase faith, you have a proof, beyond all doubt, that you have faith.

Although you may be tempted many times, that you have not faith. I remember once, in particular, some little time ago now, I was visiting one of my own members, and I happened to mention something about faith to her.

[ 7 : 04 ] And she just partly said, but not wishful thinking. And you know, Satan took hold of that. Oh, he made it like a dagger, like an arrow, in my heart.

And I went home feeling very, very low indeed. But that very circumstance was the means that God used to furnish me with a subject the next time I had to stand up in the Lord's name.

And that's often how the Lord works. By things that, to us, are most opposite. Things that we wouldn't dream of or working, as we said last evening much of working together for good.

So I was on that occasion, for I was favoured to preach from those words in James, faith without works is dead.

And if you and I have living faith, my friends, there will be that desire in their hearts that that faith shall be seen as, does he not say, you show me your faith without your works, I'll show you my faith by my works.

[ 8 : 22 ] And does he not say, was not the harlot Rahab justified by works when she had received the spy with peace.

And so we might go on. speaking of faith, but not only is the faith precious and more precious than a gold that's precious, but the very trial of it is.

So you have, so to speak, two things that are most precious, the faith itself and the trial of it. And you'll prove sometimes how precious that faith is and how precious the trial of it is.

And this faith is, as Peter says here, tried with fire. Tied with fire.

I made a remark in the early days of my pastorate that one of my members often reminds me of. I said there, the Lord knows how long to keep you in the furnace.

[ 9 : 38 ] And how long is that? Until he sees his own image. And that is so with the natural fire, the fire that is, that the precious metal is put in.

the goldsmith, he will watch that metal. And when he can see his own image in the metal then, that is thoroughly and truly purged and truly tried.

And so it is with the trial of pain. Tried with fire. And the end and God's way and purpose in all this is that it might be found unto praise.

Can we not go back in our experience this evening my friends and remember those times when those very things that we thought and Satan was ready to suggest that they would be our undoing had been the very things that have established us, brought us to a more gracious understanding of God's dealings as it was in the case of dear old Job.

Ah, dear man, he says, changes and war are basically. But you know, he was brought out, wasn't he? He was brought through many vicissitudes, many were his losses, many his crosses, many his trials.

[ 11 : 21 ] but he says this, oh how beautiful, is the language of Job when he was tried with fire. He says, I look backward into the past, can't see him.

He wanted to see his Lord, he wanted to see his God. He said, I look on the right hand, and on the left hand, where he does work, in providence and in grace, I cannot behold him.

But I've often said, you know, that there was one more place for Job to look. He may look back, you and I may look back, can't see him, we may look forward and can't see him, we may look on the right hand and not see him, we may look on the left hand and not see him.

But where shall we see him? In the same place that Job saw him. When Job looked up, then he could say this, and have you and I not been able to say so sometimes?

But, he knows the way that I take. And when he had tried me, I shall come forth and go.

[ 12 : 48 ] and he did come forth as gold, didn't he? I've often thought of Job when dear Job was instructed of his God to offer sacrifice for his friends.

The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he cried for his friends. And there would be times when you and I would have to thus cry for our friends.

I remember a day in particular when I had to cry for my friends. Those friends were acting more like enemies to me. But I just had to bring them to the throne of grace, commit the whole thing unto the Lord, and trust also in him.

And I have lived to prove the truth of that word. He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth thy righteousness as of night, and thy judgment as of noonday.

And what a wonderful thing it is when a man's ways pleases the Lord, he makes even its enemies to be in peace with him. And their ways do not please the Lord only as he causes them to please him.

[ 14 : 08 ] Only as he puts his blessed fear in their hearts. That fear of God, which is an unctuous light, a war that is right, and a bar to war that is wrong, though it be cry with fire, might be a pound of pride.

The Lord has said concerning his people as they are mentioned before us here in this chapter. They're in that according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

They're a sanctified people. They're obedient people. They're a washed people. Oh, what a blessed people they are. Can you say, can I say this evening, with them numbered when I be now and to return?

Dear Ruth, you know, she was one of these people. It matter not how much they are my sort, to turn Ruth away and even tell her that her sister-in-law had gone back.

Why didn't she do the same? Oh, she says, do you say it, can you say it, my friend, as you feel such a love and a union toward the Lord's people, entreat me not to leave thee, nor to cease from following after thee.

[ 15 : 37 ] whether thou goest, I will go. Thy people shall be my people, thy God, my God, not to part of it.

And you won't be parted either. Now, the Lord was in that. Oh, if there's that desire, as was found in the heart of Ruth, rather than being parted from them, you'll come closer to them.

that was what the Lord's mind, will, and purpose was in the case of Ruth. Little did she think when she went out that first morning to glean in the field of Boaz, that presently she was to become Boaz's wife.

And can you and I not say sometimes, Jesus, my Boaz is is gospel filled, the place where I are gleaning down, prize, and honor.

Yes, the Lord will be honored, the Lord will be glorified in the trial of faith, whatever it may be, whatever way in which the Lord may be trying us and testing us and bringing us into various things, even as also James says, we count them happy which endure.

[ 17 : 17 ] You have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. Have we not proved it to be so, my friend?

I have thought recently of what I have said sometimes and it was brought rather vividly to my mind only yesterday where we think and read and meditate of the Lord Jesus Christ being crowned with a crown of thorns.

and why was it? Was it not so that you and I be crowned with loving kindness and tender mercy? What a different crown he places upon the head of his people than was placed upon him.

Although there will be times when we shall know what it is to suffer with him. And if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

No cross, no crown, no trial, no deliverance. Where there's the trial, there will be sure to be the deliverance.

[ 18 : 40 ] Where there's the trial of faith, there will be the deliverance from that trial, being brought through to his honour and his glory.

It is all for his glory, my friend, that his people pass through the fire. Wherefore, glory by God, in the fire, this people, he says, have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.

And we cannot but praise him when he sees it to deliver us. And there will be times when even in the midst of the fire we shall praise him.

We shall be brought to those spots and places where we feel we would not have one thing offered. Oh, what a wonderful blessing is sanctified afflictions.

That which weans us from earth and earthly things, weans us from ourselves, weans us from those near and dear to us.

[ 19 : 58 ] and we have to say sometimes with the soundness, my soul is even as a weaned child.

child that is weaned from his mother. His very painful work is weaning. But God knows how to do it, my friend.

He knows how to do it. And he do it most effectively. You do it in such a way as you will even rejoice in that weaning.

and this praise and honour and glory will be at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Surely it is as though Peter would say well no, you now see him not.

You cannot see him, you're like Job, you cannot behold him. For presently when you see him, when you behold him, when you realise that he is looking on all the time and he shows you himself as his disciples when he showed them his hands and his side.

[ 21 : 17 ] Then, my friends, there will be praise, there will be honour, there will be glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And I'm sure Peter knew something what he was speaking about.

The epistles of Peter are not mere theory. These epistles of Peter, my friends, were the result of the fire.

The Lord had said to Peter, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sit you and weep. what a wonderful thing for Peter it was, that he not only said that to him, he coupled something else with it.

One of the greatest blessings, my friends, that any poor sinner can be brought to know, and that is, I have prayed for them. I sometimes feel delight in remembering I had praying parents, and knowing now that I am the subject of the prayers of God's people, my own church, and the other little churches where I minister, but my friends, why that is so great, if we would desire to esteem it a great blessing, oh the great blessing of having the prayer of Christ.

We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of their infirmity, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

[ 23 : 02 ] And when we read the word all in God's word, it means all, it means some, just some of you, all points. Whatever way you and I may be tempted and tried to know Jesus Christ was too.

Are you tempted? He was too. Deserted? Yes. He was deserted. His disciples forsook him and fled. He told them they would.

He said, all ye shall depart and leave you alone. But he said, I'm not alone. And that's a great blessing that these tried and tempted people, these people that know what the trial of faith is, there will be times when they realize however much alone they are, they're not alone, because the Father is with them.

The Father is with them. What a word. Is that word Father? No sweeter word, especially if you can look up and say as Christ has commanded us to, when ye pray side, our Father.

Blessed word. I know oftentimes the experience of the Lord's people is very blessedly described by one who says, my Father, my Father, blissful name.

[ 24 : 41 ] O may I call thee mine, I are with sweet assurance claim of portland, so divine. But this is how it will be brought to pass, by knowing what it is to go into the fire, and also to know the flame should not hurt you.

He only designs your dross to consume, your gold to refine. When you come into a fresh temptation, or a fresh affliction, or some bereavement, how at first you might fear less, and Satan will be ready to tempt you, that it's going to consume you.

But you live to prove that it's only the dross, only that which you will be well rid of, you'll be bettered by the rid of it.

So the Lord knows how to purge away, as he says, I will truly purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tears.

And this will be how to the praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

[ 26 : 13 ] Well now shall we look further a little at the trial of your faith. This is not a word which will be received in any way by those who do not understand something about it.

The apostle was helped to write concerning faith to the Hebrews, and what a wonderful description, and a very few words he gave up.

Faith is a substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. And if faith is in your heart, my friends, it will enable you sometimes to believe that which to you and to others around you is quite impossible.

As it was in the case of Abraham, was it not? Who is spoken of as the father of the faithful. And the Lord appears to him, he says, now take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest.

I believe Abraham would have willingly taken Ishmael, but the Lord says it must be Isaac. He's the one you must take and offer up in the mount, which I will tell thee of.

[ 27 : 54 ] what a trying time it was to Abraham as he was going up the hill and his son Isaac goes up with him and presently he says, father, he says, behold the wood and the fire.

But the most important thing is missing as far as I can see. Where is the lad? Isaac knew, well, that there could be no acceptable sacrifice without a lamb.

And so Abraham was given the answer. That was faith, was it not? God shall provide himself a lamb for a sacrifice.

The Lord had already instructed Abraham what he must do, but he goes on up the hill. That's a very blessed hymn we used to sing concerning it at Cranbrook years ago.

You see Abraham walking up the hill and Isaac fondling by him still and prattling in his ear. At length the lovely charred is bound, the hand is stretched, the knife is found, and then the Lord appears.

[ 29 : 17 ] A kind of faith. Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad. Now I know that thou fearest me in that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

I had a great trial in my own self and in my own church relative to my own dear son, the elected prince. It was no easy matter.

Seven years we waded through that trial of faith before it actually would have come back. But I shall never forget how I found afterwards. The Lord, I believe, gave me those words to help me, in that we had sent forth one into the ministry.

Now I know they fear is me, in that thou hast not without thy son. Probably. What a great blessing.

These things are still up to date, my friends. Some people speak of the word of God and the ways of God as being old fashion, and so they are, but they're just as up to date.

[ 30 : 33 ] And the Lord will make them up to date in your experience and mine. We should have to walk by faith and not by sight. And as we walk that pathway of faith, we are like the beloved we read of, coming up out of the wilderness, leaning upon him.

And you never lean too hard upon him. And he is almighty to save and to direct and to hold and to strengthen and to bring you through.

Yes, yes, he will bring his people through. The trial of your faith, of God given faith, and what he gives, he will not ask back.

Something he gives. He has given his well beloved son, we read last evening in that eighth of Romans, that if he has not without a son, then all things are given to us.

Will he not freely give unto you all things, all things that are necessary, all things that will be for our soul, good, good, and all glory.

[ 32 : 11 ] As the apostle said, all is yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The trial of your life.

you may often feel, as we do at times, our faith is feeble. We confess, we faintly trust his word, but does he pity us the less?

Did he pity that dear man the less when he cried out, Lord, I believe? Help thou mine unbelief?

Oh, he attended to that case. And many that came to him in the days of his practice, how often he would say to them, according to your faith, be it unto you.

Ah, faith is a wonderful thing, my friend, a wonderful blessing, a thing that we do not realise the value of, and yet it is valuable, and the trial of it is much more precious than a gold edge.

[ 33 : 32 ] However much gold we may possess, and we need it, we need that which will help us in our journey through life to do those things that are right before God and to our fellow creatures.

But you know, my friends, this precious thing, ah, it's something more precious than gold precious, gold precious.

Riches take to themselves wings and fly wide, but this will never take to itself wings of fire, the only way it will be worked out in the experience of the Lord's people, faith will to bliss give place in sight we hope to lose.

it. Now what a wonderful blessing this is, faith in the bleeding man, oh what a gift is this, hope of salvation in his name, how comfortable it is, the trial of your faith being much more precious than a gold that perish, there is something that is imperishable, no time can order, no age can make it decline, it is like the giver, it will remain, and while there is faith, surely there is also hope and love and we know that whilst presently we shall not need faith, but love shall still remain, nor can its glory cease, no other change should that sustain save only to increase it, and these three things go together, faith, hope and love, where you have faith and the trial of faith, there will always be that hope which hopes against hope, be like

Abraham who against hope believed in hope, and however dark, however distressing, however distracting, however impossible things may appear to be to our carnal mind and their natural reasoning and even to those around us the law will see to it that faith can live, it's living faith it's living faith it's a living principle in the heart the principle of faith which he puts within the heart of the sinner and that faith will live and live and live on the earth so damp it lives and though it is tried with fire it is you see being unperishable the fire can't destroy it can't destroy it and what a mercy it is that this faith can't be destroyed however hot the fire surely we have those two particular cases of it in the

[ 37 : 28 ] Old Testament whether it be Daniel in the lion's den a dear man of God faith helped him through his faith was indeed tried by fire it was not a matter of Daniel going round the den of lions he would go down into the den of lions to be delivered those three Hebrew children Shadrach Meshach and Abednego they must go into the burning fiery furnace and what for to lose their bonds and to have all those things burned away which bound them and they shall come out with no smell of fire upon them he lions and ravens contain all creatures obey his command then let us rejoice in his name and leave all our cares in his hand you say

I wish I could so do I my friends and there's times when we can there's times when we can he kindly need to prevent my fears says leave it all to me I remember once when an ungodly man railed on me called me everything but a Christian but those sweet words came to help me at that trying hour say not my soul from whence can God relieve thy care remember that omnipotence has servants everywhere so has my friends yes the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them and there'll be times when he gives you songs in the night songs in the night if you've ever known what it is to have a song in the night you've had the sweet earnest of what we also read weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning and I've often said and I say so again the longer your weeping night the more joyful your morning be then hi oh ye happy mourners a strange word that is it not to the unbeliever but not the person that possesses faith you soon shall meet with comfort sweet it is the

Lord's own promise though it be tried with fire oh the many ways in which the Lord dear people are tried some may be tried in one way some may be tried in another but you see they will stand the trial they will stand the death the Lord tried the righteous the way of the wicked he turns upside down that he won't ever turn the way of the righteous upside down I was much encouraged once when I was in a great trial of faith I believe it was when I was being prepared for the solemn work of the ministry and I walked for days under the sentence of death

I used to go out in the morning to my business and under that dreadful temptation you won't get back home to dinner but I used to go back home so when I went back again after dinner the same temptation you won't get back home to be day after day I had that and yet at night we had been reading those posthumous letters of the late William Huntington and I used to read in those letters the very things that had been passing through during the day and I many a night got up to bed like another man and then wake up in the morning and there was that great cloud over me rain but I remember one thing I read has never left my mind really he said this dear Huntington you'll find it if you've got those posthumous letters he said the Lord will never cast away a hoping soul as a man casts a stone out of a sling oil that helped me and that encouraged me tried with fire yes but it will be found under prize yes however keen however cutting however deep however solemn and searching however great the trial of faith may be my friends it will enter well oh yes verily I know says the wise man it shall be well with them that fear

God say ye to the righteous it shall be well what a trial of faith that was with that dear woman who lost her son have you ever pictured that dear woman have you ever followed her in that journey she took to the man of God the man of God didn't know quite what had happened he says he could tell her soul troubled in her there was something but the Lord hadn't shown to him what it was and she wouldn't be satisfied with the servant coming it must be God's servant oh you want to be God's servant if a man has been made a blessing to you and you have been brought to cleave to that man you'll say well no one else will do and that's not resting in the creature when it's like that it's the work of

[ 44 : 31 ] God to put a man into our hearts or us into another one's heart the soul of David was knit to the soul of Jonathan so it was with this poor woman she was knit to the man of God she couldn't leave him he sends his servant on to lay his staff upon the child but no the child is not awake so what does a woman say I believe she has two kinds in a sense two kinds of faith there are degrees and differences of faith and at first she says as she looked to the future she says it shall be well have you got such a faith this evening are you in the midst of some trying of faith and you just don't know really how it will issue but you can say with that dear woman it shall be well and that's a God given faith just as much as when the dear woman afterwards said it is well it is well and it is a great blessing when we can sign it is well it is well well with them while life endure and well when corpse dies and it is found under pride oh what a wonderful thing it is to be enabled to praise the

Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children men to sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his work with rejoicing they that go down to the sea and ships to do business in great waters these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep for he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind that lifteth up the waves there are they go down to the depths they go they go up to the heavens and they go down up and down in and out is the pathway of the Lord's living family but it's in and out to find pasture in and out to find pasture and if you find pasture my friend you won't mind how many ins and outs you have it will be the pasture you will be after that which is winnowed with a shovel and a fan and you will want to have that yes it will be found under prize and where the feeblest lamb in



Jesus fold is brought to praise him he will bring honour and glory to his name you might say well I'm that feeble one never mind how feeble you are my friend the weakest saints you win the die the earth and hell obstruct his way and I've often said this and I say so again because I've proved it to be so the weaker the better yes in themselves as weak as worms how can poor believers stand these who are in possession of the people when temptations foes and storms press them close on every hand we indeed they feel they are but they know the throne of grace they know the throne of grace do you say yes I can't keep away from it no more will you if you're among these people that have this faith and this trial of faith which is more pressures than cold at patience you'll have to be often pound at the throne of grace pleading with him for something or other sometimes for yourself sometimes for your loved ones sometimes for the church of God sometimes for the servants of God sometimes for a guilty land and nation we do appreciate the prayers of God's living family in this

England of Altax often think of that wicked queen there you know we understand that she said she dreaded the prayers of John Knox more than army of men and well he might and well might all their adversaries dreaded prayers because you see God will answer prayer when he turns away from the wicked he turns their way upside down but he blesses people with peace peace may not always feel that peace as you would desire but it is something you're longing after peace perfect peace in this dark world of sin the blood of Jesus whispers peace to him praise and honor and glory three things that the

Lord has seen to it will be joined together in your experience and mine glory and as we're led to praise him so we shall honor him and as we're led to praise honor and honor him so we shall glorify him what a wonderful thing it is that the Lord causes such poor sinners as we are to glorify him for the wonders he has drawn let us know our praise is given and by sweet experience taught call upon him while we live do not those answers of prayer that he gives us encourage us to go on in prayer oh yes you say can he have taught me to trust in his name and thus far have brought me to put me to shame each sweet ebnesia

[ 51 : 35 ] I have in review confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through peace some■ on