

1 Peter 1:1-21

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[0 : 00] I see a couple of boys in the back seat there. Good to see you. I'm going to tell you a short story today about a group of people that are out walking. I think it was the West Highland Way. They were going out walking.

And as they were all gathering to start at the beginning, at the starting line, they saw this old man there. He was old and he was bent and he was crippled. And he had two walking sticks and he had a big pack on his back. And they all said, man, this fella's not going to make the starting line, never mind the finishing line.

Well, off they went. When they arrived at the finishing post, the first person saw this old crippled, bent man. And he didn't know how on earth could that fella make it? He wasn't fit.

So they went to speak to him. And they said, hey, when did you get here? Oh, he said, hey, I couldn't make it. I'm not fit. I couldn't make it. I came in the bus.

Now, in a very real way, that's teaching us about going to heaven. We're not fit. We can't make it. We're not good enough. We have to be taken by Jesus.

[1 : 27] Jesus is going to heaven. And Jesus is, come to me. Come to me. I'll take you there. You're not good enough. You won't last the course. You'll never reach the right standard yourself. You've got to be in me.

And you know this. It's not all that long. I've been in for a few years. It's not once as I realised that the Bible hardly ever uses the word Christian. It only uses it three times.

The way the Bible speaks about a Christian is this. If any man be in Christ, it's just a term for shame. You've got to trust him. You've got to believe in him. You've got to be just in him. And he will take you to heaven.

So, the next time you see a crippled man walking out, you remember the story. You make a wee prayer. Lord, you take me to heaven. I can't make it on my own. I'm not good enough. You give me your righteousness and you take me to heaven. Okay? Very good.

All right.

[3 : 11] Now, for a little while, if need be, you've been grieved by various trials. That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour and glory at the revelation of Jesus.

Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen you, though now you do not see him. Yet, believing, you rejoice, and joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith and the salvation of your souls.

But I actually want to concentrate, though, God, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

I've entitled this sermon, the testing of genuine faith. How can we tell if our faith in Christ is genuine or not?

How can we tell if our faith in Christ? Well, what we just read tells us two things.

[4 : 58] The first is this. The first is this. We can tell our faith in Christ is genuine. If we love Christ. Verse 8.

Who, having not seen you love Christ. Though you've not seen him, you love him.

I like to think of, well, the theologians tell us that the inseparable twins are faith and love. You can't separate them. You can't separate them.

If you've got one, you've got the other. Now, I think of that coin. One side is faith, the other side is love. You want to know if you're faith in Christ?

Do you love Christ? Well, if you love him, you're faith in him. That's what we've been taught here. That's Peter's message to us.

[6 : 00] Despite what you may be going through in the triumph of faith, you still love Christ. But there's another proof given to us in the previous verse.

Verse 6. The first is if you love Christ, you're faith in him. The first is if you love Christ, you're faith in Christ.

If you're being tried because you believe in Jesus, and if you can still rejoice in these trials, you're faith in Christ.

Your faith is being tested. Rejoice. It's real faith. It's true faith. Verse 6 says it. One of the things we learnt, having to learn Greek, is that the word for testing faith and the word for tempting to sin is exactly the same.

word in Greek. It's unusual. The word to tempt into sin is the same word as the word testing of faith.

[7 : 26] God tests the strength of our faith, while Satan at the same plane tempts us to sin. God tests us to strengthen our faith.

God tests us to strengthen our faith, while Satan, through the same experience, tempts us and tries to force us to sin.

Now, to ask the question, why does God ordain that trials are to be given to us?

Why is God appointed that? Why do we need to be tested and tried with difficulties? Well, there are two reasons I would give.

The first is this. There are some things that we can only learn through experience.

[8 : 32] Most things we can learn through a tutor, through a teacher. Most things we can learn through books, through lessons, through sermons, but not everything.

Not everything. Some things we can learn through experience. For example, you're going off on your polonaise. You're flying off on your polonaise and the pilot comes on and he says, Welcome to this flight.

I'd like to let you know, this is the first time I've ever flown an aeroplane. But don't worry, I've read every book. I've passed all the exams.

I've never actually flown an aeroplane before. But I've got all the duties. I've got all the qualifications. I know all the rules. But I've never sat in a plastic seat before.

Would you be relaxed? Some things we can only learn by experience. Take it at a mundane level. What do you think the person says, playing golf?

[9 : 41] I've never played before. But I've read all the books. Read all the books. Left hand straight. Keep your head down. Balls just opposite inside of your left leg.

No, all the rules. When I go golf, I've read all the books you can read. But I've never actually played golf before. You see, there are some things we can only learn by experience.

But you know, there's a version of the Bible I could never follow. Jesus learned obedience.

Hmm? Was Jesus not obedient in heaven? Of course he was. It's a false name.

What is it? Hebrews 5.8. He learned experience. He saw. He learned obedience through suffering.

[10 : 41] I could never get it. But this is what it means. Of course Jesus Christ always obeyed in a past eternity. Before he became human.

Of course he was always obedient. He had never shared. Always obeyed. But he never knew what it was like to obey through suffering.

Because there's no suffering in heaven. When one of the reasons Christ had become a human being, was you know what it was like to suffer.

He always obeyed the father. But never through suffering. He's to become human. So he can identify with you.

And identify with me. He's to experience suffering. And obey through suffering. Which of course he did.

[11 : 39] So that's the first reason. Why there has to be. Why faith has to be tried. Because some things we can only learn.

Through experience. But there's another reason. Our bible tells us about Christians. That we've been predestined.

To be conformed to his image. We've been predestined. To be Christ like. How can we be like Christ.

Who was the man of sorrows. If we don't know sorrow. How can we be like Christ.

If he had to learn obedience. Through suffering. We have to be Christ like. We have to be like him.

[12 : 44] We have to be conformed. To his image. And if he had to go through. The experience of suffering. And sorrow. Then if we were to be like him.

We too have to go through it. Jesus Christ had to say. Or what he said on one occasion. My soul is exceedingly sorrowful.

Even unto death. Would it be Christ like? How would it be Christ like? If we don't have these experiences.

Here to cry out. My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? We expect our enemies to forsake us.

Christ predicted his friends would forsake him. In his trial. But my God. My God. Why have you forsaken me?

[13 : 51] So. If you're going through experiences. And you think. God has forsaken you. At this very point.

When I need you most. You're Christ like. Christ also said. On one occasion. John chapter 12.

Like this verse 27. On one occasion. You speechless. The son of God. Was speechless. On one occasion.

He said. In John 12. 27. I think it is. What shall I say? What shall I say? I didn't know what to say.

Is it right? But what did he say? What did he say? When he didn't know what to say? He said.

[14 : 47] Glorify. Thy name. Glorify. Thy name. And so. You see. Just a couple of pages long.

Peter says. To every Christian. Don't. Be. Surprised. That fiery. Trials. To be given to you.

Everyone. In this world. Has trouble. Of course. Trouble. Trouble of some sort. In this world. As. As. As.

As. The Bible says. Mankind. Human beings. Are born. Unto. Trouble. As the sparks fly. Up. You can't.

Escape. Trouble. You can't. Go through this world. Without having. Problems. Of one kind. Or another. Some Christians. Bring. Trouble. On themselves.

[15 : 43] Some Christians. Sadly. We walk. Into. Trouble. Through disobedience. But the trial.

The trial. Of your faith. Is a. Difficulty. That God. Puts. His. People. Through. Which could easily.

Be avoided. If it had stopped. Being. Faithful. Loyal. And obedient. You can get out of it. By just. Giving up. Your Christianity. That's a trial.

Of faith. Can we obey. When we have to suffer. From being obedient. The trial. Of your. Faith. It's a case. Of when.

We have trials. Because. We're. Determined. To remain. Faithful. To Christ. Now. It's helpful. And I find it.

[16 : 40] Hugely. Encouraging. To understand. That Christians. Do not. Automatically. Pass. Every. Test.

And trial. We fail. Some. Tests. We fail. Some trials. Peter. Failed.

Three times. After. He. Be warned. And he. Swore. With a no. He wouldn't do it.

Pre-warned. Told him. Be careful. Now you're good for it. I'll never. Deny. Three times. With all.

St. Cushes. He failed. How appropriate. That it's Peter. Who's speaking to us here. And the testing. Of faith.

[17 : 37] He failed. Of course. You know. He returned. Our authorized version. Says. When you're. Converted.

Strengthened. The bed. And it's not the best. Interpretation there. The word converted. It does not indicate. That he was not converted. Before that. A better translation.

When you're restored. When you're recovered. When you're returned. The word is translated. Returned. More often. I can't remember how many times.

The church made him return. When you're returned. Strengthen the brethren. And that's exactly what he's doing here. In these two measures. Strengthening the brethren.

I know what it's like to feel. I know what it's like to fall. I know what it's like. I know what it's like to let my saviour down.

[18 : 33] So he's writing to help us. That we would not. Make the same mistakes. As it were. Now.

How appropriate then. It was. Peter. Whom the Lord has chosen. To write to us. How to. Endure tests and trials.

Now. How was Peter restored? How was he recovered? Peter remembered. The word. Of the Lord.

The Lord. Turned and looked at Peter. And then. Peter. Remembered. The word. Of the Lord. How do we best prepare for trials?

Remember. The word. Of the Lord. In his. Second letter. He says. Beloved.

[19 : 31] I now. Write. To you. This. Second. Epistle. In both. Of which. In both.

Of which. The two letters. In both. Of which. I. Star up. Your. Pure. Minds. By way. Of. Remembrance. So.

What's the key? How do we. Face. What's the best. Way. To endure. Trials. And tests. Remember. Remember.

As God. Help me. I'd like to give you. A few. Things. We're to remember. When we're being tested. When we're going through. The fire.

Trial. Of the. Genuriness. Of our faith. Remember. These things. They all begin. With the letter. P. The first thing. To remember. Is. Trials.

[20 : 26] Were. Predicted. They were. Predicted. How often. So. You. Will. Have.

Tribulation. These things. I've spoken to you. Christ. Say. That in me. You will have peace. But in the world. You'll have tribulation. Paul says it.

In Acts 14. We must. Through. Many. Tribulations. Into. The kingdom. Again. To Timothy. We are. At two.

Sorry. To Thessalonians. We are. Appointed. To us. We told you. When we were. With you. You would. Suffer. Tribulation.

So. Remember. You were. Predicted. Expect. Trials. So. When they come. You're not. Thrown. You're not. Surprised.

[21 : 21] You don't. Start. Say. Oh. I can't be a Christian. I must have been mistaken. No. They've been. Parised. They've been. Predicted. And take it. As a token.

Of evidence. That you. Have faith. If your faith. Has been tested. Take it. As a token. Of evidence. As generally. Faith. Because it's been.

Tested. Okay. Second. P. P. Remember. Not just that they've been predicted. But remember. There's a purpose. In them. God.

Has. A purpose. In triumph. It is not the same. As the. Pagan. Concept. Of. Faith.

God. What. Whatever. Will be. Will be. Without rhyme. Of reason. Whatever. God. Is ordained.

[22 : 15] Will be. But there is. A rhyme. And there is. A reason. There is a. Pathless. In them. But God. May not.

Make that. Pathless. No. To us. God. God. God. Had. A purpose. In all. He sent. To job. That job.

Does not know. Did not know. What you and I know. Never reviewed. The. The. The poor job. Himself. So if he didn't do. A good job.

In all his trials. He may not do that. You see. It's a trial. Of. Faith. And if you. See why. And if you know. And if you. Understand. It's not a trial.

John. How do you know what he said? If you have. No problems. If you have no trials. If you have no difficulties. There's no rule.

[23 : 14] For faith. Faith. Faith. Is for enduring trials. Not dodging trials. Or tracking round up. For going through them.

So that in the midst of the trial. You see. I still love my God. I still love my saviour. I'm still going to follow him. The test is to see.

Will you still agree? Will you still follow? Will you still cling to him? You see. If you've got faith in Christ. It's gold.

It's sheer gold. Now gold. Now gold's put in the fire. What for? To destroy it now. Gold's put in the fire.

To refine it. To refine it. You're being refined. You're sheer gold. Remember that. That will not be endured.

- [24 : 13] Remember. It's been predicted. Remember. There's a purpose in it. Whether you will discover it or not. Sometimes he tells us. Sometimes we'll discover ourselves.
- Before we leave this world. But not always. But third. People. Remember. The presence. Of God.
- You will have the presence. of God. In a triumph. That you'll never have. For your prosperity. I do remember people coming to me.
- And I sympathised with them. They had a huge triumph. Oh. I would never have missed it. I would never have missed it. What I saw.
- What I loved. When you're open. Because you should have said. This is the children's story. You can see. Further. You can see. Boys. You know you can see far further.
- [25 : 13] In the darkness. Than you can in the great beginning. Do you know that? You can see far. You know you can see. Thousands of miles. In the darkness. When it's dark tonight.
- See if you can see the star. It's thousands of miles away. But you can't see it in daylight. But you can see it in darkness. Sometimes God gives us darkness.
- So that we can see in the darkness. But you'll never see in daylight. When things are going so early. You have the presence of God with you.
- And you know. That's the only thing we really need. Do you remember Moses when God told him. That the bush used to. And he told him all I need to do.
- Moses was arguing with him. Disagreeing with him. I'm not fit. I'm not qualified. I can't do it. And then at last he had to give up. And say no. I see. But wait.
- [26 : 15] You haven't told me yet. What you're going to put with me. I need someone to direct me. I need someone to hold my hand. And it was then that God said. My presence will go with you.
- My presence will go with you. And that's all you need. Remember. It's predictive. There's a purpose. Third.
- There's a presence of God in it. Fourth. You're preserved through it. In fact. We could say that's one of the practices.
- In fact. Verse 5. Tells us clearly. Kept. Kept. By the power of God. Through faith. You're not just kept.
- You're kept. Through faith. You're kept. By the power of God. Through exercising your faith. You see. It's possible. To have faith.
- [27 : 17] And not exercise it. There are people who have faith. They don't realize they have. They don't use it. Possession of faith is one thing.
- The exercise of it is another. And he's given us this letter. So that we learn to exercise. To use. To employ. What God has given to us.
- For our group. And the saviour said. I can't remember which gospel it is. I remember. When they fell asleep on the boat.
- And they said. Master. We're perishing. And he said. Where is your faith? You've got faith. Use it. We're kept. We're kept. We're kept. We're kept.
- We're kept. We're kept. We're kept by the power of God. Through faith. And by persevering. Through trials and tests. We're kept by.
- [28 : 16] As one of the purposes of trials. We're kept. To strengthen your faith. We're kept. We're kept persevering.
- Persevering. Through faith. By faith. Through the time. The tests and the trials. By keeping obedient to Jesus. Still loving Jesus.

Through the time. Now the Saviour in John chapter 17 prays for his church, prays for his people. And he says he pledged with the Father that he would keep us through your name.

How will we be kept by the power of God? Through faith. But the Saviour prayed that we'll be kept through his name.

Through your name. What do you mean by that? What does it mean? What does it mean when we speak about God's name? What does it mean?

[29 : 24] Well, it means everything connected with God. Anything to do with God. Keep through the things that belong to you, Lord.

Through your house. Through your people. Through your word. Through your providences. Through anything connected with God. I suppose you could say the means of grace.

You're kept by using the means of grace. That's what we are. Means through which you get grace. Means through which you're strengthened by grace.

Keep kept by the power of God. Through faith. And through God's name. He's provided facilities for us to use.

His word. Prayer. His people. Fellowship. And so on. And we are to use these things.

[30 : 25] So. Remember. We're predicted. There's a path loss. God's presence in it. We're preserved. Through it.

It's wonderful. It's a Christian race. All you have to do is to persevere to the end. All you have to do is finish the course.

You don't have to be first, second or third. Just finish the course. Just persevere. You'll be, again, a coin.

Preserved by the Tower of God. But we on the underside persevere. Just carry on to the end. Don't throw in the towel.

One final piece. Remember. Trials pass. Verse 6, is it? In this you would agree. Now.

[31 : 29] For a little while. If need be. You've been grieved by various trials. Trials don't last forever.

They pass. A little while. But I tell you. They may feel long. They might feel long.

But they pass. They pass. And trials don't have the last work. God has the last work.

God has the last work. And what a good job. What a good job. He has the last work. And he says. He says. He will never perish.

Never. No man. Christ said. No man. Is able. To pluck him. Out of my hand. Just. Carry.

[32 : 28] On. To the end. The trials will pass. Well. That's it. If you have faith.

Remember. It will be tested. It will be tested. Remember. The test. Is designed. To strengthen.

Job's trial. Doubled his prosperity. Count it. At the end. He doubled. And James picks it up.

In the New Testament. Did you not learn the lesson. Of Job. The purpose of Job. Of God. Was to bless. In the end. Once the trial passed.

And remember. Of course. As will faith. Has been tested. And tried. You. Are on. Your way.

[33 : 25] To glory. If we share. In Christ's suffering. You know why? Because we're to share. In his glory.

You can't have one. Without another. If you're suffering. In a trial. Your faith. Rejoice. And be exceeding glad. For great.

For your reward. In heaven. The world. If you have no faith. In Christ. Well. What do we say to you? Why not?

What a crucial role you are. How can we say to you tonight? You're not on your way to heaven. You're on your way to a lofty third.

You're on your way to a lofty third. And tell me. Why do you know faith in Christ? He's never said no to anyone. He's never refused anyone.

[34 : 23] Manasseh's in heaven. Manasseh. The first thing he did when he had power. What was the first thing he did? The man did the God-having reforms of his father.

he gave up worshipping to God as Israel worshipped angels and stocks and stones he turned to witchcraft he burnt his own children in the fire in a pagan religion of worshipping he's in heaven he's in heaven so can you read put your faith in Jesus none perish who him trust may God be Holy Spirit because word is faithful to everyone let's pray