

# A Living Hope in a World of Woe

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now I just want to maybe spark your imagination, not really imagination, but maybe your memories.

! Have you ever been through one of those times when things just were not going right? Maybe the issue is health. Maybe the issue is some suffering within your family.

Maybe it is just simply you're having a bad day. Ever had a bad day? Just in the doldrums, I mean just depressed and discouraged.

Ever had those kind of days or am I the only one? And you're going through one of those kinds of times, defeated, discouraged, depressed, whatever label you want to put on it.

And let's just say you're at Walmart and you meet one of these bubbly Christians. Maybe it's a Christian friend and you just meet there at Walmart and you're in the doldrums and you meet one of your friends, your Christian friends, one of these positive friends where everything is just praise the Lord.

[ 1 : 35 ] Isn't God good? And maybe they will quote you some scriptures. Have you ever met anybody like that? During a time when you're hurting, when you're depressed, when you're discouraged, maybe you're hurting physically, maybe mentally, emotionally, whatever it may be.

And the last thing you want to hear is someone saying, praise the Lord. I'm just being honest.

You're looking at me like you, you very irreligious pastor. How could you admit such a thing from the pulpit? And yet every one of you have experienced the same thing, haven't you?

It just is not the time you want to hear platitudes, is it? And we kind of react against that. In fact, we think in our own hearts, how insensitive.

Don't you know what I'm going through? For you to just say to me, praise the Lord. God is good.

[ 2 : 41 ] Or to quote some scripture to me. That's just the last thing we want to hear. And yet I would say to you, in effect, that is exactly what Peter is doing here in this letter.

To these Christians who are enduring tremendous suffering. I mean, really, when you get to the main body of the letter, which starts, by the way, in verse 3.

What do you have coming out or coming from the pen of Peter? Bless it be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Or we might just paraphrase it this way.

Peter, very exuberantly, you can just kind of sense this right off the page. He is writing, praise the Lord. Now remember that he is writing to Christians who are suffering.

Christians who are hurting. Some of them are even dying for their faith. How insensitive of Peter.

[ 3 : 46 ] Or maybe we might say, how uninformed Peter must be. To open his letter in that way.

Don't you know, Peter, these folks are hurting. They need to be encouraged. Or they need to be patted on the back. Or they need to be approached with some sensitivity. And for you to just work that right out in your letter.

Praise the Lord. Isn't God good? All the time. And all the time, God is good. And don't you know, Peter, that's the last thing they want to hear here?

Yet that's how he begins. Look at how he further reminds them of a tremendous truth.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Look at verse 3 there. Who, according to his great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope.

[ 4 : 49 ] Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. From the dead to obtain an inheritance. Which is imperishable. Unable. Undefined.

And cannot fade away. And it's reserved for you. In heaven. And in our western minds, we're thinking. Great.

Inheritance reserved for me in heaven. And I'll get it when I die. How does that help me here? Am I the only one who's reacting to the text in this way? Now, shame on me.

Because, listen, we ought not to react to the text in this way. What Peter's doing, he's doing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And what he's about to share with these Christians, these suffering Christians, is right on.

And yet, we cannot help but maybe react initially, just like we would react to that bubbly Christian friend we have. To react in this way. How insensitive.

[ 5 : 53 ] Don't you understand what I'm going through? Great. Got an inheritance. Wonderful. Reserve for me in heaven. But what about right here, right now? See, this is the way our western minds approach this.

Because we don't really know about suffering. Not really. Certainly not like these first century Christians who were living in the outer regions of the Roman Empire.

And they were having a hard way to go. But we here in America, we don't understand suffering. We don't know how to suffer. And so, we react to Peter in this way.

Well, what about now, Peter? What do I do about this right now? You don't understand where I work. And here I am trying to live my Christian convictions with pagan bosses and pagan workmates and fellow co-workers.

You don't understand what I'm going through right now. And the ridicule that I receive every day that I go to work. And how I've got to bite my tongue when certain jokes are told there in the coffee lounge or at the water cooler.

[ 7 : 07 ] Or, listen, pastor. You don't know. I lost my job because I would not compromise my Christian convictions. What do you have for me?

What word do you have for me right now? Or, listen, preacher. You don't understand. I am married to an unsaved husband or unsaved wife.

And they give me a hard way to go. And I need a good word to help me right now. What do I do right now? Or, preacher, you don't understand. My kids are being inundated with an anti-Christian culture at school and in college and with their friends and in this culture.

And I'm losing them. What do I do right now? In this world where it just seems to be suffering and hardship and a difficult way to go.

And to live a Christian in this country right now is getting harder and harder. You don't understand what I've suffered. What I've had to give up and what I've lost. Don't you have a word for me right now?

[ 8 : 19 ] Wonderful. I've got an inheritance in heaven. But, hey, what about right now? Does Peter have a word for us from this text?

I tell you, listen, Peter was writing to Christians who are facing many of the same things that we face right here. In this world, in this day. And worse, by the way.

As far as I know, in America, they're not killing Christians. And yet that was happening every day with these Christians living in Peter's world. And by the way, don't forget that Peter also was a very persecuted Christian.

He was one of the holy apostles. And ultimately, by tradition, and I think it's probably right, he died a martyr's death. I tell you, Peter was writing to Christians who were facing some of the similar issues that we face today.

He wrote to Christian slaves who were being mistreated by their masters. You can read about that in chapter 2, verses 18 through 20. I think there's a good correlation there between slaves and masters in that relationship.

[ 9 : 25 ] And workers and bosses in our day. And we can just cross that over into our day. And the words of encouragement that Peter was giving to people in that context of persecution would apply to us today.

So, see, they were enduring some of the same things that we endure today. Christian wives were being mistreated by their unbelieving husbands. And you can read about Peter mentioning that in chapter 3, verses 1 through 6.

Also, many of the believers had lost former friends of theirs who were now slandering them because of their faith. Chapter 2, verse 12.

Chapter 3, verse 16. 17. Chapter 4, verse 4. Chapter 4, verses 13 to 14 and 16. Now, you don't need to write all those down, but I'm just pointing out the fact that Peter was writing to Christians who were facing many of the same points of suffering and persecution that we face today.

And yet it was much more intensified in their lives, in their day, than I would suggest to you we can experience in this day. And by the way, Peter also mentions and was writing to people who were enduring physical suffering.

[10:37] They were being physically threatened for their faith. And some of them were being martyred. Chapter 3, verse 14. Chapter 4, verse 12. It's all throughout the letter. And so there's no mistaking that Peter was writing to Christians who were suffering because of their Christian faith.

And so he had a word for them. And it's the same word that he has for us here today. And what was Peter's approach?

Give them a good dose of theology. That was his approach. He said, that's not what I want. That's what Peter gave them. Good dose of theology.

Specifically, what's called soteriology. Or a doctrine, the doctrine of salvation. That's what he gave them. And he wastes no time getting to that.

He gives a little bit of a greeting. In fact, within his greeting, he packs it full of one of the most profound doctrinal statements concerning salvation. And then from chapter, verse 3 on through, really throughout the book, he focuses on that salvation and fleshes that out.

[11:49] And so his response to these Christians who were enduring tremendous persecution was to give them theology. You're not going to find that, by the way, in most of the counseling books that are written for pastors.

You're not going to find that kind of suggestion necessarily in Christian circles, you know, to friends and believers who are trying to encourage their friends, their persecuted friends.

You're not going to find that kind of suggestion. That's Peter's approach. Give them a dose of theology. And that's what we need. We're living today in a world, a culture rather, an American culture, that is becoming more and more anti-Christian as we speak.

And we, many of us, don't even realize it. We are fast approaching a time in our culture that would be comparable to what the Christians in Peter's day were suffering.

We're getting close to it. We're living for Christ will cost us more and more as we go.

[13:00] We're loving Christ will cost us. We're looking and longing for Christ to come. And living with that kind of forward looking and that kind of hope will cost us.

But sadly, many Christians do not want a Christianity that costs us. That's why it's difficult for us to maybe receive the message that Peter is giving to us here.

Because we too need a good dose of theology. And unlike the first century Christians to whom Peter was writing, we have, for the most part, forgotten the terrors of hell from which we have been graciously delivered.

We just don't sense that in our world. Because we have everything relatively easy. And we have lost track of that reality, that glorious and gracious reality that we've been delivered from hell.

And not only that, but we have forgotten all about the eternal inheritance God has prepared for us in heaven. And what I would hope that this letter, this first epistle of Peter would do for us is to bring our focus back to those two tremendous realities.

[14:33] To never lose sight of them. That we have been delivered from the terrors of God's judgment in hell. Graciously delivered.

And that we have an eternal inheritance. And is it possible that we could, in this life, in America today, as Christians today, that we could refocus our attention, our hopes, on something that is way out there somewhere.

Matter of fact, it's probably not way out there as far as we think it is. I'm talking about our eternal inheritance. Reserved for us.

Prepared for us. Kept and guarded for us. In heaven. And the point being, of course, that no matter what may come, what persecutions we may face, if we'll keep our focus on those two things, especially the second one, we'll make it.

Not only endure, but live victoriously. And that's the point here of this text in 1 Peter. Peter is primarily focusing on the latter of those two.

[15:53] That is, the inheritance. The hope that's reserved for us. That's his primary focus here. I guess what I'd like for us to do this morning, before I kind of break this out into four distinct movements of his thought, I'd like for us to just very quickly notice his thoughts here, the flow of his thought in the text.

Would you notice there, starting with verse 3, he says that God has caused us to be born again to a living hope? So he begins there.

And then we would ask, what is that living hope? In verse 4, the living hope is to obtain an inheritance. An inheritance that's reserved for us.

will obtain it. When? Well, when Jesus comes again. But until then, we are protected.

Do you see the flow of thought here? God has born us again, born, or regenerated us. He has born us into a living hope. to an inheritance reserved in heaven.

[ 17 : 18 ] And until then, he protects us here through faith. Protects us so that our salvation one day will be revealed for all that it is.

And when will that happen? Verse 7, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus is coming again one day. And when he comes, at the consummation of all time, that will be revealed to us, our full salvation.

And what will happen then? Verse 9, we will obtain, as the outcome of our faith, the salvation of our souls. Full salvation.

That's the flow of his thought here. As he's giving them a good dose of theology, and us as well.

The flow of thought from being born again to a living hope that is secured for us.

And it cannot pass away. It cannot fade away. And it will be ready to be revealed to us when Jesus comes again. And when he does, we will obtain the full salvation.

[ 18 : 32 ] I know there are a lot of things that need to be explained there, but that's the flow of his thought. His subject, his theme is salvation.

That's what he's giving them. I tell you, in the midst of persecution, we need to be reminded of our great salvation we have. His theme is salvation.

In fact, it is salvation in the fullest sense. Salvation in its three tenses, in the sense of past tense, present tense, future tense.

Do you know that salvation is expressed and understood in Scripture in those three tenses? Past, present, future. Take your Bibles and look over, if you would, to Titus.

Titus chapter 2 and verse 4. Just look at that text for just a moment. Titus chapter 2, verse 4.

[ 19 : 39 ] Paul writes, but when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us.

Saved us. You'll notice that that's past tense, isn't it? Saved us. Saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit that is being born again.

Saying the same thing that Peter is saying. Whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, so that being justified by His grace, we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

What's Paul talking about? He's talking about salvation. In what sense? Or tense? In past tense. And so, this is salvation in the past.

I have been saved. And as I stand before you as your pastor, I can say without any doubt in my heart, been confirmed in the assurance of my heart is, I have been saved.

[ 20 : 51 ] Jesus saved me. It was an act of the grace of God when I was eight years old, by the way. God. And He saved me.

And the understanding here is the theological term justification. He justified me. That's what He's bringing out in this text. That is, it was an act whereby He placed me in Christ so that when God sees me, He sees me as though I had never sinned, as though I had always obeyed Him.

That's, have been saved. An act of the grace of God. And we're saved in the past tense in this sense, we're saved from the very penalty of sin.

Never to be judged for our sin ever, ever again. Saved from the penalty of sin. Now, if you will, look at Philippians chapter 2 and verse 12.

Philippians chapter 2 and verse 12. So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now, much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

[ 22 : 09 ] For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Now, this is salvation as well.

The subject here is salvation. But it's not salvation in the past tense. It's salvation in the present tense. And it's not an act so much, though it begins with an act, but rather a process.

It's not the act of justification, but it is the process of sanctification. That is, not only have I been saved, but I am being saved.

Being saved. Not saved from the penalty of sin, that's already been done and paid for, accomplished by the cross. An act that will never need to be done again.

But now, I'm saved from the power of sin. And it appears here in the text and other places we can turn to in God's Word that it is God working, but it is also you and I participating with Him.

[ 23 : 18 ] working out our salvation with fear and trembling. See, God works it in, and we work it out. God gives us the grace to work it out as well, but we can't work it out until God works it in.

And so we have been saved. Justification. We are being saved. Sanctification. And it's a process that you and I as boarding in believers are engaged in and will be engaged in all the way through this life until Jesus comes again or until He takes us home, whichever happens first.

Sanctification. I am being saved. Being transformed into the very image of Jesus Christ Himself.

One more tense. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 13. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13.

Where Paul writes, in Him, that's in Jesus, you also, after listening, after hearing, after receiving the message of truth, that is the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

[ 24 : 37 ] That speaks of our security. Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view of the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of His glory.

And I chose that text because that brings us right back to 1 Peter. And ultimately, where we're going to go in his argument in 1 Peter chapter 1. Here the idea is salvation still.

Not in the past tense. Not in the present tense, present process, but in the future tense. The future tense in view of the redemption.

Not redemption in the saving sense of being born again, but the redemption of all we are when Christ comes for His glory. And so it's not have been saved or being saved.

It is I will one day be saved in the fullest sense. And so all of it will come together. And as a matter of fact, not only are we saved from the penalty of sin and the power of sin, but in the future sense, one day we will be saved from the very presence of sin altogether as we are redeemed out of this world to be God's own possession forever and ever and ever removed completely from the very presence of sin.

[ 26 : 04 ] Isn't that wonderful? That's what's coming. And see, it's Peter bringing all of these things together right here in this text. In fact, I can show you very quickly that the past and present and future sense of salvation are all right here when he says to be born again unto a living hope.

That's talking about salvation as a done deal in the past at some point in time where by God's grace he birthed you. That's past tense.

And then when he says there in verse 5 that you're protected by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, the idea there is salvation in the present tense.

That is the work of God in our lives right here, right now. And then he ends the text there in verse 9. With salvation in the future tense. Obtaining one day, one day when Jesus comes, obtaining the outcome of your faith.

The ultimate outcome of it. The ultimate goal for your faith. And what is it? The salvation of your souls. And see, if you did not see the tenses of salvation, you might be tempted to think that what salvation is he talking about there?

[ 27 : 20 ] Is he talking about when I was saved? And so is there some possibility that I have not been saved yet? That this salvation that is something out there in the future?

And maybe I can lose what I have right now. Maybe I have it. Maybe I don't have it. No. He's talking about salvation in the fullest sense. The full thing. The full salvation. When Jesus comes.

And when we will be with him in glory forever and ever. See, all tenses of salvation are there.

Peter's subject is salvation. And he's bringing it all together.

And he is lumping it all under the concept or the idea of hope. Hope. Or more specifically, a living hope.

A living hope, which is full salvation. Full thing. All that God has intended. All that God plans.

[ 28 : 19 ] Your salvation to be. The full thing. Our living hope. Now that's kind of a broad stroke brush of the text.

Now because our minds need some pegs to hang it all on, let me give you four very quickly. About this hope. Four realities of this hope.

First, it is a grounded hope. Grounded. I mean, it is secure. There isn't anything shaky about this hope.

See, that's why hope in the biblical sense is something quite different than the way we use hope in a secular sense. When we use the word hope, we're generally talking about something that may not be sure, may not happen, we just hope it'll happen.

But in the biblical sense, in the way that Peter uses the word hope, and really this is, this carries through all the entire Bible, hope in this sense that it's a sure thing.

[ 29 : 23 ] It's a secure thing. It's not willy-nilly. It's not dependent upon my performance or dependent upon circumstances. It's a hope that is absolutely sure.

Rock solid sure. And it is sure because it's grounded in something. It's grounded in our new birth. That's what he's talking about in verse 3.

Blessed be the God that has praised the Lord, who according to his great mercy has done what? Caused us to be born again to a living hope.

A living hope. Born again. You know, the term born again, something I think we ought to bring back into our gospel presentations.

We've got the idea of being convinced that we can't use terms like born again because people don't understand what we're talking about. And yet, when Jesus met with Nicodemus, he didn't understand what Jesus was talking about either.

[ 30 : 32 ] When he said, you must be born again. And Jesus explained that. That's what we need. That's what the world needs. That's what lost sinners need. To be born again. And the idea behind, the theological idea behind born again is this term regeneration.

To be regenerated. To be born again. To be birthed, not from below, but birthed from above. And so, this hope we have in the midst of persecution, in the midst of any kind of suffering you may be enduring, the hope that you have is sure because it is grounded in the power of God unto regeneration.

He birthed us by his power. He didn't birth us based upon what we've done or based upon our merits. He caused us to be born again.

This is all God. This is God's act. This is regeneration. And so, it's grounded in this kind of hope by the saving power of God. Regeneration to be born again.

But according to, he says, to the mercy of God. According to the unmerited favor of God, we might say.

[ 31 : 46 ] Isn't that what he said? Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who, according to his great mercy. This ought to encourage you.

No matter what we face. Whether it's persecution from the outside or suffering from the inside, no matter what problem you face, if you are born again Christian, you are so by the great mercy of God that he has granted you and grounded you in something you could never deserve.

How gracious of God to do that. We need to be reminded of it. Again, like I said a moment ago, to be reminded that he has saved us from the horrors of hell by his great mercy.

See, it's rooted, it's grounded in that. This hope we have, it's grounded in our new birth, our salvation, our regeneration. It's by the saving power of God, it is according to the unmerited favor of God, and then it is accomplished through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There would be no living hope if our Savior Jesus died upon the cross and was buried and that was the end of it.

[ 33 : 17 ] We'd have no living hope. Do you know we have a living hope because Jesus lives? Of course you know that. It's all according to the resurrection. You say, why didn't he say according to the cross?

The cross is implied here. The finished work, the whole package is accomplished not only by the death of Christ, that's implied, but by his resurrection because you see, Peter's theme here is life living and we live because he lives.

Jesus lives. When Jesus went to the cross and hung there and shed his blood for us and then died, in a sense, the blood of Jesus was brought into the very presence of God the Father, the true holy of holies and the reason why we know that our salvation was accomplished by Jesus is because he was raised from the dead.

That is, God accepted his sacrifice there upon that cross and he was raised from the dead and because he is raised, we too will live. And so, it is grounded, this hope is grounded, rock solid in

regeneration, being born again according to the mercy of God, the unmerited favor of God and accomplished through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, it's grounded in hope. Secondly, not only a grounded hope but a guarded hope.

[ 34 : 57 ] Some have suggested in this text that the real theme here is the perseverance of the saints and I think that is partly true. The overarching theme is salvation but it is a salvation that can never be lost.

It is a salvation that is sure and grounded because it's something that God did. But, in the verses, verses 4 and 5, really the theme there is primarily the perseverance of the saints.

I mean, what is happening here? See, it's not just simply grounded in something and then we're just let loose to do whatever we want and maybe we'll make and maybe we won't. It's grounded in regeneration but it's also guarded by the power of God.

Guarded. Notice what he says there in verse 4 and 5. To obtain, what? An inheritance. It's a good thing to get an inheritance, isn't it?

Isn't it? Wouldn't you like to be the recipient of an inheritance? A lot of things that we might receive in this life by way of inheritance but what could be compared to our salvation?

[ 36 : 14 ] Full and free. That's our inheritance. And in a sense, I would take it a step further and say that our inheritance really is God himself.

That when we leave this life and we go into the very presence of God, God becomes our position just as we are his position.

He's our inheritance. But in the sense here, in this text, the idea is salvation. The fullness of this salvation.

See, Peter uses several terms to speak about the same theme or to support the same theme. It's salvation. It's a living hope. It's our inheritance. It is our full salvation.

The salvation of our soul. This inheritance. And what about this inheritance? Well, he says it's preserved for us. Preserved where?

[ 37 : 16 ] In heaven. Do you know that this salvation that you have is something that is guarded for you in heaven?

It's guarded there. It's something he says cannot perish. Look at it. Verse 4. Which is imperishable. In fact, the word imperishable is used elsewhere to describe something that an enemy cannot spoil. That is Satan and his armies cannot barge in or rush into heaven and break down the walls of heaven and grab your inheritance in Christ and take it and remove it.

There isn't any way because it is guarded there for us by the power of God. It is imperishable and it is undefiled he says here.

Undefiled. There's no defect. That would be the definition here. No defects in it. There's no impurities in it.

[ 38 : 29 ] It's difficult for us to imagine anything that is absolutely perfect. That has no defect in it. No hidden clause. No exception to it.

No fine print. It's undefiled. And so no enemy can rush in and snatch it from us. That salvation reserved for us in heaven has no impurity in it.

No imperfection. and nothing that might cause us to lose it or might cause us to not enjoy it to its fullest once we get it.

It's undefiled and it can never ever fade away. It cannot be like a beautiful rose that is beautiful in all of its glory and then eventually it begins to fade.

This salvation, this inheritance we have reserved for us in heaven can never fade. Never fade. is it enough for us to know no matter what we face that our salvation is guarded for us.

[ 39 : 40 ] Can we look beyond this life? Can we look beyond the boundaries the context of our lives here as humans on this imperfect planet?

Can we look beyond that and endure no matter what may come and endure that knowing that we have a great inheritance reserved for us and it cannot be snatched away from us.

It cannot be defiled in any way and it will never ever weaken in its potency never fade away for us.

It's reserved for us there. It's preserved and protected not only the very nature of it but also the act of God whereby he surrounds it with his protection and yet in verse 5 the protection of God's power the protection over our inheritance is something that is taking place right here as well.

It's not just something in heaven. Your salvation is sure and secure right here right now. Notice how he puts it. You're protected by what?

The power of God. Protected by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. See God has put a guard on us here.

[ 41 : 07 ] That is our faith our salvation is protected by the power of God a power that can never fail. I don't care what you face and I don't care how many times you fail.

And we do fail. God's protection of our salvation is sure can never fail.

And our faith it is a faith that also cannot fail. You see listen this gives God all the glory. You see we don't have to go out there and try to drum up our own faith.

Now surely we need to participate with God and feed our minds and our hearts with his word and spend time in communion with God and do all that he requires of us so that we can work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

But when it comes down to the faith our real faith the true faith that God has given to us it's a faith that can never fail. Never fail. Not dependent upon you.

[ 42 : 14 ] It is protected by the power of God. Not just our inheritance is protected and guarded there in safe keeping by the sovereignty and power of God. But our faith itself our salvation that we have we can never lose it.

See this is a clear statement on the preservation and perseverance. Not so much the perseverance of the saint because that calls attention to the saint but perseverance of the faith.

It can never be lost. You see it's protected. See a guarded hope and one day it will be presented according to the predetermined plan of God.

You see he says there in the last part of verse 4 ready to be revealed. Ready to be revealed in the last time according to God's plan and one day it's ready to be revealed.

It's not ready in the sense that it's not ready now. That somehow God's got to do some more work and maybe if he doesn't get that done or you don't you don't do your part that maybe when Jesus comes it won't be ready.

[ 43 : 17 ] No it's in this sense that your faith your salvation is a done deal. It's done. And this is meant to give us encouragement in the face of our persecution.

You see in the face of self. It's ready to be revealed and when at the last time when that going to be when God says so. Now God's not waiting and you know to come up with a plan on that and set a date.

He's already got that set. You can't say when you know if the Lord tarries. God is not going to tarry. He's going to come just on schedule and it's his predetermined plan and time and he's saying here Peter saying to us praise the Lord no matter what you face.

God is protecting you. Your hope is sure. It's grounded in your salvation your new birth.

It is guarded by the very power of God a power that cannot fail guarding over a face that cannot fail. And one day you'll see it.

[ 44 : 26 ] You'll see it. It'll be revealed. According to God's predetermined plan. This is the preservation perseverance of the saints. It's a guarded hope.

In this he says you greatly rejoice. Though now for a little while if necessary you have been distressed by various trials.

Do you see that? So thirdly. A glorified hope. Now let me explain this as we go along.

It's not just grounded in the act of God whereby he births us into his family. It's not only guarded by the very power of God that cannot fail.

Guarding a faith that cannot fail. But this ours is a glorified hope. Or one day will be. But until then.

[ 45 : 38 ] We have the nasty nows to go through. So you have to go through the nasty nows before you can get to the sweet by and by. The nasty nows.

And so he describes for us here in verse six. The purpose of our trials. He is testing us proving us. Proving us really. Proving what?

Proving our faith. And the purpose is to reveal what it really is. It's perfect. Look at how he describes it.

in this you greatly rejoice. Even though now for a little while if necessary you've been distressed by various trials so that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire may result or be found to result in praise and glory and honor revelation of Jesus Christ.

What's the purpose of your suffering? Purpose ultimately is to prove something to you.

[ 46 : 59 ] Prove your faith. Prove it. Not testing in the sense of making it into something. Certainly from our experience our faith does need to be tested and fortified and matured.

But we're not talking about that here. Peter's not talking about here. He's talking about ultimate salvation. And so the trials that we're going through and the persecutions we're enduring are all designed to prove something.

That our faith is real. That it cannot fail. That it's the real thing. That's the purpose of it. And so that changes the perspective.

And he says something about our perspective. When you look at the trials and the persecution you might be enduring, what's your perspective on that?

Well, get Peter's perspective here. In the first place, he says it's temporary. Did you know that your trials and your persecution and your points of suffering are temporary?

[ 48 : 04 ] temporary? He said, well, that's good news. I wish it would end. That means there's going to be an end to it. That's right. There will be. When will that be?

I have no idea. In fact, you can prove from history and even from biblical history that many of the first century Christians saw no end to their persecution until they died.

is there a promise here that they will end in this life? Not necessarily. Because I want to remind you that Peter's focus here is the ultimate end, the ultimate goal, the ultimate fulfillment of our salvation. And so the necessary or excuse me, the for now or for a little while may be until you die. You say, well, that's not good news.

It is if you'll put your focus on what comes after that. And that's the whole point. To be forward looking in that sense, to look out into eternity and to see what God has reserved for us in heaven.

[ 49 : 19 ] In fact, we can't even see it all, can we? We don't know the fullness of it. We just know the one day we're going to receive it and it's being kept for us and reserved and guarded for us there.

And but for now, for a little while, and in God's mind, it is a little while, by the way, I don't care if you live to be a hundred years old. What's that to God?

But for a little while in this life, we might even say if necessary. So see, here's the perspective. It's temporary. It may be just a season and God might be gracious to let you come through it.

And often he does. It might be a season that encompasses the rest of your life, but it is temporary and it is necessary. That's the other perspective we need to see.

Perspective on trials. It's necessary. God's God's doing something here. God is accomplishing something here and it is necessary. necessary. These trials, these points of temptation, these points of suffering, they're for a temporary time and they are necessary.

[ 50 : 32 ] And thirdly, they are under God's sovereign control. That's implied in the text. Under God's sovereign control. See, he's the refiner.

You're being sifted in this life by some cantankerous unbeliever. Don't blame him.

Blame God. That's putting it quite negative. Really, we're to give him glory. That he would allow us to suffer for him.

It's all under his control. See, we're talking about a glorified hope. The purpose is to prove that your faith is real. It's true.

And to give us the right perspective on it. And then, notice what he says about the end product. The ultimate end of all of this is glory.

[ 51 : 46 ] Glory. Praise. Honor. Whose glory, by the way? Not my glory.

See, here's, it's not this idea that I have endured through this life. My hope has been sure. And I have endured to the end.

And then when I get to heaven and when Jesus comes, I can stand before him and glory in my continued and lasting hope in him. Undying hope in him.

There isn't any glory that's ever shared with man. It's all God's glory. So rather, it is that he would be glorified.

When Jesus comes and he grants or I receive, obtain the full salvation, the full hope, all realized, then he gets the glory for that.

[ 52 : 54 ] And I will glorify him like Sherry sang a moment ago. The treasures that come as a result of the trials will one day be laid at his throne. A glorified hope.

And then one last thing. A guaranteed hope. Guaranteed hope. Would you look at verses seven and eight again? Excuse me, nine, eight and nine rather.

