

“THE PRELUDE & FOUNDATION OF DISCIPLESHIP”

[March 2, 2003; Matthew 10.1; 16 – 22 & I Peter 1. 1 – 9]

This message is to be a prelude in two ways—

- 1) Next week, Lord willing, Kenny is going to preach on Mark 8. 31 – 38. In this section of Scripture is contained the very familiar passage that embodies the Christian life.

“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s shall save it.”

Discipleship is something which every Christian should be very passionate about and zealous for.

This leads into the second way in which this message aims to be prefatory...

- 2) I do not believe that discipleship is in any way separated or detached from Christianity.

You do not become a Christian and then at some later time, decide to endeavor in discipleship. It is not some kind of “higher faith” deal or next step in the Christian experience.

If you are a Christian you are to be a disciple—to act as a disciple of Christ and to live as a disciple of Christ.

And as will be shown in this message, coupled with what many of you have already had vast experience with and what the others of you will have,

DISCIPLESHIP EXACTS A HIGH PRICE.

It is demanding—even to the point of death for some.

This is discipleship—what it means to be a disciple of Christ Jesus.

But what is to be addressed here is...

How? How are we enabled to lay down our lives so that we may EMBRACE suffering, at whatever proportions? Whether it be simple and harmless chastisement and ridicule or something as sacrificial, and most times painful, as martyrdom.

How are we to continue on in faith when things get tough?

(But this is sometimes easy though. Sometimes things getting hard serves as the impetus to lean more heavily on Him).

How are we to continue on in faith when things get stale?

Or the beauty of our Lord becomes less lovely in our eyes and hearts?

For pastors and teachers, what about when burn-out or discouragement creeps in and “sets up camp”?

This is very important and should concern every Christian because...

There are many who start out strong only to have their “light” burn out, or become extinguished, before their race is finished.

They start out sprinting, running in such a way as to have everyone convinced that not only will they finish this race, but will do it with high honors; but somewhere along the way the pace slows until eventually, to the puzzlement of everyone who saw the beginning, the race is forfeited...forsaken.

So, the question remains very relevant...

“How are we to continue on? Where do we get the strength required to keep going—holding fast to the faith?”

Well, we could say...

1) LOVE

Love for God and for the Gospel.

John 14.15 states,

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

Matthew 22. 37 – 40 states,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your might...”

all your possessions, and ambitions, and your money, and your family, etc...

“This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

So certainly this is a way—MOST certainly this is the way.

But then there is...

2) DETERMINATION

We need to have, or develop, a singleness of mind and purpose.

Church and faith today are very often brought down (devalued in my opinion) to business terms and strategies.

“Develop the short and long-term goals and then be diligent in making them happen.

You have to remain focused.

Stick with the decision you have made!”

[What a “house of cards” this is. A house of cards that will blow apart—maybe not with the first strong wind of trial that comes your way, but will surely fail with the sustained assault that is the lot of every believer, and so-called believer to an extent].

And this leads quite naturally into...

3) DISCIPLINE

A good and well-maintained life of prayer, reading good books, listening to good music, church attendance, church involvement, and numerous other things that are seemingly evident marks of a holy life.

Make no mistake, each of these (Love, Determination, & Discipline) are essential in some way to the question of “How...” but they are also aspects of the Christian life that can be done for a time on our own, in our own power. They can be faked, imitated, *imagined*...

They may NOT be genuine and therefore they can fade; and this means that...

THE LOVE, DETERMINATION, AND DISCIPLINE MUST HAVE A QUALITY AND GENUINE-NESS THAT ONLY COMES FROM, AND IS ONLY SUSTAINED BY, THE POWER OF GOD.

Otherwise, they are false, misleading...

Obstacles to Christianity.

What a need there is for the proof of faith! Because the very signs by which many measure their assurance are the same that are in fact KEEPING them from Christ! This is far too great of an epidemic in today’s churches to be ignored and not spoken boldly about.

Jesus did...

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

--[Matthew 7. 21 – 23](#)

Now is not the time to get very deep into this text. I also do not want to dash all assurance of hope leaving little time left to speak about the abundance of it, because as Christians, our hope is abundant!

We must remember...

GOD REQUIRES OF US ONLY WHAT HE ALONE CAN GIVE—AND WHAT HE GIVES, HE WILL MOST ASSUREDLY SUSTAIN AND PRESERVE UNTIL THE END.

What comfort, hope, and confidence that thought, this truth, provides!

*Not what my hands have done, can save my guilty soul;
Not what my toiling flesh has borne, can make my spirit whole.
Not what I feel or do, can give me peace with God;
Not all my prayers and sighs and tears can bear my awful load.*

*Thy work alone, O Christ, can ease this weight of sin;
Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God, can give me peace within.*

*Thy love to me, O God, not mine, O Lord, to Thee,
Can rid me of this dark unrest, and set my spirit free.*

*Thy grace alone, O God, to me can pardon speak;
Thy pow'r alone, O Son of God, can this sore bondage break.
No other work save Thine, no other blood will do;
No strength, save that which is divine, can bear me safely through.*

*I bless the Christ of God; I rest on love divine;
And with unfalt'ring lip and heart, I call this Saviour mine.
His cross dispels each doubt; I bury in His tomb
Each thought of unbelief and fear, each ling'ring shade of doom.*

*I praise the God of grace; I trust His truth and might;
He calls me His, I call Him mine, my God, my joy, my light.
Tis He who saveth me, and freely pardon gives;
I love because He loveth me, I live because He lives.¹*

What a beautifully inspired song that is.

Well, before getting into our main text, I'd like to draw attention to [Matthew 10. 1, 16 – 22](#) to help serve as added foundation and parallel for the message.

It opens with an event that is about to take place that would be **ABSOLUTELY ELECTRIFYING!**

“And having summoned His disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.”

Look at what has happened up to this point?

1. This man has been born of a virgin...that's pretty big.
2. He has taught in the synagogue with supernatural understanding (Lk 2. 41 – 52);
3. He's fasted for forty days and nights in the wilderness (Mt 4. 1 – 11);
4. He's turned water into wine (Jn 2. 1 – 11);
5. He has transformed a Samaritan community and taught what true worship is (Jn 4. 1 – 45);
6. He has cast out an unclean spirit (Mk 1. 21 – 28);
7. He's healed Peter's mother-in-law (Mt 8. 14 – 17);
8. He healed all the sick and cast out all the demons in the crowd that gathered outside of Peter's house after his mother-in-law had been healed (Mk 1. 29 – 34);
9. As He traveled about all Galilee, He's healed many, many more (Mt 4. 23 – 25);

¹ “Not What My Hands Have Done” written by Horatius Bonar, 1861 [see Trinity Hymnal, Baptist Edition, #403]

10. He's caused a catch of fish so great that it broke the nets, and this immediately after a fruitless, or catchless, day (Lk 4. 42 – 5. 11);
11. He has cleansed a leper (Mt 8. 1 – 4);
12. He has completely forgiven and completely healed a paralytic (Lk 5. 17 – 39);
13. He has healed a man's withered hand (Mt 12. 1 – 14);
14. He again healed infirmities within a multitude that followed Him (Mt 12. 15 – 21);
15. He's healed the Centurion's servant without even being there (Lk 7. 1 – 17);
16. He's brought back to life the widow of Nain's son (Lk 7. 11 – 17);
17. He's healed the Nobleman's son (Jn 4. 46 – 54);
18. He has calmed the tempest and shown that He is Lord of nature (Mk 4. 35 – 5. 20);
19. He's cast out demons among the tombs of the Gaderenes (Mk 5. 1 – 20);
20. He has resurrected Jairus's daughter (Mt 9.18 – 26);
21. He has given sight to two blind men (Mt 9. 27 – 31);
22. He cast out a demon and enabled a mute to speak with simply a word (Mt 9. 32 – 33);
23. He healed a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years simply through her touching the very hem of his cloak (Lk 8. 40 – 48);
24. He restored the health of a man who had been crippled for thirty-eight years by simply saying, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." (Jn 5. 1 – 8);

And now He is giving these twelve, who have undeniably been overwhelmed and awe-struck by such a display of power and dominion, the authority and the commission to do the same!!

Do you think, even for a second, that you would NOT be excited about this???
Do you think, even for a second, that they were not?

What an awesome privilege.

Matthew 10. 7 shows us that these twelve were to be the first heralds of the Gospel. They were to preach the Gospel the same way that Christ had been doing—

WITH ATTESTING MIRACLES!!

WITH POWER AND AUTHORITY OVER DISEASE AND SICKNESS AND DEATH..

WITH POWER AND AUTHORITY OVER THE FORCES OF DARKNESS..

WITH POWER AND AUTHORITY FROM HEAVEN!!!

The thoughts that must have been going through their heads!

They were about to change the world. They may not have realized just how much of an impact they were to have, but you can be assured that they were excited about wielding the same kind of power that came from the hands and mouth of Jesus!

What excitement! What impatience to get going! What privilege!!
What an occasion that needed HUMBLE and servant-hearted men.
Men who loved their God more than they desired His power;
Men who loved the Gospel more than the miracles that testified to its truth;
Men who want for themselves, as well as to preach to others, the eternal
reward of faith in Christ rather than the temporal reward of present well-being.

MEN, WHO KNEW THE **COST** OF FOLLOWING AND PREACHING CHRIST
AND ACCEPTED IT WITH JOY.

They were, in fact, going to realize this cost...

{ They were all to realize it fully, both immediately and subsequently. In fact, depending on the source used, all of these who were to receive this power from on high, all of these who were to become Apostles, with the exception of John, would die a violent death of martyrdom. They would each fully realize the cost of being a disciple of Christ. They would experience it both commonly, in that they would see it happening to other Christians, and personally, as they would individually be...

- *Beheaded by the sword;*
- *Pinned to the ground and beheaded;*
- *Thrown from the temple tower and then smashing in the head with a club;*
- *Stoned and then beheaded;²*
- *Crucified on an X-shaped cross;*
- *Dragged to pieces;*
- *Crucified upside down;*
- *Beheaded on an execution block;³*
- *Crucified;*
- *Beaten and then crucified;*
- *Run through with spears and then thrown into an oven;*
- *Hanged from an Olive tree; and*
- *Exiled, only after having been thrown into a “large vessel filled with boiling oil that did him no harm.”⁴ }*

v.16

“...Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves;...”

This would have been a sobering thought.

A sheep in the midst of wolves doesn't stand much of a chance does it? This analogy would be hard-pressed to inspire courage or zeal.

Remember though...

GOD DOES NOT REQUIRE WHAT HE DOES NOT ALSO PROVIDE.

² The Apostle Matthias, who filled the vacancy left by Judas Iscariot.

³ This is the account of the Apostle Paul, who was told that he was to be shown how many things he would suffer for Christ's name.

⁴ These accounts are taken from “Foxe's Book Of Martyrs” © 1997 Bridge-Logos Publishers

God does not send His saints, His commissioned saints, into the middle of enemy ground without also *ensuring* their *safety* and *guaranteeing* their *success*. And it is at this point that Christ tells them of what they could expect in the coming days.

- They would be scourged; ⁵
- They would be on trial before powerful rulers who would not be friendly concerning the news of a new King—a liberator! ⁶
- Their message, the Gospel, would cause severe division and enmity among the people, and this to the point that husband would turn against wife, children against parents, brother against brother...the strongest bonds would be severed. But even more than this, these ties would be utterly despised and betrayed, to the point of delivering the other up to death. ⁷

On account of His name, the message that they were to proclaim, they would “...*be hated by all...*”. ⁸

Now, this is big, and would have been to the disciples. Where there was once an excitement that could barely be contained, now there would likely be second thoughts, ...fear, ...anxiety.

And before Christ goes on to give them some awesome words of encouragement, words that would instill confidence where there was fear...

Before He tells them what Christianity and being a Christian means—what discipleship means—He says...

*“...it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.”*⁹

And this is the thought that we have as the prelude to discipleship, because Christ immediately goes into a discourse on the subject.

This is the thought that we have as the assurance of our salvation...**ENDURING UNTIL THE END.**

This endurance is the *AFFIRMATION* of the Christian.

It is also the ground for hope, for faith, for finishing the race...

FOR DISCIPLESHIP,

Because it is not something that we do,

But because of something that has been done—

the death of Christ has secured the child of God!!

⁵ Matthew 10. 17

⁶ Matthew 10. 18

⁷ Matthew 10. 21

⁸ Matthew 10. 22

⁹ Matthew 10. 22

But ONLY the child of God.

“He that endures to the end,” and only he, “shall be saved.”¹⁰

God will not lose those He has chosen, called, and justified—He will preserve them and enable them to persevere, to endure, until the end.

This is the ground and prelude of discipleship,...

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS!

The disciple can be sure that having begun the course, it will be seen through to completion.

As Paul states in [Philippians 1.6](#),

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Or as David states in [Psalm 37. 25 – 28](#),

“I have been young, and now I am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, or his descendants begging bread.

All the day long he is gracious and leads; and his descendants are a blessing.

Depart from evil, and do good, so you will abide forever.

For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His godly ones; they are preserved forever...”

In this, the “perseverance of His godly ones,” is the disciple’s strength.

And Peter writes of this strength in beautiful detail.

Turn in your Bibles to [I Peter 1. 1 – 9](#)

¹*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen*

²*according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.*

³*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴*to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

⁵*who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

⁶*In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,*

⁷*so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

⁸*and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in*

¹⁰ C.H. Spurgeon “Spurgeon’s Sermons” Volume VIII, pg. 156 © 1999 Baker Books

*Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,
obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.*

Here we have a more mature and PRESERVED Apostle of Jesus Christ—

- One who has experienced bitter trial and suffering...
- One who has been “sifted as wheat” by Satan...
- One who has, as a professed disciple, denied his Lord...
- One who would be martyred by crucifixion, but would request that it be upside down due to not feeling worthy of being crucified in the same manner as the Lover of his soul, his Master, his Saviour, his Lord.

Here in our text, we have being taught to us the means of endurance by one who has endured;

The assurance of being preserved by one who has been enabled to persevere.

And we see in the first verse the reality of what Christ spoke of in [Matthew 10. 21 – 22](#).

Peter addresses this letter to ALIENS residing throughout the region of Asia Minor, which was some 600 to 1200 miles from Israel.

Now not all would be Jewish Christians who were driven out of Israel for their allegiance to Christ, but there would be some. This was a primary means by which the Gospel was spread—the dispersion of His people.

But who Peter is likely *most* referring to is the Christian who is an alien, a stranger, here—

one who knows, and lives accordingly, that “...*here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come.*”¹¹

Those whose hearts, minds, and lives are set on things above and not on the things that are on earth; those who have died and whose lives are hidden with Christ in God.¹²

- *Is your life hidden with Christ in God?*
- *Is your heart set on things above—things that are of eternal glory—and not on the temporal vanities of this world?*
- *Are you seeking that city which is to come with a heart’s cry that rings loud and strong, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”?*

If so, then take great joy in knowing that this letter was written to you!!

To strengthen you in your faith—

To preserve you in times of doubt and trial and temptation...

¹¹ Hebrews 13. 14

¹² Colossians 3. 2 – 3

To you, “...who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood...”

Here again lies the security of those who are God’s.

WE ARE CHOSEN—

NOT according to chance,
but by the FOREORDAINED, IMMUTABLE, **ETERNAL** plan of God!
NOT according to performance,
but BY THE SANCTIFYING WORK OF HIS SPIRIT!!
NOT according to our own will,
but BY THE EMPOWERING OF THE SPIRIT TO OBEY JESUS CHRIST!!
NOT according to a righteousness of our own,
but BY THE PERFECTION OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST!!
(...a blood much greater than that of bulls and goats).¹³

TO BE CHOSEN OF GOD IS TO BE PERMANENT!

For this NOT to be so would be

- to call God less than God and in fact, not sovereign;
- to call the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit defective;
- to call our own will more powerful than God’s; and
- to call the blood of Christ no more sufficient to save than the blood of bulls and goats.

In essence, IT WOULD COMPLETELY DISMANTLE THE TRINITY OF GOD IN THE ROLE OF SALVATION and make each person of God in the Trinity powerless to save—powerless to preserve.

(It is a serious matter to believe, to teach, that a true Christian can lose their salvation).

*THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD STANDS FOREVER...!
HIS PLAN AND HIS WILL CANNOT BE THWARTED AND THOSE WHO ARE HIS
CAN NOT BE SNATCHED FROM HIS POSSESSION!!!!*

Job 4. 2

“I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.”

¹³ Hebrews 9. 14

Isaiah 43. 10 – 13

“You are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no god formed, and there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and there is no Saviour besides Me. It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, and there was no strange god among you; so you are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and I AM GOD.”

“even from eternity, I am He; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?”

Well, what could possibly be said to capture the heart of all that?

*“MAY GRACE AND PEACE BE YOURS IN
FULLEST MEASURE.”¹⁴*

The literal rendering of this verse is,

“Grace unto you and peace be multiplied.”

Peter has just shown that grace has been given from God to His chosen in fullest measure; therefore, His chosen may also have peace in its fullest measure.

THE MORE WE COME TO KNOW THE EXTENT, THE PERFECTION, AND THE PERMANENCE OF HIS GRACE TO US, THE MORE WE CAN KNOW HIS PEACE!
THE MORE WE CAN LET THE “PEACE OF CHRIST RULE IN OUR HEARTS.”¹⁵

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,…”

Again, the theme of His election is cause for God to be praised.

He “...has caused...” SOMETHING AWESOME!!!

This is a miracle of miracles!!

- It is what perplexed Nicodemus, “a ruler of the Jews.”¹⁶
- It is what Christ told the seventy who had come back from a time of wielding the power of heaven to REALLY be amazed at and rejoicing in!!

Don't rejoice that you cast out some demons, or healed some sick people, or even raised some dead people to life again. Big deal! Rejoice that you have been born again! That is the real miracle.

He “...according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,…”

¹⁴ I Peter 1. 2

¹⁵ Colossians 3. 15

¹⁶ John 3. 1

Listen to Paul's words...

“and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.”

“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men MOST to be pitied.”¹⁷

IF CHRIST HAS NOT BEEN RAISED, OUR HOPE IS DEAD, JUST AS HE IS, BECAUSE IT IS ONLY IN HIM THAT CHRISTIANITY HAS ITS WORTH.

It is as hopeless and worthless as the “hope” placed in Mohammed! It has no life. It has a resemblance of hope but only because of its dependence on chance. It is a “hope” that enslaves since it is uncertain. It is the “hope” of a gambler! There is no real hope here.

In Christ, we have a hope that is alive because Christ Jesus is alive!
We have a living hope as the anchor of our soul.¹⁸
A living hope that KNOWS we will spend eternity with our Lord
because He has assured it and INTERCEDES for it!

A living hope that looks forward to “...an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven...”

This living hope gives us patience to endure the hardships of this life—

It testifies that the “sufferings of this world are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”¹⁹

Right now, we see the glory of God in so many things—

His creation, His providence, His grace, His blessings, His Son,...
And yet, we also know that right now, we see only and at best as in a mirror dimly!²⁰

THIS LIVING HOPE YIELDS PERSEVERANCE!!
AND THIS PERSEVERANCE IS THE FRUIT OF PRESERVATION!!!

v. 5 –

“who are protected by the power of God...”

protected...

¹⁷ I Corinthians 15. 17 - 19

¹⁸ Hebrews 6. 19 “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil.”

¹⁹ Romans 8. 18

²⁰ I Corinthians 13. 12 “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.”

BY THE POWER OF GOD!!!

(remember Job's statement? Remember Isaiah's?) { 0 above }

"The grass withers and the flower fades; but the word of the LORD stands forever." ²¹

WE ARE PROTECTED BY THE POWER OF GOD!
NOTHING, and that means NOTHING, CAN SEPARATE US FROM HIM!! ²²

But oh, how much more there is to our text!

"we are protected through faith..."

AS IF WE NEEDED MORE ASSURANCE THAN WHAT BEING
PROTECTED BY HIS POWER PROVIDES,
WE THEN FIND THAT THE MECHANISM BY WHICH WE ARE
PROTECTED IS A GIFT THAT IS GIVEN BY HIM!!

As Kenny has stated in our studies several times on Sunday nights—faith is the vessel and not the cause in salvation. ²³

Faith does not save—Christ saves—but it is faith in Him, which the Holy Spirit enables, that effects salvation.

Christ saves through faith, and
We are protected by the power of God through faith.

Faith is the fruit that regeneration yields.
It is our responsibility to exercise faith.
It is God's responsibility to put it in place.

We'll come back to this thought in a moment, but for now let me move on through the text...

"We are protected through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

**THE SALVATION WE ENJOY NOW IS ONLY THE PROMISE OF THAT
WHICH WE WILL EXPERIENCE THEN!!!**

What a magnificent thought.

²¹ Isaiah 40. 8

²² Romans 8. 38 – 39

²³ A study on the Doctrines of Grace

The joy that is the Christian's in merely knowing that he or she is saved will be magnified ten thousand times ten thousand times when it is at last experienced and felt in its fullness!!!

"In this you greatly rejoice..."

for you have found more than enough strength to endure the various trials that come.

What can possibly touch you with all that we have seen in this text?

With all that we have to hope in?

"What can man do to me?"²⁴

The very trials which beat so heavily against us are the very tools and means by which God uses to provide us with assurance!!

Look at [v. 7](#) –

"that the proof (or, genuineness) of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;..."

Why is this important?

Because of [verse 5](#)! (*"who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*)

IT IS THE GENUINENESS OF OUR FAITH THAT ENSURES THE PROTECTIVE POWER OF GOD TO SECURE OUR SALVATION!!

This also brings in verse 4 and our inheritance that God promises through the genuineness of our faith.

Peter contrasts our inheritance with gold—

Gold perishes...our inheritance NEVER will.

Therefore, the genuineness of our faith is of much greater value than the greatest treasure this earth can provide.

It is of utmost importance that our faith be genuine.

We must be very concerned to know this—that our faith is a genuine faith.

And this is why we rejoice in trials, tribulation, and distress...²⁵

Because for the Christian, they are proving a far greater reward than loss!!!

²⁴ Psalm 56. 11; 118. 6

²⁵ James 1. 2 – 3 "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."

THEY ARE PROVING THE SALVATION OF OUR SOULS!!!

*“For we have become partakers of Christ, IF we hold fast the beginning of our assurance steadfastly until the end.”*²⁶

Are you holding fast through trial and temptation?

Is your faith proving genuine or apostate?

Is the outcome of your faith resulting in the salvation or the damnation of your soul?

Here is the work of God-given faith—

“...though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him...”

Remember the definition of faith?

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”²⁷

Peter is commending faith here just as Jesus did after quelling Thomas’ doubts—

Accompanying this faith are love for Christ and a CONTINUAL “believing” in Him, or resting in Christ.

This “believing” is an entrusting faith in the work of Christ and the love and goodness of God.

And it is accompanied with *“...a joy inexpressible and full of glory!!”*²⁸

What a vivid expression of what faith in Christ, love for Him, yields.

It’s a joy that cannot be spoken, only lived out in humble and love-filled obedience every day until the fulfillment and the perfection of our salvation—the completion of our sanctification and the full glow of our glorification in Christ Jesus.

“HE THAT ENDURES TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED.”

He that endures to the end has a faith that cannot be shaken and will not be taken!!

*It is a faith of joy inexpressible and full of glory!!
It faces every trial with a joy of knowing that it is proving its genuineness!!*

²⁶ Hebrews 3. 14

²⁷ Hebrews 11. 1

²⁸ I Peter 1. 8

*It is enduring to the end...and it is obtaining as its
outcome, the salvation of God...
The salvation of our souls.*