

YOUR
baptism
ON
trial

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 REGULAR BAPTIST
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In Dedication

*With loving gratitude, this book is dedicated to
Glenn and Judy Richard.
God has used your genuine and consistent faith
to greatly impact my life.*

Your Faith on Trial

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Your Faith on Trial

The Examination of the Witness

Course Overview

- Lesson 1* We will see if the witness is truly a disciple of Jesus Christ. We will give great attention to her response to some very pertinent questions.
- Lesson 2* The motives and attitudes of the witness's heart will be closely examined. If she has real faith, she will find herself being purified from sin.
- Lesson 3* Does the witness exemplify the life of the Lord Jesus Christ? Having received Him by faith, she should be characterized by holy, submissive behavior—even when faced with difficult people and circumstances.
- Lesson 4* The witness will be questioned about fear. When she is tempted to be afraid, does her faith rise up to conquer her fear?
- Lesson 5* During times of suffering, has the witness shown a deeply rooted faith that has enabled her to press on? Can she endure suffering for the sake of her Lord?
- Lesson 6* The witness should have a plan of defense that enables her to stand firm in faith during attacks from the enemy.
- Lesson 7* Does the witness show evidence of building productive qualities into her life on the foundation of her faith in Christ?
- Lesson 8* A woman of faith is grounded in the truth. Can the witness discern truth from falsehood?
- Lesson 9* Because of her faith, the witness should look forward to the day when Christ returns. What is the fruit of her faith with that day in view?

Preface

Before the Lord Jesus Christ returned to Heaven, He told his followers, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me” (Acts 1:8). These men had put their faith in Him, and a hostile world would begin to put pressures and tests upon that faith to see if it was genuine or mere talk.

Down through the centuries and in our own time, each believer’s faith has been “on trial” by both God and man. It’s easier to declare that we have faith in Christ than it is to live a life of faith in Him under the questioning, testing, stress, and suffering we encounter in this world. The world is watching His witnesses. Is our faith standing up to the test? Will we remain steadfast to Him through future trials? In the end, will our faith produce praise to God through Christ Jesus (1 Peter 4:11)?

The New Testament books of 1 and 2 Peter address “the trial of your faith.” People try to undermine it; God is trying to purify and strengthen it. As we go through circumstances of all kinds, we must remember that these come so that our “faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).

We are on the witness stand every day. May we be found to be credible witnesses for Him.

How to Use This Study

Each lesson in this study is divided into five sections. Follow these suggestions as you prepare each lesson.



I. HEART EXAMINATION

Following the introductory comments, these questions will prepare your heart to study God's Word. The answers to these questions will not be discussed in class.



II. THE FACTS FROM GOD'S WORD

The questions in this section concentrate on the actual text of God's Word and will help you understand what God's Word says.



III. CROSS-EXAMINATION

As you answer the questions in this section, you will see how the truths of God's Word apply to your life.



IV. DECISION

This section is personal. It is designed as a starting point to help you put God's truth into practice.



V. CLOSING COMMENTS

These final words will help seal firmly in your mind what you learned from the Bible passage.

Faith: The Foundation for Salvation

1 Peter 1:1–12

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).

Peter, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus and an apostle of the early church, knew well what it meant to suffer for his faith in Christ. In the New Testament book of Acts, we read of his beatings and imprisonments for witnessing about the Lord Jesus, whom he loved. By A.D. 60 Peter was an alumnus of the Christian school of hard knocks, so he could speak with authority to others who were experiencing persecution for their faith. Peter must have sensed the need to encourage these hard-pressed believers who were scattered about the provinces of Asia Minor, and, under God’s direct leading, he wrote the letter of 1 Peter to them.

One would expect such a letter to have a somber and melancholy tone. Rather, it begins on a victorious and praising note! The theme worthy of such rejoicing is the glorious salvation that was the solid foundation of these Christians’ lives. The vocabulary of people who have put their faith in Christ Jesus—in His shed blood on the cross and His resurrection from the grave—should include such words as “praise,” “hope,” “rejoicing,” and “joy unspeakable.” Let’s see why!



I. HEART EXAMINATION

- Do you know for certain that you have a place in Heaven with God when you leave this life? If so, how do you know this?

- Do you think you could ever lose your place in Heaven? Why or why not?



II. THE FACTS FROM GOD'S WORD

Read 1 Peter 1:1–12.

1. To whom did Peter write this letter (v. 1)?

2. According to verse 2, what had each Person of the Godhead done for these believers?
THE FATHER

THE SON

THE SPIRIT

3. What two spiritual blessings did Peter desire for his readers (v. 2)?

4. Peter began his letter with a doxology. For what did he praise God (vv. 3, 4)?

5. List some of the other benefits that God has given us through Christ (vv. 3–5).

6. What characteristics, or attributes, of God did Peter cite as the source of these blessings?

7. Why can we as believers be assured we will not lose our place in Heaven (v. 5)?

8. What great event guarantees all the blessings of verses 3–5 (v. 3)?

9. In verse 6 Peter said that the blessings mentioned in verses 3–5 were the cause of rejoicing for those Christians. In what kind of circumstances were they rejoicing?

10. According to verse 7, what is the purpose of trials?

11. List three responses Peter's readers had toward the Lord Jesus (v. 8).

12. (a) According to verse 9, what is the outcome of faith?

(b) Is this something that is past, present, future, or all three?
Explain your answer.

13. What “job” did the Holy Spirit give to the Old Testament prophets concerning salvation (vv. 10–12)?

14. What was the ministry of the apostles of the New Testament era (v. 12)?

15. (a) What was the reaction of God’s angels to this plan of salvation?

(b) Why might this be so?

16. Review again verses 1–12. Write a summary of why faith is the foundation of a true Christian’s life.

A Faithful Witness to Follow: Stephen

Scan Acts 6:8 to the end of Acts 7.

17. How did Stephen demonstrate his solid faith in Christ?

18. How was he faithful, even in suffering?

19. How did he show love for Christ?

20. How did he show joy for Christ?



III. CROSS-EXAMINATION

1. Read Hebrews 11:6 and John 20:24–29. According to these verses, why is it difficult for some people to believe in God/Christ?

Can you think of any other passages of Scripture that speak of a person's inability to believe?

2. Is it possible for people to claim that they have faith, yet not believe? Can you describe the difference?

3. (a) According to the verses in question III-1 and 1 Peter 1:7-9, what is the evidence of active, genuine faith in a person's life?

(b) What do some people substitute in their lives for genuine faith in God?

4. The gospel, or "good news" (v. 12), that God requires us to believe is based on the historical facts that Jesus Christ suffered, shed His blood, died on the cross for our sins (vv. 2, 11), and was resurrected from death (v. 3). When we put genuine, active faith (belief/trust, v. 8) in Him, we receive the *salvation* of our souls (v. 9). What does "salvation" mean?

5. From what are we saved, or delivered?

6. Have you ever made the decision to put your faith in Jesus Christ and what He did for you as your *only* means of eternal life in Heaven with God? If so, when did you make that decision?

7. Verse 7 states that trials come so that our faith, which in God's sight is more precious than gold, will be purified. Why does our faith need to be refined?

8. Do you find that trials do this in your life?

9. What are some of the trials God has used to refine your faith?

10. How do trials show that our faith is genuine?

11. How do you usually react/respond to trials?

12. Verses 8 and 9 speak of three qualities that are directly affected by our relationship with Jesus Christ: love, faith, and joy. We should develop these qualities more and more as we walk with Him. What struggles have you had in these three areas? What can you do to further develop these qualities in your life?



IV. DECISION

In which one of the following areas do you need to make a decision as a result of the passage of Scripture you have just studied?

- I need to receive Jesus Christ and God's free gift of salvation (v. 9).
- I ought to be more grateful for His gift of salvation (v. 3).
- I should be living as if I have hope in Christ and that God and Heaven are real (vv. 3-5).
- I should rejoice more in my spiritual blessings even though life's circumstances are tough (v. 6).
- I need deeper love for Christ and greater trust in Him (vv. 8, 9).
- I want greater joy as I focus on Him (v. 8).

What can you do to put this decision into practice?

Speak to God about your areas of need. Keep trusting Him to do the work in you as you continue to pray about these things (Philippians 1:6; 2:13; 1 John 5:14, 15).

Select a verse from 1 Peter 1:1–12 that deals with your decision and write it on a 3" x 5" card. Post it where you will see it often. Think on this verse throughout the coming week.



V. CLOSING COMMENTS

Would you say that your life is securely founded on Jesus Christ? Have you placed your faith in Him alone for the forgiveness of your sins and eternal life in Heaven with God? He died to take the punishment from God for *your* sins. He arose from the dead to secure for you the assurance of living with Him when you die. All this is a free gift; it cannot be earned by doing good things (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5). You must receive it by faith. This “new birth” assures a place in Heaven for you. Receive Christ today!

If you are already a disciple of Christ, are you living a life of *genuine* faith? Are you loving Him, rejoicing in Him, and drawing closer to Him through all of life’s circumstances? He alone can sustain you. Through Him, grace and peace will be yours—abundantly!