

# Entrust Your Soul To The Faithful Creator

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning, everybody. My name's Caleb. Caleb Sides. Yeah, I have the funny accent. We're from America. My wife and I, we came over here as missionaries back in September of last year. So, I'm supposed to be here for two years, and we're working over with Calderwood Baptist. So, we're still learning a lot about the Scottish culture, but it's really been awesome to be here. It's just a privilege to be here, especially here at Bells Hill Baptist this morning.

And so, I won't take too much of your time to talk about myself. I want to get talking about the message here that the Lord's given me this morning. First thing I want to mention is that we're going to be talking about suffering. And suffering is something that we all go through. I think we can all understand that in different varying degrees.

But this passage from 1 Peter today talks a lot about suffering, exactly as Sebastian went over this morning in the kids' talk. Now, if we define suffering, if you just look up the definition, suffering is defined as the state of undergoing pain, distress, or hardship.

Again, by this definition, we all go through some of this. We're probably all actively going through some sort of suffering right now, today. There are different types of suffering. It could be physical ailments, sickness, anxiety, or depression, sadness, addiction, maybe even loss of friendships or family, be it by death or rejection.

Or perhaps difficult times financially, just to name a few. Again, suffering is something that we all face in our lives. And most likely we're all facing now some way here today.

[ 1 : 4 8 ] The world and mankind have come up with idea after idea of ways to end suffering in this world. And far too often we put our faith in these worldly ideas to find a savior from the world to save us from this suffering.

Whether that be things such as modern medicine, support groups, workout programs, political schemes, military efforts, diet plans, charities, or fundraisers.

Ultimately, all of these things fail in the end to provide us with the true suffering, or the true comfort, I mean. To provide us with the true comfort and the true joy that we seek to escape the suffering.

Not one of these earthly, finite things, no matter what it is, ever truly resolves our never-ending issue of suffering in this world. But thankfully, God does.

Thankfully, the one and only God has given freely to us a solution to this problem of suffering. Which is His Son, Jesus. And that's exactly what we're going to be looking at today.

[ 2 : 5 1 ] So again, turn with me if you can to, this is 1 Peter chapter 4, starting in verse 12. And I am reading from the, this is the New American Standard, it's very similar to the ESV.

I'll be reading from that. Starting in verse 12. It says, Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though something strange were happening to you.

But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory, you may also rejoice and be overjoyed.

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. Make sure that none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, evildoer, or a troublesome meddler.

But if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God.

[ 4 : 07 ] And if it begins with us first, what will become the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?

Therefore, those also suffer according to the will of God are to entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right. First off, here in verse 12, look again at what it says.

Do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you. There's so much that can be said about this short statement alone in reference to what we know about the reality of suffering.

Primarily, why are we always so surprised when suffering comes into our life? It doesn't make any sense, really. But we constantly allow ourselves to be shocked and thrown off almost every time a new suffering rises up in our life.

I personally do this all the time. All the time. For example, every time I'm watching the kids, particularly our baby, it's always right when I seem to get comfortable that I think one of them needs something.

[ 5 : 31 ] It's usually the baby needing a nappy change or something. And I get very frustrated. What do you mean you have needs? Like I'm the only one on the planet at that moment who's dealing with this sort of inconvenience.

Such a selfish way of looking at things, but that's how I do it all the time. Or how about when you pour a nice big bowl of cereal and you grab a spoon and open the fridge to grab some milk and the milk's spoiled.

That's frustrating. That's some real suffering right there. But this sort of thing happens and then we get upset, angry, aggravated, and again we act like we're the only one in the world dealing with these kinds of issues, these kinds of suffering as we feel it.

Or on a more serious note, how about when we're in a hurry to get somewhere and we have a flat tire? Or when we don't get that promotion at work and the guy who does is a dishonest liar?

Or how about when we get that dreaded health diagnosis that we've been fearing? Yes, these are much more serious issues than your relaxation time being interrupted on the couch.

[ 6 : 38 ] But nonetheless, when these things happen, we often act surprised and shocked that these sufferings have come upon us. We're surprised that these fiery ordeals are among us.

And our immediate sinful reaction is to turn to other earthly things to solve our issues, don't we? Well, verse 12 tells us, Do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you.

Why? Because of what it says here in the same verse. Do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing. First of all, suffering comes to everyone in this world, like we talked about earlier.

But it especially comes to those who follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This world and the darkness and the evil that plague it, that is Satan and his minions, they don't like anyone.

They don't want anyone to be happy or joyful, but they especially don't want Christians to be joyful. Why is that? Because true Christians are a light in the darkness, as we have the light of Jesus Christ living within us.

- [ 7 : 55 ] Like a lamp in a dark room, or a city on a hill, it doesn't take much light to expose the darkness. And the things of the world that like the darkness, that are comfortable in the darkness, that like the evil, they can't stand that light.
- In fact, they hate the light. Think of when you were a kid, or if you're like me, sometimes you'll do this now, when you're walking around outside, and you see a rock laying there, and you just want to pick it up to see what's underneath it.
- And when you pick it up and roll it over, the things that are underneath it, the bugs, the worms, and whatever else is there, it all scurries away to find the nearest darkness. Why?
- Because they don't like the light. This is exactly what it's like being a true Christian in this sinful, dark world. This is exactly why the world hated Jesus, even though He was completely without sin.
- We still sin every day, but because we have the light of Jesus shining through us, the world hates us for it. That's why we experience the suffering that we do as Christians.
- [ 9 : 05 ] Look over at John chapter 15. This is John chapter 15, verses 18 to 20. Starting in verse 18 of chapter 15.
- It says, If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own.
- But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this, the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, a slave is not greater than his master.
- If they persecuted me, they will persecute you as well. If they followed my word, they will follow yours also.
- And those are the words of Jesus as He was speaking to His disciples. This is part of why this suffering comes to us, because we follow Jesus.
- [ 10 : 27 ] But it also comes to us, as the passage tells us in 1 Peter, for our testing. The Bible speaks a lot about testing, but perhaps no passage better explains the meaning of why God allows these tests to happen in our lives than James 1, 2-3, which says, Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
- You see, God allows suffering in our lives to test us to see how much we will endure for Him. Just as God tested Abraham by telling him to sacrifice His only son Isaac.
- And just as He tested Job with all the suffering that He allowed to happen in his life. God allows the same types of suffering for us to test us to see how much we love Him and how much we are willing to give up to follow Him.
- Some may think this is harsh, but it isn't. God has already given us all, every person on the earth for all time, the free gift of eternal salvation and the redemption of sins.
- All we have to do is accept that free gift. So because He's already given us the gift, testing comes our way to see how badly we want it or even more, how badly we think we need it.
- [ 11 : 57 ] Think of all the suffering that we would be willing to face if we could get, say, a million pounds or a brand new car or to save our own life here today just to wake up the next day and face another type of suffering all over again.
- Well, if we accept Jesus' free gift of the redemption of sins and the free gift of eternal salvation and cling to Him the rest of our days, we will one day wake up in heaven and we'll never face suffering ever again.
- No more pain, no more distress, no more hardships. All of that will be gone forever as we live for the rest of eternity with Jesus in heaven as our Lord and Savior.

That's worth fighting for. And I'll tell you all here today that it's worth fighting for more than anything or anyone else in the whole world. Looking back at 1 Peter now, I'm going to pick back up in verse 13.

It says there, These sufferings that we face here and now are sufferings that we share with Christ Jesus.

[ 13 : 28 ] But if we choose to keep on rejoicing through our sufferings, not being surprised at the sufferings, but rejoicing that we are facing them because we are God's children, we will one day rejoice beyond our imagination and be overjoyed as Jesus' ultimate glory is revealed in the final days.

Again, that is something that's worth fighting for. Verse 14 speaks of the suffering as it comes in the way of being insulted for the name of Christ and that we are blessed when this occurs because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

I want you to turn to Matthew chapter 5. This is Matthew chapter 5 starting in verse 10 to verse 12.

It's a familiar passage, the Sermon on the Mount preached by Jesus. This is the greatest sermon ever preached. And here he is talking to his disciples. And it's Matthew 5 starting in verse 10.

And this is what it says. Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[ 14 : 56 ] Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad for your reward in heaven is great.

For in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. What a reassurance it is that not only are we blessed that we will rejoice in heaven one day if we persevere through our suffering the persecution and the insults but that the kingdom of heaven will be ours to share with Christ.

It's powerful to think about but it's the truth of what this tells us. And again that is something that's worth fighting through the suffering for. If you look back at 1 Peter now in verse 15 in verse 15 you'll notice that the passage shifts from talking about suffering in general to clarifying what type of suffering does not bring these incredible rewards of joy blessing and eternity in heaven.

verse 15 says make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer or thief or evildoer or a troublesome meddler.

It's interesting here that being a troublesome meddler as this translation describes it is mentioned in the same light as being a murderer a thief or an evildoer.

[ 16 : 46 ] A troublesome meddler is anyone who has a habit of prying into other people's business or affairs and with that brings nothing but division and quarreling with them.

Deceivingly troublesome meddlers pretend to do this in an act of caring for others when in reality all they want to do is make a problem for other people. Most of the time these are some of the most miserable people on the planet and to put it very frankly they don't like that other people are happier than they are so they pry claw and pull at whoever they can to get them down to their level so that they can temporarily feel better about themselves.

Troublesome meddlers are some of the worst people in churches as they are false Christians who do nothing but create damaging division and unlike most murderers or thieves most of the time they get away with it for a while before they're eventually snuffed out.

So as the passage says don't suffer as a murderer as a thief as an evildoer or as a troublesome meddler because that suffering is not Christ-like and is therefore shameful and will not bring true glory and rejoice and in fact it will bring the judgment that's deserved.

But on the contrary in verse 16 when we suffer as Christians we suffer because we're being a light in the dark as Jesus was and is and we should not feel ashamed in this but in these sufferings we are to glorify God instead.

[ 18 : 30 ] Picking up now in verse 17 it says for it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God and if it begins with us first what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Now I want you to pause for a second and just think about what it means that true Christian believers who this book is written to think about what it means that true Christian believers are the household of God.

Think about that for a moment while you are turn with me to 1st Timothy chapter 3 1st Timothy 3 starting in verse 15 in fact I'll just read verse 15 so in 1st Timothy chapter 3 15 it says I write so that you will know how one should act in the household of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and support of the truth so here in 1st Timothy we get a vividly clear description of what the household of God is in God's eyes and therefore what it should be to us it says that the household of God is the church of the living

God the pillar and support of the truth now I think we can all understand the meaning behind the church being the household of God we often refer to it as such even though God's spirit is everywhere and is specifically inside the heart of every true believer no matter where they go church is still a place where brothers and sisters in Christ gather together to worship God and learn more about God as one big family just as we sometimes often gather in a home with our blood related family for get togethers that analogy is simple to understand but I think what we often forget about today as Christians is the last part of 1st Timothy 3:15 which says that as the household of God as the church that it is the pillar and support of the truth this is the part that people often forget about or sometimes sadly deliberately ignore we Christians often don't like to stand up for the truth or to support the truth because why it often brings suffering and persecution but as we see here we are commanded by God to stand up and to be a support of the truth because when we support the truth we are supporting

God who is truth itself there is not even such a thing as truth without God because God is truth you may be familiar with the verse in John 14:6 often quoted says I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me but how often do we live our lives in accordance with Jesus being the truth how often do we actually do that we the church the true church as Christ followers are commanded by God to be the pillar and support of the truth on this earth to be the pillar and support of Jesus Christ how do we do that very simply by obeying his word turn over to 2nd

[ 22 : 42 ] Timothy 2:19 2nd Timothy chapter 2 verse 19 says there nevertheless the firm foundation of God stands having this seal the Lord knows those who are his and everyone who names the name of the Lord is to keep away from wickedness it says we are to keep away from wickedness and by doing this we will inevitably be the pillar in support of the truth the pillar in support of Jesus you may then ask well how do we know what wickedness is thankfully that's also very simple we know what wickedness is by reading our

Bibles by reading God's holy perfect word that is without error God's word given to us by his spirit lays out for us very clearly the things that are either of him or not of him and if it is not of God if it is not of him then it is wickedness God's spirit does this as well by convicting us of what's right and wrong and by showing us what is good and what is wicked we have God's word and we have God's spirit to show us the difference it's very simple we don't get to decide what is or isn't wickedness God does and again it's all laid out very clearly in his word which is given to us in the Bible read it study it but most importantly pray for his spirit to guide you through it as you read and study it and as you do this you will clearly see what is right and wrong and therefore what is truth supporting and what is utter wickedness back now to first Peter in verse 17 because we are the household of God the pillar in support of the truth as we learned this is why God's judgment will come upon us first God is going to test the church to see who is truly of him first before he tests and judges the world outside the church which are those that as it says do not obey the gospel of God because we as the church are supposed to be the pillar in support of the truth as the household of

God because of that God is going to first test purify cleanse and judge his household so that all that is left within it are his true people his true family and then after this he will judge those outside the church who don't claim to follow him it's a very sobering thought to think about being judged by God but one day we all will be this is why it's so important to be obedient to the Lord and his commands because we have no excuse on judgment day as to why we didn't obey him his commands are clearly given to us in his word and the line between righteousness and wickedness is clearly drawn and it's our choice to decide which side of that line we want to live on thankfully this is what God's grace is truly about is that if Jesus is truly our Lord and Savior then he will stand in our place on judgment day and say that we are his which takes away our sin and all the bad things we have ever done in our wickedness but Jesus will only do that if we have truly made him our Lord and Savior looking at verse 18 it says and if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved what will become of the godless man and the sinner this verse references proverbs 11 31 and it makes a very clear distinction between those that are righteous in God's eyes and those who are godless it makes a very clear distinction between those who make Jesus their Lord and Savior and those who reject him if you're here today and you're not a true follower of Christ

Jesus this verse is a wake up call for you God is going to judge in his wrath the wickedness of this world but those who choose to make Christ Jesus their Lord and Savior will be spared from this by his grace and his grace alone but those who reject Jesus will face this just wrath this judgment that is to come Jesus died for your sins but he won't answer for them on judgment day unless you're his follower his spirit is knocking on the door of your heart open it for him and let him in repent of your sins and you will stand in judgment with Jesus rather than having to stand by yourself because none of us can do that and be saved only Jesus can Jesus loves you and he wants you to be with him in the glory to come but he's not going to force you to follow him choose him today ending now in verse 19 therefore those also who suffer according to the will of

God are to entrust their souls to a faithful creator in doing what is right there's the word suffer again when we suffer for doing what is righteous and true when we suffer according to God's will let us do so by entrusting our souls to the faithful creator that is Jesus knowing that he loves us cares for us and that he will one day justify and save us for all eternity save us from all this suffering and that we will be with him in glory forever amen let's pray Lord God we just thank you so much for the word that you give us that shows us right and wrong but that ultimately that it points us to you as you are the only true answer to the suffering that we face

[ 30 : 18 ] Lord we all suffer in this life we especially suffer if we follow you but help us to remember that we don't need to be worried or scared or even surprised when this happens but it should be a great reminder that you are living in us that your spirit is with us and we need to rejoice in that because we are reflecting the sacrifice that you gave for us on this earth the suffering that you went through Lord you went through all that without sin and yet we are sinful Lord by your grace and your grace alone we can be saved and with you in eternal glory and that is such an amazing thing to rejoice over so help us Lord today to draw near you and you alone in our times of suffering not to go to the world or anything of the world to try to solve our suffering because that always fails it always fails but you never fail

Lord and you will never forsake us Lord God I pray for the people here at Bells Hill today that there is anyone that doesn't know you that they're not living for you Lord that they haven't made you their Lord and Savior that they will do that now Lord that your spirit can move upon them Lord that they can open the door of their heart and let you in and make you the Lord of their life knowing that you are the only answer to the suffering that they're going through Lord you are the only answer help us today we thank you for bringing us all here we pray this in Jesus name Amen heard