

Not Perishable, But Imperishable

Franklin Church of Christ
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AM Worship

Introduction:

Money makes the world go round we are told. To many in our world, material things are precious. The pursuit of them is all consuming. However, Peter describes that which is more precious than gold, at least to God, in **I Peter 1:7**. Our faith, when it is imperishable, is more precious than gold to God. Gold is not precious because it fades and tarnishes and eventually will be destroyed. But our faith, if it continues to shine, is far more precious to God. However, Peter explains that our faith, like gold, will be tested by fire. In those situations, we may have trouble keeping our faith imperishable. Within this first chapter of Peter's letter, he provides three imperishable bases upon which we can build our faith, helping us hold onto our faith even as we walk through the fire.

Discussion:

- I. We can have imperishable faith because we have been born again through an imperishable word (**I Peter 1:22-25**).
 - A. **Romans 10:17** says, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." In **John 20:31**, the apostle explained that he wrote his gospel so we might believe. We became Christians because we believed and, therefore, obeyed the teaching that was given to us (**Romans 6:17-18**).
 - B. But sometimes, the devil tries to distract us from this word. He wants us to believe that it is not right. Do you remember his approach in the very first temptation in **Genesis 3**? Eve told him that God had said they would die if they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But Satan said, "Oh no. You will not die. You will be made better off." He lied to her, causing her to doubt the word of God. That is how Satan will deal with us.
 - C. Look at **II Peter 3:3-4**. Mockers want us to believe that we cannot trust the promises of God. The earth has continued on and Jesus has not returned. "You cannot trust God's word," they will tell us. But Peter wants us to know that we can. In **I Peter 1:22-25**, Peter quoted from **Isaiah 40:6-8**. The great comfort is that despite how things might look, despite the persecution and oppression, God's word is imperishable. However, all these people that give us hardship and tell us we cannot trust God's word, they are perishable.
 - D. We can hold onto our faith, keeping it imperishable, because we know that God's word will not be corrupted. It will not perish. Rather, those who fight against it will perish.
- II. We can have an imperishable faith because we have been redeemed with an imperishable sacrifice (**I Peter 1:18-19**).
 - A. At times we may begin to believe that God does not love us or that God could not actually pull off our forgiveness. After all, we are pretty awful sinners. Further, when we are accosted by the modern humanists and their attacks on God's word, we may begin to doubt. If we cannot have faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, what faith can we have? However, Peter wants us to know that we can have faith in Christ's sacrifice. It was imperishable.
 - B. He provides a contrast. Perhaps if our redemption was purchased with silver or gold, which perish with the using, we would have need to be worried. But that was not the ransom price for our sins. The price paid was the blood of Jesus Christ. He was a spotless and unblemished lamb. The Hebrew writer also drives this home in **Hebrews 9:11-16**. If the sacrifice of a lamb could cleanse the body under the Old Testament, then how much more can the death and blood of Jesus, the Son of God, cleanse a defiled conscience.
 - C. In fact, the Hebrew writer goes on to point out that the only way we could have confidence of our eternal inheritance was through death. Jesus, the perfect sacrifice died for us. We can hold onto our faith and trust God to get us to heaven. After all, if He loved us so much to offer this sacrifice, how much more will He work to help us get to heaven (**Romans 5:10-11**). Do not forget **II Peter 2:7-9**. God knows how to deliver the godly from temptation. The death of His Son can provide us with that confidence and can help us maintain our faith imperishable.

- III. We can have an imperishable faith because we have an imperishable inheritance reserved for us (**I Peter 1:4-5**).
- A. Far too often, we get wrapped up in what is down here. We become impressed with money, cars, houses, land, computers, appliances, etc. When we allow ourselves to become distracted, our faith can get choked out (**Luke 8:14**).
 - B. But what is distracting us? Is there any real value in all this down here? In **Matthew 6:19-20**, Jesus explained that all of this on earth can be stolen and lost. Moths eat it and rust destroys it. There is no lasting value in what is around us. Further, when we die all of this loses its value for us (**Luke 12:16-21**). Finally, **II Peter 3:10** explains that all of this will eventually be destroyed anyway, what value will it have then?
 - C. However, God has not reserved a perishable inheritance for us. Instead it is an inheritance that cannot be defiled, cannot be corrupted and cannot be stolen. No matter what is happening to us, we cannot be separated from the love of God and therefore lose our reward (**Romans 8:31-39**), unless we decide to let our faith fail and leave God ourselves. That is why we need to focus on this imperishable inheritance and not be distracted by all of the perishable things around us (**Colossians 3:2**).

Conclusion:

If we maintain our focus on the imperishable bases for our faith, God's imperishable word, Christ's imperishable sacrifice and heaven's imperishable inheritance, then we can maintain a precious imperishable faith. Then, according to **I Peter 1:7**, we will be able to praise, glory and honor Christ at His revelation. That is, we will avoid the wrath that is to come (**II Thessalonians 1:5-10**) and be with Him forever, glorified along with Him (**Romans 8:16-18**).