



**We Swim for Jesus!**

**“These trials are only to test your faith, to see whether or not it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests gold and purifies it – and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold; so if your faith remains strong after being tried in the test tube of fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day of His return.” 1 Peter 1:7**

## **Bible Verse for Week #30** **Life Application notes**

1. The people to whom Peter wrote these words were undergoing great persecution in the Roman world. They were being persecuted because: (1) they refused to worship the emperor as a God; (2) they refused to worship at pagan temples, so business for these moneymaking enterprises suffered; (3) **they did not support the Roman ideals of self, power, and conquest**; (4) they rejected the horrible immorality of pagan culture. Despite terrible persecution, these believers courageously stood for the truth and for their faith. When you feel tempted to keep quiet about your faith, remember them.
2. Several times in this letter, Peter mentions suffering (1:6-7; 3:13-17; 4:12-19; 5:9). When Peter speaks of trials, he is referring to the response of an unbelieving world to people of faith. Believers face such trials when they let their light shine in the darkness. We must accept trials as part of the refining process that burns away impurities and prepares us to meet Christ. **Trials teach us patience** (see Romans 5:3-4 and James 1:2-3) and help us become the kind of people God wants.
3. When gold is melted, impurities float to the top and can be skimmed off. Steel is tempered or strengthened by heating it in fire. In the same way, our trials, struggles, and persecutions refine and strengthen our faith, making us useful to God. When going through tough times, ask God to teach you His lessons and to show you how to use your experience to glorify Him and remember that if you're being tried by fire, your faith is valuable to God.

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“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34

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4. Our faith is more precious than gold to God. This is a strong illustration of the contrast between the world's value and God's. In the world, money means everything; so people go to great lengths to amass wealth, while faith in God is seen as nice and quaint, but not really very important. But the reality is that when we die, we will leave our money behind, and at Judgment day, all of our gold will mean nothing. Of infinite worth, however, is our faith – if we have trusted in Christ as Savior, we have eternal life. **Don't spend your life amassing wealth that will perish; instead, build your faith.**
5. The way we handle trials tells a great deal about us. Those whose faith is genuine and strong come through, refined and purified. Our unbelieving relatives, neighbors, friends, and coworkers can be affected greatly by watching how we react. They can be turned off and turned away by our actions, or they can be attracted, intrigued and drawn to Christ. **When you are persecuted for your faith or go through other trials, remember that you are being watched. Will they see Christ in you?**
6. When we experience trials or hear terrible news reports, it's easy to get discouraged. Often it seems as though evil is winning in this world. That's when **we must remember that one day Christ will return to claim his own and make things right.** That's our blessed hope as Christians, the second coming of Christ (see Titus 2:13). So when you are being persecuted for what you believe, remember that this test of your faith will bring you praise, glory, and honor when Christ returns.

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