

What is Faith and How is it Tried?

[1 Peter 1:6-9](#)

1 Peter, Day 3

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- 1 Peter 1:6-9, ESV

If we have such great benefits in our salvation, such reason to rejoice and be glad, then why is life still so difficult? Last time, we saw that we are chosen for salvation, which includes sanctification by the Holy Spirit, obedience to Jesus Christ, cleansing from sin and guilt by the blood of Jesus, grace and peace, a living and undying hope, an imperishable inheritance, and protection through faith in Christ. Peter says, "*in this you rejoice,*" and that certainly is a list of wonderful reasons to deeply rejoice.

Still, life is really hard, isn't it? We don't always feel sanctified and cleansed, we don't always obey, we struggle with feeling really alive and hopeful, and we sometimes don't experience the grace and peace of the Gospel. Peter says it's happening because our priceless precious faith is being tested. So, what exactly is faith and how is it tested?

Faith is not a subjective emotional experience; it is trust. Faith trusts God and His promises more than our eyes can see. Faith is what unites us to Christ and all His benefits. It is crucial, for it is how we law hold on the goodness of God offered to us in the Gospel.

But lots of things can look like faith and not be faith. Easy belief is not faith. Quick assent in an emotional moment is not faith. Feeling close to God at a concert or on a retreat is not faith. Faith is trust, and trust is strengthened when it is exercised under duress. Like a precious metal purified by fire, faith only shows its real value as it is tested again and again. Such testing is not easy, and sometimes our faith wavers, as dross is burned away and we learn to cling to the Lord more closely.

What helps us rejoice in the midst of the fire is looking up to Jesus and looking ahead to His coming again. When we look up from our circumstances, we realize He is enthroned in glory as the anchor of our souls and nothing can shake Him. When we look ahead, we realize He is indeed coming again, and every eye will see Him. On that day, our faith will be sight and it will be glorious beyond our wildest imaginations.

So, when you find yourself in the fire, your faith being tested by affliction, remember the greatness of your salvation and what benefits you receive from Christ in the Gospel. Look to Jesus, who is seated at the Father's right hand, far above all power and authority. And look forward by faith to that day when we will see Him and rejoice in Him together!