

# Consequence of Faith

(James 1:1-4)

Yearly Theme: “Joy is...”

Series Title: “Eternal Joy”

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## Something to think about:

As we begin a new series today, we will be looking, this advent season, at the theme of “Eternal Joy,” that comes through, not only the birth of Christ, but also our faith in that Christ-child: Jesus. We will consider the difficulty surrounding His birth, the trials and troubles He faced in life, and the ultimate sacrifice of His life on the cross. We will do all of this while exploring, not the birth narratives in the Gospels, but the encouragement of several writers of the New Testament to keep the faith in spite of trials and difficulties that come our way in life.

We will be exploring several of, what are called the “General Epistles,” or rather, pastoral letters, in the New Testament leading up to the book of Revelation and the result of faith in Christ that concludes with eternal life and the story of Heaven. But today, we begin with a familiar passage, not often associated with advent, but one nonetheless that describes “Joy” as the consequence of faith in Jesus Christ.

Let’s take a look at several versions of this passage of Scripture today...

*James 1:1-4 (NLT),*

<sup>1</sup> *This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the “twelve tribes”—Jewish believers scattered abroad. Greetings!*

<sup>2</sup> *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.* <sup>3</sup> *For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.* <sup>4</sup> *So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*

*James 1:1-4 (ESV),*

<sup>1</sup> *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.*

<sup>2</sup> *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,* <sup>3</sup> *for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.* <sup>4</sup> *And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

*James 1:1-4 (NKJV)*

<sup>1</sup> *James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.*

<sup>2</sup> *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,* <sup>3</sup> *knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.* <sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

Before we get into the text today, let’s consider our main point this morning:

**Key Point:** “*The consequence of faith is joy.*”

If this statement is true, “the consequence of faith is joy,” then how is it true even when trials and troubles come our way? What are the factors that James writes about that that should end up bringing us “great joy”?

1. The testing of our faith.
2. The production, or the growth, of endurance.
3. The full effect of endurance that leads to perfection and completeness.

## Something to take home:

In our times of trials and testing, we may often feel like a doorstop, when in all reality we are more valuable than gold. As believers in Christ we are children of God, and as children of God we bear the markings of royalty on our life. Though this world may not see the treasure hidden within us, we know that through Christ we are more than conquerors. And this is our great cause for joy!

Let me close with these words from the Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth:

*2 Corinthians 4:7-10 (NLT),* <sup>7</sup> *We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.*

<sup>8</sup> *We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair.* <sup>9</sup> *We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.* <sup>10</sup> *Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies.*

**Key Point:** “*The consequence of faith is joy.*”