

# Evidence of Faith

(1 Peter 1:3-12)

Yearly Theme: “Joy is...”

Series Title: “Eternal Joy”

December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## Something to think about:

In 1 Peter chapter 1, Peter charges into his epistle with a challenge of hope because of faith in Christ Jesus. However, this hope that Peter speaks of isn't without its challenges. Rather, Peter says that our hope is in the *wonderful joy* ahead because of the salvation of our souls due to our faith and trust in Christ Jesus, even though we have to endure many trials for a little while. In explaining the purpose for these trials, Peter uses the analogy of the purification of gold.

Gold is one of the most valuable materials on earth. It has been used for centuries as money, but it also has many uses in industry, manufacturing, and even space flight. One of the traits that makes gold so useful is that it can be shaped and formed so easily. In fact, a single ounce of gold can be flattened out to cover three hundred square feet.

But gold ore dug out of the ground contains many other elements that must be removed prior to the gold being useful. The refining process for gold involves intense heat. Gold melts at a temperature of almost two thousand degrees Fahrenheit. That incredibly high temperature is required for gold to be ready to be used.

The Christian life – according to the Apostle Peter – involves much the same process. Sometimes we are surprised when “bad things happen to good people.” But the Scripture tells us that fiery trials are part of God's refining process for our lives. Rather than griping or complaining when trials come, we should rejoice as we think of the end result that trials ultimately produce.

So, let us consider the words of Peter today:

**1 Peter 1:3-12 (NLT),**

***<sup>3</sup> All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, <sup>4</sup> and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. <sup>5</sup> And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.***

***<sup>6</sup> So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while. <sup>7</sup> These trials will show that your faith is***

***genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.***

***<sup>8</sup> You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. <sup>9</sup> The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.***

***<sup>10</sup> This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you.***

***<sup>11</sup> They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward.***

***<sup>12</sup> They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.***

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

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

If this statement is true, “the evidence of faith is joy,” then how is it true even when trials and troubles come our way? What are the factors that Peter writes about that that should end up bringing us “wonderful joy” even though we have to endure many trials for a little while?

- 1. It is by God's great mercy that we have been born again.**
- 2. Our endurance in the trials that we face shows that our faith is genuine.**
- 3. The reward for trusting God will be the salvation of our souls.**

## Something to take home:

Not only is *joy* the evidence of faith, but living a life of genuine faith epitomized in our trusting of God also signals the authenticity of the salvation of our souls through Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son.

Is joy the tale-tale mark of your faith in God? Have you trusted in Christ even though you haven't seen Him face to face? Are the trials and troubles you face perfecting you and driving you into the arms of God even more as you grow older?

What is the evidence of your faith in God?

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