

# Your faith, being more precious ...



What is “precious”? We find from the *New Oxford American Dictionary* that “precious” refers to something “of great value; not to be wasted or treated carelessly.” Do you treat your faith carelessly? It is precious, you know.

How precious is faith? Faith, which has been tested and tried, is more precious than gold which has been tried and purified by fire. *“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of **your faith, being more precious than gold** which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1Peter 1:7).* We better be interested in learning why our faith is so precious.

Faith is precious in that **it saves**. Jesus said that belief and baptism saved (**Mark 16:16**). Paul wrote of the connection between salvation and faith many times, as in **Romans 3:21-22** and **Ephesians 2:8**). He wrote, *“in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which **you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God**, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions” (Colossians 2:10-13).* However, as precious as it is, faith does not save when alone (**James 2:18-20**). Without faith it is not possible to be saved, which leads us to the next point.

Faith is precious in that **it pleases God**. *“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).* To please God is no little thing. Jesus pleased the Father in His offering—we should, too (**Ephesians 5:2**). As noted from James, faith, which pleases God, is a faith which works. This is why Paul writes of a living sacrifice (**Romans 12:1-2**). The many examples of true faith which are given in **Hebrews 11** show this to be so.

Faith is precious in that **it justifies**. *“Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1-2).* However, faith which justifies is a faith which leads one to obey the gospel—it comes from the heart. It is at this point that purification comes. *“Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart” (1Peter 1:22).*

Faith is precious in that **it guides**. *“We walk by faith, not by sight” (2Corinthians 5:7).* The reason that faith guides us is that faith comes by hearing. What are we hearing? Upon what standard is

our guiding faith founded? It is the very words of God—the message concerning and given by our Lord (**Romans 10:17**). This is why there can be only one faith (**Ephesians 4:5**). Just as there is one word, there is one faith which is true.

Faith is precious because **it profits** the one who has it. You don't have anything without your faith. It does not matter what nation you are from—Jew or gentile—when you are in Christ through faith, it means something. *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love”* (**Galatians 5:6**). Again, it is important to notice that faith does not profit anyone until it works.

Faith is precious in that **it gives life**. *“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name”* (**John 20:30-31**). Jesus, speaking the sister of Lazarus after the occasion of his death (**John 11:23-26**) conveys the same idea. Furthermore, faith is that by which we continue to live (**Habakuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11**).

Faith is precious in that **it is lasting**. *“But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love”* (**1Corinthians 13:13**). We often use this chapter to focus on love, but the point, in context, is that faith, hope, and love are more important than the power to perform miracles, as that power was shortly going to pass (**1Corinthians 13:7,8**). We have already seen the preciousness of faith working through love. Faith, hope, and love, go hand-in-hand. Faith lasts.

Faith is precious in that **it is through faith that Christ dwells** in the Christian. *“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God”* (**Ephesians 3:14-19**). Where there is no faith, there is no indwelling Christ.