

Contextual Definition—Exegesis: Faith

(Fall, 2022)

Word Strong # Transliteration	Gloss (1-3 Words)	Within and Behind the Text
James 1:3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith (KJV). knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience (NKJV).		
Faith <i>Pistis</i> G4102	Fidelity	Faith Behind the Text • The pronoun “your” before faith refers to second person plural. For that reason, “your faith” may point not only to the individual person, but also to the entire community of believers. The ethos of faith encompasses the local assembly and Body of Christ. • In Jewish contexts faith connotes the Hebrew word <i>’ēmûnâ</i>, implying more than faith in something but also fidelity, commitment, and truth. James concern with works results from genuineness of faith (McCartney, Baker Exegetical, p. 86). • Israel had a long tradition of testing of their faith. Consider Abraham as he persevered the testing of his faith in Gen 22, Israel wanderings through the

		desert and constantly turned away from faith in their God (Num 14:20-25), while the prophets persevered through the testing of their faith (e.g., Jeremiah 38 (Hartin, <i>Sacra Pagina</i>: James (p. 57)). Within the Text • Denotes fidelity to the conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the Kingdom (Thayers) • God will try our fidelity of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to deepen it with patience (v. 3) and maturity/completeness (v. 4) to live a lifestyle of faith. (Since the Jas 1:3 starts off with a command to “count it all” or consider.) • Your faith will be tried to produce patience (1:3) • Note the link words in the verse: trials of faith produce patience (endurance) → let endurance have her perfect work (v. 1:3) → that ye may be perfect and entire...wanting nothing (v. 4) → if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God (v. 5) → but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering (v. 6) → for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind & tossed (v. 7) Cross References • 1 Pet 1:5-7: Discusses the trial of your faith. Describes the trial of faith “more
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		precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:” • Rom 5:3 discusses the triumph of faith in which one rejoices in sufferings because they lead to perseverance, perseverance to character, and character to hope. Four-Sentence Summary Definition 1. Faith denotes fidelity to the conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the Kingdom (<i>Thayers</i>) 2. The testing of our faith, God will deepen it with patience (v. 3) He will also mature us (v. 4) to live a lifestyle of faith. 3. We rejoice in sufferings because they lead to perseverance, perseverance to character, and character to hope. 4. First Peter 1:5-7 adds that the trials of faith are “more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”
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