

“The Faith, Once For All Delivered”

Jude 3

Introduction

1. Many people know what it means to have faith.
 - a. A common definition of faith is a thing that we believe.
 - b. Faith is also seen as our confidence.
2. But in Jude 3 we will notice that Jude places the article *the* in front of the word “faith.”
 - a. “*I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3).
 - b. This ought to cause us to ask the question, why does it say “the faith,” instead of just “faith” or “our faith?”
3. We must answer this question because whatever the Holy Spirit meant by saying, “the faith,” He says that we must “contend earnestly” for it.
4. Therefore let us consider the follow points in order that we may “*contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*”

Discussion

I. “The Faith”

- A. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be sent and that He would reveal all truth (John 16:12-14).
 1. The truth which the Holy Spirit delivered was the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - a. It was the same as the message that Jesus said would be preached throughout all the world in Mark 16:15.
 - b. It was the revelation of the word which would judge all men at the last day according to John 12:48.
 - c. It included a reminder of all that Jesus had taught throughout His ministry as well as “*all truth*” which would govern and direct the church in accordance with the will of God (John 14:26).
 2. Romans 10:17 says that it is from this revealed word that all men must get their faith.
 3. Hebrews 11:6 says that without this faith it is impossible to please God.
 4. Therefore the revelation which the Holy Spirit inspired and the apostles and prophets delivered is the standard for the faith that all men must have in order to please God.
- B. It is here that we are able to see the distinction between an individual’s faith and what our text refers to as “*the faith.*”
 1. What a person believes is his own faith.
 - a. It may be our confidence in the existence, the power, the word, and the promises of God (Hebrews 11:1).
 - b. Yet a person’s individual faith can also consist of things conjured up in his own imagination, but not necessarily delivered by God.
 - c. Whatever we believe or put our confidence in is our own faith.
 2. But the standard of what we must believe in order to please God, the word from which true faith comes, is “*the faith.*”
 - a. There are many faiths in the world, but there is only one true faith that can result in a person’s salvation (Eph. 4:5).

- b. This is *the faith* which God has delivered for us to believe through His inspired word.
- c. It was this pattern, or standard of faith, which was delivered to the saints by the will of God.
- d. Jesus first accomplished it on the cross, then the Holy Spirit revealed it through the apostles, and now we must believe it if we are going to have salvation in Christ.
- e. This is the standard by which we must walk.

II. “Once For All Delivered”

A. The faith has been delivered.

1. The fact that we cannot be saved unless we believe in *the faith* explains why it was so important for God to deliver it to us.
2. This delivery of the faith was a two-fold process.
 - a. First, Jesus had to accomplish it. The faith is, in large part, the accomplishments of Jesus through His ministry and His death, burial, and resurrection, and the teachings which He delivered to us.
 - b. Therefore in order for us to believe in the power of His salvation He had to first accomplish it, and that is exactly what He did, “...according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” ([Ephesians 3:11](#)).
 - c. We are told that since Jesus has become Lord through this, we cannot be saved by any other name but His ([Acts 4:12](#)).
 - d. For this reason we are warned by Jesus who said, “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many...” ([Matthew 24:4-5, 23-25](#)).
 - e. We must understand this, for there are some even today who try to deceive men with “another faith” or “another gospel” than the one true faith. The Mormons, Jehovah’s witnesses, and New Age Christians are just a few who fit into this category.
3. Second, news of that faith had to be taken to the world.
 - a. This was the gospel preached by the apostles and prophets as we have already discussed.
 - b. Just as there is salvation in no one besides Christ, we cannot believe in any message than the one which Jesus authorized to be preached.
 - c. That is why Paul sternly warned “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed...” ([Galatians 1:8-9](#)).
 - d. Throughout the centuries many have tried to proclaim a “new faith,” or a “new gospel,” claiming to have achieved a more accurate knowledge than even the apostles.
 - e. But we must understand that the truth revealed in scriptures is as accurate as it comes.
 - f. It was this truth that was delivered to us by God and is not preserved in the Scriptures.
4. There would be no other truth delivered, as Jude has said, it was...

B. “Once for all delivered to the saints”

1. The Greek word from which we get “once for all” is *hapax*.
 - a. This word simply means “once, a single time” (Strong’s). It refers to the number of times something occurs, as well as the completion of what was done.
 - b. It comes from the Greek word *hapas*, which means “absolutely, all, everyone” (Strong’s).

2. Therefore when the Holy Spirit chose to use this word He was saying that the faith, the one true standard by which all men must be saved, would be delivered one time, for all time.
 - a. It would not be delivered again, nor would it be delivered continuously over the generations.
 - b. There would be no other faith delivered in the future, for the faith would be complete and whole.
3. Therefore “the faith” refers to the one system of faith that we must believe, and the fact that it was “*once for all delivered to the saints,*” proves that it is complete, whole, and perfect.

III. “Contend Earnestly For The Faith”

- A. We have seen through the scriptures and can see in the world today that men are not content to confine themselves to *the faith*.
 1. Paul spoke of a departure from the faith in 1 Timothy 4:1.
 2. Peter warned us of this same danger in 2 Peter 2:1-3.
 3. It is for this reason that Jude thought it so necessary to exhort the brethren to “*contend earnestly for the faith.*”
- B. The word “contend” is translated from *epagonizomai*: ep-ag-o-nid-zom-ahee
 1. *Epa* (or *epi*) is a preposition which brings emphasis on or toward the subject. It means “because of, on behalf of, over, by, for, toward, etc” (Strong’s). We use this type of emphasis in words such as “stand-up” in order to emphasis the action.
 2. *agonizomai* which means “to struggle, literally (to compete for a prize), figuratively (to contend with an adversary)” (Strong’s). It is translated in the KJV as fight, labor fervently, strive.
 3. Vine defines it, “to contend about a thing, as a combatant.”
 4. Thus when we “contend earnestly for the faith” we are struggling, fighting, and striving on behalf of the one true faith.
 - a. We contending with the adversaries who would contradict the word of God, we reason from the scriptures and overthrow foolish arguments with the truth that is God’s word (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).
 - b. Men preach the word so that all may hear the truth and turn away from error (2 Timothy 4:2).
 - c. We contend by holding fast in our own hearts to God’s word, by overcoming sin, by enduring those who do evil and by imitating the character of God in all things. Thus Paul describes this as fighting the good fight of faith in 1 Timothy 6:11-12.
 5. This is how we contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Conclusion

1. God gives us confidence showing us that all men can understand the truth, whoever has a willing and honest heart (Ephesians 5:17).
2. God also gives us to ability to continue in it according to Colossians 1:23
3. Let us learn to contend for the one true faith. Let us put our hope in the word and power of God. Let us walk through life, continually striving to uphold God’s standard in all that we do. Then, when we rise up to meet our Lord on the last day, He will say to us, “*well done good and faithful servant.*”

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