

THE PRECIOUS FAITH

II Pet. 1:1

INTRODUCTION

1. In this text, Peter addresses "*them*" "*that have obtained like precious faith with us*".
2. The "US" would be the Jewish Christians; the "THEM" the Gentile Christians.
3. Peter said BOTH had received a "*like precious faith*".
4. FAITH IS USED IN TWO SENSES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

(1) It is sometimes used of the act of believing

(2) Sometimes it means that which is believed -- the system of religion revealed -- the Gospel.

5. Our text uses it in the sense of the system of religion revealed -- THE GOSPEL

6. Examples of "faith" used in both ways:

(1) The Act of Believing:

1. Stephen was a man "full of faith" -- Acts 6: 5, 8
2. Barnabas was a good man "full of faith" -- Acts 11: 24
3. Faith comes by hearing the God's Word -- Rom. 10:17
4. Without faith we cannot be saved -- Heb. 11:6

(2) That which is Believed -- The Gospel

1. Paul preached "*The faith which he once destroyed*" -- Gal. 1: 23
2. It was the faith which came after the Law -- Gal. 3: 23 - 25
3. "*The faith of the gospel*" -- Phil. 1: 27
4. One faith -- Eph. 4:4
5. Must contend for the faith-- Jude 3

II. THE FAITH IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ALL MEN

1. The Law of Moses was never given to the Gentiles -- Rom. 2:14; Eph. 2: 11 - 12; Rom. 3: 1 - 2
2. The faith has been given to the Gentiles as well as the Jew -- II Pet. 1:1; Eph. 3: 1 - 10; Rom. 1: 14 - 17
3. The Gospel to be preached to all nations -- Mk. 16: 15 - 16; Matt. 28: 18 - 20

III. THE FAITH IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE IT IS COMPLETE

1. The faith has been "*once for all delivered unto the saints*" (ASV) -- Jude 3
2. All the truth was revealed -- John 16:13; 14:26
3. It is a perfect system -- James 1:25; I Cor. 13: 9 - 10
4. It contains all things pertaining to life and godliness -- II Pet. 1:3
5. It furnishes the man of God unto all good works -- II Tim. 3:16
6. We are forbidden to go beyond the Scriptures -- I Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1: 6 - 9; II John 9 - 11; I Pet. 4:11; Rev. 22: 18 -

IV. THIS PRECIOUS FAITH MUST BE CONTENDED FOR AND DEFENDED

1. Phil. 1: 17; Jude 3
2. This calls for a strenuous, verbal defense of the faith
 - (1) *Webster* defines "contend" as "to strive in combat or opposition; to strive in debate or controversy; to argue; to dispute"
 - (2) Notice how this same word is used in other passages
 1. "Fight" -- I Tim. 6:12
 2. "Strive" -- Luke 13: 24
3. Many brethren do not know what it means to "contend for the faith".
 - (1) They say, "Preach the gospel and leave everybody alone", and "I wouldn't dispute about the Bible".
 - (2) How can we fight without hitting somebody?
 - (3) When we say we don't believe in arguing and disputing, we are actually saying we do not believe in doing what the Bible says.
4. We have many Bible examples of contending earnestly
 - (1) Stephen successfully disputed with adversaries -- Acts 6: 9 - 10
 - (2) Paul disputed with the Grecians -- Acts 9: 29
 - (3) Paul disputed daily in the market at Athens -- Acts 17:17
 - (4) Paul and Barnabas disputed with the Judaizing teachers -- Acts 15:1 - 2
 - (5) Christ and the Devil -- Matt. 4: 1 - 10
 - (6) Apollos -- Acts 18: 28
5. We must contend for the precious faith today against false teachers
 - (1) This commands us to dispute with false teachers within the church
 - (2) Many false teachers are in the church today
 - (3) False teachers outside the church must be contended with
 - (4) The faith cannot defend itself; we must take the Sword of the Spirit, using our mouth
 - (5) Anytime that false doctrine rears its head we must rise to the defense of the faith -- to be silent is SIN.

Donald Townsley

1981