

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

One Faith

Eph. 4:4 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

When we speak of faith we need to be plain as to which faith we are talking about. There is the faith of the individual which is the fruit of the Spirit and comes as a result of the work of the Spirit in the new birth. There is the faith of Christ or of God which is God's faithfulness to execute his covenant promises. There is the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

This faith which was once delivered unto the saints is the "one faith" in Eph. 4:4. This faith is the system of doctrine, practice and government given to the New Testament church. Most of the time in the New Testament it is referred to as "the faith."

Numerous times in the New Testament "the faith" is spoken of:

1. Acts 6:7 "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
2. Acts 13:8 "But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."
3. Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."
4. Acts 16:5 "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."
5. Acts 24:24 "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ."
6. Rom 1:5 "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:"
7. Rom 14:1 "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."
8. 1 Cor 16:13 "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."
9. 2 Cor 13:5 "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

10. Gal 1:23 "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."
11. Gal 3:23 "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."
12. Eph 4:13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"
13. Phil 1:27 "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"
14. Col 1:23 "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"
15. Col 2:7 "Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."
16. 1 Tim 1:2 "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord."
17. 1 Tim 3:9 "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."
18. 1 Tim 3:13 "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."
19. 1 Tim 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"
20. 1 Tim 5:8 "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
21. 1 Tim 6:10 "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
22. 1 Tim 6:21 "Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen."
23. 2 Tim 2:18 "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."
24. 2 Tim 3:8 "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."
25. 2 Tim 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"
26. Titus 1:13 "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;"
27. Titus 3:15 "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."
28. 1 Pet 5:9 "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

29. Jude 1:3 "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

While volumes could be written on the subject of "the faith," it is not our purpose to do so at this time. We read in II Tim. 3:16 that the scriptures are a thorough furnisher unto all good works. Therefore, we conclude that what constitutes the faith is thoroughly furnished to us in the scriptures. Thus, those things added to the New Testament faith, which are not given to us in the New Testament, are not part of the faith that was once given to the saints.

Sunday schools, singing with instrumental music accompaniment, preachers schools or seminars, tithing, salaried ministry, women preachers and deacons, raising money for foreign missions, mission boards, flowery titles to the ministry, church auxiliaries, and church organizations above the local church are not part of "the faith once given to the saints."

Eph. 4:11-13 tells us that the gospel ministry was given to bring us unto the unity of the faith. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." If some preach one thing and others preach another, and some practice one thing and others practice another, then we are not unified. Therefore, we cannot possibly be in the unity of the faith unless we are according to thus saith the Lord in all that we teach and practice.