

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

A teaching bulletin produced and provided by FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 2 ◆ Issue 32 ◆ August 8, 2021

THE FAITH

Larry R. Ping II

A word is not a part of speech until placed into its context. Such is the case with the word faith. In many cases, the word faith is used to depict an individual's belief, such as described in Hebrews 11. At other times, however, faith, especially when paired with "the" indicates a system of law. The phrase "the faith" appears several times in the New Testament, and is usually referring to the New Testament as a whole. From them, we can learn many lessons. Consider these.

1) Obedient to the faith. Luke penned, "*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*" (Acts 6:7). Ponder the bookends to the epistle to the Roman Christians. "*By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name*" (Rom. 1:5) and "*But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the*

prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26). To obey "the faith," one must **OBSERVE** God's law, **BELIEVE** God's law, **ESTEEM** God's law above all others and **YIELD** to God's Law. Have you done these?

2) Continue in the faith. In the midst of his first preaching journey, Paul "*returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 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*" (Acts 14:21-22). Paul urged the brethren of Colosse to "*continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard*" (Col. 1:23). It is not good enough to merely obey "the faith" once, and call it quits! We must persist in our obedience and allegiance to it. Have you? Will you?

3) Established in the faith. It is noted the first century churches "*increased in number daily*" because "*the churches*" were "*established in the faith*" (Acts 16:5). Paul was highly concerned early disciples would be drawn away from the Gospel and consequently warned to be "*Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*" (Col. 2:7-8). The foundation of our spiritual life are the words of the New Testament, "the faith." They must be the basis for all we do and say. It is written, "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*" (Col. 3:17). Have you studied daily and diligently (II Tim. 2:15)? Do you, on a daily basis, ensure you know God's Word well (Acts 17:11)?

THE FAITH

Larry R. Ping II

4) Preacheth the faith.

In his opening remarks to the Galatian faithful, Paul said, “*But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed*” (Gal. 1:23). The apostle emphasized the need for preaching when writing, “*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things*” (Rom. 10:14-15)! The need to “stand fast in the faith” must be preached (I Cor. 16:13). The need to “*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves*” must be preached (II Cor. 13:5). The need to exhibit “great boldness in the faith” must be preached (I Tim. 3:13). The need to remind about the need to keep “the faith” must be preached (II Tim. 4:7). The need to remain “sound in the faith” must be preached (Tit. 1:13).

The need to be “stedfast in the faith” must be preached (I Pet. 5:9). Be sure you are preaching these things, or are supporting those who do.

5) Contend for the faith.

In his short, but important book, Jude authored, “*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*” (Jude 3). The idea of “contending” is to “struggle for; to battle for; to vie for.” The picture is of a faithful child of God who will defend, at all costs, God’s Word. These are those who are “*faithful unto death*” (Rev. 2:10). Are you willing to put your life on the line for “the faith?” Are you prepared to put your neck on the line for “the faith?” If not, why not?

6) Turn away from the truth.

Not every mention of the phrase “the faith” is of a positive note. Several occurrences indicate the possibility of falling away.

Acts 13:8 indicates, “*But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.*” The Holy Spirit warned, “*that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth*” (I Tim. 4:1-3). Some have “denied the faith” (I Tim. 5:8). The Holy Book of God admonishes, “*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*” (I Tim. 6:10). May we be of such spiritual fabric we will not err “concerning the faith” (I Tim. 6:21). Let us each be “stedfast” and “unmoveable” (I Cor. 15:58) as we labor for the Lord and for “the faith!” How are you doing?

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

MEETING AT HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

2720 Battery Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 672
Vincennes, IN 47591

Phone: 317.308.8288

Website: www.firstcitychurchofchrist.com

Email: firstcitychurchofchrist@gmail.com

MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm