

Only Scripture - 2

by Anton Bosch

The Bible is complete and final, and we must contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

Scripture: Jude 1:3

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "False Prophets"

Description

Anton Bosch preaches on the importance of relying exclusively on the Bible for revelation, emphasizing that God has spoken through His Son and that everything we need to know has been revealed in and through Jesus Christ. The book of Jude warns about false prophets and the need to contend earnestly for the faith, which refers to the body of doctrine that makes up Christianity. Both Jude and Paul stress the finality and completeness of the revelation received, condemning any new teachings or extra-biblical sources of revelation as false and accursed.

Transcript

In the last article we began to examine the Scriptural basis for relying exclusively on the Bible rather than accepting various extra-biblical "revelations" as being at the same level, or higher, authority as the Bible. This is a view that is fast dying out as more and more Christians and their leaders move away from the Scriptures to all sorts of extra-biblical sources of revelation. Hebrews 1:1-2 expressly says that God has spoken through His Son and that He is finished speaking - everything we need to know has been revealed in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. (See the first article in this series.)

The one-chapter book of Jude is specifically written to warn about the dangers of false prophets, teachers and apostles. Verse 3 says: "...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 1:3).

The words "the faith" does not refer to faith in the sense of trusting in the Lord. It specifically refers to the body of doctrine and teaching that make up Christianity. Note that we must contend for "the faith" not just "faith". The difference between "faith" and "the faith" is illustrated very well by Prince Charles who said that if he (ever) became King he would change the title kings of England have carried for hundreds of years. Instead of being "the Defender of the Faith" he would be "the Defender of Faith" . Generally when the Bible uses the definite article "the" before "faith", it refers to what we believe - the Gospel as opposed to just believing in general. (See also Galatians 1:23, Ephesians 4:13, Colossians 1:23 etc.)

Jude was written, at the very latest, by AD90 and already at that time he writes about a definitive set of doctrines that make up the Gospel. But he is even more specific in the words that follow.

"The faith", he says, "was once for all delivered to the saints". The words "once for all" are translated from a single Greek word which can only be translated as "once for all" in a very final and complete sense. This is the same word used in Hebrews 9:26 where the writer emphasizes the finality and completeness of the work of Christ: "He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Hebrews 9:26).

Thus Jude says the faith was once for all time delivered. It is not still being delivered but it is complete, final and done. By Jude's definition, therefore, those who claim that God is progressively revealing more to us in these days, or that there are additional revelations not contained in the teachings of the Apostles (the Twelve and Paul) are the false preachers against whom we must defend the faith.

[There is obviously a vast amount of information God has chosen not to reveal to us. The reason for that is simple; we don't need to know everything. But everything we need has been revealed, not only for salvation but for daily living, not only for the present and the past but also for the future. "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3)]

Paul shares this sense of finality, absoluteness and completeness of the revelation: "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:27); "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle." (2 Thessalonians 2:15); "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them." (Romans 16:17); "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13).

The list of verses in which Paul admonishes us not to depart from the things he had taught is conclusive evidence that he believed that he had received everything that we need to know and that he had passed that on to others. If there was any question in Paul's mind that we should continue to seek for new revelation, then surely he would have said so - even once. Why then do we have many scriptures telling us that the doctrine and revelation is complete and we are not to follow anything else and why is there not a single verse telling us to seek a new revelation? Obviously because the revelation received by Paul and the other Apostles was the full and final revelation of Jesus Christ.

In fact, Paul is so sure of the comprehensiveness and finality of his doctrine that he resorts to extreme language as well as repetition to curse anyone who would bring another message: "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. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8-9). Please note that Paul says that even if he himself (or an angel) came with another message, that such a one is to be anathema - accursed. Even Paul locked himself into the doctrine as it stood then and he totally excludes the possibility that even he could receive any further revelation!

Why is it then that lesser men than Paul are coming with all sorts of new revelations and finding all sorts of revelations in extra-biblical sources? Why is it that millions believe the new messages that they come with? And why is it that these false prophets are called blessed when Paul says they are accursed? The only explanation can be that Christians and churches have strayed so far from the truth that evil has

become good and good has become evil (Isaiah 5:20).

Continued Here

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/3454271/Prince-Charles-to-be-known-as-Defender-of-Faith.html>. He actually wanted the title "Defender of Faiths" but was forced to modify it after a public outcry.

Only the KJV does not include the words "for all"

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