

## **Faith (Proposition and Progress)**

What is faith? Most people would answer that question by saying that 'faith' was ***what we believe***. In other words, 'faith' is certain 'propositions'; a proposition being something stated, approved and accepted as an article of belief. For a Christian, such propositions might be the statements contained in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. The words of Jude, in verse three, refer to such a set of propositions when He speaks of, "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." In speaking in this way he means there exists a body of facts related to the message of Jesus Christ. The rest of the NT also refers to faith in terms of the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Apostles.

Jude tells the church to be "built up" in this faith. He says in v.20, "but you, beloved, build yourselves up on this most holy faith". Faith then is certainly an 'intellectual' exercise in apprehending and appreciating with the mind all facets or facts relating to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But faith in the NT is not only about informing our minds with 'propositions'. Faith in the NT is also about our 'progressing' relationship with Christ. I do not mean the progression of intellectual knowledge by adding to our 'facts', but the progression of our learning to trust Christ; of 'walking in faith' in the difficult times in life.

Faith in the NT is about maturing trust in Christ; it is about progressing in that trust. It is about learning, often through very painful experiences, that God has His own purpose for us. He moulds and fashions the life of faith in His people through many arduous and trying circumstances. Think about Abraham or Joseph or Daniel in the Old Testament. Faith is about a work in progress. God did not make a mistake in the life of Joseph. We can be confident that our trials are for the maturing of faith, and 'making' us God's holy people.