

Is Doctrine Really Important ?

INTRODUCTION :

- A. In today's world many do not feel that doctrine is important.**
1. People have a strong desire to just get along, **i.e.**, to be politically correct.
 2. Because they feel doctrine causes division, they reject it.
 3. To do so is to place the feelings of man above the sovereignty of God.
- B. Some religious movements were founded on the rejection of doctrine.**
1. They have agreed to disagree.
 2. They say, "There's only one God .. as long as one has faith in Him he's okay."
 3. Rules keeping can never save anyone because salvation is indeed by grace through faith.
- C. However, one must realize that to reject doctrine is to reject the word of God.**
1. The word of God (bible) contains the doctrine of Christ. (**Teaches grace**)
 2. To reject doctrine is to reject God, because God He is the giver of doctrine.

TRANSITION :

In this lesson we will demonstrate from scriptures that :

- i. Christian doctrine was given by God ;
- ii. Taught by Jesus ; and
- iii. Carried on by the Apostles who, in turn, commanded us to continue in it.
- iv. ALL Christians are commanded to know and to teach the doctrine.
- v. Those who stray from the doctrine **MUST** be corrected or rejected.

I. What is doctrine ?

- A. Translated from the original word from didaskalia; (διδασκαλία)**
1. The meaning is clear and translation is not controversial.
 2. As a noun : Doctrine, teaching, instruction
 3. As a verb : to teach, to instruct
- (*New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*)

B. The English dictionary defines “doctrine” as :

1. Something that is taught
2. A principle or position or the body of principles in a branch of knowledge or system of belief

C. Thus, as we studying the Bible, we understand "doctrine" to be :

1. A specific teaching about a bible topic.
2. And, “the doctrine” to be a set of teachings which are the basis of the Christian's faith
3. In **Heb. 6: 1-2** .. The scriptures reference “doctrines” about such things as :
 - a. Repentance and faith
 - b. Baptism
 - c. Laying on of hands
 - d. The resurrection
 - e. Eternal judgment
4. In **I Tim 6: 1** .. "**The doctrine**" refers to all of the teachings about Christ, the church.

II. Jesus taught doctrine.**A. Jesus taught with authority.**

1. **Matthew 7:28-29**
2. Thus, Jesus must have thought doctrine (teaching) to be important.

B. Jesus said that His doctrine came from God.

1. **John 7:16 - My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.**
2. Since God gave doctrine, God obviously believes it to be important.

C. Jesus taught that anyone who wants to obey God, will learn what is the true doctrine.

1. **John 7:17- If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.**
Compare : **I Pet. 2: 2-** like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,
2. There have always been deceitful workers sent into the church by Satan to destroy the faith of God's people by distorting the true doctrine.
 - a. **Genesis 3: 1-4** ... Satan tempted the first couple. (**You will NOT surely die.**)
 - b. **I Cor. 11: 13-14** ... Satan sends false Apostles and false teachers into the church.
 - c. **II Pet. 3: 16** ... Unstable people twist the scriptures to suit their purposes.
3. **Eph. 5: 8, 10** ... Christians try to learn what pleases God, **i.e., to learn His doctrine.**

D. The scriptures admonish us to develop strength to resist those who pervert the word.

1. **Eph. 4: 14** ... Crafty teachers lead people astray with distorted teachings.
2. **Heb. 13: 8-9** **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**
⁹ **Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; ...**
 - a. The doctrine of Christ remains constant through the ages.
 - b. It never changes.
 - c. However, it is expressed differently in different eras and different places.

III. The Apostles Taught Doctrine.**A. The first Christians were careful to follow the doctrine taught by the Apostles.**

1. **Acts 2: 41-47**
2. They also worshipped and prayed daily.
3. They had daily fellowship.

B. The Apostle Paul admonishes Christians to be faithful to the doctrine.

1. **I Tim. 4: 16-** **Pay close attention to yourself and to your doctrine; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.**
2. **NOTICE** ... Salvation is linked to the accurate transmission of the doctrine.

C. Christians are forbidden to fellowship those who teach some other doctrine.

1. **II John 10-11** **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; ¹¹ for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.**
2. The one who brings a different doctrine is committing a sin. (“evil deeds”)
3. Those who are honestly in error should be corrected. (Cf- **Acts 18: 24-28**)

D. Christians teachers commanded to bind doctrines.

1. We must bind specific doctrines.
I Tim 4:11- **Prescribe and teach these things.**
I Tim 5:7- **Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach.**
2. Some things were to be proclaimed with fervor.
Titus 3:8- **... concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. ...**
- * 3. **Obviously the Apostles thought it was important to teach doctrine.**

IV. Adherence to the correct doctrine is a test of fellowship.

A. Those who mistakenly teach incorrect doctrine must be lovingly taught better.

1. **Read & Exegete ... Acts 18: 24 - 19:7**

- a. Erring teacher was taught better.
 - b. When teaching change, erring teacher was accepted.
 - c. Those taught by erring teacher were corrected.
2. The correction must always be done with gentleness and love.

II Tim. 2: 24-26 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. (cf- **Eph. 4: 15**)

B. Christians are commanded to STOP false teachers.

1. **Titus 1:10-11** For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹ who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain.

2. These are people who knowingly and maliciously teach error.
 - a. "rebellious men"
 - b. "deceivers"

C. Those who knowingly teach false doctrine are lost.

1. Those who do not stay within the doctrine do not have a relationship with God.

II John 9- Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

2. Those who do not remain in the doctrine make their faith worthless. (**saved by faith**)

I Corinthians 15:1-2 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

3. Those who teach wrong doctrine are not acceptable.

Read & Exegete ... I Tim. 6: 3-5

D. Elders and preachers must teach Christians not to change the doctrine of Christ.

1. **I Timothy 1:3-** “... remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines”
2. **I Corinthians 4:6-** “..so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so ..”
3. **I Pet 4:11- /Jude 17** ... Speak ONLY what God speaks. (cf- **Prov 30:5-6**)

E. Those who teach a different doctrine are to be pointed out and avoided.

1. **Rom. 16:17-** Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.
2. **Titus 3:9-11** But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.
¹⁰ Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, ¹¹ knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

*** The argumentative and “debateful” spirit is not Christian.**

V. Christians are commanded to pay close attention to doctrine.**A. The scriptures clearly teach us to place importance on doctrine.**

1. **I Timothy 4:13-** Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.
 - a. Learn it.
 - b. Teach it.
 - c. Apply it.
2. **I Timothy 4:16-** Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.
 - a. Pay close attention ... Make sure you are accurate.
 - b. Persevere in ... Don't change the doctrine.
 - c. The result ... Salvation

B. Christians must develop the ability to handle the doctrine of Christ.

1. In order to be approved of God a preacher must teach the doctrine of Christ.

I Tim. 4: 6- In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

2. .. Over time ALL Christians must develop the ability to teach the doctrine.
 - a. **Heb. 5: 11-12**
 - b. **I Peter 3:15**
 3. Christians must develop past the first principles, the elementary doctrines.
 - a. **Heb 6:1-2** **Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.**
 - b. Many long time Christians still have not mastered those “**elementary teachings.**”
- C. All Christians must be vigilant against slipping away from the truth.**
1. **I Tim. 6: 20-** **O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—**
 2. **Jude 3-** **... I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.**

CONCLUSION :

- A. Is doctrine important ? YES !! Indeed it is.**
1. The doctrine was given by God ;
 2. Taught by Jesus ; and
 3. Carried on and commanded by the Apostles.
 4. ALL Christians are commanded to learn and to teach the doctrine.
 5. Those who stray from the doctrine MUST be corrected or rejected.
- B. Satan tries to downplay the importance of doctrine. (Just have faith .. get along)**
- C. Doctrine is from God so to reject it is to reject the sovereignty of God.**
- D. To teach custom or tradition as doctrine is rebellion against God.**
1. It takes but one verse to establish a doctrine.
 2. However, NO VERSE = NO DOCTRINE
- E. Traditions naturally develop with time, but cannot be bound on others.**
- F. There is only one throne and God sets on it.**
- * **Who's on the throne of your heart ?** Salvation is by grace through faith