

# How Important Is Doctrine?

***Isaiah 55:10-11*** For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

**DOCTRINE:** - (dictionary meaning) teachings, instruction; the principles of religion that are taught

- (literal meaning) “to teach the substance”

**OBJECTIONS:** - “There is no Biblical record of Jesus or any of the Apostles formulating or giving any ready-made system of doctrine.” (*perhaps not systematic order, but foundational!*)

- “The church does not need doctrine for doctrine has always been divisive, and this is why there are so many denominations.” (*church didn’t originate doctrine, God did!*)

- “It does not matter what you believe; it only matters who you believe.” (*you cannot accept Christ and reject what He taught; He and His Word are one!*)

- “You can be right in your doctrine and wrong in your spirit and that is not acceptable with God.” OR “You could be wrong in your doctrine and right in your spirit and this is more acceptable with God.” (*right attitudes are not more important to God than the truth He has declared; God’s ideal is for us to be right in both areas!*)

- “Doctrine is dry, dull and dead and is useless for us today; we need practical teaching.” OR “Experience is more important than doctrine.” (*don’t dispense with truth because the teacher needs life; unguarded experience always leads to error!*)

## DOCTRINE IS LIKENED TO THREE THINGS IN SCRIPTURE:

### 1. DOCTRINE IS LIKE LEAVEN

- Yeast works silently and secretly, eventually influencing the whole lump of dough
- ***Matthew 16:6*** Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

### 2. DOCTRINE IS LIKE WIND

- False doctrines can uproot believers like strong winds can uproot trees (Psalm 1:4).

- *Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

### 3. DOCTRINE IS LIKE RAIN

- Rain is symbolic of revival, refreshing and restoration after a time of drought or famine.
- Bible doctrine is heaven-sent teaching! You cannot have a real move of God without it!
- *Deuteronomy 32:2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:*

## WHAT GOD WANTS US TO KNOW ABOUT DOCTRINE:

### 1. DOCTRINE MUST BE SOUND

- Sound doctrine alone preserves from error, bringing spiritual health and development.
- *2 Timothy 4:2-4 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

### 2. DOCTRINE MUST BE PURE

- The only true test for the purity of teaching is the purity of life it produces.
- *Job 11:4 For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.*

### 3. DOCTRINE MUST BE SCRIPTURAL

- All things must be tested by the Word of God, which must be interpreted by proper principles.

*2 Timothy 3:14-17 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

### 4. DOCTRINE DETERMINES CHARACTER

- What a person believes affects what he is. Believing affects being, and being affects doing.
- If we follow Bible doctrine, it develops the Divine nature in us, dividing us from the world.

- 1 Timothy 4:16 *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*
- Titus 2:10 *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

## 5. DOCTRINE AFFECTS FELLOWSHIP

- The Bible teaches that believers should not have fellowship with teachers of false doctrine.
- The converts at Pentecost continued first in doctrine and second in fellowship (Acts 2:42).
- The measure of common light between believers will determine their measure of fellowship.
- Some wrongly sacrifice fellowship for doctrine, but don't sacrifice doctrine for fellowship!
- 1 John 1:7 *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

## 6. DOCTRINE DETERMINES DESTINY

- It is wrong to say that it doesn't matter what a person believes as long as they are sincere!
- Who and what you believe affects your eternal destiny. It is possible to be sincerely wrong!
- Your destiny hangs on Pilate's question in Matthew 27:22 ... *"What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"* Outside of obedience is darkness and death; inside is light and life!

## 7. DOCTRINE MUST BE HANDLED WITH LOVE

- Though all our doctrine is exactly right, if we do not have love we are nothing in God's sight.
- 1 Corinthians 13:2 *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*
- However, the highest degree of "love" will never negate the need for obedience to doctrine!

## 8. DOCTRINE MUST BE OBEYED

- We never really understand truth until we obey truth! Doctrine is lifeless until it is practiced.
- Bible doctrines have no effect on your life whatsoever unless they are obeyed!
- Jesus warned us in Matthew 23:3 to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees because *"they say and do not."* Preaching without practicing becomes a lifeless form!

- Paul commended the believers at Rome *who “obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered”* to them. Christian living must accompany Christian doctrine.
- Paul could say in 2 Timothy 3:10, *“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life ...”* because his lifestyle was consistent with the doctrine he preached.
- The greatest danger in handling doctrine is that it may become truth apart from experience.
- Truth that is not lived is powerless truth. Truth unlived is the greatest waste in the world!

*Someone asked Sis. Bobbye Wendell, the first missionary to Ethiopia, what their national ministers would say if asked what brought great revival in that country. Her answer?*

***“Doctrine. Doctrine. Doctrine.”***