

## The Advantages of Studying Doctrine

When we study the Word of God there are several considerations that we should remember. David Bernard states the following in *Doctrines of the Bible* (p. 28):

When studying the Bible, we should keep in mind several points:

- (1) Illumination of the Spirit is necessary,
- (2) The Bible is basically plain and meant to be understood,
- (3) Scripture interprets Scripture,
- (4) Truth is revealed progressively from Old to New Testament,
- (5) The Bible presents a unified theology,
- (6) No doctrine stands on one passage alone or is hidden in obscure passages,
- (7) The Bible is accommodated to the human mind (but not to error), and
- (8) Each passage has one primary meaning but can have many applications.

We can have confidence that God has revealed, preserved, and transmitted His Word to us today and that we can understand it. His Word is the Bible.

In addition to these points, there are several advantages that come with the serious study of Doctrine.

1. **The study of Doctrine will keep us from spiritual error.** It is important to seek out and pursue the tenets of faith expressed by the Bible. If the true core of Apostolic Doctrine is lost, then all that is dear to the Apostolic Pentecostals will soon follow. *Take Heed Unto Thyself and to the Doctrine. . .*

**1 Timothy 4:1-5** Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 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. 4 For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

**1 Timothy 4:13-16** Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. 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.

**2 Timothy 4:1-4** I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 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; 4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

2. **Doctrine will help to settle our lives.** There is an “academic” responsibility for us not only to be aware of the doctrine but to learn and know how to give a ready answer (1 Peter 3:15).

**Ephesians 4:14-16** 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; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: 16 From whom the whole

body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

**3. Doctrine will help to acquaint us with the details of God's eternal plans.**

Concerning the History of Israel -- **1 Corinthians 10:1** Moreover, brethren, ***I would not that ye should be ignorant***, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

Concerning the Restoration of Israel -- **Romans 11:25** For ***I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery***, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

Concerning Spiritual Gifts -- **1 Corinthians 12:1** Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, ***I would not have you ignorant***.

Concerning The Rapture -- **1 Thessalonians 4:13** But ***I would not have you to be ignorant***, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

Concerning the Destruction of the Earth -- **2 Peter 3:8-10** But, beloved, ***be not ignorant of this one thing***, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

**4. Doctrine will afford to us the approval of God.** When we become mature saints of God, there is a greater hunger for the Word. The more

that we hunger for the Word, the more disciplined that our study of the Bible will become.

**2 Timothy 2:15** Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**5. Doctrine provides a clear Biblical basis for our foundational beliefs.**

Our theology must be explicitly based on the Word of God. When one attempts to factor in extra-biblical literature (i.e. – The Early Church fathers, creeds, etc.) the potential for spiritual error greatly increases. Therefore, *all* Scripture is profitable for doctrine. We must adapt the pattern of the Bereans who carefully pursued the evidence found within Scripture.

**Acts 17:10-11** And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

**6. Doctrine provides a clear explanation of the Word of God.** The study of doctrine is not intended to result in confusion and frustration and fill one's life with uncertainty and doubt. Once we allow the Word of God to have the final say on issues, our hearts can remain at rest. One can understand that the New Birth is essential, that baptism is essential, that tongues are still the initial evidence of the New Birth, that the gifts of the Spirit are still in the New Testament church, and that we can have hope in a Rapture that will remove a waiting church from this world.

**Titus 1:9** Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

**7. Doctrine can be applied to our daily lives in a sense of godly and righteous living.** Theology is to be lived, sung, and prayed. The entire

Word of God brings applicational truth to our lives. The more we know about God, His Word, about His plan for man, the more we are able to trust, worship, and more readily obey Him.

**1 Timothy 6:3** *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;*

### **Myths and Facts about Doctrine**

**MYTH:** Doctrine is the useless practice of arguing about non-essential matters in Scripture.

**FACT:** Doctrine is the systematic gathering and presentation of facts concerning a body of truth. One must love doctrine enough to gather the facts about it.

**MYTH:** Doctrine is divisive and one must pursue an alternative of “love.”

**FACT:** Doctrine does divide. It divides light from darkness, right from wrong, the broad way and the narrow path. However, it unites true Christian fellowship and unites us with God. The cry of Paul was, “That I might know Him. . .” (Philippians 3:10)

**MYTH:** Doctrine and soul-winning and church growth do not mix.

**FACT:** Doctrine and soul-winning and church growth must go together. People must be convinced of what they are standing for. There can never be a lack of knowledge. Paul used doctrine and soul-winning and church planting very effectively. The Apostolic doctrine gives the church a place to stand.

**MYTH:** Doctrine is dull and impractical for my life.

**FACT:** Doctrine is the fire and song of those who “read and heed.” Luke 24:32-33 indicates that our hearts will burn within while the Scriptures are opened to us.

**MYTH:** Why learn more doctrine when we do not live out what we already know?

**FACT:** We need to learn to obey all of the Bible. By learning more, we are able to incorporate what we already know into our lives.

**MYTH:** Doctrine is too deep and covers too much.

**FACT:** Doctrine is revealed to babies (1 Peter 2:2; Matt. 11:25; 11:28-30). Doctrine is not too difficult if you are willing to apply yourself to learning.

**MYTH:** Our goal should be to allow the Bible to master us and do not waste time trying to master it.

**FACT:** Our goal is for the Bible to master us by study. One cannot be influenced by what one does not know.

**Deeper, Deeper**  
**C. P. Jones**

*Deeper, deeper in the love of Jesus, Daily let me go; Higher, higher in the school of wisdom, More of grace to know.*

*Deeper, deeper! Blessed Holy Spirit, take me deeper still, Till my life is wholly lost in Jesus, And His perfect will.*

*Deeper, deeper! Tho' it cost hard trials, Deeper let me go! Rooted in the holy love of Jesus, Let me fruitful grow.*

*Deeper, higher, ev'ry day in Jesus, Till all conflict past, Finds me conqu'ror, and in His own image Perfected at last.*

*O deeper yet I pray, And higher ev'ry day, And wiser blessed Lord, In Thy precious, holy word.*