

Does Doctrine Really Matter? – Outline

I. Introduction: Doctrine is Teaching

- A. *The Gospel is Doctrine* – “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)
- B. *Truth is Doctrine* – “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:15)
- C. *The Faith is Doctrine* – “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3)
- D. *The Bible is Doctrine* – “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” (2 Timothy 3:16)

II. Is Doctrine Important? If So, How Important?

- A. *If Doctrine is...*
 - 1. How we know God (and it is), then it is important
 - 2. The essence of Scripture's teaching (and it is), then it is important
 - 3. What Christians are called to believe and defend (and it is), then it is important.
- B. *How Scripture Views Doctrine*
 - 1. Doctrine is exclusive: “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.” (1 Timothy 1:3)
 - 2. Doctrine is commendable: “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.” (1 Timothy 4:6)
 - 3. Doctrine is central:
 - a. “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” (1 Timothy 4:13)
 - b. “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” (2 Timothy 4:2)
- C. *The Danger of Bad (and Lack of) Doctrine*
 - 1. Our attitude to false teachers:
 - a. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” (Romans 16:17)
 - b. “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” (2 John 1:9-10)
 - 2. The diversity and deceptiveness of bad doctrine: “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." (Ephesians 4:14)

3. Lack of doctrine reflects Godless Christianity: "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..." (2 Timothy 4:3)
4. The effects bad doctrine has on the hearers: "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; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Timothy 6:3-5)
5. The necessity of carefulness in dealing with doctrine: "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." (1 Timothy 4:16)

III. Doctrine and the Believer

A. *Doctrine is Not for Clergymen, but for Bible Students (Which Should Be Every Believer)*

1. EVERY believer's ability to know doctrine
 - a. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (1 John 2:27)
 - b. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Corinthians 2:9-10)
 - c. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16)
2. EVERY believer's obligation to know doctrine:
 - a. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth..." (Ephesians 6:14)
 - b. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." (1 Peter 1:12)
 - c. "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." (1 John 2:21)
 - d. "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." (Romans 15:14)

B. *Doctrine is the Basis for Obedience*

1. To disobey is to be contrary to sound doctrine: "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

2. It was what we obeyed in the gospel: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." (Romans 6:17)
 3. It is what changes the believer's heart and perspective: "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." (Titus 1:9)
 4. To walk in truth is to obey God's commandment: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." (2 John 1:4)
 5. Truth is what we practice: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth." (1 John 1:6)
- C. *Doctrine is the Basis for Fellowship*
1. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42)
 2. "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." (2 John 1:1)
- D. *Doctrine is Commended by a Godly Lifestyle* – "Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus 2:10)