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RESTORING THE CHURCH - PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LIFE

Why Study Doctrine?

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this lesson is to help us to see our need for teaching a biblical instruction and to develop a desire to go on with the Lord – beyond a mere confession of faith. A deeper understanding of what we believe and why we believe it will produce a greater maturity and an increased fruitfulness.

KEY VERSE:

“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; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”

Ephesians 4:14-15

I. WHAT IS DOCTRINE?

- A. The word “Doctrine” simply means teaching or instruction.
- B. A biblical doctrine is simply all that the Bible teaches or says about a particular subject.

II. WHAT IS THE BASIC PURPOSE OF ALL DOCTRINAL STUDY?

“Luke, the author of the third Gospel, put it this way, “..... to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

Luke 1:1, 4

The purpose for all doctrinal study is fivefold:

- A. To equip the believers to do **good works**.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, or correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
2 Timothy 3:16-17

- B. To prepare the believer to war **an effective** warfare against Satan.

- C. To ground our faith **firmly** on the Word of Truth.

“Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”
Colossians 2:7

- D. To enable the believer to properly **express love** to the Lord and His people.

The goal of this instruction is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
1 Timothy 1:5 (NAS)

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:”
1 Peter 1:22

- E. To instruct the believer as to how to **properly function** in the House of the Lord.

“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 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 3:14-15

III. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR EVERY BELIEVER TO HAVE A GOOD BIBLICAL FOUNDATION?

Many people today would lead us to believe that it does not matter what you believe as long as you have accepted Christ as your saviour. The Bible is emphatic about this point that it is important that every believer knows what they believe and why they believe it. (1 Timothy 6:1-4, Titus 2:7-15, 1 Timothy 4:6, 13)

“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**

There are several reasons why it is important to know what we believe:

- A. Because the last days will be characterised by **deceptions**. This is very apparent in our day with the rise of various cults and the infiltration of secular, humanistic philosophies (1 Timothy 4:1, 2; 2 John 7; Matthew 24:10-13, 24).

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”

Matthew 24:4-5

- B. Because every believer is to **teach and instruct** others to observe the commandments of the Lord.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Matthew 28:19-20

- C. Because all believers should be able to give **an answer**, when questioned concerning the hope that they have in Christ.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”

1 Peter 3:15

- D. Because what we believe will affect **our destiny**. (John 14:6, 2 Peter 1:8-11).

“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.” **2 Timothy 3:15**

IV. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTRINE?

- A. Doctrine must be **sound** (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4).

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

Titus 2:1

B. Doctrine must be **pure** (Titus 2:7, 8)

C. Doctrine must be based on **Scripture** (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
2 Peter 1:20-21

D. Doctrine must be mixed with faith (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it”. **Hebrews 4:2**

E. Doctrine must be practiced (Romans 6:17; Luke 11:28)

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
James 1:22-25

CONCLUSION:

God is raising up a body of people in our day who are going to go beyond the last generation in entering into the provisions of the New Covenant. If this is true, we must be a people who have a love for the Word of Truth and a desire to learn the right ways of God. We are living in a time where people like to choose for themselves what they want to hear and are resisting some of the things that are clearly revealed in the Word of God. If we will distinguish ourselves in these days by a love for righteousness and a desire to live by God’s Word, God will do special things through us as He has promised.

Read Psalm 19:7-11