

Why we need to study and understand doctrine

Christians say we need to teach Christianity. That's true and we need to teach truth and right doctrine. Let me say this, in the first century all of the teaching of the gospel or doctrine was of "word of mouth"--people would teach others by telling it. There was no written record of doctrine or the gospels except for the Old Testament. This is how it started.

Peter said this concerning this form of teaching, **"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty."** (2 Peter 1:15,16)

The writers of the gospels and epistles had what was called amanuensis' or secretaries that would write down what the Holy Spirit was communicating to these authors. As the years progressed and the medium began to change like papyri, vellum, paper and such, the quality become more of a "permanent" record.

We had individual laymen and ministers commenting on the word of God, we had the Didache, which was a type of rule or compilation of the teaching of the apostles. Still further you had sermons, books, and letters that helped define teaching and doctrine. But always, always the basic principle of learning and teaching Christianity came by reading and studying God's Word. We get this from the Old Testament in Joshua for example.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." (Joshua 1:8)

And in the New Testament.

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

This is the mandate of every individual Christian to study and pray to understand the Scriptures relying on the Holy Spirit to guide him or her. Now up until the 15th century or so by the time of Tyndale's first published edition of

the English New Testament in 1525. Before this time the only way Christians could learn was that they had to go to Church to hear sermons. The problem was that it was the Catholic Church and it was all in Latin. And if you did not know Latin then you were in the dark. And if people could get a copy of the Scriptures then they could read it for themselves, but that was difficult and dangerous. This is the horror of the dark ages when the evil institution of Roman Catholicism put people in bondage to control them.

So, when Bibles became available by 1611 there was a huge Bible that was put in Churches and chained to a desk people could go and read it that, but individual people having their own copy of a Bible was still rare. The Roman Catholics did not want people having their own Bibles why? They might read it for themselves and become saved and leave the Catholic Church.

Again, when Bibles slowly after 1525 and 1611 began to be produced people could then read them on their own. Now down through the ages we had word of mouth, sermons, books, letters, and then we could get our own Bibles, then we had the advent of sound through the reeled tape for audio that came into use, and then radio and Television. Then we had cassette tape, which dominated for many, many years. Then came CD (Compact Disk) which holds a huge amount of information. Then computers, the Internet, and DVD's (Digital Video Disks) and now MP3's and the new thing coming is Memory Sticks (SDs). The basic format and medium for the Christian to use is still the Bible. Good old leather and paper Bibles.

An example of the over abundance is this. Let's say you love tomatoes and you go to a restaurant and there is a table twelve feet long filled with tomatoes you have hundreds of tomatoes to chose from and eat you're inundated with tomatoes. That is kind of the way it is today in the area of Christian teaching to the point were you are taught so many differing views, and on different topics, it throws individuals into confusion.

You get all these different views and people become confused because they don't know what's true. And because you have Bible teachers, ministers, and evangelists that will teach you, even if the plain text is there, their twisted views of their own ideas instead of letting the Scriptures speak.

This is a difficult time in the Church and this means we need to get back to correct teaching, we need to get back to studying the Scriptures for ourselves coupled with good Bible study tools. The question is this why do people not

do what the Bible says? Because they are confused and have little faith, and because of the twisted teachings.

We need to study yes, we need to hear good Bible teaching yes, but it has to be truth—true and faithful Bible teaching. Why? Because the Bible says it is good for our edification what does that mean? It means to **build us up** to make us stronger in the faith and what we believe.

You can't cease to pray, read, study, and hear the word of God. If you do altogether you will dry up. You will become unfruitful. God and His word by Jesus Christ and the help of the Holy Spirit **will** foster growth and wisdom if we apply our hearts and minds to the task.

We need discipline and doctrine we need Biblical truth. We must study from a faithful version like the King James version in doing so we know we will be getting the Word of God unadulterated and not watered down. We must be aware that our enemy (satan) has, does, and will do everything, in subtle but powerful ways, to pervert the words of God. The enemy knows he can't change the final word of God, so he introduces through so-called theologians, scholars, etc. to provide validity to the error corrupt versions that remove or add words, change phrases, etc. then it is disseminated out to the gullible Christian masses. A version can be corrupt but the final word of God can not be.

This then creates confusion when a hundred different Bible teachers, pastors, scholars, and even laymen use these corrupted translations. Peter said this would happen. **"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."** (2 Peter 2:1)

The goal of the enemy is to kill, rob, and destroy, **"the thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly."** (John 10:10) And to twist the truth creating wrong doctrine. And if false doctrine is created, proclaimed, and believed then confusion and error reign.

Here's how it works. False translations are made. These translations are sold in mass to seminaries (or I like to call them cemeteries) which in turn teach out of these false versions and subsequent false doctrine follows. Then these men

(and women God forbid) are sent out to churches they in turn teach it to the people which they in turn believe and become entrenched in error. It's a killer cycle with devastating consequences.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 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: 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." (Ephesians 4:11-16)

The above verses are **the reason** why we need doctrine. Not just any doctrine, but **correct faithful** doctrine. What is there to be fearful of? What is there we don't want to give up in obeying all of God's truth? When Christians believe error and false doctrine it's very difficult to convince them of truth. There is so much error being disseminated today that the truth is looked upon as error itself. We have history in the Church and that history dictates we hold fast to correct doctrine. Jude says to "contend for the faith." We must be faithful in what we teach, and each generation should be just as faithful to continue the good work of God in purity and truth!

It comes down to this. There are those that teach everything true in God's word, and are faithful to Him by the grace of the Holy Spirit. These men are learning, studying, and teaching, in all forms, the absolute truths of the word of God. We should seek them out, pray for them, and support them.

May God grant your eyes to see and your ears to hear His truth!

Amen?