

Basic Doctrine 1

Lesson 1 - 2

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Why Study Doctrine

Colossians 2:7 - “Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

What is doctrine?

The word “doctrine” simply means “teaching” or “instruction.” A Bible doctrine consists of all that the Bible has to say on a particular subject. When we talk about the “Doctrine of Christ” we are actually saying, “the teachings of Christ”. A church’s doctrine is what that church teaches.

What is the basic goal of doctrinal study?

To give us an orderly understanding of basic biblical truths (Luke 1:1-4).

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

To ground us in our faith solidly upon the word of God (Col. 2:6-8).

Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Why is it important for us to study Bible doctrine?

First, because it was important to Jesus (John 17:8; Mt. 7:28-29; John 7:14-17).

Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. ¹⁵And the Jews marveled, saying, “How does this Man know letters, having never studied?”

¹⁶Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. ¹⁷If

anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. John 7:14-17

Jesus Himself focused on teaching in His ministry. It was Jesus’ knowledge of true doctrine that gave Him a sharp sword against the devil (Luke 4:4). Jesus instructed us to do the same (Mt. 28:20).

Second, because it was important to the disciples (Luke 1:1-4, Acts 6:4).

...but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. Acts 6:4

Third, because it was important to Paul (I Tim. 6:3; 4:16).

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. I Timothy 4:16

Fourth, because the Early Church saw it as one of the necessary essentials of body life (Acts 2:41-42).

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

They continued "steadfast" in the apostles' doctrine. To continue steadfast is to persevere, to give constant attention to a thing, to be devoted to, to be in constant readiness for.

Fifth, because it is God's means of progressing the development of our Christian character (Is. 28:9-10; Jam. 1:22-25).

"Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." Isaiah 28:9-10

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. James 1:22-25

Right teaching leads to righteous living (Col. 1:9-10).

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...

Right teaching leads to Christian freedom (John 8:31-32, 36).

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³²And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." ³³ They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?" ³⁴Jesus answered them, "Most

assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. ³⁶Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Right teaching leads to sanctification (John 15:3; 17:17; II Tim. 3:14-17; Eph. 5:26).

You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. John 15:13

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. John 17:17

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27

Right teaching leads to maturity (Col. 1:27-28; Eph. 4:11-16).

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:11-16

Right teaching leads to life (Pro. 16:20-23).

Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

²¹The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction.

²²Understanding is a fountain of life to those who have it, but folly brings punishment to fools. ²³A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction.

Right teaching is the rain that will cause our lives to bear fruit (Deut. 32:2).

Let my teaching [lit. doctrine] drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass.

Sixth, because the last days will be characterized by deception (I Tim. 4:1-2; II Tim. 4:1-5).

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron... I Timothy 4:1-2

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ²Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For

the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. II Timothy 4:1-4

Right teaching will help us to be able to judge true doctrine (I Tim. 1:3-4).

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

Handling the real helps you to identify the counterfeit. Unless we have studied doctrine ourselves, we have not confidence to know “other doctrines.”

Right teaching will keep us from going astray (Pro. 5:23; 8:33).

He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. Proverbs 5:23

Right teaching will keep us from being blown about (Eph. 4:14).

“Driven before the wind of each new doctrine” (Weymouth).

Right teaching will help us to be firmly rooted in Christ (Col. 2:7).

Right teaching will give us confidence in spiritual warfare when the battle is raging (II Tim. 1:12-14).

For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. ¹³Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Seventh, because we are commanded to “instruct” all nations (Mt. 28:20). This command is not just given to the apostles and church leaders. It is for all of us to do.

Right teaching will help us to give an answer to those who ask (I Pet. 3:15).

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear...

Right teaching will help us to convince those who contradict (Tit. 1:9).

... holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

Right teaching will enable us to teach others (II Tim. 2:2; Heb. 8:11).

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust

these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. II Tim. 2:2

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. II Timothy 2:1-2

Eighth, because right teaching will bring peace to God's people (II Chr. 15:3-5).

Peace is the opposite of confusion.

For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law. 4 But in their distress they turned to the Lord God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him. 5 In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands.

Ninth, because doctrine affects our fellowship (II Th. 3:1, 14; II John 9-11). It is hard to have fellowship with those who do not hold these truths.

Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; II Th. 3:1

If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. II Th. 3:14

Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; 11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds. II John 9-11

Tenth, because doctrine determines destiny (John 14:6). There is only one way to life both now and in eternity.

Eleventh, because good doctrine makes one spiritually rich (Pro. 8:8-11).

*"All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness;
There is nothing crooked or perverted in them.
9 "They are all straightforward to him who understands,
And right to those who find knowledge.
10 "Take my instruction and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choicest gold.
11 "For wisdom is better than jewels;
And all desirable things cannot compare with her.*

Twelfth, because good doctrine makes one wise (Pro. 9:9; 4:1-13; 19:20).

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. Proverbs 9:9

Take hold of instruction, do not let go; Guard her, for she is your life. Proverbs 4:13

***Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.
Proverbs 19:20***

Right teaching is hated by the wicked (Ps. 50:17).

***“For you hate discipline,
And you cast My words behind you.***

Right teaching is despised by the fool (Pro. 1:7).

***The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
Fools despise wisdom and instruction.***

Finally, because God is restoring the teaching ministry to the Church that the Church might fully enter the purposes of God (Is. 30:20; Eph. 4:8-13).

Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. Is. 30:20

Therefore, it says,

***“When He ascended on high,
He led captive a host of captives,
And He gave gifts to men.”***

9 (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Eph. 4:8-13

What are the requirements for doctrine?

Doctrine must be sound (I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 4:3-4; Tit. 2:1).

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. II Timothy 4:3-4

Doctrine must be pure (Tit. 2:6-8). No mixture.

Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is

beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Doctrine must be based on Scripture (II Tim. 3:14-17). Doctrine must be practiced or obeyed (Rom. 6:17; Mt. 16:12; 23:1-3; Jam. 1:17-25).

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, Romans 6:17

A lot of knowledge by itself can turn us into good Pharisees if we do not observe what we know.

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, 2 saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; 3 therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. Matthew 23:1-3

We are self-deceived if we think that knowing the truth is the same thing as practicing the truth.

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. James 1:22-25

What should be our attitude toward doctrine and the Word of God?

Nehemiah 8:1-12

And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel. 2 Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. 3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishaël, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam on his left hand. 5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the Lord the great God. And all the people answered, “Amen, Amen!” while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah,

Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. 8 They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." 11 So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them.

We should hunger for the Word (Mt. 5:6; Job 23:12).

*"I have not departed from the command of His lips;
I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food. Job 23:12*

We should desire spiritual understanding of the Word (Neh. 8:2). We should be attentive to the Word (Neh. 8:3). We should be respectful to the Word (Neh. 8:5). We should be responsive to the Word (Neh.8:6).

*"Those who err in mind will know the truth,
And those who criticize will accept instruction. Isaiah 29:24*

*The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.
They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.
Psalm 19:7-11*