

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST



The Importance of the Doctrine of Christ!

Introduction:

I. For many years now there was been debate and conflict in the church concerning the Gospel of Christ versus the Doctrine of Christ.

A. Many believe that there is a distinction between the Gospel and New Testament Doctrine.

B. There are preachers today teaching that doctrine is not even necessary and that it is actually divisive while the gospel is all about acceptance and it unites us together.

1. The assertion is that all that really is necessary is knowing **about** Christ and this is the core belief of the Gospel.

2. Therefore, if you know about Christ; you know about Him, that He saves you from sin; that this is the core of the Gospel and that is all that is needed to be saved.

3. They continue saying that the Gospel is comprised of historical facts and events such as Christ dying on the cross, His burial, His resurrection, etc. All these things are necessary information so that we can know **about** Him.

C. Doctrine on the other hand is not as important and that there can be different ideas that establish different doctrinal teachings and that is okay!

II. This concept is certainly not found in the Bible.

A. We see in the New Testament where the Gospel and Doctrine are actually used interchangeably.

I Timothy 1:8-11

“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.”

1. Paul in describing the concept of lawlessness identifies several sins and relate that those that practice such are going against “sound doctrine.”
 2. And “sound doctrine” is in harmony with “the glorious gospel.”
 3. The Apostle Paul believed that the Gospel of God was the same as the “glorious gospel.”
- B. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not simply a message **about** Christ; it is the directives that He has given, His teaching, His doctrine, for us to follow.
1. Paul taught that if another gospel was preached different than the Lord’s then those individuals would be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9)
 2. Paul urged Timothy to not preach any other doctrine. (I Timothy 1:3)
 3. The Gospel of Christ and the Doctrine of Christ are one of the same. Plus, there is not other!
- C. It is the message that we present to others so that they might know the mercy of Deity and how to accept the saving grace of God!
1. Notice the Great Commission that the Lord presented to His Apostles and also to us.

Matthew 28:18-20
“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

Mark 16:15-16
“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
 2. The Apostles did exactly what the Lord directed them to do, they went into the world and they preached (heralded, proclaimed – Mark 16:15) the Gospel and taught (presented doctrine – Matthew 28:20) concerning everything that the Lord commanded them.

3. When we study the book of Acts and the epistles of the New Testament, we see the Apostles and other disciples preaching the one message of Christ.
4. Paul also told Timothy to heed to the doctrine, to continue in it; “for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” (I Timothy 4:16)
Doctrine saves others because it is the Gospel of Christ!

III. It is imperative that we preach only the Gospel of Christ, His doctrine!

In our lesson today we will notice that when we preach only the Gospel of Christ, His doctrine; then the church will be Fruitful, Faithful, and Fellows!

Discussion:

- ▶ I. The proclaiming of the doctrine of Christ will make a church Fruitful!
 - A. The Lord on various occasions spoke that we must be fruitful and He means that we must teach others and therefore adding more disciples to His Kingdom.
 1. We have already mentioned the need for us to fulfill the Great Commission! God does not expect us to be stagnate in our faith.
 2. We cannot be fruitful unless we are willing to “GO” out into the world with the doctrine of our Lord.
 3. Jesus taught His disciples that if His Words where in them then they would “bear much fruit.”

John 15:7-8
“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.
By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”
- ▶ B. As fruitful followers of Christ then are making disciples for Him and no other!
 1. Even Christ stated that He did not teach His own doctrine but His doctrine was from God the Father.

John 7:16
“Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.””

2. Paul affirmed that His message was not his own doctrine, it was not another man's teaching; but it was from Deity!

Galatians 1:11-12

"But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."

3. The doctrine of Christ is important because without it there would be no Christians.
 - a. Paul told the Roman Christians that because they had obeyed the Lord's doctrine then Christ had delivered them from sin.

Romans 6:17

"But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered."
 - b. He also told the Hebrew Christians that Christ was able to offer His salvation to them because they had obeyed Him.

Hebrews 5:9

"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,"
 - c. It is the Lord's doctrine that the disciples preached and that we have today that must obeyed in order for us and others to be saved!

C. When we present the doctrine of Christ to others then His church will be Fruitful!

▶ II. The presentation of the doctrine of Christ with keep us Faithful!

- A. When we continue in the words of Christ and are indeed His disciples then we are set free by Truth!

John 8:31-32

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

▶ B. The early Christian's faithfulness was characterized by their continuing in the Apostle's doctrine.

Acts 2:42

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

1. We have already mentioned the fact that the Apostles' doctrine came from Christ. And we know that the Holy Spirit insured that they would remember all that the Lord had taught them.

John 14:26

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."

John 15:26-27

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

2. The Scriptures and the Scriptures alone provide us with our doctrine that will keep us faithful.

II Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

▶ C. We have the ability to search the Scriptures and know God's direction for us because of the doctrine of Christ that is the New Testament.

1. So when I am faithful to the Message of the Scripture then I know that I am being faithful to God.
2. And equally true, if a congregation is faithful to the doctrine of Christ, then I can know that the congregation is faithful.
3. So, let me urge you to look at yourself. Are you abiding in the Word of Christ or are you attempting to justify our belief and actions with something other than the Gospel?

▶ D. When we follow and teach and abide in the doctrine of Christ then we as individuals and His church collectively will be Faithful!

▶ III. Through the presentation and following of the doctrine of Christ then we will all be in unity with each other and enjoy godly fellowship.

- A. The doctrine of Christ is most important because it is the basis for our unity and fellowship!

1. This is the reason I believe that many attempt to discredit the Lord's teaching, His doctrine.
 - a. The doctrine of Christ holds the key to our being in fellowship or not being in fellowship with others.
 - b. Those that want to extend fellowship in a wider avenue than what the Bible teaches attempt to suggest that doctrine is not important.
2. Yet, to be in fellowship with one another we must first be in fellowship with Christ and His Word.



B. Notice what the doctrine of Christ states about how to be united:

1. Paul wrote the church in Corinth that they must not have divisions among themselves but be united by speaking the same thing, having the same mind, and having the same judgement.

I Corinthians 1:10

“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

2. To the Ephesian Christians Paul wrote that the basis for our unity is our doctrine.

Ephesians 4:3-6

“endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

3. Timothy is directed to not let others teach a different doctrine.

I Timothy 1:3

“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,”

4. Paul also directs Timothy telling him to withdraw, or not have fellowship, with those that teach a different doctrine.

I Timothy 6:3-5

“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness,

he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.”

5. John’s teaching concerning fellowshiping those that are outside the doctrine of Christ is very clear!

II John 1:9-10

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.”

- C. If we desire to be in unity together then we must adhere to the doctrine of Christ. Yet, even more importantly if I want to have unity with Christ then I must be obedient to the His doctrine!
- D. The basis for Christian unity, for Christian fellowship together is the doctrine of Christ!
1. We do not need to devalue or discredit doctrine for the sake of unity.
 2. Rather, we need to embrace New Testament doctrine achieving true unity with each other and God.

Conclusion:

- ▶ I. So how important is the doctrine of Christ, which I will remind is also the Gospel of Christ?
- A. The teaching of the doctrine of Christ is what makes us Fruitful, adding others to the Kingdom of Christ.
 - B. Abiding in the doctrine of Christ demonstrates our Faithfulness to Deity!
 - C. And the doctrine of Christ determines who my fellow heirs are in Christ and therefore identifies my fellowship them.
- ▶ II. So doctrine is important for my life as a Christian but let us not forget that the Lord’s doctrine concerning our salvation.
- A. In a quick survey of religious groups you will find a multitude of different doctrines concerning how one finds salvation.
 - B. Yet, Jesus states that there is only one way to Heaven and being with Deity and that is through Him.

John 14:6

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

- C. Therefore the only way to find eternal salvation is through the teaching that Jesus established. Anything different than the Lord’s plan would be insufficient.
- D. So, what if the plan that Jesus Christ established?

- 1. First, we must recognize that due to our personal sins we deserve spiritual separation from God.

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- 2. What we deserve is spiritual death, however God has given us an amazing gift! It is called God’s saving grace.

Ephesians 2:4-5, 8

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,”

- 3. Deity has provided all that is needed so that our sins can be forgiven.
 - a. Jesus Christ, a Divine being, came to this earth and lived a perfect life and therefore became the perfect sacrifice for us.
 - b. And He willingly went to the cross and died so that the whole world would have the opportunity to be saved.

John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

Titus 2:11

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,”

4. God has done His part in offering such a wonderful and special gift to us, yet the receiving of His grace is contingent upon our faith and obedience.
5. It is through the doctrine of Christ that we learn what we are to do in order to receive God's saving grace. Only Jesus has the authority to relate how we can obtain His offering of salvation!

- a. Our Lord said that we must develop faith, belief, through a diligent study of His Message. It all goes back to knowing and accepting His doctrine, His teaching!

Romans 10:17

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Hebrews 11:6

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

- b. With real godly faith in Christ's doctrine, then we will be motivated to obey Christ. This obedience is not to merit our salvation but rather to accept Deity's grace.
- c. So in acceptance to God grace we must confess or pledge our allegiance of Christ to others.

Romans 10:10

"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

- d. Also to accept God's grace we must repent of our sins.

Acts 3:19

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,"

- e. And the doctrine of Christ directs us to be baptized, which is when we come in contact with the saving blood of Christ.

- 1) Paul taught the Roman Christians that at baptism is when we walk in the "newness of life."

Romans 6:3-4

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

- 2) Paul instructs the Galatian Christians that through their faith they were baptized putting on Christ.

Galatians 3:26-27

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

- 3) And Peter relates that it is at baptism that we obtain salvation, which again is the saving grace of God.

I Peter 3:21

“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,”

6. Friends, it is by the doctrine of Christ that we learn what we must do in accepting the grace of Christ and receiving His wonderful gift of salvation.

▶ III. Now the question for you! Have you accepted the Lord’s grace?

- A. If you need to study the Bible to see what Christ has said concerning His grace and the salvation He offers then we would be glad to study with you.
- B. If you know the Lord’s will concerning salvation but you keep putting it off let me ask you “Why?”
 1. Why are you waiting when you know you need the Lord!
 3. The Lord has done so much in offering His grace to you, why have you continually refused it?
- C. If you are a Christian yet fallen away from Christ, leaving the tenets of His doctrine; you know you need to return to the Lord and you know He is willing to accept your return.
- D. If you need Christ right now; come and we will assist you. Come as we stand and as we sing!