

The Importance of Doctrine

1 Timothy 4:13 says “give attention ... to doctrine.” Yet some people belittle the value of doctrinal preaching. Consider Bible teaching about the importance of doctrine.

I. The Meaning of Doctrine

A. Definition and Related Forms of the Word

“Doctrine” simply means teaching or that which is taught. It comes from the root word for teaching. Note: Verb – teach (didasko); Adjective – taught (didaktos); Noun (person) – teacher (didaskolos); Noun (act of teaching or information taught) – teaching/doctrine (didache or didaskalia). Consider some examples.

Mark 1:21,22 – Jesus taught and people were astonished at His doctrine/teaching

Mark 4:2 – Jesus taught parables and said in His doctrine ...

B. Other Equivalent or Connected Terms

Acts 13:7,12 – When Sergius Paulus heard the word of God (verse 7), he was astonished at the doctrine of the Lord (verse 12).

1 Timothy 1:10,11 – Sound doctrine is that which is according to the gospel

2 Timothy 4:2-4 – Some will not want sound doctrine but will turn from the truth

So despite the mistaken claims of some people, “doctrine” is interchangeable in meaning with the word of God, the gospel, the truth. How important are these? (Titus 1:9)

II. The Source of True Doctrine

Another way to understand doctrine and see its importance is to understand its origin.

Acts 2:42 – Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles’ **doctrine**. Doctrine was revealed by inspired men, so God’s people should continue in it steadfastly.

2 Timothy 3:16,17 – Scriptures inspired by God are profitable for doctrine

2 John 9 – In order to have the Father and the Son, we must abide in the doctrine of Christ

The doctrine of Scripture is profitable, it is necessary to all good works, and continuing steadfastly in it is necessary to have fellowship with the Father and the Son.

(John 7:16,17; Titus 2:10)

III. The Importance of True Doctrine

General Passages Emphasizing the Need to Teach

These verses show the importance of teaching but use other forms of the word for teaching.

Matthew 28:18-20 – Converts should be **taught** to obey all Jesus’ commands

John 6:44-45 – No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him. They must be taught, hear, and learn. Teaching is the way God brings men to salvation.

Acts 5:42 – Having been beaten and warned to stop preaching Jesus’ message, the apostles did not cease **teaching** and preaching Jesus as Christ. (Acts 20:20)

Acts 11:26 – Preachers assembled with the church and **taught** many people.

Colossians 1:28 – Paul preached Christ, warning every man and **teaching** every man

Hebrews 5:12-6:1 – Each disciple, as he/she matures, should become a teacher

Passages Specifically Emphasizing the Importance of True Doctrine

These passages do use the specific word for “doctrine.”

Those who are unconverted need to be taught doctrine.

Acts 5:28 – The apostles had filled Jerusalem with their **doctrine**.

Romans 6:16-18 – People who are slaves of sin must obey from the heart the form of doctrine/teaching delivered to them. They are then set free from sin.

Disciples need to be taught doctrine.

Acts 2:42 – Those who were converted at Pentecost continued in the apostles' doctrine

1 Timothy 4:6,7 – Disciples should be nourished in good doctrine, which they should carefully follow. So both converted people and unconverted people need doctrine.

(2 Timothy 3:10)

Everyone needs to be taught doctrine.

1 Timothy 4:13,16 – Preachers should give attention to doctrine, take heed to themselves and to the doctrine. By continuing in these, they can save both themselves and those who hear them. Doctrine is necessary so we can be saved and so others can be saved.

Titus 1:9 – Elders must hold to the faithful word he has been **taught** (Greek: doctrine). Then he must be able, by using sound **doctrine**, to convince those who contradict.

Titus 2:7 – Young men should show integrity, reverence, and incorruptibility in **doctrine**. So older men should learn and teach doctrine, and young men should also speak doctrine.

So everyone needs to be taught doctrine, and everyone needs to learn to teach doctrine.

(2 Timothy 4:2-4; Titus 2:1-6; 2 John 9-11)

IV. The Danger of False Doctrine

One reason we must emphasize true doctrine is to help people avoid false doctrines.

Matthew 15:9 – In vain they worship me, teaching as **doctrine** the commands of men

Romans 16:17 – Mark and avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the **doctrine**

Ephesians 4:13-15 – Seek maturity, not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine

1 Timothy 1:3,4 – Charge people to teach no other doctrine, such as fables, etc.

1 Timothy 4:1-3,6 – Some will leave the faith and follow doctrine of demons. Those who are nourished in good doctrine must teach the brethren about these things.

2 Timothy 4:2-4 – Some will not want sound doctrine, but they turn from the truth to fables. So preach the word, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine

Titus 1:9 – Elders should use sound doctrine to convict those who contradict.

2 John 9-11 – To have fellowship with God, we must abide in the doctrine of Christ. If someone comes who does not bring this doctrine/teaching, we must not support him.

One reason true doctrine is necessary is to help people avoid false doctrine.

(Matt. 16:12; Col. 2:20-22; 1 Tim. 6:3,4; Rev. 2:14,15,24; Heb. 13:9; Passages warning about false teachers: Matthew 7:15-23; 15:14; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Acts 20:28-30; 1 John 4:1; Titus 1:9-14; 2 John 9-11; Romans 16:17,18; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Peter chap. 2)

V. Examples of Doctrine

These teachings are called “doctrine.” Ask yourself: How important is this kind of teaching?

Matthew 7:28 – The Sermon on the Mount was Jesus' teaching (**doctrine**).

Matthew 22:31-33 – Resurrection of the dead was Jesus' teaching (**doctrine**).

Mark 4:2,3 – In His teaching (**doctrine**) Jesus taught many things in parables

Mark 12:38-40 – In His teaching/doctrine Jesus **opposed the errors** of the scribes.

Acts 17:17-19 – When Paul taught Jesus' resurrection He spoke **doctrine**

Romans 6:16-18 – To be **freed from sin**, people must obey the doctrine delivered

1 Timothy 1:9-11 – The many **moral errors** listed are contrary to sound doctrine

Titus 2:1-6 – Sound **doctrine** includes responsibilities of **older men and women, and younger women and men, including family responsibilities and moral issues**.

Hebrews 6:2 – Basic principles include the **doctrine** of baptisms

Are these doctrinal subjects important? Are they necessary to salvation or unnecessary?

Conclusion

1 Timothy 4:16 – Faithful teachers must take heed themselves and to the doctrine and continue in it, so they can save themselves and those who hear them.

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