

Is Doctrine Important?

by Sheldon Emry

How important is doctrine? If you ask that question of some Christians, they will emphatically say, "It is very important!" However, many will say, "Well, it depends." And then they will justify their answer to some extent, by saying: "We shouldn't be so dogmatic on our doctrines that we break or intrude on the Christian fellowship among other people."

American Ecumenism

We have, what we call, an "ecumenical" movement in the United States, where a number of professing Christians are attempting to unite all of the churches in some sort of a fellowship. They are trying to convince the people that the only important thing is that they use the Bible and profess Jesus Christ. Any other differences should be subdued or forgotten because we MUST get together for fellowship! This carries down all the way to individual Christian families saying, "I don't agree with the doctrines preached in this church, but it's the only one in my neighborhood, so I'm going to go there anyway."

So doctrine is compromised at all levels. Some of the argument is, "Doctrine is not important if you have disagreements with others, because after all we are all Christians! — We are all brothers," etc. And I happen to be one minister who does get some criticism from people who say, "Pastor Emry, you emphasize doctrinal differences too much, and you antagonize people by insisting that certain doctrines are true and that certain other doctrines are false. Doctrines should not be made

that important. The important thing is to keep from antagonizing people. Be nice to them and get them to listen. And we especially need cooperation among the ministers."

Jesus' Teachings Are Called Doctrine

Well, all of that sounds very good, but let us read what Webster's Dictionary and the Bible have to say about doctrine. In Webster's dictionary there is about four inches of very fine print about doctrine, so I will just briefly summarize what it says.

Webster says that doctrine is "that which is taught. The body of principle in any branch of knowledge." Then Webster gives some other words: "tenet, dogma in relation to religion, principle of faith, learning, knowledge." Mr. Webster, also, uses the following phrase: "a dogma is a doctrine laid down with authority." Remember that, because I will repeat it later. We will, also, look at Strong's Concordance dictionary definition, as we go on in our study.

Matthew five is the first place that the word "doctrine" is used in the New Testament. We will begin reading in the first verse, which is the introduction of this long teaching by Jesus Christ:

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: “And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:1-3

Then follows all the teaching of Jesus Christ, sometimes called the sermon on the Mount in chapters five, six and seven. And at the very end it closes this way:

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

Matthew 7:28,29

Not only do we have the word "doctrine" here, but we have another verse which, in effect, says he taught with authority. According to Webster, Matthew 5,6 and 7 would be DOGMA — doctrine taught with authority:

Jesus' Teachings Are God's Doctrines

Verse 28 of Matthew seven says "the people were astonished at his doctrine." This indicates that it was apparently new and/or different than they had heard before. Yet, they did recognize that He spoke with authority.

Turn to John 7, starting with verse 14:

“Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

“And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters (or learning), having never learned?”

John 7:14,15

In other words, how can He know all these things if He never went to our schools? The Jews were surprised at His wisdom. Some thinking-Christians have.

problems when they try to point out an unpopular truth, from a particular scripture passage, to some Judeo-Christian minister. The minister does not specifically address the issue the Christian brings up, but instead, comes back with, "Well, I've been in the seminary for four or seven years and I've been preaching for 25 or 30 years and, therefore, I have more authority to interpret this than you do."

If you ever encounter such a minister, you might point out these verses in John seven, where the scribes and the Pharisees admitted that Jesus taught with doctrine and truth; but they could not figure out why, because he had never gone to their schools. He had not gone to the accepted schools, which they had set up for teaching the teachers in their religion.

Jesus answered in the next verse as to where he got his doctrine:

“Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”

John 7:16

So we have it from Jesus Christ, himself, that what He taught that astonished them was God's doctrine. This is the same word translated "doctrine" in other places. It IS the doctrine of God.

Obedience Helps You To Identify True Doctrine

Then Jesus went on to tell us how a man can know if something is the doctrine of God:

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

John 7:17

He, in effect, was saying that if a man will obey God, he will know whether the doctrine is true or not. Now think about that. You know of many people who read the same verses and the same chapters out of the same translations that you do and yet you have a disagreement with them over what it means. They do not understand it the way you do. Here, Jesus is saying that if a man will do God's will, he shall know whether the doctrine is of God. In some way, he will have a verification from God that this is Bible truth. But it is predicated on him doing God's will. It is not predicated on him reading the Bible ten hours a day, or going to certain schools, or attending certain churches. It, apparently, is predicated on obedience. If you will obey God, He will reveal His truth to you.

Here is a warning on how to listen to the MAN who is preaching the doctrine to see whether his doctrine is true:

“He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”

John 7:18

Correct Doctrine Will Glorify God Only

In other words, if he seeks God's glory, he is true and righteous. To put it another way, a man who preaches the true doctrines of God will not preach anything that glorifies himself. When he gets all through preaching, if you, having listened to him, glorify and praise God, then he is preaching the truth. But if, after listening to him, you glorify and praise the speaker, then be careful. Be careful if he builds up some sort of an emotional feeling in you that makes you think, "Boy, isn't he a great preacher! Boy, he is something!" Be

careful if you go out praising the man, because then he is NOT preaching the truth!

Many of the television evangelists create a tremendous loyalty among their listeners, and the people really believe that their favorite evangelist is some great man. They will continually praise him like this:

"Oh, I heard Oral Roberts (or Rex Humbard, or Jimmy Swaggart, or etc.) and he was terrific and he was wonderful!"

If you want to give them an interesting thought, ask them just an hour or a day after they have heard his latest sermon, what their favorite preacher said. And do you know, nine times out of ten, they do not know what he said!

A friend of mine did this, using Robert Schuller as the TV evangelist, and they wrote me a letter about what happened. A friend with whom he worked was a tremendous fan of Robert Schuller, and had often made the remark that Schuller was probably the greatest preacher that he had ever heard. Bill, the man on my mailing list, then told him, "Well, I'd be interested in knowing more about Bob Schuller. When you listen to him next time, would you write down the verses out of the Bible that he uses in his sermon and then bring and show them to me?"

The friend said he would and the next Monday at work the fellow said, "He never read the Bible!"

Bill's friend discovered for the first time, after listening to this man he thought was such a great preacher, that Schuller did not use any Bible passages! And if you have ever listened to him, you know he very seldom does. Many TV evan-

gelists are the same way. They preach in such a way that when they are through, the glory goes to the speaker, not to God Almighty.

There was a book, published some years ago, titled "How to Be A Bishop Without Being Religious." If you read the book, you realized that the title really meant "how to be a minister without being a Christian." And one of the things in the instructions was what kind of sermons to preach to build a large ministry. This book was an instruction to men either going into the ministry or who had already been in the ministry.

The author of that book, in that one chapter, stated at least three times in three different ways: do not exalt God. Exalt the people! Praise the people. Make them feel good, but do not exalt God Almighty. And he made it very plain in the book that if you exalted God Almighty, you would not have this thousand or two thousand or five thousand people in your church, because people like to come and hear themselves praised. They like to be made to feel emotional about themselves and about the church. THAT is why they keep coming back in great numbers.

But Jesus teaches the very opposite! If, after you hear the minister preach, you praise the minister, then there is something wrong about the man's preaching. There is something wrong because what he should preach is that which praises God Almighty. Then it is evident that he is probably preaching true doctrine.

Let us look at the passages in the Old Testament where the word "doctrine" is used. One passage is found in the Song of Moses and it is introduced in the last verse of Deuteronomy 31:

"And Moses spake in the ears of all the

congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended."

Deuteronomy 31:30

And then it goes on into the Song of Moses:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

"My DOCTRINE shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:"

Deuteronomy 32:1,2

This doctrine that he was going to preach was going to do something good for the people. By the way, the word "doctrine," in the Hebrew, according to Strong's Concordance, means INSTRUCTION RECEIVED. Doctrine is instruction received or learning. In the very next verse, he says:

"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Deuteronomy 32:3,4

Why would the doctrines or the instructions that Moses taught the people be as the rain? Why would his speech distill as the dew — as the small rain on the tender herb? In other words, why would Moses' doctrine make the people grow and bless them and instruct them and teach them? Because he praised God immediately. He said "He is the Rock," "ascribe ye greatness unto our God," "I will publish the name of the Lord." Whatever it was that he was going to teach the people would be a benefit to them because it

came to them with the praise and glorification of God — not of Moses.

You should read all of the Song of Moses, which is 43 verses long. Many Christians do not even know there is such a thing in the Bible, in spite of the fact that in Revelation 16, it tells of the saints who have "overcome the beast and his mark," who sing the Song of Moses. I have heard a lot of preaching about the mark of the beast, but I have never heard a minister talk about the mark of the beast and the Song of Moses in the same breath. Yet, they are tied together in the book of Revelation.

A Wise Man Desires Doctrine

There are five places in Proverbs where Solomon used this same word. The Hebrew word is "leqach" (Strong's #3948) and is translated "doctrine" or "learning," meaning, instruction received. In Proverbs, it is translated "doctrine" once, and "learning" four times:

*“The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;
“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;
“To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;
“To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.”*

Proverbs 1:1-4

After giving the reasons why he is writing this book of Proverbs, he says in verse five:

*“A wise man will hear, and will increase **LEARNING** (Ieqach) and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:”*

Proverbs 1:5

The Hebrew word for "learning" is, also, translated "doctrine" in other places. In effect, he is saying that a wise man will hear these instructions or proverbs, which were from God through Solomon, of course, and he will increase doctrine.

The emphasis is on a wise man wanting more doctrine and increasing in wisdom.

Obedience Brings Knowledge of Doctrine

Proverbs four beginning in verse one:

*“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.
“For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.”*

Proverbs 4:1,2

This is Solomon speaking, of course, through the spirit of God, so Solomon is not referring to his own law. He is referring to God's Law. Therefore, good doctrine has something to do with hearing God's Law. Remember, Jesus said if you attempt to do his will, then He will reveal to you whether the doctrine is the truth or not.

“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

Proverbs 9:9

The word "just" also means "righteous." The last phrase could read "teach a **RIGHTEOUS** man and he will increase in **DOCTRINE**." Notice again, he is righteous; **THEN** he increases in doctrine.

This is the same pattern that Jesus taught. Remember, Jesus said:

“If any man will do his will (God's will), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

John 7:17

If a man does God's will, that makes him a righteous man. In Proverbs, Solomon correctly-put the horse before the cart again, instead of the other way around. The implication is that obedience is rewarded with learning, whereas we may have incorrectly-thought that learning was rewarded with obedience. To illustrate this, many Christians have run across a person who knows the Bible probably a lot better than they; and yet, he is a very vicious, wicked person and may even use the Bible to his own personal advantage, while he teaches it wrongly.

Jack Van Impe, by the way, is one of those who can quote the entire Bible from memory! But, if you will investigate Jack Van Impe's doctrine, it does not fit what the Bible says.

Another example is a local man who was on the radio some years ago, whose nickname was "The Walking Bible." He would preach at various churches around California, Arizona and other places in the country, demonstrating his memory of the Bible by having members of the audience give the chapter and the verse, and then he would quote it. Or they would quote the verse and he would give the chapter and the verse. He had memorized the entire Bible — all 66 books! And yet, he taught that the Jews were Israel; that we were Gentiles; that the rapture was going to come soon; that there were seven years of tribulation coming before Jesus Christ would return. He taught all the false doctrines of the pentecostals and fundamentalists, and yet he knew every word in the Bible by heart and could tell you chapter and verse, where it was."

Thus, it is not a case of simply knowing, and then the obedience coming later. Solomon said (Proverbs 9:9), you obey God and then He will open up His treasures to you. He will open up His wisdom and His learning to you.

“The wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning (DOCTRINE).”

Proverbs 16:21

Those who are wise are again related to doctrine.

“The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning (DOCTRINE) to his lips.”

Proverbs 16:23

Those who are wise will teach doctrine. Of course, you realize when the word "doctrine" is used in the Bible, it means TRUE doctrine. The only time you would say FALSE doctrine is when you put the word "false" in front of the word. When it says "doctrines," it means God's true doctrines.

Israel Will Be Corrected By Learning Doctrine

Let us look at one more passage in the Old Testament. Isaiah 29 and 30 are end-of-the-age prophecies — some of which have not come to pass, some of which are now coming to pass. But anyway, he is summing up an end-of-this age prophecy:

“Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.”

Isaiah 29:22

This is after Jacob Israel's deliverance in the end of the age. He is not going to be frightened or ashamed of his God.

“But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

“They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.”

Isaiah 29:23,24

Now, think about that. He sums up the correcting, the turning, the redeeming and the saving of Israel in the end of the age; by saying that even those who are in error, will get understanding and learn doctrine. They will come to the correct understanding of God's word as he saves them in the end of the age. Evidently, it means, very simply, that teaching correct doctrine will be done to those who are in error. They will have to be taught by God, or by someone, to correct their error.

Three Important Questions

Now, here are three questions. You think of them carefully, and we will find the answers in our study.

1. If a man or a nation is in error (that means in sin and in disobedience to the true doctrines of God), which of the following will tend to correct the man or the nation?

a. An agreement among ministers not to contend about differences in doctrine, but rather to be quiet about them and shut up on doctrinal differences so they can have fellowship.

b. A knock-down drag-out fight as to which doctrine is true, forcing the people to listen to both sides of the question.

In other words, should we speak out and preach what we know to be true or should we, simply, be quiet and attempt to

have fellowship? Which will teach them true doctrine? Which will convert them from error?

You think about that when you hear the ministers say, 'Well, let's just keep things quiet here. We know we have a lot of disagreements, but we shouldn't fight because, after all, we're all brothers.'

2. Would the people even hear the true doctrine if the ministers who knew it backed off from preaching it for fear of offending the other ministers?

3. How many of you have ever heard of a minister who preaches false doctrine backing off from HIS doctrine for fellowship?

You see, **THE COMPROMISE IS ALWAYS EXPECTED TO COME FROM THE SIDE THAT HAS TRUTH!**

I have had some specific, definite criticism by people who tell me, "Oh Pastor Emry, you keep preaching against the Rapture and all you're doing is antagonizing all of these wonderful pro-Rapture ministers and preachers out there who don't know any better." The implication is that I should not show people it is a false doctrine because I hurt their feelings and then they will not cooperate with me.

No one ever suggests that they quit preaching the Rapture doctrine so they do not antagonize Emry! Now, you think about that!

THE IMPLICATION IS ALWAYS ON THE BASIS THAT THE MAN WHO IS PREACHING THE TRUTH IS THE ONE WHO SHOULD COMPROMISE. I think it is done in ignorance by Christian people who know it is the truth, but they have been trained to think that fellowship is more important than doctrine.

There are many isolated families and I feel for them — and I understand their situation — who will say, “Well, we know the church is teaching false doctrine, but our children need fellowship.” And so they will go to some church where they know the minister preaches false doctrine, but they want their children to have fellowship with other Christians. And what happens? Their children grow up believing false doctrine because they compromised with falsehood, attempting to get fellowship instead of true doctrine.

You can begin to see the possibility that true doctrine is more important than fellowship. And you will see this more as we go back to the New Testament again.

Fellowship Must Have Doctrine

Let us go back to Acts two. This is THE chapter perhaps best known especially among the Pentecostal people and among most fundamentalists, or people who have been in churches for some time. It is generally taught that this was the beginning of "the church age" or "the Christian era" when the spirit was poured out at Pentecost. And the people were converted, becoming, eventually, Christians, beginning what we call, the Christian era or the era of the Christian church.

We, who understand that we are the Israel people, recognize it as the beginning of the calling out of Israel from paganism. Israel was being turned away from the false religions into the true doctrines of Jesus Christ.

Peter finished preaching the sermon about Jesus to these men:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both lord and Christ”

Acts 2:36

The summing up of the very first sermon preached by this disciple to those people at Pentecost, at what we call the beginning of the Christian era, was that God had made Jesus both Lord and Christ. Therefore, we must accept that a basic doctrine of our Christian faith is that Jesus is the Lord, or the Redeemer, or the Savior or the Messiah. You cannot turn away from that or you will throw out Peter's whole sermon in Acts two!

Then we read, starting in Verse 37:

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the lord our God shall call.

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, (In other words, he kept on in that manner.) saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

Acts 2:37-41

The pouring out of the Spirit on this day of Pentecost was a marvelous thing in the history of Christendom.

Along with it came the preaching of the doctrine establishing the basis that Jesus Christ was Lord and Christ over the house of Israel, and it began this new era of the turning of the hearts of the people back to the fathers. The people received

the doctrine gladly and many of them were added to the group.

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

Acts 2:42

Did they abandon doctrine for fellowship or did they fellowship under the doctrine? Do you see the difference here? It says "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." **THE DOCTRINE WAS THE BASIS OF THE FELLOWSHIP — NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND!**

I do not think that the people who try to convince us that we should nullify or cancel our doctrinal teachings so we can have "fellowship" are all evil or wicked people. I think they have heard this theme of "fellowship" and it sounds good to them. After all, we are not a loner type of people to any great extent. We love other people. We enjoy other families and children, and we are a gregarious people. It would seem that fellowship is a great goal. Therefore, many people think, that we should compromise on our Christian doctrines a little bit. “What does that hurt?” they ask.

The answer to that question is that it hurts doctrine! As we have so often seen, if we insist on having fellowship with other churches that do not agree with all of our doctrines, pretty soon the same thing happens there that we see in the denominations. **THE MINISTERS AVOID PREACHING SOME OF THE DOCTRINES BECAUSE THOSE DOCTRINES OFFEND MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP!**

You can see that fellowship can destroy doctrine, whereas doctrine will build true fellowship.

Christians Refused To Stop Preaching Jesus And His Doctrines

Here, in Acts TWO, is the beginning of our Christian faith. This is the day when it all began. It follows up by saying that they then had both doctrine and fellowship. What happened when they continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship?

“And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.”

Acts 2:43

You see, they stayed true to the doctrine and then God blessed what they did. I would say that very few churches or ministers who compromise with their doctrines, on the basis of needing fellowship, ever have any great work other than gathering a lot of people around them. And they probably consider that a great work. But, you see, that does not get the doctrine preached to Israel!

In Acts five, the apostles have been out preaching for a while and some miracles have happened. Then we read, starting in verse 24:

“Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

“Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

“Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

“And when they had brought them,

they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, "Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Acts 5:24-28

What happened in a matter of a very short time with these people who remained steadfast in the doctrine? THEY FILLED THE CITY WITH THEIR DOCTRINE! And they brought upon themselves the anger and the ire of the pharisaic religious/political leaders of their day. These leaders said, "We told you not to preach in Jesus Christ's name, and here you have filled the whole city with your doctrine."

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

Acts 5:29-32

Now, I watched three preachers, during the fall of 1982, interview Menahem Begin (Israeli Prime Minister) in Israel, during the height of the slaughter in Lebanon. Those preachers fawned over him, telling him what a wonderful man he was and how wonderful his people were and so on. This went on for about an hour with talk back and forth between he and these three preachers.

At the very end of the interview one of the ministers asked Begin, very apologetically, if he could close in prayer and pray for Begin and for his people. Begin nodded his head affirmatively, and the three ministers bowed their heads. While the minister prayed, Begin sat over there on the couch and just looked at him. He never bowed his head or closed his eyes or anything. He just watched them during the prayer. And the minister prayed a very long prayer, asking for God's blessing upon his people, the Jews, and for Begin, and so on. When he ended the prayer, he ended it WITHOUT the name of Jesus Christ. He just said, "Amen."

Now what did that man do? He obeyed men instead of God. In Acts five the Pharisees told Peter and the rest of the apostles in verse 28, "Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?" In other words, "You're not to use the name of Jesus Christ. We told you that and here you've been using it right here in Jerusalem among this people."

And Peter did not just answer, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Do you realize what he did? He did much more. He preached a sermon about Jesus Christ to those Jewish Pharisees! He did not just tell his other fellow ministers and disciples that they should obey God instead of the Jewish Pharisees. He preached a sermon to the Jewish Pharisees. It is only three or four verses long, but he preached to them about Jesus Christ.

Now if those three ministers in that interview with Menahem Begin had wanted to do what God intended them to do, when they finished their conversation about the situation over in Lebanon and Israel, regardless what they thought about Begin and the people, they should have given a witness and a sermon about

Jesus Christ to those people. But, when they showed complicity to the anti-Christians they demonstrated that they feared those men more than they did God. Now, if they exalt and fear men more than they exalt and fear God, that is evidence that there must be something wrong with their preaching.

Is it not probable that their followers will do the same thing? Will not their followers also fear men above the fear of God?

Peter and the Apostles, of course, preached about Jesus. They said "the God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree." In other words, they preached the resurrection. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior." They preached that Jesus was the savior and the redeemer through his death and resurrection. They, also, told the reason for it: "For to give repentance to Israel and repentance of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things."

The apostles knew these doctrines to be true and they would risk their lives to preach them right to the people who had threatened them with death for preaching such doctrines.

This is a very short sermon, but everything is in there. It is a composite of the whole story of Jesus Christ and Israel in just three or four verses.

Paul Did Not Compromise True Doctrine

Acts 17 beginning in verse 16:

"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to

idolatry.

"Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

"Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, what will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

"And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

"For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean."

Acts 17:16-20

There is quite a lot in that passage. First of all, Paul saw the city given over to paganism - to the worship of false gods. Did Paul compromise with this in any way? He did not just acquiesce to them and say, "Oh, it sure is wonderful to have fellowship with you people!" No! It says that he "DISPUTED" in the synagogues with them. He, actually, got into arguments with them to show them they were wrong according to the true doctrine.

Secondly, the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics recognized that the doctrine Paul taught was new. It certainly was not like what they had been hearing. Why was it new? Because Paul preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection! That is a new doctrine to any religion. No other religion except the Christian faith teaches Jesus and the resurrection.

Paul did not try to fellowship with these people. If you try to fellowship with the Jews and the pagans and get along with them, one of the things you would have to leave out would be the doctrine of

the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You might even have to do that with some of the modernist so called Christian churches. I understand that some percentage of even the United Methodist church ministers have stated that they not only DO NOT believe that Jesus was born of a virgin; they DO NOT believe in His resurrection.

Now, can you think of the ultimate compromise between those who preach Jesus and the resurrection and those that they might fellowship with, if it is not fellowshiping with the people who follow the religion of Judaism? Most Jews absolutely, totally-deny that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. In fact, they even write books to claim that there was deceit and trickery surrounding Jesus' resurrection. They contend that the disciples stole the body of Jesus and hid it in order to trick the people into believing that Jesus was resurrected from the dead.

And yet we have, in America, a tremendous number of ministers who say they believe in Jesus Christ and the resurrection, but they turn right around and tell their flock that if they do not applaud, obey and help those people who deny Christ and the resurrection, then one way or another God is going to curse them. NOW HOW INSANE CAN YOU GET IN RELATION TO DOCTRINE?

These Judeo-Christians go to the ultimate to have fellowship in absolute, total opposition to the true doctrines that are in the Bible!

The question is, of course, should we have fellowship AT ALL, IN ANY WAY, with those who deny Christ and His resurrection?

Turn to Roman's 15. Paul is beginning to close his letter to Roman Christians:

“And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ

“Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

“That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

Paul is really saying, “You pray NOT that I will fellowship with these people who do not believe, BUT THAT I BE DELIVERED FROM THEM.”

“That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

Romans 15:29-33

Think of this: how important was this fellowship with the unbelievers to Paul? He actually-asked them to deliver him "from them who do not believe in Judea." Now, we have a lot of people over in the ancient land of "Judea" who do not believe! Should we not-as Paul did — pray that we be "delivered from them that do not believe in the land of Judea?" Instead we have ministers who say, "Oh, those people who do not believe in the land of Judea are the most important people on the face of the earth. They're special. They are the apple of God's eye. And if you don't do everything you can to help them, God will curse you."

Now that is the exact opposite of what Paul prayed for — what we just read in the New Testament.

Whom did Paul want to fellowship and

be refreshed with? He said "with you," referring to the people he was writing to. And who were they? Well, let us read Paul's own definition at the beginning of the letter to the Romans, as he addressed them and described what kind of people he believed they were to whom he was writing:

“Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

And then he addresses the letter:

“To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.”

Romans 1:6-8

Paul wanted to be delivered from those who did not believe and he wanted to come to Rome to be refreshed in fellowship with those whose faith was spoken of throughout the whole world.

Should it not be true that we, as Christians, would want to fellowship with those who believe in Jesus Christ, His resurrection, and the truths of the Holy Scripture instead of trying to fellowship with those who compromise and justify all sorts of evil that is in opposition to the Word of God?

I put an article about Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority in my newsletter. It stated that they do not open their meetings in prayer using Jesus' name and the reason given was “We do not want to offend the Jews and other non-Christians in Moral Majority meetings.” What is that? That is:

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

2 Timothy 3:5

You see, they fear men more than they fear God and the reason may be that their doctrine builds up men more than it builds up God; therefore, of course, they would fear men more than they would fear God.

You have no doubt heard the arguments for the necessity of fellowship with other church groups. These arguments may range from, "They agree with almost everything we teach, so we should fellowship with them," to the ultimate of seeking union with the people of the so-called "Jewish" religion, who actually deny Jesus Christ and the resurrection. At that point, the argument is usually, "We have to fellowship with them because they are God's chosen people. If we don't associate with them, God will curse us."

However, let US see. what the Bible says on this subject. Which is most important — doctrine or fellowship?

The Holy Spirit Is Given For Obedience

In previous pages, we found that obedience helps us to identify true doctrine:

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

John 7:17

Perhaps the holy spirit is given in the same way that true doctrine is given, It is given not to those who simply pray and ask for it, but it is given to those who obey the will of the father:

“And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the holy spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

Acts 5:32

Obedience is first; then God blesses us with knowledge and the Holy spirit, which leads us into truth.

Pentecostals preach that "the Holy Ghost" comes to those who pray and ask for it. They have religious services where they lay hands on people and pray that they will "get the Holy Ghost," but Peter said that God gives the holy spirit to them that obey Him.

The same is true regarding doctrine. Obey God and He will open up His doctrine to you. He will give you the spirit to correctly-interpret it. He will give you wisdom and understanding, if you obey.

This does not mean that He will give you wisdom and understanding, if you obey every jot and tittle of the law.

However, with the understanding that you already have, if you turn and obey as best you can, God will lead you further into doctrine and obedience.

The Holy Spirit Will Lead Us Into True Doctrine

Let us read more about "the holy spirit at this point" so that we understand what it was to do.

What follows are the words of Jesus. Using Webster's definition of "doctrine," (as we learned earlier in this study) we see that John 16 is DOGMA because it is Jesus' doctrine. He is preaching about the holy spirit, starting in verse 12:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

“Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

“He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

John 16:12-14

Ministers, generally in Pentecostal groups, often claim that they have "the Holy Ghost." What do they preach about? They preach about "the Holy Ghost" — and that is ALL they preach about. I have heard whole sermons on "getting the Holy Ghost." Pentecostals insist that "the Holy Ghost" is an actual person.

According to Jesus' dogma (doctrine) in John 16:12 -14, here are the traits of the holy spirit:

1. Verse 13 states that the holy spirit will guide you into all truth.
2. Verse 13, also, states that the holy spirit shall not witness of itself. It does not lead ministers to go on and on about the holy spirit.
3. In addition, verse 13 states that the holy spirit will show things to come. It will open up God's prophecies. And where will you read God's prophecies? You will read them in both the Old and New Testaments; but it is the holy spirit that will show you these prophecies and how they are fulfilled.
4. Verse 14 states that the holy spirit shall glorify Jesus. So many of the professing "Holy-Ghost-filled" preachers do not glorify Jesus because they preach false doctrines, and then turn around and glorify themselves for having "The Holy Ghost." You are supposed to think they are better

than other people because they have "The Holy Ghost." Nonetheless, in John 16:12-14, Jesus said the holy spirit (spirit of truth), would not speak of itself. It would give you truth and it would glorify Jesus Christ. This is Jesus' dogma!

So let us get this straight when we read about the holy spirit and what the purpose of the holy spirit is to God's Christian people.

Avoid Those Who Preach False Doctrine

"Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Romans 16:16-17

It would seem as if the modern church has changed that to read: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine AND ARRANGE SOME SORT OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THEM, AND AVOID SPEAKING ABOUT DOCTRINE."

That is, to a great extent, their so-called missionary work. They pander to the unbelievers in any way they can.

About 10 or 15 years ago, Billy Graham had meetings down in Florida and set up a youth seminar which included a rock band separate from the main auditorium. Billy Graham justified it by saying, "Well, this is the way we can get the youngsters. They'll come in to hear the rock music and then we can preach the gospel to them." So he justified this by saying "if we can get to them some way,

then we'll preach the gospel and they'll hear."

You will not find that kind of doctrine taught in the New Testament. In fact, in the next verse, there is a separation. There is actually a call to the Christians to separate themselves from those who will not believe. Christians are to stay away from unbelievers and fellowship with Christian people only.

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Romans 16:18

Considering those three verses in Romans 16, should Christians fellowship in ANY way with those who teach the Jews are Israel? The answer, obviously, is NO because their doctrine deceives the hearts of the simple.

Those Who Preach False Doctrine Do Not Serve Jesus

Should Christians who know that the pretribulation rapture doctrine is false go to church with those who preach the pretribulation rapture? According to Paul, those people teach contrary to the doctrine and "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ."

How many of you have heard people justify ministers, groups or churches who teach false doctrine by saying, "Well, I know their doctrine is false, but they certainly preach Jesus! They continually mention Jesus Christ, saying how much they love Him. They teach that if you will come forward and accept Christ, you will go to heaven when you die." They seem to be outspoken Christians.

But Paul says, "You mark them! You identify them! You expose those who preach contrary to the doctrine and you avoid them!" The reason you avoid them is because "they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

One of the tragedies I see among Christian families are those families who are isolated. They cannot attend a church where the minister preaches true doctrine, so in desperation they will go to any sort of a fundamental church. They will say, "Well, our children need to associate with Christian young people." And so the children do, and eventually end up marrying other young people from those churches. These young people, and eventually THEIR children, learn errors and grow up believing the doctrines of the false churches instead of the true doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What caused it? Well, Christians thought they needed fellowship more than they needed true doctrine. But that is a big mistake! If your family is the only one in the area that will accept true doctrine, I guess you will have to not fellowship with ANY of them. You stay with the doctrine of Jesus Christ and God will take care of the fellowship. Something will come up later if you are obedient to this call of marking them and avoiding them. Do not let them influence your children!

The Old Testament Was Written For Our Doctrine

What right do we have to compromise with ministers and churches who, by their doctrines, deceive our Israel brethren? I can find no reason to compromise at all! And about that time somebody will say, "Well, Pastor Emry, you have to admit

that a lot of those preachers preach more about Jesus Christ than you do because, Pastor Emry, you're in the Old Testament and the Prophets all the time."

And I DO get this criticism from some people. They, also, say something like, "Oh, Pastor Emry, you have to preach more of Jesus like the Baptists do." Well, perhaps we can answer that charge by reading further in this same chapter of Paul's letter to the Roman Christians. Here is what Paul says as he closes his letter. starting in verse 25:

"Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

"But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

"To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

Romans 16:25-27

What did Paul say in those last verses? He refers, in verse 25, to the "gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ" and to "the revelation of the mystery." And where does he say the revelation of the mystery is coming from? The answer is found in verse 26: "But now is made manifest (or made known) by the scriptures of the prophets."

Old Testament Doctrine Equals Belief In Jesus Christ

I have said this before and I will say it again for emphasis: YOU CAN NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEW TESTAMENT UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND THE OLD

TESTAMENT! Paul quoted Old Testament passages 56 times in the letter to the Romans. You cannot understand the letter to the Romans unless you go back and read the passages and the surrounding verses to see what Paul was quoting. He was writing to Christians who knew the Old Scriptures, which he was quoting. So he would quote, perhaps, just a phrase or a sentence, but he was referring to a whole passage. You can not understand the New Testament without the Old Testament.

In Romans 16:25-27 Paul said that this mystery of the revelation of the preaching of Jesus, the gospel, and so on, is now made known "by the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of the faith."

We can more readily-understand what Paul is saying here by turning to John 5. In verse 39 Jesus said to the Jews:

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

John 5:39

What testified of Jesus Christ? The Old Scriptures according to the dogma (doctrine) of Jesus Christ, Himself.

Jesus said to the Jews in the last two verses of that same chapter:

"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

John 5:46,47

Jesus gave two doctrines in verses 46 and 47:

1. If you believe Moses, you will believe Jesus.

2. If you do not believe Moses, you will not believe Jesus' words.

Now those are New Testament doctrines, are they not? They are dogma because they are from Jesus, Himself!

How foolish we are to say, as so many ministers do, that the Jews believe Moses and the prophets, but they do not believe Jesus Christ was the Messiah. JESUS SAID THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE! If they do not believe Jesus, then they obviously did not, never did and do not now believe Moses and the prophets!

If you want a double witness for the believers about this same doctrine, turn to Luke 16, which tells the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to him with water and Abraham said there was a great gulf. Then the rich man goes on in verse 27:

"Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

"For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

Luke 16:27,28

In the following three verses Abraham is speaking but remember, it is Jesus telling the story. So I am reading the doctrine of Jesus Christ as He puts these words in Abraham's mouth, as we continue in verse 29:

"Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

"And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither

will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

Luke 16:29-31

Why did the Jews not believe Jesus Christ? Well, according to these two witnesses in the New Testament, they did not believe Jesus Christ because they did not believe Moses and the prophets.

Yet, ministers teach that the Jews believe Moses, that the Jews believe in the same God we do, even though they have not accepted Jesus Christ. Those ministers are liars whether they know it or not! They are liars because their doctrine is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

Those ministers who say that the Jews believe in the same God that we do would have us believe the only difference is just that their eyes have not been opened to accept Jesus Christ. However, we already read in Romans 16:18:

“For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

Romans 16:18

If we try to fellowship with those kind of people, we will be a party to those who are deceiving our Israel brethren with doctrines that do not come from the Holy Word of God.

Romans 15:4 tells us:

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

Romans 15:4

What was "written aforetime?" Moses and the prophets, Psalms and the history

of Israel — ie. the Old Testament — was "written aforetime." And the word translated "learning" in that verse is the same one translated "doctrine" in other places in the New Testament.

After reading these passages, could you possibly fellowship with a preacher who claimed to believe in Jesus Christ but taught that the Old Testament or the Old Law has been put away? ONLY IF YOU BELIEVE FELLOWSHIP IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DOCTRINE COULD YOU COMPROMISE YOUR DOCTRINE.

God’s Law Is Against Any Unsound Doctrine

The doctrine of the New Testament states specifically that the Old Testament is doctrine given for us. We have read about Moses and the prophets, and now here is a passage on God's Law, itself, in 1 Timothy 1, starting in verse 1:

“Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;

“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”

1 Timothy 1:1-3

Paul was writing to a young minister of the Christian gospel and he said, "You tell them that they teach no other doctrine."

“Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister ques-

tions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

1 Timothy 1:4

I should comment on verse 4 because it has often been used against those of us who teach that we, the Anglo-Saxon and kindred peoples are the descendants of Israel. The detractors say, "Oh, don't give heed to endless genealogies," implying that we prove our Israelite ancestry by genealogies. But that is not accurate.

Obviously, we do not prove our Israelite ancestry or the gospel of the Kingdom by genealogy. We prove it by fulfilled prophecy, by the covenants and by the history of our people fulfilling what God said in His Word.

Paul continues in verse 5:

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

"From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; "Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

1 Timothy 1:5-7

Then, Paul tells us the intention of the Law:

"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

"For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured

persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;"

1 Timothy 1:8-10

The Law of God is against anything that is not SOUND DOCTRINE. So the purpose of the Law is not only to bring judgment on the law breaker, but it is, also, to teach doctrine.

Where do we find the Law? We find it way back in Moses and the prophets. And then Paul says that all of this he has just written is:

"According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

1 Timothy 1:11

We, also, read the following in 1 Timothy 4, starting with verse 6:

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness."

1 Timothy 4:6,7

PAUL IS ADMONISHING YOU TO REFUSE FALSE DOCTRINE! Now that may mean that you must refuse the person who preaches it, does it not? This means you may have to end some fellowship with some church or group of people where you refuse their doctrine.

Praise God that some of our good people, who have not left churches where false doctrine was preached, did try and speak up concerning the true doctrine. And then, finally, they were simply kicked

out. So, whether they left or not, God took care of breaking the fellowship; and they ended fellowshiping with those who taught false doctrine.

Paul continues in verse 13:

“Till I come, give attendance to reading; to exhortation, to doctrine.”

Next to verse 16:

“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 4:13,16

Notice the emphasis Paul is putting on doctrine in this letter. Remember, he is writing to a man who is a preacher. So perhaps he stresses the doctrine more than he did in the other letters. He is telling Timothy, "When you preach, pay attention to the doctrine!" In other words, "Preach God's truth!"

Can People Be Converted By False Doctrine?

Further in Timothy we read:

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

1 Timothy 5:17

Not double honor to those who labor for compromise and false fellowship. We have a great number of ministers, and churches who spend a lot of their time trying to build up fellowship.

They want more people in their churches. Because of this we find the ministers, in some cases, back off from

preaching doctrine because they are afraid it will drive someone in the congregation away. So the minister is at fault. The minister who will not preach doctrine because he wants a great number of people in his church is a hypocrite. He wants fellowship first and foremost at the expense of doctrine!

He may sincerely believe that the important thing is to get those people into the church and then he will let everything else take care of itself.

Some years ago, a friend and I went to see a minister who preached the doctrine of the Pre-tribulation Rapture. He preached it on television every day and in his church on Sunday. He had, also, written books on the subject. Within two minutes after introducing ourselves and beginning to talk about the Pre-tribulation Rapture, the minister admitted to us that the Pretribulation Rapture was not true AND HE KNEW IT!

But he justified it by saying, "However, it does get them thinking about the end times and gets them into the church and gets them saved." So he justified his own teaching of false doctrines on the grounds that it attracted people into the church and got people saved.

I say, THAT IS A FALSE DOCTRINE ITSELF, WHICH TEACHES THAT PEOPLE CAN BE SAVED BY FALSE DOCTRINE!

This minister's reasoning was nonsensical and unscriptural. Needless to say, we did not ever fellowship with that church.

In 2 Timothy, chapter 3, we find this familiar verse:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,

for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”

2 Timothy 3:16

"ALL scripture," spoken of in this verse, which is "profitable for doctrine," obviously-means, expressly, the Old Testament! The New Testament wasn't published yet.

Yet some teach that the doctrine of love takes precedence over any thing else. "God is love. Jesus is love. We must love one another." And they will preach love literally to the exclusion of preaching doctrines of the Holy Word of God.

Their problem is that they are incorrectly defining "love." Near the end of the New Testament, in John's epistles, we find the Biblical definition:

“And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.”

2 John 1:6

Now that is the BIBLICAL DEFINITION and the BIBLICAL DOCTRINE regarding love. Obedience to God's commandments is love, according to the doctrine here.

John continues in verse 7:

“For many deceivers are entered-into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the

Father and the Son.

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

“For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

2 John 1:7-11

Is doctrine Important? God's Word says DO NOT FELLOWSHIP WITH THOSE WHO HAVE NOT THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS CHRIST. So you think of that the next time you are tempted to compromise with ANYONE who is not in the doctrine of Christ and does not believe in Jesus Christ according to the doctrines taught in the Holy Scripture.

Glorifying God With One Mouth And One Mind

In Romans 15, starting in verse 4, we read this:

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 15:4-6

How are we going to glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, with one mind and one mouth if we compromise on doctrine? We will have the same mish-mash that we have now, where the churches are trying to get along in this ecumenical movement by literally laying aside an doctrines because they cannot get together on them. They say, “We just want to have love and fellowship because

we're all Christians." It is not long before they carry it a little bit further and bring in the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Jews, and everyone else. Why? Because they initially compromised on doctrine.

According to Romans 15:4-6, in order to glorify God with one mind and one mouth (in other words, with the same teaching), we are going to have to teach the same doctrine.

What doctrine should we teach? It must come from the Holy Word of God! It cannot be something we make up because that could not possibly glorify God.

Conclusion

Let us close in Isaiah 29. After all of this study on doctrine, we should close with the great and marvelous hope that in spite of everything the anti-Christians do — in spite of everything foolish Christians do, regarding doctrine — God has prophesied and promised that His people would learn true doctrine:

“Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

“But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.”

Isaiah 29:22-23

That whole chapter is a prophecy about Israel coming to understand who they are, and that God has saved them (brought salvation to them through His Word). Then they will turn to Him, the Holy One of Jacob, and will sanctify His name, Then in verse 24 is a promise:

“They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.”

Isaiah 29:24

In other words, it is not going to be up to us. We do not have to be responsible, ourselves, to teach all of Israel doctrine. God has said THEY WILL LEARN DOCTRINE!

Review

Even though I may have missed some points, I have listed below the things we have learned about doctrine in this study:

1. Jesus' teachings are called doctrine.
2. Jesus' doctrine is from God.
3. Obedience helps one to know whether the doctrine is true.
4. Correct doctrine will glorify God, not the carrier of the doctrine.
5. In Proverbs, we read that a wise man should desire doctrine.
6. Obedience brings knowledge of doctrine.
7. In Isaiah 29, Israel is corrected by learning doctrine as God saves and delivers them.
8. Early Christians fellowshiped IN doctrine, not OUT of it.
9. Early Christians refused the Jews' order to stop preaching Jesus and His doctrines.
10. Paul wanted no fellowship with those who were disobedient to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
11. The holy spirit is given for obedience.

12. The holy spirit will lead us into truth (doctrine).

13. Paul said we should avoid those who preach false doctrine.

14. Those who reject truth and preach false doctrine do not serve Jesus Christ.

I suppose that is the hardest truth for us to grasp. If they mention Jesus, claim they are Christians, repeat His name and then preach doctrines which have a rather emotional or good sound to them, we tend to think they are serving Jesus. But according to the Bible, those who preach false doctrine do not serve Jesus, but their own belly and they deceive the hearts of the simple.

15. The Old Testament was written for our doctrine.

16. The Old Testament doctrines must be believed in order to believe in Jesus Christ.

17. The Law of God is against any thing that is not sound doctrine.

18. We are not even to receive them into our house who have not the doctrine of Jesus Christ nor bid them Godspeed.

19. We will glorify God with one mouth and one mind, when we come to an understanding of true doctrine — the doctrine of the Holy Word.

These 19 Biblical points teach us that true fellowship must be IN doctrine. Let us lay hold of doctrine. Let us pursue true doctrine, and God will take care of the fellowship.

Is Doctrine Important?



by Sheldon Emry

Is Doctrine Important?

by Pastor Sheldon Emry

A transcription of Sermon Tape #8309

Transcription courtesy of
Pastor Ben Williams