

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

It is necessary that Christians be taught sound Bible doctrine and that all doctrine be tested by the full context of the infallible Word of God. Doctrine received, believed and practiced determines a person's character, behavior and destiny.

Kevin Conner, The Foundations of Christian Doctrine

What is Christian doctrine? The English word, "doctrine," comes from the Latin word *doctrina*. It can be defined as, "teaching or instruction." Christian doctrine simply means the beliefs of Christians.

A Christian doctrine is what the entire Bible has to say on one particular subject. Therefore, we speak of such things as the "Doctrine of Christ", the "Doctrine of God", and the "Doctrine of Scripture", etc. This refers to what Christians believe about these subjects based upon the teaching of the Bible.

Doctrine Is Different from Theology, but the terms may be used interchangeably. Sometimes the word "doctrine" is used interchangeably with the word "theology". While this is not necessarily wrong, there is a difference between the two terms. Theology, or Christian theology, is the more general term. It refers to the study of the God of the Bible. Doctrine refers to the specific teachings about God that are found in a study of theology such as the "Doctrine of salvation" or the "Doctrine of the Holy Spirit".

The Necessity of Doctrine

The Apostle Paul prophesied, "*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; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*" II Timothy 4:3-4 NKJV

We are living in the day in which every believer needs to know:

1. WHO they believe
2. WHAT they believe
3. WHY they believe it

All religions, true or false, all cults, ideologies are founded on various doctrines and these teachings received, believed, obeyed and continually practice determines:

1. Character – what we are
2. Behavior – what we do
3. Destiny – where we go

Strong character is determined by strong beliefs, and clearly defined doctrine makes for clear cut convictions. What a person believes is either molded by the vain philosophies of men or the inspired Word of God.

The Classification of Doctrine

The Scripture lists several classes of doctrine. However, it will be seen that all doctrine proceeds from three sources: God, Men or Satan. Illustrated in Matthew 16:13-23.

A. The Doctrine of God

1. Doctrine of God – Deuteronomy 32:2; Proverbs 4:2; I Timothy 6:1; I Timothy 6:3
2. Doctrine of Christ – Hebrews 6:1; Matthew 7:28
3. Doctrine of the Apostles – Acts 2:42; Hebrews 6:1-2
 - a. The Doctrine of Repentance from Dead Works
 - b. The Doctrine of Faith towards God
 - c. The Doctrine of Baptisms
 - d. The Doctrine of Laying on of Hands
 - e. The Doctrine of Resurrection from the Dead
 - f. The Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

B. The Doctrine of Men

“And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men —the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.”“ Mark 7:7-8

1. The doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Luke 12:1
2. Doctrines in Revelation: Balaam, Nicolaitans, and Jezebel. Revelation 2

C. The Doctrine of Devils

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ”I Timothy 4:1 NKJV

All doctrine ultimately proceeds from one of two sources: the Spirit of Truth or the Spirit of Error. The only sure and infallible test of all doctrine is the complete body of Scripture.

The Nature of Doctrine

- A. Doctrine Must Be Sound: I Timothy 1:10; II Timothy 4:2-4; Titus 1:9; 2:1
- B. Doctrine Must Be Pure: Job 11:4
- C. Doctrine Must Be Scriptural: II Timothy 3:14-17; Titus 2:1
- D. Doctrine Must Obeyed: Romans 6:17; Matthew 23:1-3;
- E. Doctrine Determines Character: I Timothy 4:6, 13, 16; Titus 2:7-10
- F. Doctrine Affects Fellowship: I John 1:1-7; Acts 2:42
- G. Doctrine Determines Destiny: II Peter 3:14-15
- H. Doctrine and Love: I Corinthians 13:1-2