

# **Delighting In Doctrine and the Terrible Consequences of Neglecting It**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

**We're going to take a look at what the Bible has to say about the teachings that are contained in it's 66 books. We'll see that they've been attacked and often times ignored. But, we'll also see how important they really are.**

### **A. What do we mean by doctrine?**

**The Word doctrine means teaching. Every group has it's own teaching which distinguishes itself from others who have their own teaching. Our beliefs label us.**

**Matt. 16:6 - And Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the **Pharisees and Sadducees.**"**

**Matt. 16:12 - Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of **the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.****

**⇒ They each had their own set of beliefs and they were always separate from each other. The only exception was when they would come together to try to hinder the ministry of Jesus. Matt. 16:1**

**There are certain non-cardinal doctrines that we may not want to make a major issue about, but we must not compromise on those doctrines that have eternal negative consequences on one's soul.**

### **B. The neglect of doctrine.**

**Why is doctrine neglected? Here are some things that some people believe about doctrine that causes it to be neglected**

1. **“Doctrine divides.”** “I prefer to emphasize love. I look for the things that unite believers together.” There are whole denominations, churches and organizations that are “functioning” based upon the statement; “Unity at all cost.” But in reality, doctrine does divide. It is designed to force us to take a stand.

2. **“Doctrine takes us down the road of judging others.”** “Emphasizing doctrine forces us to examine what others believe. We are then forced to draw conclusions about their beliefs.”

**With the current mindset the way it is in so many places,  
the actions of the Bereans would be questionable.**

Acts 17:10-11 - And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, **examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.**

3. **“Doctrine can lead to narrow mindedness.”** “I prefer to be open minded. I don’t want to be known as one who opposes or criticizes the beliefs of others. I don’t want to be exclusivistic.”

**God Himself happens to be very narrow minded. This is  
illustrated by the very plan of salvation.**

John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, **but through Me.**

Gal. 1:6-8 - I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and **want to distort** the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, **let him be accursed.**

⇒ **God has narrowed everything down to one true gospel message.  
All others are wrong.**

4. **“Doctrine builds walls.”** “I don’t want to construct barriers. I don’t want to keep people out of my circle and I don’t want to be kept out of theirs.”

This mindset wouldn’t work in the boy scouts, the girl scouts, or a country club. They all have rules and regulations. They all have do’s and don’t’s, but many think it’s ok to have this “accept people no matter what they believe” mentality present in the church.

5. **“I find today people are not looking for theology.”** There’s a place for it, But in your everyday life you need to know how to live.”

This statement was made by one of today’s most popular “pastors” in America. His book has taken the country by storm. He regularly fills stadiums to hear him speak.

“Lest you think me a bit harsh let me remind you that theology simply means “the knowledge of God.” In essence this pastor has said that people are really not interested in learning about God. Somehow (undoubtedly due to his lack of biblical education) he has made a disconnect between knowing the God of the Bible via sound biblical theology and knowing how to live.” Bob Liichow

### C. **Doctrine must not be neglected!**

**This is emphasized in many different ways and in many passages in the Word of God.**

1 Tim. 4:13 - Until I come, **give attention** to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and **teaching**.

2 Tim. 3:16 - All Scripture is inspired by God and **profitable for teaching**, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

Acts 2:42 - And they were continually **devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching** and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Col. 1:28 - And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and **teaching every man** with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Matt. 28:19-20 - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching them** to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

⇒ **Part of the great commission is to “doctrinize” those who became disciples.**

**One cannot even estimate the negative impact that neglecting doctrine has on the church and on individual believers.**

## **1. The results of neglecting doctrine are disastrous in many ways.**

**The Scriptures are overflowing with results of neglecting doctrine.**

### **Believers will be theologically unstable**

Eph. 4:11-16 - And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. **As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine,** by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up** in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

### **The standards for solid Bible teaching and preaching are lowered**

2 Tim. 4:3 - For the time will come when they will **not endure sound doctrine**; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will **accumulate for themselves** teachers in accordance to their own desires.

### **What is the Standard?**

2 Tim. 4:2 - **Preach the word**; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and **doctrine**.

### **Standards for church leadership are neglected**

Titus 1:7-9 - For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious,

not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, **that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.**

### **The overall design of the Church will not be what it was meant to be**

1 Tim. 3:14-15 - I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one **ought to conduct himself** in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, **the pillar and support of the truth.**

⇒ **The church is supposed to be a support beam for the truth. The church is where the truth is to be found and taught.**

### **Preachers who neglect doctrine are unworthy servants**

1 Tim. 4:6 - In pointing out these things to the brethren, **you will be a good servant** of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of **the faith and of the sound doctrine** which you have been following.

### **\*Preachers should work hard at preaching and teaching - 1 Tim. 5:17**

1 Tim. 5:17 - Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who **work hard at preaching and teaching.**

### **The ability to discern truth from error is greatly hindered**

Heb. 5:11-14 - Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since **you have become dull of hearing.** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need **milk** and not **solid food.** For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

But solid food is for the mature, **who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.**

**Two major errors have erupted in our day as a result of neglecting doctrine:**

- 1. The ability to discern who is and who isn't a true Christian.**
- 2. Not dealing with Satan's tares that have found their way into the church.**

**Neglecting doctrine is like constructing a building without a foundation. As nice as the building may look, it will not stand over time. Solid teaching is like the re-bar that strengthens the foundation.**

## **II. DOCTRINE VERSUS LOVE**

**This is the way these two concepts are normally portrayed. They are sometimes seen as being on opposite sides of the fence. There is no reconciling of the two, they are like oil and water. It is commonly believed that if you are doctrinally strong, you are weak in the area of loving people and vice versa.**

### **A. Sometimes this is the case. One or the other is present.**

**There's no reason why strong doctrine and love cannot both be present at the same time. They are not incompatible.**

#### **1. Examples of two of the seven Churches in Revelation.**

**The Churches in Ephesus and Thyatira presents for us an example of having love and no doctrine and vice versa.**

##### **Ephesus- Right Doctrine, but no Love**

Rev. 2:1-7 - To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ...I know your deeds and your **toil and perseverance**, and that you **cannot endure evil men**, and you **put to the test** those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and **you found them to be false**; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that **you have left your first love**. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that **you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans**, which I also hate...

### **Thyatira- Love, but wrong doctrine**

Rev. 2:18-29 And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ...I know your deeds, and **your love** and faith and service and perseverance, and that **your deeds of late are greater than at first**. But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and **she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray**, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ...But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, **who do not hold this teaching**, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them I place no other burden on you.

Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come...

**It should not be this way!! Those who are strong in doctrine, should also be strong in love and those who are strong in love, should be also strong in doctrine.**

## **2. Paul's teaching to Pastor Timothy and Pastor Titus.**

**The teaching in I & II Timothy and Titus revolves around the local Church and how it is supposed to function.**

**Notice how Paul emphasizes both doctrine and love. He doesn't present them as either or, but speaks strongly of the necessity of both.**

I Tim. 1:3- doctrine

I Tim. 1:5 - love

1 Tim. 2:15 - love

1 Tim. 4:6 - doctrine

1 Tim. 4:12 - love

1 Tim. 4:13 - doctrine

1 Tim. 4:16 - doctrine

1 Tim. 5:17 - doctrine

1 Tim. 6:1 - doctrine

1 Tim. 6:3-4 - doctrine

1 Tim. 6:11 - love

2 Tim. 1:7 - love

2 Tim. 1:13 - love - doctrine

2 Tim. 2:22 - love

2 Tim. 3:10 - love - doctrine

2 Tim. 3:16 - doctrine

2 Tim. 4:3 - doctrine

Titus 1:9 - doctrine

Titus 2:1 - doctrine

Titus 2:2 - love

Titus 2:4 - love

Titus 2:7 - doctrine

Titus 2:10 - doctrine

Titus 3:15 - love

**Doctrine and love are not on opposite sides of the universe. They are mingled together so much so that Biblically speaking, you should not have one without the other.**

### **III. EXHORTATIONS, WARNINGS & COUNSEL** **CONCERNING DOCTRINE**

**Thankfully, the Word of God is filled with advise on the actions we should take in regards to doctrine. How should we deal with false teachers who teach false doctrine? What can we do to preserve pure doctrine?**

#### **A. Various insights into the matter.**

**1. Keep the original pattern that was started by the early church.**

Acts 2:41-42 - So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. **And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching** and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

**2. Appoint true Biblical elders.**

Titus 1:5-9 - For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and **appoint elders** in every city as I directed you... For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, **holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.**

**3. Make sure you are growing spiritually.**

2 Pet. 3:15-18 - ... just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which **the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures**, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard** lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, **but grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

**4. Be willing to fight for the truth.**

Jude 1:3 - Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.

**5. Don't just accept what a teacher says.**

1 John 4:1 - Beloved, **do not believe every spirit**, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

**6. Don't be fooled by smooth talkers.**

Col. 2:8 - See to it that no one **takes you captive** through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

**7. Realize the source of false doctrine.**

1 Tim. 4:1 - But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to **deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons**.

**8. Turn away from false teachers.**

Rom. 16:17-18 - Now I urge you, brethren, **keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances** contrary to the teaching which you learned, and **turn away from them**. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and **by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting**.

⇒ **Note, it's not the ones who are teaching true doctrine that's causing the dissension in the church.**

**9. Seek to silence those who are caught up in false doctrine.**

1 Tim. 1:3-4 - As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus, in order that you may **instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines**, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

**10. We must beware of false teachers.**

Matt. 7:15-16 - **Beware of the false prophets**, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?

**False teachers are here to stay, but we must not give them a platform to spread their destructive heresies. We must make every effort to silence them and prove them wrong with the truth of the Word.**

2 Pet. 2:1-2 - But false prophets also arose among the people, **just as there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction

upon themselves. And **many will follow** their sensuality, and because of them the **way of the truth** will be maligned.

#### **IV. WHY IS THERE SO LITTLE CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH IN OUR DAY? WHAT SHOULD WE BE CONTENDING FOR?**

##### **A. Why isn't there more of a concern for pure doctrine to be present in the church today?**

**The present mindset in the church is against it.**

**It makes you a marked individual.**

**You become known as a troublemaker.**

**You are rejected in intellectual circles.**

**You are labeled as unloving and narrow minded.**

**People fear man more than they fear God.**

#### **V. WHAT SHOULD WE BE CONTENDING FOR ?**

##### **A. A sampling of some of the doctrines that are under attack and have to be contended for.**

**Inerrancy & authority of the Bible**  
**Literal consciousness after death**  
**Virgin birth of the Messiah**  
**Resurrection of the Messiah**  
**Second coming of the Messiah**  
**Creation account in Genesis**  
**The Atonement of Jesus**  
**Existence of the devil**

**Deity of the Messiah**  
**Eternality of the soul & spirit**  
**God's one plan of salvation**  
**Fall of man**  
**Sovereignty of God**  
**The Trinity**

## **VI. SOME PRACTICAL RESPONSES TO WHAT WE HAVE STUDIED**

### **1. Pray for discernment.**

**In one of Paul's letters he offers up a prayer to God on behalf of those to whom he was writing. We have several such inspired prayers in his letters that deal with various subjects.**

Phil. 1:9-10 - And this I pray, that your **love** may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all **discernment**, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.

### **2. Obedience produces a good testimony.**

**When we walk in the truth of the Word of God, people will notice. The same is true when someone dishonors the the Word by disobedience.**

3 John 1:3-4 - For I was very glad when brethren came and **bore witness** to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

1 Tim. 6:1 - Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so **that the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against.**

### **3. Obedience produces joy and gladness.**

**When we walk in the truth of the Word of God, it produces joy in others and joy in us as well.**

2 John 1:4-6 - I was **very glad** to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father. And now I ask you, lady, not as writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. **And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.** This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.