

The Importance of Doctrine

1. Definition: As used in this categorical study, doctrine is the content of Scripture exegeted and taught categorically by a pastor-teacher in a local church.

1.1 Col. R. B. Thieme developed an acrostic to communicate the way doctrine should be taught in the local church: ICE, for Isagogics, Categories and Exegesis. I have amplified it somewhat.

ICED

I The I stands for Introduction, meaning those facts which introduce historical nuances and background information about the book, the author and the historical setting.

C The C stands for Categories meaning that study of a subject found throughout the Bible as opposed to an eclectic approach.

E The E stands for Exegesis, meaning a critical analysis of the Bible performed from a study of the original language using the best manuscripts available.

D The D stands for Dispensation, meaning that analysis of the biblical passage or passages given the epoch to which the Scripture relates.

2. In 2Ti 3:16-17 we find that doctrine is stressed as the means for performing the Christian life.

2Ti 3:16: All scripture is God breathed and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

1Ti 3:17: In order that the man of God might be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2.1 Scripture, however, must be interpreted based on a complete and thorough exegesis.

3. 2Pe 1:2-8 summarizes the process for acquiring doctrine. In an earlier study of Peter's second epistle, I exegeted and analyzed verses 2 through 8. Rather than an extensive review, I want to simply present an expanded translation.

Expanded Translation

2Pe 1:2 God's wonderful plan for your life and the peace and stability that comes from that plan, I want it for each of you; however, you must realize it can only come from Bible doctrine metabolized in your soul, where the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ becomes more real than reality.

2Pe 1:3 For you see, God's divine power has provided everything that pertains to your life in time. Your spiritual life is a product of the doctrine you have in your soul. God called you for the solitary purpose of glorifying Him.

2Pe 1:4 To facilitate our progress in the Christian life, God has provided in Scripture many great and precious promises; by the inculcation of these marvelous promises, you might become partakers of a divine nature, having escaped the control and domination of your old sin nature.

2Pe 1:5 And because of God's grace, there are several protocols which must be added to your faith in Christ; for example, to your faith you must add the consistent intake of the Word of God and to this virtue you have to keep on adding more doctrine. The transforming of the mind is a never-ending task.

2Pe 1:6 And to your newly acquired doctrine you must add self-control, organized thinking and patience as you continue metabolizing the Word of God, even when it is inconvenient, consistently making application of that which you have learned.

2Pe 1:7 And to that application you must learn to appreciate your very own spiritual life, even while living right smack in the middle of the devil's world. And to this appreciation you must acquire a thorough understanding of God's protocols, some of which are very difficult and illogical. For example, you are to pray for your enemies; you are to do good to those who abuse you; you are to give thanks in all things and you are to pray regularly. You are to use your freedom in Christ as a liberty, not a license.

2Pe 1:8 Now if the protocols listed in verses two through seven are resident in your soul, you will not be devoid of divine good; for these precious promises will make you a living testimony of Him who called you, as His ambassador for time.

4. Now let's study 2Pe 1:9 where the plight of the negative believer is set forth. In verse nine, we find a description of the poor Christian who has not added to his faith the cast of characters demanded in the first eight verses of 2nd Peter chapter two.

2Pe 1:9 but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

4.1 This verse suffers from a translation problem.

4.1.1 "But" is actually a poor translation of **Gar**. **Gar** is better translated "for you see."

4.1.2 The phrase "he that lacketh these things" is better translated "to whom these things are not present." Instead of speaking of the "assembled characters" belonging to the Christian, the verse indicates they may be present, but not his or her settled possession.

4.1.3 Because many believers have not followed the protocol plan of God, they wake up in a new world each morning, unaware of their very own spiritual life and oblivious to the fact they have a spiritual sense of destiny. These negative believers are everywhere today. Our churches are full of them, and, perhaps worse, there are many born-again people who have rejected the church altogether.

The protocol plan of God is perhaps best summarized in our Edification Complex of The Soul chart.

Edification Complex of the Soul Chart

Occupation With Christ

Plus Happiness

Impersonal Love

Love of God

Sense of Destiny

Doctrinal Orientation

Grace Orientation

Faith Rest

Filling of the Spirit

Rebound

4.1.4 The phrase "cannot see afar off" is a translation of **Muopazo**, a word used by Aristotle of a near-sighted man. It was also used by Ecclesiasticus of a man who has seen the light, but blinking he turns away from the light.

4.1.5 Here the word **Muopazo** modifies the word **Tuflos**, translated "blind." The word blind is better "he screws up his eyes because of the light, seeing only things present and not the heavenly things."

4.1.6 Negative people can't see spiritual things because doctrine is spiritually discerned.

4.1.7 Vincent has written of the blind soul "he cannot see the things of heaven, though he may be quick enough in regard to worldly matters."

4.1.8 "Hath forgotten" in the Greek text is literally "having taken forgetfulness." The phrase comes from **Lambano Lethe**, which is better translated "having seized a state of forgetfulness, a state of oblivion."

4.1.9 "Purged" is **Katharizo** and means "to be cleansed." This is an apt description of the saint who will not use the two power options.

4.1.10 Continued refusal to take in the Word may result in a believer forgetting he was ever saved.

4.1.11 This Christian is not stone-blind but simply lacks even the basics--a sad situation indeed.

5. Now let's leave Second Peter and develop further our subject, "The Importance of Doctrine."

6. It is impossible to please God if you do not believe that He is your Savior and that He blesses the believer who uses the two power options.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7. Without doctrine you will find your prayers to be an abomination to God.

Pro 28:9 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayers shall be an abomination.

8. Pro 12:1a tells us the man who loves spiritual growth will love knowledge.

Pro 12:1 Whoever loveth instruction loveth knowledge: and he that hateth reproof is brutish.

8.1 Notice Pro 12:1b tells us not to despise discipline; we should accept it and move forward. The man who rebels against the discipline of God is brutish--animal-like.

8.2 Compare this verse to Heb 4:12. The anonymous writer of Hebrews declares the power of Scripture, how it cuts to the essence of our soul and human spirit discerning our true thoughts and intents.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

9. Doctrine was always with God, even from eternity past; before anything was, there was doctrine. Pro 8:22 and 23 also declare the importance God places on doctrine.

Pro 8:22-23 The Lord possessed wisdom in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Wisdom was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was.

10. God has magnified His Word, even above His name and reputation. A clear demonstration of the importance of His Word is found in Psa 138:2.

"I will worship toward the Holy Temple and praise thy Name for thy loving Kindness and for thy Truth: for thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name."

11. The attitude of a believer toward Bible doctrine determines whether he or she receives blessing or discipline in time.

Pro 8:33-36 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the post of my doors. For whoever findeth doctrine, findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against doctrine wrongeth his own soul: and all they that hate me love operational death in time.

12. Jos 1:8 says daily study of the Word of God will make the believer a unique success.

Jos 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then you shall make thy way prosperous, and then you shall have a good success.

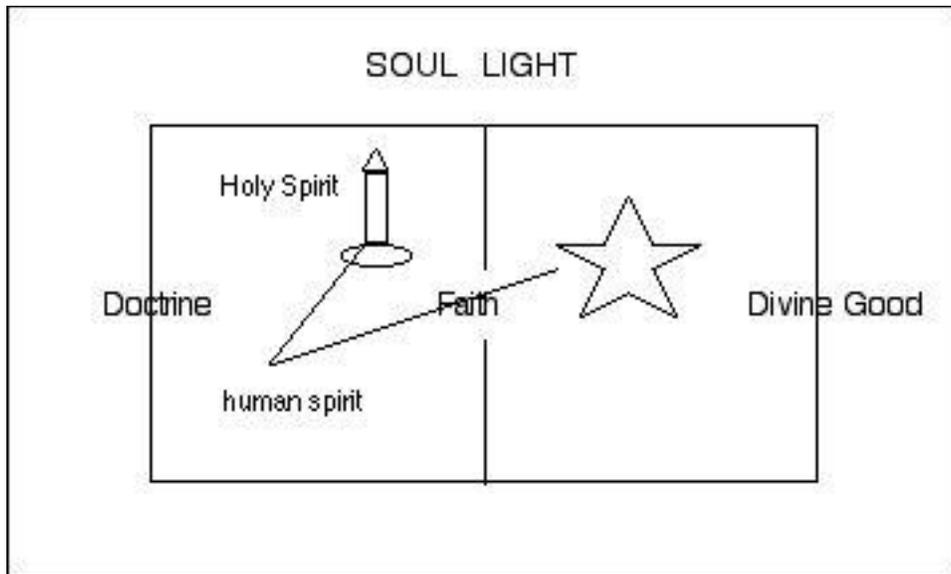
13. Doctrine, therefore, is the basis for blessing in time.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: for I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

14. Doctrine must become more real than reality in the life of a believer.

KJV

2Pe 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your heart:



14.1 An expanded and corrected translation of 2Pe 1:20 demands a categorical study of Scripture.

Expanded Translation

2Pe 1:20 Know and understand no verse should be read and interpreted alone; i.e., it must not be isolated from what the Scripture says elsewhere.

15. In order to function properly in time every believer is urged to get under the authority of his or her right pastor-teacher.

Heb 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Heb 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, those men who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the result of their modus operandi of studying and teaching.

Heb 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

16. A nation without a pivot of positive believers will fall under the fifth cycle of discipline. As go the believers in a nation, so goes that nation.

Hos 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land ...

Hos 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

17. The pastor-teacher in the local church has the responsibility for communicating doctrine.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, *pastors-teachers*;

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

18. Doctrine is only found in the written Canon.

1Pe 1:8 Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

19. Doctrine produces several attributes.

Confidence

2Co 5:6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

2Co 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

2Co 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Divine viewpoint

2Co 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalt itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Orientation to the plan of God

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

A stable mind

Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

2Ti 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

A basis for divine guidance

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

All things that pertain to life and godliness

2Pe 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things which pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him who has called us to glory and virtue.

Works acceptable to God--Metabolized doctrine is the source of Christian production.

2Pe 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

2Pe 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Jam 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Jam 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Jam 1:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

Jam 1:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Jam 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

20. To avail ourselves of doctrine and thus avoid the catastrophe of being blinded by the lights of the world, we must consistently use our two power options; i.e., the intake of the Word and the filling of the Spirit.

21. This is the only way we can assemble the cast of characters listed by Peter.

22. For many Christians, their spiritual life is simply a one-act play. The first act for them is faith in Christ, but God desires that the show continue and the story line develop.

22.1 To avoid being a one-act play there must be a disciplined approach to rebound and study, rebound and study--the consistent use of the two power options.

22.2 Without the assembled characters the curtain will never rise on act two. A vast audience of unseen witnesses is waiting in the theater: the question perpetually remains. Are we willing to claim the promises which lead us to fulfill our very own sense of spiritual destiny?