

DOCTRINE

This word, DOCTRINE, is found throughout the Bible over 50 times. It refers to the total content of belief of an individual, a Church, or a Denomination. It is as some have said in the past – “What you believe in, what you live for, and what you would be willing to die for.” Now that’s a very strong statement.

Many times when a person relocates to a different area and looks for a Church for their family to attend and eventually join, they inquire as to the DOCTRINAL Statement of the Church. This is usually in printed form and lists the basics of the group’s faith and belief.

The word DOCTRINE is found in the oldest Book of the Bible, the Book of Job, as he answers his friends question of his faithfulness – ~~“My DOCTRINE is pure, and I am clean”~~ (Job 11:4) – quite a simple statement to stand on.

King Solomon shared with his children, *“Hear the instruction of a father, and give attention to know understanding – for I give you good DOCTRINE – do not forsake my law”* (Proverbs 4:1,2).

It is used 16 times in the Apostle Paul’s challenge to his sons-in-the-faith Timothy and Titus in the New Testament – and five times prefaced with the word “sound” or “good” – therefore emphasizing the importance of solid, firm and unwavering belief.

In the four Gospels it is often quoted that the people were “astonished” at the DOCTRINE that Jesus Christ maintained throughout His short ministry on earth.

In the Book of John, Jesus makes the source of His DOCTRINE really clear, *“Jesus answered them and said, My DOCTRINE is not Mine, but His who sent Me”* (John 7:16) insisting that God had sent Him and given Jesus His own authority in all things.

Later in the Book of Acts after the Apostle Peter gave his famous Pentecost message it is quoted, *“And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ DOCTRINE and fellowship”* (Acts 2:42) – so the converts embraced and followed the teachings of the early Church leaders and the Church grew and flourished on this solid foundation.

Without SOUND DOCTRINE the door is left wide open to all kinds of man-made nonsense creeping in and taking over. We must be very vigilant in maintaining strong standards in our Worship and Faith – following the Fundamental teachings of the Bible every step of the way *“that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of DOCTRINE, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive”* (Ephesians 4:14). Beware – this is happening a lot today.

The faithfulness of the early followers of the Lord was often challenged, as in the case of the imprisonment of the Apostles for preaching Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. After

God sent an angel to *"open the prison doors and bring them out"* (Acts 5:19) the Apostles continued with their message and were again brought before the Counsel and told, *"Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your DOCTRINE"* -- to which *"Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than man"* (Acts 5:28,29). What a testimony -- needed then in their situation -- and especially needed today as we face the watering-down of the message of God's Word.

True, basic DOCTRINE must include absolute and unwavering strong belief in the Inerrancy of the Scriptures, the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, His Sinless Life, His Blood Atonement, His Death on the Cross, His Resurrection and Victory Over the Grave, His Ascension into Heaven, and His Promise to Return to Take All Believers to Be With Him for Eternity -- and one more item -- the Eternal Fiery Punishment in Hell of the devil and all who refuse to accept God's offer of pardon and forgiveness.

A DOCTRINAL Statement of any Church, Mission, Organization or Individual must include these basics and be strictly and guardedly adhered to by all involved.

In closing, one more verse -- *"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the DOCTRINE of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the DOCTRINE of Christ has both the Father and the Son"* (2 John 9).

Make sure of the DOCTRINE you follow and support -- it is a matter of Eternity!

~~~~~  
for more information or counseling contact Pastor Bruce R. Burke

**OPEN BIBLE MINISTRIES**

263 Edgefield Road -- Lake Ariel, PA 18436 -- Phone 570-698-7890  
Cell 570-470-3760 -- E-mail [openbiblemin@verizon.net](mailto:openbiblemin@verizon.net)