

## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Oh, I can hear it, “Ho hum here we go again, can’t he talk about something exciting, maybe some new truth? I’m getting so tired of hearing the same old stuff.” Besides, doctrine only brings division! Let’s talk about love, isn’t that what Christ is all about?”

Paul must have heard similar words when speaking to the Hebrews, for he says, “...we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are *dull of hearing*.” So, bear with me, say a prayer for me, and it might get better as we move along.

### **But, you are right on both counts!**

Doctrine *will* cause division, and Christ *is* all about love, so why am I talking about doctrine? Because real love can only be defined by truth and the doctrine of Christ is truth defined - *for God is truth*.

But, herein lies our problem. Christianity has been so inoculated against God’s truth that many can’t recognize truth when it is presented to them. To inoculate means to imbue or fill to capacity, often used to prevent an invasion of something more virulent. In our case, it would mean to so saturate the mind with a convoluted version of Christianity that only those with a real love of the truth are able to detect and separate truth from error.

In Matthew 24, Christ warns of Satan's agenda to inoculate the world with his lies; and tells of false Christs, false prophets and deception so severe that even the elect are in danger of being deceived. We are forewarned, so let's prepare.

### **Deception works.**

The Grand Junction Valley is fighting an infestation of the Japanese Beetle and it was found that the most successful way to fight it is, oddly enough, through *deception*. As I understand it, they use what amounts to a perfume emitted by the female that so confuses the male that it is unable to recognize the true female and thus fails to reproduce.

Could it be that Satan is filling the world with something that *smells* like, *looks* like, maybe even *feels* like true Christianity, but renders one to be ineffective in much of their Christian life? Consider Matthew 7:21-23. Think about this revealing prophecy written by William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army.

**“The chief danger that confronts the coming century will be, *religion* without the holy ghost, *Christianity* without Christ, *forgiveness* without repentance, *salvation* without regeneration, *politics* without God, *heaven* without hell.”**

Are we there yet? Do you see any evidence of his words being fulfilled? Keep his words in mind as we struggle through this “*dull of hearing*” thing.

## **John explains why doctrine causes division!**

“Whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abides 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: (*What did Christ say to do about the blind leaders of the blind in Matthew 15:14*)?”

“For he that bids him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 9-11). Never compromise with evil.

Think seriously about what John is saying. God’s enemies have good reason to hate His doctrine because, “*it inoculates a person against their lies.*”

## **Paul warns Timothy.**

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shall both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (I Tim. 4:16).

**Of course doctrine will cause division because it faces up to the real issues! Therefore, shouldn’t we be sure we understand the doctrine of Christ?** Let’s consider a few questions and comments about doctrines.

## **What is the doctrine of Christ?**

It is the absolute *truth* of God applied in every situation. It is unimpeachable *love* in action. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Notice, Christ said *must* worship Him in spirit and *truth*. Doctrines of men are unacceptable, (Matt. 15:8-9).

## **Where did Christ's doctrine come from?**

From the Father, Jesus said, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me” (John 7:16). Therefore, it is paramount in its importance.

## **When was it revealed to mankind?**

It began at the giving of the Ten Commandments, (life's truths) the very foundation of our Christian life; but was completed at the coming of Christ, as the fulfillment of the promise of grace made available to all mankind (demonstrable love). Am I saying there was no grace until Christ came? Not at all! I'm saying that Christ was the manifestation of the promise of grace spread abroad.

## **Why is it important?**

The doctrine of Christ leads us to perfection and eternal life. Let's go again to I Timothy 4:16, where we are told that doctrines “have the power to save ourselves as well as those that hear us.” Why is it important?

## **For the salvation of mankind!**

## **Ephesians 4:14 tells us another benefit of studying doctrine.**

So that we will be mature in the word and not be deceived by every new thing, enticing revelations, cunningly crafted by the cleverness of men whose purpose is to deceive (Eph. 4:14). Christ's doctrine is an inoculation against deception and a very important aspect of Christianity. Know wherein you stand!

## **Is there a false gospel?**

Yes, it is a doctrine of death whose author is Satan. Paul calls it a doctrine of devils (I Tim. 4:1). It frequently appears as dogmas, traditions, and rituals as well as doctrine, but they're all based on falsehoods and are contrary to the doctrine of Christ. Paul stress's: "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" (Gal 1:8). Therefore, verify your beliefs. A false gospel cannot save, but can make you think you are.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17-18). (*But, have we learned them, scrutinized and verified them?*)

“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.” (*Impressive speakers, speaking “smooth things,” Isaiah 30:10, appearing ever so righteous, II Cor. 11:14-15*).

## **The seven pillars of the New Covenant.**

Christ established His church on a New Covenant, foundational doctrine of seven pillars. These pillars outline the *seven steps* to eternal life. They are very important for every Christian to know, memorize and understand, because they are continually under attack by the forces of evil.

They are conveniently summarized and placed in sequence for us in the book of Hebrews, but oddly, Paul is chastising the Hebrews for their lack of understanding of them. Sadly, I'm afraid that fits many Christians today.

Let's start in Hebrews 5:11 where the writer is speaking of the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ and says: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing." (*Oh my, there are those words again*).

Please note: Paul says he has much more to teach them about our High Priest, Jesus Christ, but they are unable to receive it; how sad. Are we able to receive it?

Continuing in Hebrews 12: "For when for the time ye ought to be *teachers*, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles (*very basics*) of the oracles (*canon*) of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13. "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14. "But strong meat (*deep and secret things, Dan. 2:22*) belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to *discern* both good and evil." (*There's more to it than just giving your heart to the Lord, warming a pew and thinking you've done enough, consider James 2:14-20*).

### **Now to Hebrews 6:1-3.**

“Therefore, leaving (*building on*) the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2. “Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3. “And this will we do, if God permit.”

Why am I taking you back to these basic principles that we all know, *or should know*, so well? The battle lines are drawn, the mission is before us, should we not sharpen our swords?

### **We are to be teachers.**

Let’s shore up our foundation so that our faith will stand against the many winds of doctrine that daily come blowing against us. Then we will be ready to tackle the job given us, which is *to be teachers*.

Understand that the enemy has declared outright war on these principles and has twisted them in every possible way in order to render them ineffective. But, by knowing the enemy’s tactics and methods and by inoculating ourselves with the doctrines of Christ, we will not be deceived and will save others as well as ourselves.

Now let’s review the fundamentals and touch on how they have been distorted. Satan has counterfeited every one of God’s doctrines, and those unskilled in the word or who have little love of the truth are frequently deceived.

## **The first pillar: REPENTANCE!**

This was what John the Baptist preached, and it was the first thing Christ preached when He proclaimed that the time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand (Mk. 1:14). And when the question was asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, **“Repent...”**

A major part of repentance is to admit to your helpless and sinful state. We read in Romans 10:10, “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” What is meant by, “works meet for repentance” (Acts 26:20), or “Godly sorrow” (II Cor. 7:9)? A complete surrender of your will and a total submission to God is not an option, but a prerequisite before the next pillar can even be approached. “For godly sorrow works repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world works death (II Cor. 7:10). How can there be forgiveness without genuine, heartfelt repentance?”

### **Listen to the words of Jesus.**

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (lawlessness)” (Matt. 7:21-23). God will



not accept a mongrelized worship. Good intentions are not good enough. Is forgiveness without repentance being taught today? Again; “For Godly sorrow works repentance to salvation ... but the sorrow of the world works death” (II Cor. 7:10).

### **The second pillar: FAITH IN CHRIST!**

Is there evidence of Christianity without Christ today? Could faith in a false Christ save? To some, Jesus Christ has become just a name with little meaning. We hear of preachers that do not believe in the virgin birth, or that Jesus was really just a concept, a divine idea, or just a man that attained to a higher order. Some claim that He was Satan’s brother (but remember, Satan is a created being, but the Word (Jesus) always existed). Should we believe what man says or what the Bible says?

#### **Peter said it:**

*“Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God.”* And in Hebrews 11:6 we read: “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.” Has much of Christianity substituted a false Christ for the real Christ today? Can we worship the God of truth with religious lies? Who is the father of lies?

#### **The two Priesthoods.**

Do we really understand the difference between the Melchisedec Priesthood and the Levitical Priesthood; and why a change in the law was required? Why is an earthly

priesthood not required today? What law was replaced? Study the book of Hebrews, especially chapter 7. Jesus said there would be many false Christs (Matt. 24). Did He give us a sign whereby we can know the real Christ? Jesus did give us a sign; and it's still being ignored today by most churches, it was the sign of Jonah. He as much as said that if He is not in the grave for three days *and three nights* (Matt. 12:44) then He is not the true Christ.

### **Couldn't Jesus count?**

How many days and nights are there between Friday p.m. and Sunday at sunrise? Where does the Bible say that the real Christ was crucified on Friday? They buried Jesus before the Sabbath; was that a weekly or an annual Sabbath? Why do so many churches give the honor that belongs to Christ to an imposter that did not fulfill the only sign Jesus gave to identify the true Christ? Besides, what does that pagan celebration of Easter have to do with the real Jesus Christ? Have we bought into the vain worship of traditions of men instead of Christ? (Mk. 7:8-9; Col. 2:8). Could it be high time we examine some of these 'sacred cows' that have been handed down to us over the centuries, which we aren't supposed to question?

### **The third pillar: BAPTISM!**

Satan has really tried to do a number on this one, so it must be very important. Some of the modern translations leave out the word *baptism* and substitute the word *cleansing or washing*. Some denominations sprinkle a little "holy" water on the person. Some even baptize for

the dead, a classic example of building a doctrine on one scripture taken out of context. Think about it, if the dead (or anyone) have not believed or repented what good is baptizing going to do them?

The examples given in God's word are that it is done by immersion after the individual makes a carefully considered decision. Jesus Himself, chose to be baptized, and it was by immersion. That's good enough for me, how about you?

### **The forth pillar: LAYING ON OF HANDS!**

It appears that this is the point of conception (not born) by the Holy Spirit. It is also where we get our power to obey, and where even to day we can see many miracles performed. But are all miracles from God? (*Study Deut. 13:1-3; II Thes. 2:8-12 and Matt. 7:2-23 again*). This can be a serious problem for those who believe in miracles over God's word. Can there be seemingly miraculous exploits performed by some who teach against God's doctrines? Is God testing you? Try the spirits! "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). We see lots of phonies in this area. If they don't agree with God's word they are certainly suspect.

Are we seeing religion without the Holy Spirit in many of today's churches?

## **The fifth Pillar: RESURRECTION!**

This is another one Satan has played havoc with. By convincing people that they go immediately to either heaven or hell at death, fully conscious, opens the door for much demon activity and false doctrine. So we have such deceptions as purgatory, praying to the dead, séances, messages from the dead, reincarnation, spiritual guides, etc. Superstition and uncontrolled emotionalism reign supreme if you choose to believe that death is not like sleep as described in God's word. Why the need of a future resurrection if the dead are already in heaven? Why does Christ say He will bring His rewards with Him when He comes if the good already have it? This subject requires more than a surface study.

### **How many resurrections?**

Do you know the sequences of the resurrections (Rev.20:5-6)? Who is resurrected in the first resurrection? When does it occur? Do you understand that there is both a spiritual and a physical resurrection (Ez. 37)? When will Tyre and Sidon be resurrected? Why are some not called NOW (John 6:44), yet in John 7:37 any who desire are welcomed? Why are some resurrected at His coming while others must wait 1000 years (Rev. 20:5)? Where do babies go at death? Is there a secret rapture? Are you really born again if you are still physical? Can you give biblical answers to these questions, if asked?

Are some preaching salvation without regeneration?

## **Pillar number 6: ETERNAL JUDGMENT**

The world teaches that those that go to hell go at death and continue burning throughout eternity. Why then, the need of the great white throne judgment? Have they not already received their reward? Can you show from your Bible that they will become ashes under our feet (Mal. 4:3)? Who are those that are exempt from the second death (Rev. 2:11, 20:6)? What is meant by the second death (Rev. 21:8)? When will death and hell be no more (Rev. 20:14)? Can you explain the words hell, Sheol, Gehenna, or Hades when talking about death and eternal punishment? (See Bible guide UNDERSTANDING HELL). I don't believe I've ever heard a preacher at someone's funeral say, "He's going to hell." Isn't that kind-of-like heaven without hell?

## **Pillar number 7: ACCHIEVING PERFECTION!**

Growing in grace and knowledge throughout our life is a sequential, step-by-step process. Our perfection comes through the grace of God and is ultimately reached at the resurrection. We will not find the full doctrine of Christ in one verse or even one chapter or book, but it is made available to those who diligently search for it. Isaiah 28:9-10 tells us how to find it.

“Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

“For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”

How can we even think to come to a correct conclusion of a matter unless we have considered every scriptural reference on the subject? God’s word does not contradict if correctly understood!

This is a summary, but only a summary, of the pillars of the doctrines of God’s church and we are “**charged** to teach **no other doctrine**” (I Tim. 1:3). But are we ready? How can we teach it if we haven’t sharpened our swords? Consider the mandate Paul gave to Timothy: “I **charge** thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.

“**Preach the word**; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (*That means stand up, speak out, and never give up*).

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own **lusts** shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” (*They don’t want to hear truth, they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (II Tim. 3:4) taking pleasure in their own lusts they look for ministers who will reinforce their pernicious ways*).

“And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto **fables**. (*Fabricated doctrines based on lies. Would you trust a lie for your salvation?*).

“But watch thou in all things, *endure afflictions*, do the work of an evangelist, make **full proof** of thy ministry” (II Timothy 4:1-5). *If what you believe is not true, then you have not made full proof of your ministry.*

### **Therefore:**

Let’s keep in mind John’s warning: “Whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the *doctrine of Christ*, hath not God. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.” Since it is imperative not to transgress Christ’s doctrines let us persevere by:

**Studying** to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15)

**Searching** the scriptures, **all** scriptures of the same subject (II Tim. 3:16).

**Praying** for and developing such a love for the truth that we not believe a lie (II Thes. 2:10-11),

**Proving** all things, avoiding the doctrines of man (Mark 7:9).

### **Know that the true doctrine of Christ will:**

1. Save you and those who hear you.
2. Inoculate you against the lies and false doctrine of Satan.

### **However:**

You will cause division. But, the division you cause will not be contrary to Christ’s doctrine but in support of it (Rom. 16:17).

You will be falsely accused (Matt. 24:9).

You will be afflicted (II Cor. 4:17).

You will be hated for His names sake (Luke 21:17).

But take courage, they hated Him too (John 15:18).

Back to Hebrews and speaking of Melchisedec, our High Priest: “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are *dull of hearing*.”

Time is short.

**Don't become dull of hearing God's word!**

“The chief danger that confronts the coming century will be, *religion* without the holy ghost, *Christianity* without Christ, *forgiveness* without repentance, *salvation* without regeneration, *politics* without God, *heaven* without hell.”

**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**



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