

## ***“Doctrine, What is it, and Why is it Important”***

### ***“What is Doctrine”***

***Greek - (Didaskalia) - The act of teaching or that which is taught.***

- 1) The term in Scripture, however, is broader than a simple reference to information passed on from one person to another or from one generation to the next.
- 2) Christianity is a religion founded on a *Message of Good News* rooted in the significance of the life of Jesus Christ. In Scripture, then, Doctrine refers to the entire body of ***Essential Theological Truths*** that define and describe the Work and Message of God. ***( 1 Timothy 1:3-7, 4:16, 6:3) and (Titus 1:9 )***
- 3) The *Message* includes historical facts, such as those regarding the events of the life of Jesus Christ. ***( 1 Corinthians 11:23 )***
- 4) But it is deeper than biographical facts alone. Jesus' death is a historical fact but it is not Doctrine. *Jesus' death for Sin ( 1 Corinthians 15:3 ) is Doctrine.* Doctrine, then is the ***Scriptural Teaching on Theological Truths.***

### ***“Why Doctrine is Important”***

- 1) Doctrine is indispensable to Christianity. Christianity does not exist without it.
- 2) The New Testament repeatedly emphasizes the value and importance of *Sound Doctrine, Sound Instruction ( 1 Timothy 6:3 )* and a pattern of *Sound Teaching. ( 2 Timothy 1:13-14 )*

- 3) The Apostles defended the faithful proclamation of the Gospel.  
**(Galatians 1:8-9)**

***They formulated Christian faith in Doctrinal terms and then called for its preservation. They were adamant about the protection, appropriation, and propagation of doctrine because it contained the truth about Jesus Christ.***

- 4) Knowing the truth was and is the only way that a person can come to faith. So the Apostles delivered a body of Theological Truth to the Church!  
**( 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 )**

- 5) They encouraged believers to be faithful to that body of information they had heard and received in the beginning! **(1 John 2:7 -2:24 -2:26 and 3:11)**

The "*faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints*" **(Jude 3)**

- 6) Believers, in general, were instructed to guard the faith, that is, to stand firm in *Sound Doctrine*! **( 2 Timothy 1:13-14 )**

- 7) Pastors in particular were admonished to cleave to *Sound Doctrine* so that they could be good ministers of the gospel! **( 1 Timothy 4:6 )**

***The use of the term "Doctrine" in Scripture is important for at least three reasons.***

***First***, it affirms that the *Early Church was Confessional*.

The first generation of believers confessed apostolic teaching about the significance of the life of Christ. They delivered a body of information that included facts about Christ with interpretation of their importance.

***Second***, the use of the term reflects the development of thought or a *Systematic Theology* in the *Early Church*.

***Didaskalia*** is used in the Pastoral Epistles with reference to the sum of teaching, especially of that which had come from the lips of the Jesus Christ and the Apostles. The Apostolic Message had been transformed into a body of foundational teaching.

***Third***, it affirms the indispensable link between Spirituality and Doctrine.

Christianity is a way of life founded on doctrine. Some disparage Doctrine in favor of the Spiritual life.

Paul, however, taught that spiritual growth in Christ is dependent on faithfulness to *Sound Doctrine*, for its truth provides the means of growth! (***Colossians 2:6***)

***The Apostle John developed three tests for discerning: "Authentic Spirituality"***

- 1) Believing right doctrine. ( 1 John 2:18-28 )***
- 2) Obedience to right doctrine! ( 1 John 2:29-3:10 )***
- 3) Giving expression to right doctrine with love! ( 1 John 3:11-19 )***

Faithful *Obedience and Love*, then, are not alternatives to *Sound Doctrine*.

They are the *fruit of right Doctrine* as it *works* itself out in the life of the believer's *character and relationships*.