

Essential Beliefs/Doctrine

May 28, 2017

1 John 5, 2 Timothy 3:16 and 4:1-5

Essential beliefs are **non**-negotiable.

Those that we hold to (based on scripture as a Church):

- God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed as 3-in-1, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life and offered His life as a perfect sacrifice for all by dying on the cross. He rose three days later and reigns over sin and death. He sits at the right hand of God and one day will return to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- The Holy Spirit is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus. He lives in every Believer from the time of salvation on. He provides the Believer the power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. Believers seek to live under the control of the Holy Spirit daily.
- The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without mixture of error.
- People are made in the image of God, to be like Him. People are the supreme object of God's creation. However, we disobeyed God and are marred by sin. This attitude and choice separates people from God and causes many problems in life.
- Salvation is God's free gift, but we must receive it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus as God's forgiveness can we be free from sin's penalty and in a right relationship with God. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved.
- Because God gives eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true Believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been saved, you cannot lose it.
- People were created to live forever. Either we exist eternally separated from God or eternally with Him through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

The word translated "doctrine" means "instruction, especially as it applies to lifestyle application." In other words, doctrine is teaching imparted by an authoritative source. In the Bible, the word always refers to spiritually related fields of study. The Bible says of itself that it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). We are to be careful about what we believe and present as truth. First Timothy 4:16 says, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

Biblical doctrine helps us understand the will of God for our lives. Biblical doctrine teaches us the nature and the character of God (Psalm 90:2; 97:2; John 4:24), the path of salvation through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10), instruction for the church (1 Corinthians 14:26; Titus 2:1-10), and God's standard of holiness for our lives (1 Peter 1:14-17; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20). When we accept the Bible as God's Word to us (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21), we have a solid foundation for our doctrine. There can be disagreement within the body of Christ over secondary points of doctrine, such as eschatology,

church organization, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But truly biblical doctrine is that which incorporates the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27) and draws conclusions based on that which seems most closely aligned with the character of our unchanging God (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 13:8).

Doctrine is the worldview by which we govern our lives. If our doctrine is based soundly upon Scripture, we can know we are walking in the path God designed for us. However, if we do not study the Word of God for ourselves (2 Timothy 2:15), we are led more easily into error. Although there are a variety of minor issues upon which Christians disagree, true doctrine is clearer than many imply. Second Peter 1:20 says that “no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.” There is a right interpretation of everything God says, and it is our job to discern that meaning, not create an interpretation to suit our tastes. God wants us to know His heart and has given us His Word upon which we can build godly lives (see Matthew 7:24). The more we study true doctrine, the more we understand God and ourselves.¹

True Believers are unable to have a laissez faire attitude on doctrine; it is the lifeblood of what we believe.

Correct Doctrine is important, therefore:

1) What I believe must be **true**.

Truth can’t be relative.

2) What I believe must be from God’s **Word** (it’s not my opinion, but God’s Word that matters).

3) I can’t pick and **choose**.

4) I must read Gods Word in **context**.

5) Opinions are always **overridden** by God’s Word ... always.

6) A half-truth is still a **lie!**

Whose or what doctrine are you living by, yours, another’s, or God’s and His Word?.

Prayer Focus:

I would always go back to God and His Word when I receive any advice etc.

I will be confident in what I believe and why.

I would make sure my thoughts and beliefs match up with Scripture. If they don’t, I would repent.

¹ www.gotquestions.com