

# Why We Are

*Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine ... Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (1 Timothy 4:13, 16)*

## THE PROBLEM

The Oxford English Dictionary defines doctrine as “**what is taught, body of instruction; principle of religious or political etc. belief, set of such principles.**” While this definition may seem innocuous, many Evangelical churches today seem to be leery about doctrine. At best, “doctrine” brings to mind useless medieval debates about how many angels can dance on the head of pin. At worst, doctrine is seen as something divisive, something that stirs up strife within churches and so had best be avoided. Building community, worship teams, social works, life management skills, and pop psychology all seem to have a higher profile among Evangelicals today than studying doctrine.

Is this a bad thing? Doctrinal disputes do cause strife in churches, do they not? Is not unity more important than doctrine? Is it not the loving thing to agree to disagree? Why can't we settle for “Just Give Me Jesus” and leave it at that?

Does the Bible allow for this, however? 1 Timothy 4:13, 16, quoted above, commands us to take heed to doctrine “for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” According to this passage, people's very salvation depends on careful attention to doctrine! Doctrine, it seems, is rather more important than many Evangelicals may think.

Consider first Job 42:7-8:

*And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.”*

Eliphaz and his friends were addressing the issue of theodicy (the problem of why a good God allows suffering to happen) with the best of intentions, as far as we can tell. Theodicy is not a matter of salvific belief, yet because they spoke error in this matter, God was angry with them. So the first point to notice is that God is angry with us if we teach false doctrine.

Second, there is standalone merit in knowing about God (Jeremiah 9:23-24; 2 Peter 1:5). The claim you sometimes hear, that God wants us to have a relationship with Him, and not intellectual knowledge about Him, is a false dichotomy. You cannot know someone without knowing about that someone.

Third, as we have seen in 1 Timothy 4:13, 16, people's very salvation depends on a knowledge of sound doctrine, for without this, they can be drawn away into heresy and become servants of Satan:

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 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 of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—(Ephesians 4:11-15)*

*And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)*

Notice also in the passage from Ephesians that Christian unity is centered around true doctrine, so the idea that we can sacrifice truth to attain unity is a non-starter. Unity is not broken by those who insist on correct doctrine, but on those who refuse it:

*“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even*

*the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing. ... From such withdraw yourself.” (1 Timothy 6:3-4a, 5b)*

*“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.” (Romans 16:17)*

*“Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned. (Titus 3:10-11)*

Thus, the responsibility for strife about doctrine is always on the heads of those who reject or ignore correct doctrine, and never on the heads of those who teach and insist upon correct doctrine.

Fourth, the pastoral epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), which are written to instruct church leaders, make it clear that by far the most important duty of church leaders is to teach and defend sound doctrine. (In addition to the passages already cited, see also, *inter alia*, 1 Timothy 1:3, 10, 3:2, 4:6, 5:17; Titus 1:7,9, 2:1,6-7). Yet in far too many Evangelical churches, teaching and defending sound doctrine is a very low priority, if indeed it is a priority at all.

The crucial importance of sound doctrine should, therefore, be clear. Yet we are warned that the time will come when doctrine will be ignored:

*Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. (2 Timothy 4:2-4)*

*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons ... (1 Timothy 4:1)*

It seems to us that these days are upon us. It seems clear that, despite the

importance of doctrine in the eyes of God, it has become a trivial matter to many Evangelicals, who don't know what they believe or why they believe it, and are unable to "give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15b) - if indeed they even think they need to do this. Under the influence of, *inter alia*, historical criticism of the Bible, Darwinist propaganda, and textual criticism, the Church seems to have lost its confidence in the Bible as the inerrant, infallible word of God, and its teachings have correspondingly come to be treated as less and less important - to the eternal detriment of many.

**This is a problem of enormous magnitude.** It is to respond to this problem that Truth In My Days Ministries has been created.

## THE SOLUTION

As we see it, the solution lies in the Evangelical church once again wholeheartedly embracing the Bible as the very word of God, fully inspired ("God-breathed") by Him, inerrant and fully trustworthy, and the sufficient and only authoritative rule for the faith and practice of the true church. It must stand in judgment over every human theology and statement of faith. It must be preached boldly and unashamedly, and it must be defended against all attacks, whether from historical criticism, Darwinism, textual criticism, or any other thing "falsely called science" (1 Timothy 6:20).

*All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge ... (2 Peter 1:5)*

*... as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby ... (1 Peter 2:2)*

## OUR GOAL

1. **To stir up church leaders** to understand the need to make the teaching of sound doctrine the first priority in their churches, and to present the

Bible as the inerrant and authoritative word of God, in actuality and not only in theory

2. **To equip and teach any individual Christian** who wishes to become better grounded in sound doctrine and in the knowledge not only of what we believe but why we believe it
3. **To urge Evangelicals** to become not just believers but believers who bear fruit for the Lord and live in accordance with His word; in other words, to become disciples, which is what God wants (Matthew 28:19)
4. **To present and defend the Gospel** in such a way that those who do not believe in Christ may seriously consider His claims, and so may lay hold of salvation

We do not know how many we will reach, if indeed the days of 2 Timothy 2:2-4 are upon us, but we are determined that, as King Hezekiah said long ago, as long as we are here,

*“... there will be peace and truth in my days.” (Isaiah 39:8b)*

## **OUR ROLE**

The quintessence of our ministry is **to defend the Bible against all attacks**; to show its trustworthiness; to draw attention to the importance of doctrine; to teach sound doctrine, based on the Bible; to expose all teachings and traditions, no matter how revered, that are not in accordance with the Bible.

We do not wish to reinvent the wheel. There are good Evangelical ministries already engaged in some of these areas and producing excellent materials. In such cases, we will direct attention to their work. Our primary focus will be on areas that are underserved for Evangelicals. Attacks on Christianity and the Bible occur rather frequently in the popular media, and there is a need for a “rapid response” to such things. Often the Christian response is delayed. Our goal is to have something available in response to such things on the very day they appear. We will offer more detailed articles on important issues, as well as book and magazine reviews. We will be interactive. Christians can send us questions or comments, and we will do our best to respond to them all as we are able.