



Scriptures and Doctrine :: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible

The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by Holiday, on: 2005/5/15 15:44

I recently put a call in to a large national radio ministry (I will not now say who it was) regarding the host's opinion about the doctrinal qualifications of certain books of the Bible.

He plainly stated to several previous callers that the Book of Acts was not a "doctrinal book" - and he went on to further say that "no important theologian of recent history thought it was either" - etc.

When it came my turn to speak on the air, I simply asked him what books of the Bible were "doctrinal". He basically said, the epistles of Paul. I quoted 2 Timothy 3:16 to him, and he just said, "hey, no major theologian would get doctrine from the Book of Acts."

After thinking about this for a while, I re-read 2 Timothy 3:16. It does say that all Scripture is "profitable for doctrine". But it doesn't say, "all Scripture is doctrine"

Can anyone weigh in here on this?

Thanks so much and God Bless,

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/5/16 0:03

Doctrine

DOCTRINE, n.

1. In a general sense, whatever is taught. Hence, a principle or position in any science; whatever is laid down as true by an instructor or master. The doctrines of the gospel are the principles or truths taught by Christ and his apostles. The doctrines of Plato are the principles which he taught. Hence a doctrine may be true or false; it may be a mere tenet or opinion.

2. The act of teaching.

He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in his doctrine. Mark 4.

3. Learning; knowledge.

Whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Isa 28.

4. The truths of the gospel in general.

That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Titus 2.

5. Instruction and confirmation in the truths of the gospel. 2 Tim 3.

Ye Old Websters

The irony of it all...

Act 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: Act 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:... Act 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: ... Act 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

There is that minor matter of that other
'doctrine' not found specifically within the Pauline epistles

Mar 9:35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/5/16 2:03

The early church fathers reconized John as the first theologian. The hebrew mindset on theology is diffrent than that of pure outline instruction. An example of this is the book of proverbs----light contrasted with darkness. The righteous are this way the wicked are that way. About 400 ad the church started a shift more toward Paul from what I've read. I think because the churches in the north(rome) had more clout and also I believe alot of what Paul wrote was really just bringing up to speed the gentile believers to the common knowledge that most jews already had from thier youth. Most scholars do discount the Book Of Acts siteing it more as a historical book and not instructional, how ever it is instructional but its not laid out in an outline form like much of the Pauline letters are. Some believe Acts was written as an investigative letter of defense for Paul to Theophilus, in his defense at Rome. That's another reason why some of the more liberal scholars discount it. But I'm with you, I believe ALL Scripture is profitable for teaching. I supose if we were to really get down to it , we would spend more time teaching what Jesus said and less time everything else. Matt 7:24

Quote:

-----I quoted 2 Timothy 3:16 to him, and he just said, "hey, no major theologian would get doctrine from the Book of Acts."

It might be noted here that at least in application most of the churches have one of the several forms of church governm ent in place found in Acts. But basically it's not really worth the debate. I heard a wise old missionary pastor say once , "c hose well your battles, some things aren't worth fighting about".

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/5/16 3:27

Dohzman unwittingly touched on one of my pet peeves with some current evangelical scholarship. 8-) I'm not disagreeing--- just that these comments touched this subject...

Quote:

-----The hebrew mindset on theology is diffrent than that of pure outline instruction....About 400 ad the church started a shift more toward Paul from what I've read. I think because the churches in the north(rome) had more clout and also I believe alot of what Paul wrote was really just bringing up to speed the gentile believers to the common knowledge that most jews already had from thier youth.

There are some trends today in historical skepticism that makes me wonder how in the world anyone can be confident of anything. There are so many books out right now saying that we have zigged when we should've zagged hundreds of ye ars ago. "Paul didn't mean what we think he meant" or "We lost the gospel that early Christians believed because Constantine or some other gentile hijacked the church."

Inspite of all the talk about trying to return to first century Christianity I have come to believe that the first century is long gone. The only early century Christians we can claim to fathom are the ones that exist in our 21st century imagination.

I am descended from Constantines Rome, a grandson of the Roman Catholic Church and a son of the Reformation. Do I need ancient Hebrew decoder glasses before I can see what is written in scripture?

Why do I ask? I guess it's because there is an undercurrent trend now, for those of us raised a believers, to question the doctrines that we've been taught in our youth. (Some would even question whether most of us are even saved as if we've e been suckered by a hellinistic counterfeit of true Christianity.) Everything is suspect now. "Paul invented Christianity" or "James was the real leader of the early Church", or "Paul didn't mean faith as we understand it but how ancient Jews understood it." The problem is that I am a modern man. Now I'm supposed to presume to know how to think ancient Hebrew? Impossible.

So, with all of the new questions in the arena of ideas, how do I decide on which doctrines I will teach my own children? Well, all scripture is profitable for doctrine, but not every verse is equally so or handy in the same way. As an example, P

Paul fully explained promise of the gospel, while Jesus, talking about the promise, fully explained how to please the Father. I'm being simple but my point is that they are both needed for instruction, yet serve different objectives.

Regarding doctrinal questions, let the explicit interpret the implicit. Why go looking in Acts for implicit doctrine if doctrine is treated explicitly in the epistles? The epistles are centered on supernaturally revealed doctrine while Acts is concerned with the supernatural birth of the church.

Sure we can find exceptions to the rule. Acts and the epistles aren't mutually exclusive. For instance, whenever the apostles are speaking, there is the chance that a doctrine is being touched on. Likewise, in the epistles we can find some peeks into church history.

Yet in the letters, Paul, James, Peter, and even John were being didactic regarding doctrine as a cue that these words are the very Gospel defined. While pieces of the gospel are being revealed in the book of Acts, and even the gospels, it's not until Paul breaks it down for us forensically do we really have a grasp of the dimensions of the Gospel.

Regarding Acts, one thing is certain. Acts is the supernatural benchmark for churches that has been challenging believers for centuries. I don't know if that is the same as a doctrine but it sure makes the Book of Acts highly relevant and vital for us today!

That's my input on the issue!

Bless you guys!

MC

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible, on: 2005/5/16 18:27

gosh, I just love reading Acts after I read Luke.

sometimes a life lesson IS doctrine, like the lesson the God of Hosts taught Ananias and Sapphira, as in don't play games with Holy Things, don't lie to the Holy Spirit.

better get that one buried deep deep deep in our hearts.

Acts teaches you evangelistic strategy.....gravitate towards the population and cultural centers of this world, and preach the Gospel there.

Teaches you about martyrdom, and how to comport yourself when faced with a murderous rage filled crowd.

Teaches what do at midnight when your hands and legs are in shackles, your back is laid open and your freezing cold.

teaches you how to use dreams and be obedient to God at the same time.

Acts is a book about MODELING apostolic behavior.

doctrine....anybody can recite doctrine.

Acts is about LIVING it out.

I love that Book!

My prayer is that we learn how to sing worship songs at midnight, while chained to a wall, then we have really become servants of the God Most High.

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2005/5/16 19:27

The funny thing is that Jesus and others in the Scriptures used "historical books" to teach doctrine. For example, Jesus cited how David ate consecrated bread in order to justify how he could heal on the sabbath... and he did that from a history book. Paul based his doctrine of justification by faith primarily from Genesis.

Any theologian who denies the use of history books to teach doctrine is ignoring the fact that the history book of the Scriptures were in fact written by individuals with a theological agenda in mind. Such is why we have the stories contained in the Scriptures.

Biblical scholars refer to this as "redaction criticism." Redaction criticism seeks to detect through analyzing patterns and editorial comments of the various books to discover this theological agenda. Thus, if one closely examines the book of Acts, one will see some obvious patterns from which to draw rich sources of doctrine.

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by Smokey (), on: 2005/5/16 22:06

Holiday

Does this program have an audio archive that can be accessed to double check their content? If so could you please contact me direct so I can check it out...:-o Thanks

Greg

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/5/17 1:57

Quote:
-----Any theologian who denies the use of history books to teach doctrine is ignoring the fact that the history book of the Scriptures were in fact written by individuals with a theological agenda in mind. Such is why we have the stories contained in the Scriptures.

Makes sense.

Mere men... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/5/17 9:04

Interesting,

But if I am following the definitions of the word below, then wouldn't the meaning of 2 Tim 3:16 refer to what it meant, **all** ?

'The act of teaching.'

'Learning; knowledge.'

'The truths of the gospel in general'

'Instruction and confirmation in the truths of the gospel.'

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Mat 4:4

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deu 32:1-4

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." Joh 7:16

As MC alluded to isn't this very much the problem, where mere men are attempting to re-write, re-interpret and re-classify everything? Breaking down the whole into sub sections while the earliest understanding that I can grasp was to join all the books into a canon in the first place...And though the original statements expressed here may make this all seem a bit

over the top, but there is a subtle thing underneath it all it seems.

Even taking into account that there are historical, poetic, prophetic and so forth throughout.... it is still doctrine, Gods doctrine. Without the advantage of having lived in the times it was written shouldn't make it anything that we cannot understand and in the heart where it is aimed at in the first place.

Surely there is some didactic separating and the ideal of just straight teaching I fully understand that, but this is just ridiculous and what seems to happen consistently. That instead of taking the full counsel, *all* of scripture to bear, it becomes a segregating of gifts without being servants, prophetic utterance without measurement, prosperity and self indulgence without suffering, being blessed without dying to self and carrying ones own cross. A study in academia. Professors of religion without a profession of a changed heart and disposition. It is why there is more seemingly contradictory contradictions presented not only to the world but to the believer. It appears to be the likely cause and effect of what Paul warned:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2Ti 2:15

Further on

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." 2Ti 2:23-26

So much that needs to be considered...

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb 4:12

How many of the so called "important theologians" have allowed this to penetrate both their thoughts and intents of the heart, rather than to do away with that core issue of exposure and deciding to set themselves as rulers and judges:

"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles:" 1Pe 2:8-12

All of scripture is doctrinal. All of scripture is meant to deal in one form or fashion with the Lords controversy with His creatures, all this clever dodging and segregating into sects and denominational thinking carries across to pit one thing against another. It is rather bemusing that the very things it teaches are stridently opposed as if to mean something other than what they say:

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." 2Co 10:12

It broaches the very same subject of inerrancy. Of course men are full of error it is at that core that everything has gone wrong and the stinking level of pride and exalting of creature thought and reasoning to turn Isaiah on it's very head:

"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?" Isa 45:9

And by running along this line of thinking you would have to relegate this to the trash bin:

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which"

ch came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2Pe 1:16-21

This is truly complete and total wilful ignorance and precisely what the Lord meant:

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."

Luk 8:7-10

The very reason I believe there is much of a drawing of heart towards what not only goes on around here but the very messengers that God has spoken through in times past, that God raised up His servant Greg to bring forth such a needed ministry for such a time as this... Is precisely to counter this error that has gone out into the greater part of Christendom; That is the whole counsel of the Lord and these men brought all of it to bear, comparing scripture with scripture and letting that dig down deep into the very bone and marrow, to the core issues and root of our problem. You want 'important theologians' you got 'em right here and the first thing they would likely tell you is their importance is filthy rags...

What a bunch of buffoonery. If all of scripture is not to state the mess we find ourselves in, that of sheer rebellion against God, that it is a book of truth and heart searching honesty, that it contains the very remedy for all that ails us at the very core of our existence, that it is first and foremost a spiritual book as we are ultimately a spiritual creation and that is what it is after as it is written:

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Joh 4:23-24

Just slightly perturbed here...

My, is it any wonder how we have lost a high view of God, a true humbling, reverential fear of His Holiness, judgement, righteousness, wrath, unfathomable mystery, mercy and love...

"Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.

But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities." Jer 10:6-8

"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees". Mat 16:12

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." 2Jo 1:9

"Slaves are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."

Tit 2:9-14

One last doctrine that needs to be mentioned:

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"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;" 1Ti 4:1

Re: The "Doctrinal" Books of the Bible - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/5/20 17:51

Quote:
-----After thinking about this for a while, I re-read 2 Timothy 3:16. It does say that all Scripture is "profitable for doctrine". But it doesn't say, "all Scripture is doctrine"

I couldn't quite get my head around this one. It is a good exercise to refuse to use the word doctrine and use 'the teaching' or 'to teach' instead. It can sometimes get us loose from the ruts of 'doctrinal teaching' which, of course, is a tautology.

'The teaching' is the accumulation of all that the scriptures 'teach'. If I try my own medicine on your paragraph I get "all scripture is profitable for teaching but all scripture is not teaching". No, I can't get my head around it.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/5/20 17:57

Quote:
-----In spite of all the talk about trying to return to first century Christianity I have come to believe that the first century is long gone. The only early century Christians we can claim to fathom are the ones that exist in our 21st century imagination.

MC, I have a lot of sympathy with this post. Reading the epistles makes it sound as though first century Christianity was pretty messy. I had a friend who used to distinguish between 'First Century Christianity' and 'New Testament Christianity'. I will let you muse on the difference.