



LESSON ONE – LIVING BY GOD'S WORD

Abstract

In Psalms 11:3 the Bible declares, “If the foundation be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” For this reason, we are going to study foundational truths pertaining to the church that began on the day of Pentecost and which continues to this day. Those foundational truths, which are listed in Hebrews chapter 6 include six doctrines that should be basic for every believer. These doctrines pertain to salvation, and understanding these teachings (the word doctrine means “teaching”) will help us to be grounded in the proper understanding of the Word of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What is Doctrine and does it matter?

Definition - That which is taught; what is held, put forth as true, and supported by a teacher, a school, or a sect; a principle or position, or the body of principles, in any branch of knowledge; any tenet or dogma; a principle of faith; as, the doctrine of atoms; the doctrine of chances. We are warned that in the last days, men will refuse sound doctrine. 2 Timothy 4:2-3

The very purpose of the Word of God is for teaching – 2 Timothy 3:15-16

Doctrine (what we learn) determines what is believed, received, and practiced – it determines the following:

- Our character – what we are
- Our actions – what we do
- Our destiny – where we go

What is Reproof?

The word reproof means to blame or criticize. Just as the prophets of old reprovved Israel for sin, the Word of God does that to us today. Several examples of reproof in the Bible:

1. 2 Samuel 12 – Nathan reprovves David for sin
2. I Kings 21: 17-29 Elijah reprovves Ahab
3. Luke 3:18-20 John the Baptist reprovves Herod
4. Galatians 2:11-14 Paul reprovves Peter

Usually in the Bible, the examples of reproof begin with “the word of the Lord came to –“ or “thus saith the Lord”

What is Correction?

Correction means to “change mistakes, direction” or to “make right”

1. God loves to correct us (Proverbs 3: 11-12)
2. Consider correction and reproof together (Proverbs 15: 1-12)
3. He that regards reproof is prudent (v.5)
4. Correction is grievous (v.10)
5. A scorner does not love one who reprovves him (v.12)

What is the difference between doctrine and instruction in righteousness?

Doctrine teaches you what you are supposed to know. Instruction in righteousness teaches you how you are supposed to live. The Greek word for instruction is *paideia* or “to nurture”. This refers to



the development of the Christian, not just the basic foundations of doctrine.

Example:

- To teach the Oneness of the Godhead – that is doctrine
- To teach you to worship God – this is instruction in righteousness
- To teach you the power of his name – that is doctrine
- To teach you how to use that power – that is instruction in righteousness
- To teach you holiness – that is doctrine
- To teach you how to dress – that is instruction in righteousness

Instruction in righteousness is the practical application of doctrinal truths

The six doctrines listed in Hebrews 6: 1-2 are as follows:

- Repentance from dead works
- Faith toward God
- The doctrine of baptisms (plural)
- Laying on of hands
- Resurrection of the dead
- Eternal judgment

In Christianity today, it is those six doctrines that continue to come under attack from Satan, from liberal theologians, and most often from believers themselves who would rather believe tradition than the scripture. For example, *repentance* has lost its place in preaching. There is a “sin a little bit every day” mentality that is considered acceptable in the Christian life. *Faith* exist mostly in the form of mental assent, rather than in an active, experiential form. *Baptisms* of water and spirit are now counted as non-essentials, rather than elements of the new birth. The significance of *laying on of hands* has been lost both in the practice of power, or for the imparting of spiritual gifts or blessing. The doctrines of *the resurrection of the dead* and of *eternal judgment*

has been under attack by cultist who teach “soul sleep” and “reincarnation” as well as many other perversions, such as “celestial marriages”, all of which contradict the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Once we have finished our study of the six “foundational doctrines” mentioned in Hebrews, the Bible declares that we are to “go on unto perfection”. In this series of lessons, I will attempt to provide instruction that will help mature the disciple as we come to understand more about the Apostolic church in its original form. This same church exist today, but many of its practices have changed because of social or religious pressure. Often new converts fall back into beliefs and practices that should have been left behind. Just as Israel had in its midst the “mixed multitude” (part Hebrew and part Egyptian), Christianity today is also a mixed multitude who will be here until the coming of the Lord.

After the six foundational lessons, the lessons that “go on to perfection” include understanding fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayer, fasting, stewardship, and much more.

So what does it mean to “live by God’s Word?” First of all, we have scriptural injunctions to study God’s Word. In Acts 2:42, we read that they (the new converts at Jerusalem) “continued steadfastly in the Apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” Again in Acts 5:42 we read that the Apostles taught daily in the temple and from house to house. Following are several reasons why preachers should preach, teachers should teach, and disciples should become hearers of God’s Word:

- Jesus commanded teaching as a part of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20)
- We must study if we are to become workmen for God’s kingdom (II Timothy 2:15)
- We are to “live” by God’s Word (Matthew 4:4)



- The Word of God is “seed” from the sower. It is the only thing that will produce fruit in our lives.
- The Word of God is our foundation (Matthew 7:24-27)
- The Word of God is for cleansing (Psalms 119:9-11; Proverbs 6:23)
- The Word of God is for direction (Psalms 119:105; Proverbs 6:23)
- The Word of God is a “discerner” of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)

LESSON APPLICATION

God intended us to become *life long learners* of the Word of God. This requires the willingness to devote time to study, asking questions, and praying for answers. This can be done by (1) daily reading by using a prepared reading schedule or (2) devoting a morning or evening reading time to read a portion of both the Old and the New Testaments.

REVIEW AND QUIZ

Question 1: What Bible text list the six foundational doctrines that each new Christian should be taught before going on to perfection?

Question 2: List the six foundational doctrines of the NT church

1

2

3

4

5

6

Question 3: What does the word “doctrine” mean and is it necessary for a Christian?

Question 4: What three things about us are effected by having sound doctrine?

1

2

3

Question 5: Name one of the purposes of the Word of God.