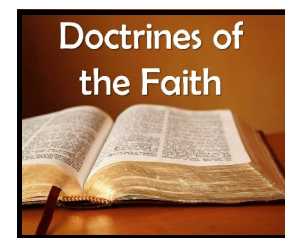


Church of God Sunday School

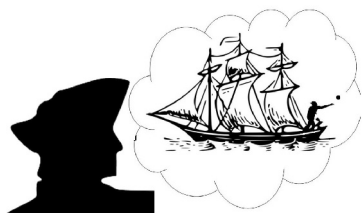


WHOLE-LIFE STEWARDSHIP #13 – DOCTRINES OF THE FAITH

DAILY READINGS:

- ❑ **Monday:** Doctrine comes from God (Deuteronomy 32:1-2; Proverbs 4:1-2; John 7:16).
- ❑ **Tuesday:** God desires His people to come to a true knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:1-4; Hebrews 13:9).
- ❑ **Wednesday:** Jesus taught the doctrines (Matthew 7:28-29; Mark 1:21-27; Mark 4:1-2).
- ❑ **Thursday:** The apostles taught the doctrines (Acts 2:41-43; Acts 13:1-12).
- ❑ **Friday:** Beware of false doctrines (Matthew 15:1-9; Ephesians 4:14-15; 1 Timothy 4:1-3).
- ❑ **Saturday:** We must hold fast to and develop a love for the doctrines (Proverbs 12:1; Romans 6:17; Titus 1:9).

MEMORY VERSE: *"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."* —Romans 6:17



Carelessly Thrown Away

John Newton (author of the song *Amazing Grace*) wrote that he once had a dream where something valuable was placed in his safekeeping with a warning to guard it carefully. He was told that if he preserved it, he would be happy and successful, but if he let it go, he was to expect nothing but trouble and misery. In his dream, it was not long until someone came and told him it was foolish to believe all that. John heard the words: "Throw it away. Create your own destiny." In his dream, John Newton threw the treasured item into the sea.

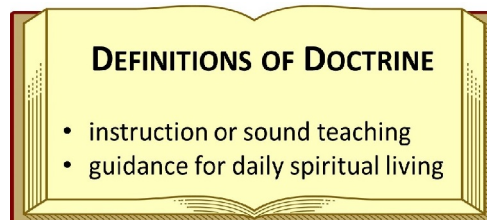
John was brought up in a Christian home and taught the truths of the Bible at a young age. Yet, as a young man, he turned away from all those Godly principles, living life as he wanted. Years later, after returning to the Lord and repenting, he told of how the memory of this dream often came to him. Like that item of value, so carelessly thrown into the sea, John had tossed aside the valuable doctrines taught to him by his mother.

Today, many young people are hearing opinions similar to the words of the second man in John's dream. They say things such as: "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere"; "There are many ways to get to Heaven"; "Your parents' beliefs are outdated"; "Christianity is just a list of Do's and Don'ts"; and "You should choose your own beliefs." Sadly, many young people who were taught the truths of God's Word are believing these lies.

Why Are Doctrines Important?

Imagine a soldier going to battle without putting on any protective equipment (armor). What chance does he have against the enemy? Living for the Lord has been compared to being a soldier (Ephesians 6:10-18). What chance do you have in this spiritual battle if you do not know the important doctrines? There are voices that say, "It doesn't matter which church you attend." Is that true? Other voices say, "It doesn't matter what you wear; God sees the heart." Still others tell you that you cannot live free from sin, that everyone sins. If you do not know what God's Word says on these vital doctrines of the faith, you could easily be deceived.

Doctrine helps us to understand what is the truth and what is false. True doctrines are not feelings or impressions. It is easy to say, "I don't feel that is wrong," but feelings often change. That is not a good founda-



tion to be building your future on. To know what the doctrines of the faith are requires a relationship with the One who entrusted those doctrines to us. A relationship requires time spent with God, getting to know Him and His Word (Bible reading and studying and praying). As you increase in your understanding of the doctrine (Isaiah 28:9), you will be better equipped to face the problems of life and to also share the Gospel with others.

The Doctrines Entrusted to Us



In John 7:16 Jesus told the Jews that His "doctrine" was from God. Jesus carefully taught these doctrines to His disciples. Then, when He returned to Heaven, those doctrines were placed in the care of His followers. The apostles taught these doctrines, and the believers faithfully followed those teachings (Acts 2:42). The New Testament authors wrote down these doctrines so that future generations "mightest know the certainty of those things [the history and the doctrines of the faith]" (Luke 1:4). Today we have the doctrines preserved for us through reading the written Word and hearing the preaching of the Gospel (1 Timothy 4:13). It is important to "remove [change] not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (Proverbs 22:28). It is too easy to say, "That is just tradition" or "That is outdated." There is an old saying, "Before removing the old landmarks, it would be good to learn why they were placed there in the first place." Human reasoning says, "This is not important," but a deeper look into the Bible will bring a full understanding.

Some Vital Doctrines

There are many religions in the world today. Four of the most well-known ones are Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism. Which one is right? What makes Christianity different? Within Christianity, there are thousands of different "branches," or denominations. There are conflicting teachings and beliefs within these. Does it matter? Can you just go to the church of your choice? If one denomination says "no one can live free from sin" and another group teaches holy living, is that not confusing? Yet, 1 Corinthians 14:33 says, "God is not the author of confusion." Some people used to believe in modesty and holy living, but now they say they do not believe that way anymore. How does that line up with the Bible, which tells us, "For I am the LORD, I change not" (Malachi 3:6)?

Regular Bible study will bring understanding on vital doctrines, such as:

- the name of the church (John 17:11; Acts 20:28; Galatians 1:13; 1 Timothy 3:5).
- there is only one way to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Isaiah 53:5; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- living free from sin (Romans 6:15-16; Jude 24; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 3:7-10).
- holy, modest living (1 Peter 1:15; 1 Timothy 2:9; Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12).
- the unity of God's people (Psalm 133:1-2; John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Colossians 3:14-15).

The Importance of Loving the Doctrines

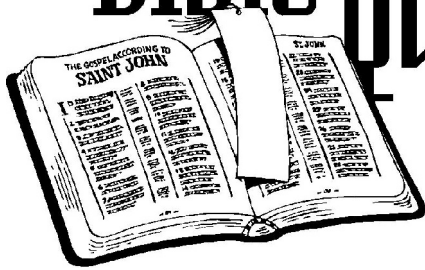
One of the greatest dangers of being entrusted with the precious, vital doctrines of the faith is that they can be lost. Jude was warning of this when he wrote to "earnestly contend for [defend] the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). When our love for God and for others grows cold, apostasy (a departure from the truth) begins. John reminded the saints of one of the vital doctrines: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1 John 3:11). When we only KNOW the doctrines and fail to LOVE them (2 Thessalonians 2:10), we are in great danger of losing those truths and losing our love for the people of God.

Statistics show as many as 75 percent of youth brought up going to church services walk away and want nothing to do with the doctrines of the faith. Some find an easier way, and others completely lose all belief in a Divine God. They were given a priceless gift, one that would provide lifelong guidance and spiritual life, but just as John Newton's dream, they failed to realize the importance of learning, loving, and protecting that treasure (doctrines of the faith) entrusted to their care.



A high price was paid by Christ (on Calvary), by the apostles (all but John were put to death), and the martyrs since then to preserve and pass down the doctrines of the faith to us. They have been given to us to manage, preserve, and pass down to the next generation. How are we stewarding the doctrines of the faith?

Bible Quiz



1. Why did John Newton throw away a treasure in his dream?

2. What is one of the dangerous opinions young people often hear that might make them doubt the doctrines of the faith they were taught?

3. How is not knowing the doctrines similar to a soldier going to battle without his armor? _____

4. What is a definition of the word *doctrine*? _____

5. Why can't you trust your feelings to guide your beliefs? _____

6. What will knowing the doctrines require? _____

7. What makes Christianity different from all the other world religions? _____

8. What Scripture lets us know that God cannot be pleased with so many confusing doctrines? _____

9. What preparation is needed to "contend for" (defend) the faith? _____

10. What are some possible reasons so many young people are walking away from the faith? _____

Vital Doctrines

O Church of God!

He is the head of the body, the church. Col. 1:18 There is one body, and one Spirit, Eph. 4:4
(Jerusalem which is above it free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26)

1. The church of God was bod - y it, One Spir - it dwells with - in,
 2. Di - vine - ly built, di - vine - ly ruled, To God the death sub - mit;
 3. God sets her mem - bers each in place, Ac - cord - ing to His will—
 4. Sal - va - tion in her ho - ly walls, The cross her sign of pow'r;
 5. Stand in thy heav - y, church of God, With sig - nal - cross - es ar - rayed.

And all her mem - bers are re - deemed, And tri - umph a - ver sin,
 His will her law, His truth her guide, Her path is glo - ry - lit.
 A - pen - des, pre - pects, teach - ers, all— His pur - pose is ful - fill.
 Her Cap - tain is the might - y God, Who guards her ev - ery hour;
 Put on thy strength and face thy face With rear - age on - dis - cour.

Refrain
 O church of God! I love thy courts, Thou moth - er of the free;

We Must Be Holy

We both chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Eph. 1:4

1. Ye - ses has to - ken my land of sin, Such love as tongue can tell,
 2. Can I be - hold the dear Sav - ior's death, And yet with - hold a part,
 3. How - soon and just - ice, my debt of love, De - mand that I should be,
 4. We must be ho - ly as He is pure, For this the Sav - ior died;

Then should I not re - sign to Him, My life and all my will?
 Oh, can I draw one soul - ish breath, And not give all my heart?
 Red - dy and spir - it and all I have De - voted, oh, Lord, to Thee,
 Tal - ents and time and all earth - ly store To God be sac - ri - ficed.

Refrain
 Ho - ly, dear brethren, we must be ho - ly, Liv - ing be - fore the throne;

We Need Each Other, Brethren!

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Gal. 6:2

1. In a world filled with vi - lence and ha - tred, Ev - ery - where wars and tur - moid we see;
 2. Oh, how sad to see some of our brethren, As they strive for earth's pleas - ures and gold;
 3. Lord, give us true warn - ing and af - fec - tion; When one fails, help us res - cue his soul;
 4. Dear saints, let us vow to each oth - er, "I will help, I will com - fort and pray;

God's peo - ple face dai - ly this strug - gle; On - ly love will keep us free.
 Be - come self - ish and strive with each oth - er, Love and kind - ness has quick - ly grown cold.
 "He's not heav - y, for he is my broth - er," Let us cry as we car - ry his load,
 I will stand by your side and de - fend you In this bat - tle you're fac - ing to - day!"

Refrain
 We need each oth - er, brethren

I Am from Sin Set Free

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God,
ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Rom. 6:22

1. Let world - ly minds the world pur - sue, It has no charms for me;
 2. Its pleas - ures can no longer please, Now hap - pi - ness af - ferd;
 3. Ac - cept the light of a - gain - ing day, The stars are all con - cealed,
 4. Cross - takes no more ob - vious my choice, I bid them all de - part;

Once I ad - mired its tri - fles, too, But grace hath set me free.
 Far from my heart he joys like these, Now, I have seen the Lord.
 So earth - ly pleas - ures fade a - way, When Je - sus is re - vealed,
 of my ro - ving heart.

Now sin set free!

Christ hath set me free.

