

Sincerity is no guide to sound doctrine

500 years ago the false doctrine of the Medieval Roman Catholic Church led to false practice. The Reformation was a protest against the false doctrine that led to the reforming of practice.

Desire: a church equipped to stand against false teaching

Finally, sound doctrine does not save me.

God saves me by grace, alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Vanhoozer says,

Good doctrine is salutary - healthy and helpful, in the same way that sunshine, clean air and rain are healthy and helpful for people

Things to think over this week:

Sound doctrine is vital for a healthy, biblical church. Why should you want to be part of a church that values doctrine?

Both doctrinal neglect and doctrinal error are dangerous in our culture. Where do you see both of these dangers, i. within the wider evangelical church, ii. within your own life?

Supplementary reading (available online):

* R. S. Clark, *Drawing the line: Why doctrine Matters* www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/drawing-the-line-why-doctrine-matters/

Credo Journal online at www.credomag.com/doctrine-matters/

K. Vanhoozer, *Why Doctrine Matters* www.crossway.org/articles/why-theology-matters/

A McGrath, *Doctrine Matters: Chapter 1: Why Doctrine?* www.virtueonline.org/doctrine-matters-chapter-1-why-doctrine

Key Doctrines #1

What we believe matters?

Read Proverbs 2:1-8

Definitions:

doctrine – from the Latin, *doctrina*, “that which is taught”

theology – lit. the study or science (ology) of God (theo)

Why does doctrine matter?

Our current cultural climate

doctrine helps the church to know what to say, think, and do in the face of new challenges (Kevin Vanhoozer)

The Danger of Neglecting Doctrine

- a danger outside of the church

- and also inside the church

“Ironically, in the world of “humble” uncertainty, new certainties boldly rule. The reigning certainty is global uncertainty. Its cousin inclusivism requires that the exclusivity of the gospel be exclusively excluded.”¹

doctrine is inevitable

the modern despising of doctrine and “new doctrines”

The question is not whether, but which or *whose* doctrine shall we heed?

In the OT God’s commandment taught to instruct His people how to think and live

Exodus 24:12

*The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their **instruction**.”²*

Also see Psalm 119:66 and 111:10

In the New Testament,

Jesus

The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”³

Paul

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.⁴

¹ David B. Garner, Credo Magazine, September 2016

² Exodus 24:12

³ John 12:48–50, also see John 3:11, 5:30-46, 8:12-20, 8:31-38, 1 John 1:1-4, Revelation 1:5

⁴ Titus 2:1, also 1 Timothy 4:6, 2 Timothy 4:1-4, Titus 1:9, 2 Timothy 2:14-16

Because Jesus is LORD of all, we are to take heed of His teaching in all of life

*We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and **take every thought captive to obey Christ**,⁵*

Our desire: a church who value doctrine

The Danger of False Doctrine

But doesn’t doctrine divide?

Consider Jesus’ words in Luke 12:51-53

Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵²For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. ⁵³They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”⁶

Jesus is truth (John 14:6), people divide around their response to Him

i. false doctrine ultimately bares false witness against God

Genesis 3:4

the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.”⁷

ii. false doctrine leads to ungodly behaviour

See 1 Timothy 1:8-11 and Titus 6:2-4

*Teach and urge these things. ³If anyone teaches a **different doctrine** and does not agree with the **sound** words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the **teaching that accords with godliness**, ⁴he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.⁸*

There is clearly teaching that is good, true, sound doctrine

⁵ 2 Corinthians 10:5.

⁶ Luke 12:51–53

⁷ Genesis 3:4

⁸ 1 Timothy 6:2–4