
Sermon Notes

January 17, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

True Doctrine and True Love

1 Timothy 1:3-7

True and False

- ❖ Jesus makes exclusive truth claims
 - ***I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*** (Jn. 14:6)
 - ***...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*** (Jn. 8:32)
- ❖ Jesus also provides numerous warnings about the nature of Satan, false teachers and their false teaching
 - ***Satan is a liar and the father of lies*** (Jn. 8:44)
 - ***Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*** (Matt. 7:15)
 - ***Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.*** (Matt. 24:11)
- ❖ Paul warns us: ***Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.*** (2 Cor. 11:14-15)
- ❖ The subtlety and danger of false teachers lies in their clever twisting of Scripture for their own purposes

Ephesus

- ❖ Paul's extraordinary ministry in Ephesus impacts the sale of idols and precipitated a riot staged by the idol-maker's guild
- ❖ When Paul leaves Ephesus, he sounds a very serious warning to the elders of the Ephesian church (Acts 20:26-31)
 - sadly, what Paul warns the church about comes true within 5 years
 - in response, Paul dispatches Timothy, his true child in the faith, to deal with these problems
- ❖ Timothy's mission is to silence false teachers and to promote true gospel teaching
 - any doctrine that differs from true doctrine is false doctrine
 - we must always go back to the Word of God, dig in to know what we believe and why we believe it
- ❖ The danger of looking for hidden meaning and secret truths in God's Word
 - myths and endless genealogies
 - then as now, speculative theories are very attractive and exciting to weak-minded people who are not grounded in the truth
 - extra biblical texts that are treated by some as being on par with Scripture in our day
 - *The Book of Mormon*
 - *The Apocrypha*
 - *The Bible Code*

- even works of fiction like *The Da Vinci Code*
- many discussion about the end times fall into this category
- a good deal of Roman Catholic dogma is mythical

So What?

- ❖ What's the big danger of all this? Why is Paul so concerned?
 - all such discussion tends to obscure the pure, simple gospel message that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
 - we can either promote controversy or we can exercise good stewardship in our thinking and in our theology
- ❖ Nothing is more important or more deserving of our time and attention than the study and proclamation of the gospel
- ❖ False teaching of any kind disturbs the life and love of the church
 - Paul's ultimate goal in promoting true doctrine is to promote true love
 - *love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith*
 - love for God first then love for those around us (Matthew 22:37-40)
 - there is nothing more loving than telling people the truth!
 - a pure heart is a loving heart because there is no self-interest

- false doctrine promotes controversy and strife, wrangling and confusion, snobbishness, empty talk, hatred and distrust

- ❖ True doctrine divides truth from falsehood, light from darkness
 - our greatest need is to know God better, and we can only learn more of Him from His Word
 - true love from a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith is the best advertisement for true doctrine that any of us can over make
- ❖ We are completely dependent upon the grace of God to maintain the essential relationship between doctrine and love

Personal Application

1. How do you respond to the statements, "Any doctrine which is different from true doctrine is false doctrine." and "There is only one right theology, and every other theology is wrong."? What safeguards the making of any such claims as these from pride and arrogance?
2. How would you describe the inseparable relationship that exists between true doctrine and true love to someone who is not familiar with Jesus and the gospel message?
3. Are you more likely to want love without doctrine or to promote doctrine without love? What will help you maintain the appropriate balance between these two?