

Bible Doctrines

Introduction

Important Definitions:

- The word **doctrine** comes from the Greek word *didachē* (referring to the content of teaching) and *didaskalia* (referring to the activity of teaching).¹ *Biblical Doctrine*, then, is the teaching of Scriptural truths. Another word we use for this is *theology*.²
- *Systematic Theology* is the process of organizing the biblical data in an orderly way. “Systematic Theology answers the question, what does the completed canon of Scripture teach about any one theme or topic?”³
- *Exegesis* is the process of mining out the truths of Scripture. We utilize certain *hermeneutics* (i.e. ways of studying and interpreting the Bible) to do that exegetical work.

Categories of Doctrines / Systematic Theology

- *Bibliology* — the doctrine of the Bible and its inspiration
- *Theology Proper* — the doctrine of God and His existence
- *Christology* — the doctrine of Jesus Christ
- *Pneumatology* — the doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- *Anthropology* — the doctrine of mankind
- *Hamartiology* — the doctrine of sin
- *Soteriology* — the doctrine of salvation
- *Angelology* — the doctrine of angels, demons, and Satan
- *Ecclesiology* — the doctrine of the church
- *Eschatology* — the doctrine concerning the end times (including heaven, hell, judgment seats, last things, etc.)

Why Study Doctrines?

1. Because all Scripture is profitable for doctrine / teaching.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 ¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2. Because the basis for all of our Christian beliefs is on the teachings of the Bible.

¹ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 40.

² The word *theology* comes from the Greek words for “God” (*theos*) and “word” (*logia*). “Christian theology is the study of the divine revelation in the Bible” (MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 34). In other words, every Christian who studies the Bible is a theologian.

³ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 36.

3. Because what we as Christians believe informs the way in which we live.

Romans 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

2 Timothy 3:10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,

Titus 2:1–4 ¹ But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: ² that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; ³ the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—⁴ that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Bibliology

Inspiration of Scripture

- God reveals Himself in two primary ways:
 - In **general revelation** God communicates His power and divine nature clearly such that every human being is without excuse (Rom. 1:18–21). Creation proclaims the glory of God (Ps. 19:1–6). The human conscience attests to the fact that man is accountable to God (Rom. 2:14–16). However, general revelation cannot reveal the entire gospel message and thus it is through the means of special revelation that we as Christians preach Christ (Rom. 10:17).
 - **Special revelation** denotes God's manifestation and communication to humanity through dreams (1 Kings 3:5; 9:2; Matt. 2:13), through the prophet's spoken words, through words written down by holy men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Spirit of God (2 Pet. 1:21), and through Jesus Christ Himself (John 1:14). The Bible as we have it today is the complete Word of God (i.e. there is no continuing revelation today). Each book was recognized as part of the canon by people of God who acknowledged it as such.
- *I believe in the verbal, plenary, and inerrant inspiration of Scripture in the original manuscripts (2 Tim. 3:16).*
 - *Verbal* (meaning that the very words, not just the thoughts or meaning, are breathed out by God), *plenary* (meaning that all of Scripture is inspired, not simply portions of it), *inerrant* (meaning that the Scriptures contain no errors or contradictions).
 - Scripture is *infallible* (unable to mislead or fail in accomplishing the divinely intended purpose).⁴
 - God utilized men who were moved by the Holy Spirit to write His Words (2 Pet. 1:21).
 - The Bible has over 40 human authors. These men wrote the Scriptures over a period of 1,400 years. The three primary languages used in writing Scripture was Hebrew & Aramaic (Old Testament), and Greek (New Testament).

The theme of Scripture is the glory of God in redeeming lost sinners. This theme begins with the creation account in Genesis (i.e. God's glory is on display in His creating something out of nothing, *ex-nihilo*). The theme of God's glory in salvation begins with the promise God makes to send a seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's head:

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

⁴ Ibid, 109.

The final chapters of Revelation recount the future glory of God in the eternal state where redeemed sinners will enjoy God forever.

Preservation of Scripture

God has preserved His Word; it will never be lost or eradicated. It is firmly settled in heaven:

Psalm 119:89 Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.”

Matthew 5:18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

God’s Word has been preserved on earth through the diligent protection of His people.

- God told his people to not add or take away from His Word (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Jer. 26:2; Rev. 22:18–19). God gave His word to man, as evidenced by His giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses (Ex. 31:18).

Practically, I believe that any translation that is faithful to the original texts in formal equivalence is acceptable for use in both private and public ministry.

I believe the Bible should be interpreted according to the grammatical/historical method and according to context. I believe in a literal, dispensational approach to Bible interpretation, and dispensationalism recognizes the distinction between Israel and the church.

Notes / Questions:

