

Orientation Class #3

Basic Doctrines

God

“The Doctrine of God is the same in all three branches of Christianity. The Westminster Shorter Catechism (Question 6) reads, ‘There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.’ The Athanasian Creed elaborates on the doctrine of the Trinity: ‘...we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance [Essence]. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate...The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal...So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God...the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

“...The facts of the biblical teaching are these: There is one God. This one God has a plural personality. This one God is called the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, all distinct personalities, all designated God. We are therefore led to the conclusion that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one God, the doctrine of the Trinity.” --Josh McDowell, “The Beliefs of Orthodox Christianity”

1. God Reveals Himself

Creation -Romans 1:19, 20 Prophets-Hebrews 1:1
Conscience-Romans 2:15

Christ- Hebrews 1:2 (John 14:9)
Scripture-2nd Peter 1:21, 2nd Tim. 3:16, 17

2. God’s Attributes

Everlasting -Is. 40:28

Immutable-James 1:17

Can’t lie -Num. 23:19

Compassionate-Ps. 103:8-14

Holy-1 Pet. 1:15, 16

Righteous-Ps. 11:7

Just-Deut. 32:4

Love-1 John 4:8

Forgiving- Ps. 130:3, 4

Omnipotent-Jer. 32:17

Omniscient-1st John 3:20

Omnipresent-Jer. 23:24

Sovereign- 1 Tim. 6:15

Glorious-1st Chron. 29:10-13

3. The Trinity

God is one--Deut. 6:4--Father, Son and Holy Spirit--Matt. 28:19, 20

Father--John 6:27 Son--Heb. 1:8 Holy Spirit--Acts 5:3, 4

4. Roles in the Trinity

Father-John 3:16, Hebrews 12:9

Son-Col. 1:15-18, Gal 4:4, 5, Heb. 4:14-16

Holy Spirit- John 14:16, John 16:7-15, Tit. 3:5, Eph. 1:13, 1st Cor. 12:12, 13, 1st Cor. 6:19, 20, Rom. 8:9, Acts 1:8, Eph. 5:18, Gal. 5:16,22,23, 1st Thess. 5:19, Eph. 4:30

Angels, Demons, and Satan

Angels

1. Who they are--Hebrews 1:14, 2nd Peter 2:11, Genesis 18:2, 16, 19:1, 11

2. Unfallen angels--Matt. 18:10, 22:30, 26:53, Luke 15:10, 16:22, 1st Cor. 11:10, Eph. 3:10, 1st Pet. 1:12, Rev. 5:11, 12

3. Fallen angels--Rev. 12:9, Matt. 9:32, 33, 25:41, Mark 5:9, 15, 1 Tim. 4:1, 2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6

Satan

1. Who he is--Is. 14:12-14, Ezek. 28:14-19, Eph. 2:2, John 12:31, 2nd Cor. 4:4, 1st Pet. 5:8, 2nd Cor. 11:14

2. What he does--2nd Cor. 2:11, Gen. 3:1-5, 1st John 2:15, 16, Luke 8:11, 12, 2nd Cor. 4:3,4, Eph. 6:16, Acts 5:3, John 8:44, Deut. 18:10-12, 1 Tim. 4:1

3. Believer’s resources--Acts 26:18, Heb. 2:14-18, Col. 1:13, James 4:7, 2 Cor. 10:3-5, Eph. 6:10, 11

The Christian Family in Focus

Upward Focus—the Devotional Life

Unless the Lord builds the house-Psalm 127

Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord-Psalm 128

The Word -Luke 11:28, 2nd Timothy 3:16, 17

Prayer-Psalm 116:1, 2, John 15:7

Inward Focus—Roles and Responsibilities

Family-Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:16-21

Wives-Titus 2:4, 5

Fathers-Ephesians 6:4

Children--Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:20

Child training-Deut. 6:6, 7, Prov. 22:6, 13:24, 29:17

Other verses Eph. 4:29-32, Prov. 17:1, 13:20

Outward Focus—Hospitality and the Great Commission

Hospitality-Rom. 12:13, 1st Pet. 4:9

Aquila and Priscilla-Acts 18:2, 3, 18,19, 24-26, 1st Cor. 16:19, Rom. 16:3-5

The Church--1st Timothy 3:14, 15

"I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."

"The church has been ordained by God to be the primary instrument through which His work on earth is to be accomplished. Here Paul uses three phrases to describe three aspects of the church:

"(1) The house of God: The Christian family, with husband, wife, and children performing their God-given roles, provides a beautiful picture of the relationship of the church (the 'bride' of Christ) to the Lord. The household of God consists of a family of believers where love controls and where He is honored. 'Ye also, as lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ' (1st Peter 2:5).

"(2) The church of the Living God: The *ekklesia*, or 'called-out ones,' serve the living God. 'The blood of Christ (shall)...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God' (Hebrews 9:14).

"(3) The pillar and ground of the truth: A pillar of a building is not used for support, but rather for display, by elevating or calling attention to something else. The ground provides the support. The church should function to support and display the whole truth in such a way that all men can see and believe it.

"It should be a family of believers exhibiting brotherly love, individually and corporately serving the living God out of a pure conscience, defending the truth, and displaying it to the lost. May each of us as church members enjoy and support such a church."

--John D. Morris, Ph.D.

1. What it is--1 Tim. 3:15, Eph. 1:22, 23, Acts 20:28, Acts 2:41-47
2. Membership--Eph. 1:13, 14, 1st Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11
3. Leaders (who they are)--1 Tim. 3:1-13, Tit. 1:5-9, Acts 20:17, 28, Phil. 1:1
4. Leaders (what they do)--Eph. 4:11-13, 1 Pet. 5:1-4
5. Finances--Pro 3:9, 10, 1 Cor. 16-1, 2, Gal. 6:6, 1 Tim- 5:9-18, 1 John 3:16-18, Luke. 6:38
6. Ordinances--1 Cor. 11:23-30, Acts 8:12
7. Gifts--Rom. 12:1-8, 1 Pet. 4:10, 11
8. Fellowship--Eph. 4:14-16, John 13:34, 35
9. Prayer--Heb. 13:15, Acts 4:31
10. Evangelism--Acts 8:1-4, Matt. 28:18-20

Faith

"Faith is the assurance that the thing which God has said in His Word is true, and that God will act according to what He has said in His Word...Faith is not a matter of impressions, nor of probabilities, nor of appearances." --George Muller

1. What faith is: Hebrews 11:1, 6; Romans 4:1-5, 4:20,21; Acts 27:25
2. How God has revealed Himself to us: Creation--Romans 1:18-20; Incarnation--Hebrews 1:1-3; Written Revelation--2 Tim. 3:16, 17
3. Hindrances to faith-John 3:18-21, 5:44, 7:17
4. The Christian life is begun by faith (Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 1:13). After a person becomes a Christian, he is to continue to live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 2:6, 7). How can we grow in faith?

God-Romans 12:3; Hebrews 12:2; John 15:26

Prayer-Mark 9:24; Luke 22:32

Word-Romans 10:17; 2 Peter 1:4

Other believers-Hebrews 13:7; Rom. 1:12 Obedience-James 2:22; John 14:21

5. In 2nd Peter 1:4 we learn that God "has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature...."

Consider the following promises:

Psalms 37:4-good life Rom. 8:28-all things for good

1 Corinthians 10:13-no temptation

Philippians 4:13-can do all things

2 Corinthians 9:8, 12:9-grace

Hope

1. What hope is: Romans 8:24, 25; 1st Peter 1:3-5; 1st Timothy 1:1; Colossians 1:27
2. Importance: 1st Corinthians 15:19; Hebrews 6:19
3. Hope in this present life: Romans 8:28; Romans 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:5, 6; Psalm 27:13
4. Hope in the life to come: 1st Thessalonians 4:16--18; Titus 2:13
5. What will happen when He returns: Philippians 3:20, 21; 1st John 3:2, 3; 1st Corinthians 3:8-15; 2nd Cor. 5:10; Rev. 5:9,10; 20:6
6. What things will be like in the future: Revelation 21:3, 4; 2nd Peter 3:10-13
7. What can we learn about hope in the following verses? Colossians 1:4, 5; 1st Thessalonians 1:3; Romans 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18
8. Developing hope: Romans 15:4, 13; Hebrews 6:11, 12; Romans 5:1-5; Ephesians 1:18; 1st Peter 1:13

Love--John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1st John 3:18). The little word "love" is probably the most overused and misused word in our language. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1st John 4:10). "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1st John 4:11). True love in our own lives is manifest in a number of vital ways. First of all, it is evidenced by our guarding the integrity of His Word: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected" (1st John 2:5). Next, it involves separation from the world: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1st John 2:15). Obedience is another evidence: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1st John 5:3). "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments" (2nd John 6). True love is courageous and confident in all circumstances. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (1st John 4:18). Such love will give up possessions or even life itself for the brethren...Love therefore, is not something we write about or talk about (word or tongue), but something we do, "in deed and in truth." Love is always best measured in terms of the love of God Himself. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).
--Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.

1. What love is: 1st Corinthians 13; 1st Timothy 1:5
 2. God's love for us: Romans 5:8; 1st John 4:10; Romans 8:38, 39; Psalm 103:11-14; Isaiah 49:14-16; 62:5
 3. Our love for God: 1st John 4:19; Matthew 22:37-39; John 14:21; 13:34, 35; Luke 6:27; 1st Thessalonians 3:12
 4. Our love for people: 1st John 4:7, 8; Galatians 5:22, 23; 2nd Peter 1:4-8
- Consider the following verses:
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| Golden rule -Matthew 7:12 | Thoughts-Hebrews 10:24, 25 |
| Words-Ephesians 4:29 | Deeds-Titus 3:14, 1st John 3:16-18 |
| No selfishness-Philippians 2:3, 4 | Forgive- Ephesians 4:31, 32 |
| Go to others -Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15 | Give-Luke 6:38 |
| Serve-Galatians 5:13 | Win-1st Corinthians 9:19-23 |
| Build-Colossians 1:28, 29 | |
5. What motivated Paul? 2nd Corinthians 5:14, 15

Bible Intake--2 Tim 2:15

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth."

Many verses indicate that the Scriptures are necessary for the believer's growth and maturity. For instance, 1st Peter 2:2 says, "like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation." In addition, 2nd Timothy 3:17 declares, "The scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God, and fit him fully for all branches of his work" (2nd Timothy 3:17, Phillips). There are several methods of Scripture intake. Just as a hand has five fingers to grasp objects, so there are five ways to "grasp" the truths of the Bible: hearing, reading, studying, memorizing and meditating.

Hearing

We can hear the truths of the Scriptures when we gather with other Christians for Bible study or by listening to sermons. We can also listen to good radio programs. Another way of hearing the word is by listening to tapes. The Bible itself is available on tape, as well as many expository and topical sermons about Bible truths. Romans 10:17 declares, "faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

Reading

Reading is an important method of Scripture intake. The Old Testament kings were instructed to read the Scriptures every day (Deuteronomy 17:19); readers of the last book of the Bible are promised a blessing (Revelation 1:3). Timothy was instructed to "give attention to the public reading of Scripture" (1st Timothy 4:13). By reading one chapter from the New Testament and 3 chapters from the Old Testament each day, the entire Bible can be read in a single year.

Studying

Bible study is an important part of the process of becoming more Christlike. Ezra was a man "who set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10). The one who studies God's word faithfully, prays for understanding (Psalm 119:18, John 14:26, 1st Corinthians 2:12), and diligently applies the Scriptures to his life (James 1:22-25), will experience a changed life that will increasingly glorify God.

Principles of Interpretation

1. The Bible interprets itself; Scripture best explains Scripture.
2. Saving faith and the Holy Spirit are necessary for us to understand and properly interpret the Scriptures.
3. Interpret personal experience in the light of Scripture and not Scripture in the light of personal experience.
4. Each Christian has the right and responsibility to investigate and interpret the Word of God for himself.
5. Church history is important but not decisive in the interpretation of Scripture.
6. The promises of God throughout the Bible are available to the Holy Spirit for the believers of every generation.
7. Grammatical principles: Scripture has only one meaning and should be taken literally; words should be interpreted in harmony with their meaning in the times of the author; words should be interpreted in relation to their sentences and the context; and a passage should be interpreted in harmony with its context.

The late Dr. David Cooper has stated it well: "When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise."

Memorizing

"Probably no method of Scripture intake pays higher dividends for the time invested than Scripture memory." --Walter Henrichsen, author of *Disciples are Made-Not Born*. Proverbs 22:17, 18 says, "Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge; for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, that they may be ready on your lips." Colossians 3:16 instructs us to "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you." What are some of the benefits of memorizing Scripture? It can help you have victory over sin (Psalms 119:9, 11), give you confidence in witnessing (1st Peter 3:15), give you joy (Jeremiah 15:16), help you pray more effectively (John 15:7), and help you grow (1st Peter 2:2). Jesus could quote Scripture (Matthew 4), and so could Paul (Acts 13), as well as other godly men. We should follow their example!

Meditating

Meditation is like chewing. Just as a cow takes in food and then chews it, partially digests it, and then chews it again until finally the food is transformed into building-blocks for the restoration and growth of the cow's body, so in meditation Scripture is "chewed" or analyzed, carefully thought about until it can be applied in our lives. We meditate in order to do. "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success" (Joshua 1:8). James 1:22-25 declares, "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does."