

18th of October 2015

## Those on meat are to give attendance to doctrine (Doctrine Pt 5)

### Introduction.

This is the fifth study on the word “doctrine” in the Holy Scriptures.

### Previous study.

(1) Beware of Pharisaical doctrine that makes the word of God of none effect, and (2) be not tossed about with every wind of doctrine, and (3) be a good example in doctrine.

### Three points are established from the Scriptures for this study.

(1) Believers are to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine, and (2) those who sit in the seat of a minister of God but “omit weightier matters” need not doctrine but milk, and (3) ministers of God who labour in the scriptures and doctrine are counted worthy of double honour.

### Our three points in more detail.

1. We are to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine.

### Supporting verse.

1Tim 4:13 “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

### Context and meaning of our verse.

\* Paul is writing to Timothy and begins the chapter with a reference to the “latter times some shall depart from the faith.” They will give “heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils”. You can identify them, because they speak “lies in hypocrisy: having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (verse 2). The out-working of having a seared conscience is they forbid marriage, and command “to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving” (verse 3). Paul says “If thou”, speaking to Timothy, “put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.” And good doctrine (for Paul’s audience) is that which “thou hast attained” (verse 6) from Paul (2Tim.3: 10). Paul then encourages Timothy to refuse “profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness” (verse 7). Verse 11 Paul says, “these things command and teach”. He then says it is important to be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” A man obeys such a commandment by giving “attendance to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine” from the scriptures.

### Scriptural examples.

\* The priests in the Old Testament like Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh.8: 8).

### Application of our verse today

\* The letter to Timothy is part of Paul’s instruction to the Gentile church, and is therefore applicable to us today.

### Illustration.

\* When you go into a church and their messages are only from the gospels, or they only include one or two references, and the rest of the sermon is the minister’s experience, then you know that any exhortation and doctrine you are receiving is from man and **not** God.

Likewise when you attend a church as Karen and I did when we belonged to the Messianic church, where they give attendance to reading and exhortation and doctrine solely from the books of the Torah (first five books of the Old Testament), with brief reference to the New Testament then the exhortation and doctrine is predominantly for an audience in a different age.

### Learning from our Illustration.

\* Do not convince me, convince yourself if a church that solely teaches from the gospels or the Torah gives attendance to reading, exhortation, and doctrine in the context of Paul’s instruction. What we can say for **certain** is that when a minister teaches from Paul’s epistles to the church, he does not have to make application, but is teaching doctrine, and particularly sound doctrine.

Challenge & or encouragement.

\* Our challenge is to give heed to reading, exhortation, and doctrine where the majority of our instruction is from that which is “sound doctrine”, which does not mean that we abandon, the gospels, or the books written to the Jews, because “all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine” (2Tim.3: 16). Let us be encouraged to spend time in **all** the scriptures, and in particular that which is written to the Gentile churches, and therefore obey the instruction “to give attendance to reading”, exhortation, and doctrine, within the context of Paul’s epistles.

## 2. Ministers who “omit weightier matters” need not doctrine but milk again.

Supporting Verse.

Isa 28:9 “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? [them that are] weaned from the milk, [and] drawn from the breasts.”

Context and meaning of our verse.

\* The Lord is rebuking Ephraim, “the crown of pride...the drunkards of Ephraim”, whose beauty is fading, and are “on the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!” (verse 1). The “crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden down under feet” (verse 3). Verse 4 puts the fading of the “glorious beauty” in the future with the words “shall be”. And in that day “shall the Lord be for a crown of glory...unto a residue of his people” (verse 5), “and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment” (verse 6). Now the prophet brings his rebukes back to the current time when he is writing saying “But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink...the priest and prophet have erred through strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment” (verse 7). Hence those who were supposed to see the visions that God shows them, and judge the people righteous judgment, have stumbled by strong drink. And their sin is not localised, see verse 8 “For all the tables are full of vomit, and filthiness”. Next we have our verse, “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk”. Hence the priests and prophets who neglect the first principles of the law (Heb.5: 12), as the Pharisees who “omitted the weightier matters of the law” (Matt.23: 23) need not doctrine but milk.

Scriptural examples.

\* When Israel came out of Egypt the Lord taught His children, line upon line, one precept at a time, which was like giving them milk first, and from there they should have been ready to receive doctrine (Is.28: 13).

Application of our verse today.

\* The prophet is writing about the children of Ephraim within the Old Testament. We make application today that the teacher is to teach milk to those who “omit the weightier matters of the law”, to those who have been moved away from “first principles” (Heb.5: 12).

Illustration.

\* At Laidlaw college the lecturers generally had PhDs, they were supposed to be Bible teachers, teaching other men to become teachers of the word of righteousness. But generally the lecturers either believe in universalism (every one is saved), did not believe in hell (which means there can be no heaven either), and their authority is not the scriptures, but their own wisdom.

Learning from our Illustration.

\* Men who are false ministers do not have to err with strong drink to show that they need to be taught again the milk of the word. The Laidlaw lecturer who departs from the first principles of salvation, heaven, and hell, and the authority of the scriptures, is no more doing the work at college for God than the priest who was vomiting all over the table from strong drink in Isaiah.

Challenge & or encouragement.

\* Today in the churches many ministers do not know the gospel of Christ crucified for today, therefore do not teach the gospel by which a man can get saved today. Hence they omit “the weightier matters” of Pauline instruction to the church. Be encouraged to know the signs of a minister of Satan, who needs to repent, and then be taught milk. Because ministers who err on the first principles like salvation do not need doctrine, but the “sincere milk of the word” (1Pet.2: 2).

### 3. Those who labour in doctrine are counted worthy of double honour.

#### Supporting Verses.

1Tim 5:17 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

#### Context and meaning of our verse.

\* Paul's instruction to the church is for those in the body of Christ not to rebuke an elder. This could be read two ways, where an elder teaches and rules over the flock (verse 17) and those who are "older" men, as there are older or "elder women" (verse 2). Paul then moves on to talk about widows, and the church's responsibility for them (verse 5). And in verse 11 he speaks of the younger widows who if they "wax wanton against Christ, they will marry", and "give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (verse 14). Then he says that "some have already turned aside after Satan" (verse 15). And next we have our verse, "let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Therefore, those who teach us are to be skilful in the use of the word of righteousness (Heb.5: 13), have the responsibility to labour in the scriptures and doctrine, and therefore equipped to feed and have the rule over them. Hence, are counted worthy of double honour from God who equipped them.

#### Application of our verse today.

\* Paul is writing to Timothy in the context of the Gentile church, and therefore it is doctrinally applicable to believers today.

#### Illustration.

\* A self-confessed Jehovah Witness from my days at Corys has given up his job to be a missionary in the Jehovah Witness church in the Solomon Islands, perhaps he is now an elder in that church. Does God count him worthy of double honour for labouring in the NWT (if he was an elder)? When I laboured in the Torah during our time in the Messianic group, if I was an elder, and I had the responsibility to feed the flock, would I have been counted worthy of double honour?

#### Learning from our Illustration.

\* NO to our questions. God counts elders/those who labour in the word and have the rule over others, worthy when they "labour in the word and doctrine", and in the context of the holy scriptures, and in particular Paul's writing to the churches, that refers to "my doctrine" (2Tim.3: 10). Hence they are to labour in milk (line upon line, precept upon precept), and in meat that is "sound doctrine" (Tit.2: 1).

#### Challenge & or encouragement.

\* When I was at BCNZ I knew Jn.3: 16 from the NIV off by heart and no other verses, because the colleges of this world teach men to labour in the words of man, and his writings of what they think the scriptures say, but they "have their reward" (Matt.6: 16). Our challenge in the context of this scripture, is to put ourselves under those who labour in the word and doctrine from the holy scriptures (the Authorised Bible). If we do not, we subject ourselves to man and not God's written holy writings. So pray for those whom you know that are saved, but remain in the mainstream churches where the minister is his own authority, and he labours in his books, and his reward is his PHD or his title of "reverend", that they may, through God's strength come out and be taught the milk of the word, and subject themselves to those who labour in the **scriptures** and (sound) doctrine, whom **God** counts worthy of double honour.

#### Summary of our three points.

(1) Believers are to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine, and (2) those who sit in the seat of a minister of God but "omit weightier matters" need not doctrine but milk, and (3) ministers of God who labour in the scriptures and doctrine are counted worthy of double honour.