

1st November 2015

Good doctrine furnishes a believer unto good works.
(Doctrine Pt 6)

Introduction

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

Previous study.

1. We are to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine.
2. Those who were weaned from the milk are ready for doctrine.
3. There are those that have the rule over us, who labour in the Scriptures and doctrine.

Three points are established from the scriptures for this study.

1. The purpose of doctrine is that the man of God may be perfect.
2. The purpose of doctrine is that a believer may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
3. False doctrine is revealed in a person's works.

Our three points in more detail.

1. The purpose of doctrine is that the man of God may be perfect.

Supporting verse.

2Tim.3: 16–17 “All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine...That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Context & setting of verse.

* The context is the last days, and Paul is pointing out to Timothy “that in the last days perilous times shall come” (verse 1). He then says that men shall be: “lovers of their own selves...Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (verses 3–5). The church has been infected with the things of this world, where verse 6 says: “this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (verse 6 & 7). Paul then sites “Jannes and Jambres” who withstood Moses, “so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” Paul then says to Timothy in verse 10 “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience” (verse 11). In verse 13 Paul takes us back to those who are like the men of verses 2 – 5, where he calls them “evil men and seducers”, they “shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” Then Paul speaks to Timothy of when he was “a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (verse 15). Then we have our verse which points out the usefulness of scripture to a believer, where he says “All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine”, and verse 17: “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” And in the context Paul's reference to doctrine, the inference is “my doctrine”, hence it is principally from Paul's doctrine that we may be perfect.

Application of verse today.

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

Other scriptural support.

Col.1: 28

Illustration.

* When Karen and I went to the Messianic church and were taught doctrine from the Torah out of the Complete Jewish Bible (which is based on the Roman Catholic text), could we be made perfect, could we be sanctified by the word of God, when the relevance of those doctrines in Leviticus were not applied to us today through the instruction of Paul to the church age?

Learning from our Illustration.

* No! Imperfect instruction can **not** sanctify the man of God, and neither can God's words that are written for one audience (like the Jew is the audience of the first five books of the Old Testament)

that are given as doctrine for another age when it contradicts Paul's doctrine for today. A man can only be sanctified by the word of God with sound doctrine. And it is the task of our Pastors and teachers to rightly divide the scriptures and teach sound doctrine, "For the perfecting of the saints...Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man" (Eph.4: 13). Perfection then, is in the future (when we get to heaven), but there is also a sense that we are sanctified and perfected by the word of God (Jn.17: 17). Hence, teachers teach from the word of God, they teach doctrine. And when a man receives sound doctrine for today only then can he be sanctified by the word of God.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* Our challenge today in this world of ever-changing morality is that we do not change the words of God, but we allow the words of God to change us, to sanctify us, perfecting us by firstly using God's preserved pure words, and sitting under teachers that rightly divide them so we can feed on sound doctrine for today. Because the purpose of doctrine is that the believer may be perfect.

2. Doctrine is for a believer that he may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Supporting verse.

2Tim.3: 16–17 "All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Context & setting of verse.

* See earlier context and setting for point 1.

Application of verse today.

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

Illustration.

* My mentor would say that his wife has "diligently followed every good work" (1Tim.5: 10) because of her focus on obeying the word of God, and in their marriage, specifically as the scriptures pertain to a wife, by supporting him in the work, keeping the home and "brought up the children" without any hint of dissatisfaction, or disapproval, but only submission. According to the scriptures, not the local church, has his wife followed sound doctrine, and as a wife will she be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" as the husband would claim?

Learning from our Illustration.

* Yes, according to 1Tim.5: 9 & 10, his wife is a valuable example for any young widows and young maidens, who when they begin "to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry" (1Tim.5: 11). Not all of us are created in Christ for the same purpose, but we are created by "his workmanship" which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph.2: 10). So whereas some men are created in Christ to be teachers and pastors, we are all to be (i) zealous of good works (Tit.2: 14), and ii) a pattern of good works (Tit.2: 7), and (iii) rich in good works (1Tim.6: 18). What is a good work? We know that when a person is "rich in good works" they are "ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1Tim.6: 8). We know from Jesus' instruction that He did "many good works" (Jn.10: 32), with the ultimate being His sacrifice on the cross for the sin of the world. And during His lifetime, he washed the feet of his disciples, taught, preached, fed the hungry, and healed the sick, His life was one of sacrifice for others. 1Cor.13 includes a detailed list of actions that make up charity toward our brethren (verses 4–8), hence charity is good works.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* Our challenge is not that we should all desire to be like my mentor's wife, but rather that we would fulfil the good works which God hath ordained for us, "that we should walk in them" (Eph.2: 10). So, remembering that good works are the consequences of feeding on sound doctrine, let us pray for the young that they would first come to the knowledge of the truth of the scriptures, then know the sound doctrine that Paul spoke of (see our second study on this topic), and that they would feed principally on that doctrine and so be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

3. False doctrine is revealed in a person's works.

Supporting verse.

2Cor.11: 15 "Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Context & setting of verse.

* The Corinthian church was being deceived but those preaching another gospel (which Paul had not preached, see verse 4), such that their minds were being "corrupted by the simplicity that is in Christ" (verse 3). Paul then establishes that he is an apostle, that he was rude in speech, "yet not in knowledge" (verse 6). Verse 7 reveals that Paul abased himself (meaning he humbled himself), which was out worked with him not taking any money from the church (verses 8 & 9). We then read that those who glory in themselves are "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (verse 13), but they should not marvel at such men, for "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (verse 14). Then we have our verse (15): "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." In the context of this chapter, those that Paul is referring to are those who have not received his gospel and his doctrine, their end shall be according to their works. Hence we have made the point that false doctrine is revealed in a person's works.

Scriptural examples.

* Men that were craftsmen making shrines for Diana were idol worshippers, and when Paul "persuaded and turned away much people" (Acts 19: 26), they spoke out against him and those preaching Christ (Acts 19: 27 & 28). Hence, their false doctrine is revealed in their works.

Application of verse today.

* Paul's letter to the church at Corinth is part of his instruction to the Gentile church, and is therefore applicable to us today.

Illustration.

* I remember inviting a young brother to come and preach on the street. The regular preacher preached Christ crucified including heaven and hell, with a note that hell was in the centre of the earth. The younger brother that was a pastor later rebuked the preacher for preaching false doctrine as part of the gospel by saying that hell was in the centre of the earth.

Learning from our Illustration.

* When you have a final authority in the English text of the 1611 Authorised Bible then you can say with certainty that hell **is** in the centre of the earth (take a look when you have a spare hour and do your own study: Matt.12: 40, Acts 2: 31, Ps.63: 9, Is.44: 23 and Ez.31: 16). Hence, false doctrine is revealed in the young pastor's works.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* Jehovah Witness' (JW) are known for door knocking (where most Christians do not) with their message from the NWT, as are Mormons with their message from the false prophet Joseph Smith. Therefore, you can often pick up those who believe such false doctrines by their works. For example the JW believes there is no hell, and Jesus is a "god", and Mormons teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and good works for salvation, such are doctrines of devils, and those who believe them are revealed by their works. Let us remember that before a brother opens his mouth his works will generally reveal any false doctrine, just like the example of the young preacher. So be encouraged to be wise, look, listen and pray to the Lord for discernment that you do not spend your time with those who believe false doctrine, which is evident by their works.

* What instruction do you take out of context, or what doctrine do you take from another age and wrongly apply it to today, and so adopt false doctrine that is revealed in your works?

Summary of points

1. The purpose of doctrine is that the man of God may be perfect.
2. The purpose of doctrine is that a believer may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
3. False doctrine is revealed in a person's works.