



False Doctrine

The Bible tells us that:

2 Timothy 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"

Doctrine simply means "teaching". Thus, the scripture is truth committed to those who are vessels of God's spirit, to infuse others to whom they communicate the Lord Jesus, with abiding, lasting, unquestionable truth. (See "The Authority of the Word")

God ministers to man, through man. That is, he communicates by means vessels that carry and communicate truth. This is typified, and maximized in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Word - who was and is truth made flesh (or "shown as humanity").

Since God does not remove man's capacity for judgment, human carnal nature, inclination for sin, or capacity for error from those who he calls, ministry and doctrine depends upon the submission of an man or woman to the Spirit of God. Since people can be influenced by other spirits, doctrines that man teaches can be false, failing to convey truth, or worse, conveying concepts declared to be "of God", while in fact contradicting, subverting, complicating, negating, or diminishing the truth of God's word.

It all sounds very dangerous, right? Indeed, false doctrine is the most malevolent killer of hopes, and the only real threat to the work of God's church which exists.

False doctrine can destroy a vital and effective church that may have taken decades to establish, almost overnight.

False doctrine can remove souls from the confidence of salvation into a place of careless disregard for God and even their own spiritual lives.

False doctrine always works to weaken faith, and to eventually make a mockery of the scripture, requiring carnal rationalizations from those who would continue to attend to those religious bodies which are effected by the erroneous teaching.

False doctrine can establish religions, and can ensnare huge multitudes of people, as often, false doctrine requires no spiritual nature to receive. In particular, recipients of false doctrine are NEVER required to carry the cross of Jesus Christ, restraining the pride and ego, and maintaining clear spiritual vision (although false doctrine may actually afflict the believer with harsh servitude and punishment, supposing to make that person spiritual)

Origin:

Satan may be credited with inspiration of, if not authorship of all false doctrine. The Apostles identified two and only two spirits effecting the knowledge and communication of spiritual doctrine. the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error. (We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." - 1 John 4:6)

Many religious persons refuted Jesus Christ. Their credentials would have appeared adequate in their tradition, to certify their objections , but Jesus responded: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar , and the father of it"

These harsh words reproving those who reject and contradict the declaration of Truth, are accompanied by a note revealing the origin of error. Satan is the father of lying, though he is not the father of every lie. Each and every element of false doctrine arises in the service of spiritual darkness, either with good intentions in those who are trapped in darkness, or with evil intentions, in those who hate the light (See John 3:18-21).

In Jesus statement we have the equation of false doctrine with lie. In our vernacular and philosophical system, we often require that a lie be accompanied by deliberate repression of truth. However, with respect to spiritual truth, any statement that contradicts, subverts or diminishes truth is a lie. As gentle Christian people, we are reluctant to use the term lie, or even assert it, since we believe that such an assertion will naturally carry with it the prescription of punishment, in that we assume that it will be a charge of deliberately withholding truth. But, in the case of false doctrine, people can be and often are the unwitting carriers of lies, when they themselves have not been meaningfully impacted by the truth.

You can compare this unknowing carrier of false doctrine with the person who is asked to carry an envelope describing a sale at the local store. The prices advertised are exceptionally good! What the delivery agent does not know is that, when the respondent gets to the store, there is no merchandise available for the published price. The agent has

never been to the store, and could not verify the information before he carried it. So likewise are so many religious authorities who themselves have not received the powerful touch of God upon their lives, with the baptism of the Holy Ghost and a sincere repentance from sin, and perhaps have not had the necessary fellowship with them of "like precious faith".

Note: To preserve the credentials of Apostolic authority, Christians must retain openness to the word of God, and continue to receive revelation from God's word, lest it be no longer possible to say, as John said "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us." Further, be mindful that remaining open to revelation from the word of God does not mean being open to the contradiction of the word of God, for the establishment of Apostolic authority and the criteria discriminating the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error depends upon hearing the doctrine of the Apostles as given in the Holy Scriptures. One cannot suppose, as do some modern groups, that having broken the link of belief of the Apostle's doctrine, allows them to abide under the same mantle. Those who leave the Apostle's doctrine loose this authority of declaration, and cannot validly say "we are of God"

How Does False Doctrine Arrive at the Human Heart?

By hearing.

There is a story in the Old Testament that typifies the transmission and effect of false doctrine:

2 Kings 4:38-41 "And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets [were] sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred [them] into the pot of pottage: for they knew [them] not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot."

The spiritual food that the children of God receive is utterly important to their spiritual health. In the story, the stew, or "pottage" is like the spiritual meal that people receive in their religion and worship, and when seeking spiritual nourishment.

While they were preparing the food, a common experience, a man went carelessly into the field and gathered "wild gourds" from a "wild vine". Remember, that Jesus Christ, God manifest in flesh, is the true vine (see John 15:1). Reflecting in the story, there are many spiritual influences in the "spirit world" other than the truth. Doctrine, or teaching, communicates the substance of those influences to the human heart. In the story, someone recognized the inedible nature of the unsavory ingredients, and

Surely the "wild gourds" looked good, and did not appear to be dangerous to the man who tried to help with the preparation. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, his careless, or even malicious folly was unchecked, and the food was nearly served! Life was nearly lost, and there was a cry "There is death in the pot!".

This is the cry that ought to go up across the land as people recognize the traditions originating in Catholicism, and later in the Protestantism that inherited many "wild gourds" from Catholicism. "There is death in the pot!"

In addition to these inherited errors, there are now and have always been rampant "wild growths" or corrupt variants on Biblical teaching that arise sporadically, often demonstrating the spiritual and character weaknesses of those groups of people who become infected by them. See "classification", below.

If It Is So Dangerous, Why Does God allow the teaching of False Doctrine?

1 Corinthians 11:18 "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

This question is not unlike the often asked question of "Why does God allow Satan to tempt mankind?" The Bible clearly states that salvation comes by the believing of the Truth (see 2 Thessalonians 2:10). Remember the fact that man's fall came by his rejection of the Truth. In simple fact, it would be utterly impossible for man's heart to receive and demonstrate his preference for truth, unless he were also able to reject the liar. Satan is a liar. His doctrines, as mentioned above, are similitude's and twists of truth. The heart that loves and cleaves to truth, is a heart that will surrender to the Spirit of Truth. On the other hand, with opportunity to receive and cleave to lies, for the sake of personal pleasure, or other promises of the tempter, the soul who does not love truth will be lost in the deceit of false doctrine.

As the scripture above shows, God allows the heretic and false prophet so that those who teach the Truth will be plainly distinct, and so that those who are seekers of truth, will be able to distinguish the clear sound of God's word, and responding with surrender, be transformed by it.

Likewise, Satan is allowed to tempt, so that there will be opportunity and need for man to reach out to God, and hear and respond to His word in times of storm and conflict, and loving the truth, be saved,

The Solution to and Defense Against False Doctrine

In the story of "Death in the Pot!", the man of God asked that meal (or the basis for bread) be brought, and then cast it into the pot. The story illustrates a miracle, because we know that one would not normally eat a poison stew after merely adding more bread. The addition of edible food would not correct, or nullify the poison in the

pot. However, Elijah knew that it would, and indeed, this meal corrected the evil that was already in the pot.

The insightful reader knows that the meal is a symbol of the Word of God (commonly through the Bible, the word of God is bread, whether manna from heaven, or the broken bread of our communion). When there is false doctrine abounding, there is no reason to stop having church! Rather, **PREACH THE WORD! READ THE WORD! RECEIVE THE WORD! OBEY THE WORD! CONTEND FOR THE WORD!** Only the word of God can correct sin and error!

How shall we deal with false doctrine?

The only solution to those threats that propose to replace truth in the heart of man, and in the pulpits of the church is to give special attendance and heed to the Word of God. The Word of God is pure, and only when it is neglected, or mixed with error so as not to be immediately detected, can it be supplanted. The solution is to receive more of the Word of God, more often, with more faith, and constant obedience. Man's heart will be exercised in believing God, filling the heart with the engrafted Word which is able to save the soul (James 1:21), or many inventions (Eccl 7:29)

1 Timothy 4:13 "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. "

vs 16 "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. " -

1 Peter 1:21-22 "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

(Don't miss the fact, Apostolics, that the application of "obeying the truth" is unto fervent "unfeigned love of the brethren - knowing the truth, and even preaching the truth is not enough)

Romans 16:17 " Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

(Paul is speaking of that Apostolic doctrine that was received by ALL of the church, as taught by the Apostles. Before there was a New Testament, there was the preaching and teaching of the Apostles.)

Remember, if you truly believe that Jesus saves, then you believe that doctrine saves!

Romans 6:16-17 "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

Classifications and Elements of False Doctrine

False doctrine may fall into several categories:

Converse Assertions:

Revelatory truths are contradicted, generally using scripture. Examples: Genesis 3:4 - Satan declares, contrary to Genesis 2:17, "Ye shalt not surely die".

Extrapolation from type:

Symbols or parables are interpreted with eclectic method to produce "interesting", enthralling, esoteric, or convenient conclusions. For example, it has been said that the broken planks of the ship, on which Paul and the prisoners and soldiers made it to shore represent the denominations of the last 500 years. This is purely arbitrary gainsaying having no other scriptural support but the speculation of the teacher. Conversely, the tabernacle in the wilderness clearly does have symbolic meaning - however, interpretation of the meaning of the tabernacle and its components can be motivated by a pre-existing theological system.

Misuse of wording, or conclusions drawn from context illogically. For example, some might suggest that a failure of intellectual faith will result in trials because of displeasing God, by pointing to Job's hardships and declaring that what Job feared had come upon him (See Job 3:25). Of course Job's trials did not come as a consequence of unbelief or fear, but rather as a combination of God's purpose in Job, and Satan's desire to prove him to be without love for God.

Sibling and Generative False Doctrine:

Simply put, false doctrine begets additional false doctrine. Those whose foundations are not in truth are also unstable, and inclined to additional invention.

Literal Import of Symbol and Type:

A very common form of false doctrine results from efforts to impose the imprints of Old Testament type and shadow upon the New Testament experience. Examples include the priesthood evident in the Catholic variants, which recognizes the royal priesthood of the believer, but imposes it as a limited class of people, or as New Testament "Levites". In essence, this is a form of "Judaizing "

Isolation and Amplification:

When Biblical concepts are separated from the whole counsel of God, and the concepts are given attention, false doctrine is codified. For example, when the idea of faith is removed from the measure of obedient action, "easy believism" results. In this and other forms of false doctrine, very often, the proponents are making an effort to defend what they believe is Biblical, but themselves are not "furnished unto all good works", lacking a comprehensive knowledge of the scripture.

Neglect of Scripture:

It seems almost needless to say, but the neglect of scriptural doctrines (though perhaps individually thought of as peripheral or secondary) results in aberrations and imbalances in other doctrines. IN part, the curse against those who will remove from the Book, (Rev 22:19), is effectuated in the loss of the blessings that result from whole hearted and ful-orbed belief in the word of the Lord.

Doctrinal Conflation:

the opposite of neglect, where excess emphasis is placed on a certain Biblical concept, and subsequently, many elements of philosophy or other teachings are brought beneath the cover of this single over amplified idea.

False Localization:

While it is important to view the scripture as being originally understood by Orientals with certain cultural idioms, it is not correct to dismiss the word of God as applicable only within certain culture. Scripture is dismissed, at times, with the justification that it addressed only problems or persons in that local setting.

These are just a few of the ways in which false doctrine steals the benefits of the Word of God from the human heart.