

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD DOCTRINE

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Published by:

Christian Identity Ministries

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In his day, Milton said, "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed". Jesus said in John 10:9, "*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture*". If the hungry sheep are not being fed, then something must be wrong with their shepherds. What is missing is the spiritual gift of teaching. Where we read in 1 Cor. 12:28, "*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers*", etc., in this ranking position as given, we do not find the Pastor (government) until second from the bottom in this grading. There are indications, such as in the third epistle of John, that the top three rankings do not belong to, or function in, any one assembly. Today it is normal to find a leader wearing all the hats in the one group. The consequence is that there is no depth of teaching, and the sheep remain hungry and dissatisfied.

Good doctrine is help for a searching soul to find rest in the knowledge of God. Before we go on, let us consider a little more about the importance of good doctrine. What Christians believe in matters of doctrine and practice largely depends upon their pre-conditioning that has come from what they have been led to believe from all sorts of sources. For a child to see pictures of animals going into the ark two by two of each kind, stays in his memory. This effectively stops him from ever reading that the clean animals went in seven by seven pairs. His ability to read has been destroyed! Try this out on churchgoers, and see what a shock they get when the seven by seven is pointed out to them. This principle applies to everything in the Bible. Religious notions abound; some Christians faithfully follow the teachings of their group without ever daring to question them. Very few ever "*search the scriptures*" themselves and "*meditate night and day*" in the Word of God. Christians everywhere are like that, but the consequences are a disaster area. Just ask around what a simple biblical word means and see how many answers you get, even within one assembly! The meaning of a single word can change a whole doctrine; word meanings are vitally important. Confusion and differences in doctrine are negative and they lead to a let-down feeling, doubts, disillusionment, defeat and apathy. There is absolutely no bliss in ignorance.

As Charles Swindoll puts it in the introduction his book, "Growing Deep In The Christian Life",

"Everywhere I turn, I meet or hear about well-meaning Christians who are long on zeal but short on facts.....lots of enthusiasm and motivation, but foggy when it comes to scriptural truth. They have a deep and genuine desire to be used by God.....but their doctrinal foundation is shifting sand rather than solid rock....Later they discover how far off the target they really were. The whole miserable mess leaves a person filled with doubt and disillusionment, grossly lacking in confidence, not to mention that awful feeling of being exposed. At this point most Christians decide to pack it in lest they get caught again in a similar position of vulnerability.

You and I might be amazed to know how many have retreated into the background scenery of passivity, simply because of their ignorance of the basic building blocks..."

Mr.Swindoll goes on to show how doctrinal position determines all interpretation and application of scripture, and that many Christians do lack in emotional stability simply because they do not have a doctrinal foundation that is solid and consistent. Shortly we will look the basis of how to establish a good doctrinal foundation and at some "good building blocks".

THE FOUNDATIONS.

It is most necessary to lay a sure foundation before making any argument from scripture. Jesus Himself, and the Apostles gave to us a model way to lay a scriptural foundation. Outside of this there is the probability of error and/or a lack of certainty. It is certain that revelation knowledge would not contradict this foundation. So, let us look at the foundation, noting the New Testament reference back to the Law and the Prophets.

Luke 24:44 *"All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of **Moses, and in the prophets**, and in the Psalms.*

No one can pretend that everything prophesied within the Old Testament has been fulfilled, and yet the popular attitude is that this is so.

Luke 16:31 *"If they hear not **Moses and the prophets**".*

Acts 15:15 *"And to this agree the **words of the prophets**; as it is written".*

Acts 17:2 *"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them.....and reasoned with them **out of the scriptures**, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen from the dead"*

Acts 24:14 *"But this I confess, that after the way they call heresy, so worship I the god of my fathers, believing all things which are written **in the law and the prophets**".*
Acts 26:22 *"Saying none other things than those which **Moses and the prophets** did say should come".*
Isaiah 8:20 *"To the law and the testimony, if they speak not **according to this word**, it is because there is no light in them".*

For God to say that there is no light in those who do not speak from this foundation must be taken very seriously. The context for five verses above are about Jesus himself, and his mission. This was all prophesied in prophecy.

Romans 15:25-6 *"Now unto him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now **IS MADE MANIFEST, AND BY THE SCRIPTURES OF THE PROPHETS** according to the commandment of the everlasting god, made known....."*

The mystery cannot be manifest without the scriptures of the prophets. Those who decry the prophets are destroying their own ability to have understanding.

Through the New Testament, the Greek word "*graphe*" is used for what is written in the Old Testament and it is used about fifty times. This is a lot of times so there is no excuse for writing or speaking from another basis. To speak other than from the Law and the Testimony basis is to deceive. If the deceiving is done in ignorance, then it can be forgiven through repentance and a change in direction. So we must be aware that this is a vitally important subject that we are dealing with. For the Apostle Paul to say that he limited his teachings to those things that were based upon Moses and the prophets, disallows the popular teachings that Paul had additional revelations about "the Church" that were not contained within the Old Testament prophecies.

It might be questioned whether the traditional and the common basis used today is different from the basis and foundation Jesus and the apostles gave. What is going to be shown is that there are popular New Testament doctrines taught throughout many of the Christian denominations that do not have this right foundation. These doctrines are not usually those which concern elementary practical Christian living; they are those which concern prophecy, doctrines, history and end-time events, but there are practical applications.

ON THE RIGHT FOUNDATION, ISRAEL IS EXCLUSIVE.

In the Old Testament there is a great body of scripture that is consistent in spelling out the "*Exclusive Nature of Israel*" in words that are simple and direct. From this Old Testament foundation, it is found that the "Exclusive Nature of Israel" continues into the New Testament. Without the Old Testament foundation, the connection might be missed with the consequence that the national message of the Bible and the Kingdom of Heaven can no longer be proclaimed. This is why it is almost universally missed today.

The New Testament is a fulfilling of covenant promises made about Jesus and His mission to Israel, and this must be so according to what Jesus says in Luke 24:44 -["*All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law and the prophets, concerning Me*"]. If we move away from the foundation of the Old Testament into New Testament doctrine that does not have Old Testament foundations, then we must "get it wrong".

There are major areas of New Testament teachings today that do not have the Old Testament foundations. These have the appearance of being the Word of God; they are followed by perhaps 90% or more of denominations today. The sincerity of teachers is not being questioned here, and it will be indicated how that some of the slant in popular teachings originates from Rome, the Latin Vulgate, and the *Vaticanus* or *Sinaiticus* texts. The Greek exegetical theology of these Romanised texts by two famous unbelievers, Westcott and Hort, are treated in Bible schools and seminaries as being their final authorities! Most translators have used these two texts since the Authorised Version. This explains why the Roman Catholic Church so dearly wants to eliminate the Authorised Version, and also how the Protestants have been leavened in their beliefs.

There is undeviating agreement through both Testaments that will surprise many and there are aspects that may never have been thought about. This is because they are not ever presented in most denominations. It is the simplicity of the answers that will register, but this in turn will create other questions. These arise because they will conflict with traditional beliefs. These reactions will be common to most readers because most readers will have had the same teaching background that "The Jews" are Israel. The words "Jew and Gentiles" are key issues. In saying this it is said that the reader should have no reason to doubt his

redemption, because the reader probably will be an Israelite. This can be shown once pre-conditioning is overcome.

WE HAVE TO BELIEVE MOSES TO BE ABLE TO BELIEVE JESUS.

Jesus asks a question that every Christian today should be able to answer. Most denominations will not teach, ask or answer this question.

John 5:46-7. "For had you believed Moses, you would have believed me: for he wrote of Me, but if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe My words?."

Then we have:

John 3:12. "But, if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?."

Luke 16:31 "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead".

It is a simple thing to test some of the prophetic things that Moses wrote and see if these are commonly accepted by most denominations. If they are not accepted, then it is these denominations that have a great problem in their understanding of the words of Jesus.

This is saying that if we do not believe what Moses wrote, we will not be able to believe Jesus. To ignore Moses means that we cannot help misinterpreting Jesus' words. Let us look at some of the writings of Moses and see if it is safe to say that the greater majority of professing Christians do not believe the writings of Moses. When these words of Moses are not believed, the Words of Jesus cannot be properly understood. What this means, is that the greater majority of professing Christians are, of necessity, being taught things that are not fully the Truth concerning Jesus' Words.

It might be claimed that the Holy Spirit teaches us and guides us into all Truth, and that He speaks of Jesus, but the self-same Spirit of Truth would not encourage us to disbelieve the writings of Moses. He must want us to be guided into believing the writings of Moses in order that we might believe the Words of Jesus.

We are told about things pertaining to the Law in regard to sacrifices and rituals that are fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus speaks about certain things that will yet be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God [e.g. Luke 22:16]. The Kingdom of God is presented as being an inheritance yet to be possessed. In the book of Revelation we are told, "*until the Words of God shall be fulfilled*".

Moses is called a prophet, and no one can pretend that every Old Testament prophecy and promise is already fulfilled. For us to believe Moses, there are some things that he tells us that are not commonly accepted. What we believe about these things, conditions what we believe about in the New Testament. In other words, it conditions what we believe about Jesus' Words. What are some of these things that are not commonly believed in the writings of Moses?

MOSES WROTE and made statements about the Lord God of Israel and about Israel being God's people. Moses wrote about God's special relationship with Israel as being separated from all the other races. As soon as this is accepted, it can be seen that this also runs through the New Testament.

MOSES WROTE of covenants and promises made to Israel. The New Testament says that the promise "*Which was made unto the fathers [of Israel], God has fulfilled unto US THEIR CHILDREN" -[Acts 13:32-3]. There is never a mention of fulfilment in any others. We will see that the current popular concepts about "Israel" and the children [*sperma*] of Abraham are inadequate. There is a large amount of pre-conditioning from popular teachings to overcome, and this is never easy for anyone. Moses wrote about election in the same way that the Apostle Paul did and both were concerned with the same one people.*

MOSES WROTE about both the Word of God and the Law of Moses as being given only to Israel amongst all the other races. If this is so, then only Israel needed redemption from this Law Israel broke. This is why it is recorded that Jesus came, "*To save His people [Israel] from their sins*"-[Matt.1:21, Luke 1:77 etc.]. Through both Testaments the people concerned are always God's people before they are redeemed. To be "*bought back*" means that they must have been in a place of God's favour once before. This can only be Israel.

MOSES WROTE about the different destinies of each individual Tribe of Israel "*in the last days*". It is never a common destiny as "The Jews" in the way currently taught. He wrote of the birthright position of the sons of

Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, "in the last days". The prophecy made by Jacob -[Gen.48-9] and by Moses -[Deut.33] for "*the last days*" concerning the sons of Jacob are ignored. In today's teachings they do not even rate a mention, even if this is an important prophetic subject that has bearing on end-time events.

MOSES WROTE concerning Jesus, "*For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of YOUR brethren, like unto me: him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And, it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people*"-[Deut.18:15-19] This word for "like" is different in Acts 3:22 [*paromoiazō*] and Acts 7:37 [*hos*]. Jesus was to be raised up unto Israel [Ye "*men of Israel*" as being addressed] in the same manner and to the same people. To not hear this and to extend this to include all people of every race is to become destroyed from among the people. As Jesus says, "*IF THEY HEAR NOT MOSES AND THE PROPHETS, NEITHER WILL THEY BE PERSUADED THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD*"-[Luke 16:31]. This is not and was not the belief of our popular translators, and the contrary view has thus been written into the translations. While many are prepared to believe that Jesus rose from the dead, they are not prepared to believe what Jesus says. Jesus spake in John 6 about "*What if you shall see the Son of man ascend...*" making it very clear that only:

-*"No man can come unto to me except it be given to him of my Father"*-[V65].

-*"No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him"*-[V44].

-*"All that the Father giveth me"*-[V37 and 39].

This limitation still offends people -[V61] and is still "*a hard saying; who can hear it?*" -[V60]. All the religious tradition, translations, emotion or sentiment are not going to change it.

MOSES WROTE about what Balaam prophesied of the tents of Jacob and the tabernacles of Israel-[Numbers 24], and of what God's people would do to Moab, Sheth and Edom in the latter days. Each of these identities is ignored today, even if Jacob is mentioned 24 times in the New Testament and Israel occurs 75 times in the New Testament. One never hears of the destiny of Edom. Israel with Jacob occur 3,929 times by name through the Bible. This is one reason why the Bible can be said to be a book about Israel.

MOSES WROTE a song of which we are told in Rev.15:3 "*And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God...*". At this end of time, there is no change in the content of the Song Of Moses. In this song we are told, "*For the Lord's portion is His people, and Jacob is the lot of His inheritance*". At the end of this song we are told, "*And will be merciful unto His Land and to His people*"-[Deut.32:9+43]. These words were spoken to all Israel, only!

The Psalms and all the Prophets, together with the New Testament, consistently confirm what Moses wrote. They do not, and cannot, oppose each-other. We either agree or reject this, but Jesus says we must believe Moses if we say we believe Jesus.

John: 6:29 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of god that you believe on him whom he has sent".

If we really want to know the answer to the question that was asked and for our assemblies to work the works of God, this is the answer Jesus gave.

TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.

There is a consistent principle that that certainty is established in the mouth of two or three witnesses. We find this established in our law in marriage where it is necessary to say "*I do*" in front of witnesses, to become legal.

1. When a brother trespasses against another.

Matt.18:16 "*But if he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established*".

2. Paul rebuking those who have sinned. He repeats his warning.

2 Cor. 13:1 "*This is the third time I am coming to you In the mouth of two or three witness shall every word be established*".

3. How to check up and act on accusations against leaders in the Church.

1 Tim. 5:19 "*Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.*

4. The consequences of wilful sin are established.
Heb. 10:28 *"He that despised Moses' law dies without mercy under two or three witnesses.*
5. A good profession is to be maintained before many witnesses.
1 Tim. 6:12 *"Lay hold on eternal life whereunto you are also called, and have professed a good confession before many witnesses.*
6. Good teaching comes from many witnesses.
2 Tim.2:2 *"And the things you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.*
7. The death sentence must not be carried out without witnesses.
Num. 35:30 *"The murderer shall be put to death at the mouth of witnesses.*
8. To eliminate a false witness.
Deut. 19:15 *"One witness shall not rise up against any man for iniquity...at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall the matter be established.*
9. To establish land transfer.
Ruth 4:9 *"Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Eliminech's*
10. We are God's witnesses.
Isaiah 44:8 *"Have I not told you from that time, even ye are my witnesses. Is there a God beside me?*
11. God's righteousness is witnessed.
Rom. 3:21 *"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.*

CONCLUSION.

Sheep cannot stay healthy and well-fed on bad doctrine. For doctrine to be good, it must have the foundation given:

*Eph 2:20 And are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Quoting from an unknown source in a computer file, we can read about one of the major sources of false doctrine:

"It follows that, not to understand the distinction of Israel from Judah, is positively to misunderstand seven-eighths of the Bible, and yet, it is an undeniable fact, that 99 per cent, of our people do not recognise any difference as existing between Israel and Judah, and that, when you speak to them about Israel, they immediately think you are referring to the Jews, and read their Bible with this same false impression. Nationally, to this day, both Oxford and Cambridge are under this delusion, as well as all the Dissenting Colleges of the land; how, then, can we be surprised at the amount of stupid blundering and erroneous statements issuing from our pulpits, or wonder at the fact, that our pulpit ministrations do not gain the respect of the masses, so that, while the thousands regard the Church as a venerable Institution, the millions are really outside its influence?"

Brethren! is it not a lamentable assertion to make in 1876, that seven-eighths of the Bible are misunderstood? Yet it is, too truly, a fact. By not distinguishing Israel from Judah, we set all the prophetic books at variance with each other; we make one prophet give the direct falsehood to another; we make Isaiah call into question the prophecies of Jeremiah; and Jeremiah impugn the statements of Hosea. We set Joel against Amos, Zephaniah against Zechariah, and make Ezekiel contradict them all.

Hundreds of proofs are at hand to substantiate these statements, but a few must suffice. Isaiah, Hosea, and Christ declare Israel to be Lost. Isaiah 7:8; Hosea 1:10; 6:2; Matt. 15:24. Jeremiah and Ezekiel declare Judah to be Known. Jer. 24:9; Ezek. 22:4. Hosea declares Israel to be as the sand for Multitude. Hos. 1:10. Jeremiah declares Judah to be Few in number. Jer. 15:7. Isaiah, David, and Micah declare Israel to be the Strongest War Power upon earth. Isa. 41:11; Psa. 105:24, Micah 7:16. Whereas Jeremiah declares Judah to be Without Might. Jer. 19:7. God Almighty, Samuel, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah declare Israel

to be a Monarchy. H Sam. 7:12, 13; Psa. 89:4; Isa. 37:31; 49:23; Jer. 33:26. Jeremiah states Judah to be without Government, 17:4. Isaiah and Obadiah state Israel to be an Island Nation with large Colonies, 49:1, 8; Obad. 17. Jeremiah and Ezekiel state Judah to be strangers in all countries, without geographical inheritance. Jer. 24:9; Ezek. 22:16. Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, Habakkuk, and Paul declare Israel to be a Christian People. Isa. 44:23; Hos. 2:19; Micah 5:7; Hab. 3:13; Rom. 6:14. Whereas Ezekiel, Nahum, Zechariah, Christ, and Peter declare Judah to be under the Mosaic Law. Ezek. 43:18-27; Nahum 1:15; Zech. 9:11; Mark 7:9; Luke 13:35; 1 Peter 2:8. Many scores of such illustrations might be given. These statements are, in reality, perfectly harmonious.

It is only when we read Scripture in our blindness, under the impression that each statement refers to one and the same people, that it becomes contradictory; then it is that the whole Bible seems one mass of confusion, defying the genius of man to bring forth a shadow of reconciliation, without doing material damage to other parts of the Book. Tom Paine fell into the common error of looking at the Jews as the House of Israel, and states boldly in his writings that he was led into infidelity because he saw that the Jews could never verify the promises given to Israel; he therefore gave the Bible up as a myth.

Honestly, I cannot blame the man; for he did but exercise an acute judgement; and I frankly avow, that if my eyes had not been opened, and my mind instructed, to see that Israel and Judah are not the same people, I could have come to no other conclusion. I can never be too thankful to the Almighty, that in my youth He used the late Professor Wilson to show me the difference between the two Houses. The very understanding of this difference is *the key* by which almost the entire Bible becomes intelligible, and I cannot state too strongly, that the man who has not yet seen that the Israel of the Scriptures are totally distinct from the Jewish people, is yet in the very infancy, the mere alphabet of Biblical study, and that, to this day, the meaning of fully seven-eighths of the Bible is completely shut out to his understanding.

This is given by God Himself:

Isa. 65:13-15. *"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants (Israel) shall eat, but ye (Judah) shall be hungry,. behold, my servants (Israel) shall drink, but ye (Judah) shall be thirsty; behold, my servants (Israel) shall rejoice, but ye (Judah) shall be ashamed; behold, my servants (Israel) shall sing for joy of heart, but ye (Judah) shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit,. and ye (Judah) shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen (Israel); for the Lord God shall slay thee (Judah), and call His servants (Israel) by another name".*

Yes, "His Servant Race" is known by another name, but good doctrine will enable identification.