

Doctrinal Integrity - "What is Truth?"

Genesis 3:1-15

The Christian Church in North America has fallen into a state of laxity towards and departure from the orthodox Christian faith.

The church's greatest need is to return to doctrinal integrity. In particular, preachers who will stand in the pulpit every Sunday and preach the truth and nothing but the truth of God's Word.

Satan's temptation of Eve was in doctrinal integrity. He dared accuse God of lacking integrity. Since then, it has been hard to know what the truth is.

Jesus declared that He was the truth and the life. This means then, that the good news of Jesus involves a clear declaration of Him, the truth, in a world full of lies. It behooves all Christians therefore, in their witnessing for and of Christ to declare the full truth of the Gospel.

The Source of Truth

Any time you begin a discussion of doctrinal integrity; you must start with the presupposition that God is Truth. God has placed in the universe all true knowledge.

All knowledge and truth reside in Him. He is therefore the source of all truth in the created order. When He told Adam not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Genesis 2, He was asserting truth to Adam. Hence, anything that God has said through His word, whether spoken or written, conveys truth. Truth is doctrine.

Satan openly declared to Eve that what God said was not the truth, but false. He insinuated that God was a liar and therefore, he introduced falsehood, or the lack of integrity into the world. Jesus called Satan a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44

To redeem mankind and all of creation, God had to introduce truth into the world. God did this through Jesus Christ.

The Personification of Truth

Jesus Christ, who was God and therefore truth, came to us in the form in flesh and blood like us. In this way, truth reentered the world, pushing back Satan's dark kingdom, the kingdom of sin and death. Christ said, "I am the way (to God), the truth (of God), and the (spiritual) life (of God). No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

The only way to salvation is for you and me to believe in Him - Who he is and what He has done for us in His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. This is truth. Salvation and the forgiveness of sins in Christ is truth. It is doctrine. Anything contrary to this is a lie.

Christ bore witness to Him, the Truth, when He engaged Pilate in John 18:37. Truth stood and spoke in front of Pilate, yet he asked, "What is truth?" Pilate was spiritually blind.

In John 17:17, Jesus, knowing that He would soon be leaving the earth, prayed that His disciples would be sanctified by the truth of God's word.

The "word" refers to both Jesus Christ and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The word is truth. It is the doctrine by which Christ desires both the twelve and us to live. The Word transformed and purified them and does us also for service in the kingdom of God. In this passage, Jesus is praying that God set apart His disciples "in truth" that they might proclaim the truth of His Gospel in this world of falsehood and darkness.

The Distribution of Truth

For the church to proclaim the truth of Christ, she must know and understand truth - doctrine- and communicate it effectively.

The Great Commission found in Matt. 28:18-20 shows us this. It is the church's job to evangelize, to share the gospel with unbelievers, and then, when they convert, teach them the truth of scripture, thereby grounding them in the faith. To do this, the church must be sound in doctrine. To be anything less than this is to lack integrity. When we lack doctrinal integrity, we are not communicating the truth, thereby disobeying God.

We lack doctrinal integrity when in our evangelism we press for an emotional response without first properly conveying the great doctrines of the Christian faith to the individual. We must understand that a proper response of the heart can only be made after the truth of the Gospel has been imparted to the sinner. Only after the truth of the gospel is understood can a genuine response take place. Anything less is a lack of doctrinal integrity.

We also lack doctrinal integrity when we do not teach all who embrace Christ the truths of Scripture. It behooves ministers who stand in the pulpit every Sunday to be faithful in knowing, understanding, and communicating the truth of the Scriptures.

Challenge: Read the Standards of the Reformed Churches: Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort, along with the Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.