BIBLE DOCTRINE IN THE CONTEXT OF WORSHIP AND THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE MAN OF GOD

By Brother Mike Sutherland

Your doctrine will affect the Spirit of your worship, the object of your worship, and the truth of your worship. Please note the following passages in *Matthew 15:7-9*, *John 4:23-24*, *Acts 17:23-30*, and *Romans 1:25*:

> [7] Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, [8] This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. [9] But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. *Matthew 15:7-9*

> [23] But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. [24] God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. *John 4:23-24*

> [23] For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. [24] God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; [25] Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; [26] And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; [27] That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: [28] For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. [29] Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. [30] And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: *Acts 17:23-30*

> [25] Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. *Romans 1:25*

The Biblical conclusion is that for your worship to be right your doctrine must be right. The Bible puts much emphasis on the word "doctrine". The word "doctrine" is used 56 times in your Bible. In its first use in your King James Bible, doctrine is described as being the "words of my [God's] mouth". Therefore, every reference to the "words of God" in your Bibles is doctrine. The word "doctrine" is used 50 times in the New Testament. The denial of sound doctrine leads to heresy and apostasy.

Heresy is the deliberate act of a professing Christian of obstinately rejecting the plain words and the

plain teaching of the word of God even after proper teaching and rebuke. It is an outright confrontational denial and rejection of the truths of the Bible.

A simple definition of apostasy is the abandonment of something once held to be truth. Apostasy is the result of knowing the truth, and even stating a belief in it, but refusing to live by the truth. Apostasy is rooted in ignorance of the Word of God, the fear of men, the worship of self, and Christians living unholy lives. In Hosea 4:6, the Bible says, "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge". This lack of knowledge comes from Christians in the pews refusing to study their Bibles at home and from preachers and teachers refusing to study and to declare the whole counsel of the Word of God in their churches. *2 Timothy 2:15* says: " Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth". *Psalm 119:11* says: " Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee".

Apostasy results more from a lack of application of the Word of God in the lives of believers than from an outright rejection of the Word of God. Therein lies the difference between heresy and apostasy. The toleration of heresy in a congregation will lead to apostasy because it grieves God the Holy Ghost. For that reason, the toleration of heresy and apostasy in a church will destroy Biblical worship of God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Ghost is the most sensitive person in any congregation. Grieve the Holy Ghost and you grieve worship.

There are at least ten different passages in the New Testament that require that Christians to separate from heretics, apostates, the unsaved, and unholy Christians. At some point in this study, we will deal with all those passages. The separation required results from the Biblical exercise of church discipline.

God's charge to the man of God in *2 Timothy 4:2-5* is to:

> [2] Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. [3] For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; [4] And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. [5] But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. *2 Timothy 4:2-5*

Believe me, the apostates and heretics in today's Satanic churches have declared open season on Bible believing churches, preachers, and teachers. They are well practiced at throwing the fiery darts of the wicked under the control of the arm and aim of Satan. Today's Bible believing churches are in great peril as they sail against the hurricane forces of unsound doctrine on a sea of apostasy infested by Satan's ships who are being blown about by every wind of false doctrine. Thank God for the steady hand of the Captain of our salvation who is at the helm of every separated, Bible believing church.

God's charge to Jeremiah was "be not afraid of their faces" (*Jeremiah 1:8*). God further expanded upon that warning to Jeremiah when he stated in *Jeremiah 1:17-19*:

> [17] Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. [18] For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. [19] And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee. *Jeremiah 1:17-19*

God's charge to Ezekiel was:

> [1] Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. [2] So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. [3] And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. [4] And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. [5] For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; [6] Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. [7] But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted. [8] Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. [9] As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. [10] Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. [11] And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. *Ezekiel 3:1-11*

What we need today is a Nathan that will tell the political and religious leaders, "thou art the men". What we need today is some more Pauls who will not shun to declare unto all the world all the counsel of God. What we need in Christianity is some more Micaiahs who will not sugar coat the truth for our ungodly political leaders. The Holy Ghost said of Micaiah in *2 Chronicles 18:7*:

> [7] And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. *2 Chronicles 18:7*

Micaiah was thrown in prison by Ahab because he told the truth to Ahab. In this particular instance, King Jehoshaphat of Judah was rebuked by the prophet Jehu for coming to the aid of King Ahab of

Israel in these famous words:

> [2] And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. *2 Chronicles 19:2*

Now, that is a strong passage that has its New Testament parallel in James 4:4 which states:

> [4] Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. *James 4:4*

That is a strong statement from a man of God. We need more men like James who will not be shrinking violets when it comes to declaring and living the truths of the Word of God. We need many more men like Peter who said: "we ought to obey God rather than men" (*Acts 5:29*). We need an holy flock of teachers and preachers that are willing to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ". We have so many fearful men in pulpits today who turn and run when the battle is pitched. *Proverbs 29:25* states:

> [25] The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. *Proverbs 29:25*

We have to many men, and unscriptural women, standing behind pulpits and lecterns who put their trust in their intellects, degrees, and titles rather than trusting in the Lord. God forbid that either I or you should seek after any degrees, titles, and applause that be of men. Elihu said in *Job 32:21-22*:

> [21] Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. [22] For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away. *Job 32:21-22*

God the Holy Ghost said in *Jeremiah 9:23-24*:

> [23] Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: [24] But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. *Jeremiah 9:23-24*

Most men today are lifted up in their pride and they glory in themselves rather than glorying in the Lord Jesus Christ. When we have a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we will see our selves as Job did himself when he stated in *Job 40:3-5* and *Job 42:5-6*:

> [3] Then Job answered the LORD, and said, [4] Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. [5] Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. *Job 40:3-5*

> [5] I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. [6] Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. *Job 42:5-6*

Any head knowledge that we have that is not enlightened by the Holy Ghost rests in the wisdom of men. The Holy Ghost said in *1 Corinthians 3:18-20*:

> [18] Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. [19] For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. [20] And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. *1 Corinthians 3:18-20*

Paul did not glory in his theological degrees and titles. He gloried in the cross. Paul said in *Galatians 6:14*:

> [14] But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. *Galatians 6:14*

The cross will separate you from the world folks. Paul did not consider himself to be the chiefest of theologians, but rather the chiefest of sinners. If you glory in your flesh, it is an indication that you have not been in the presence of the Lord today. We have said all this about men to say that even the greatest of men are but men. Elihu in speaking to Job has this to say of great men in *Job 32:9*:

> [9] Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment. *Job 32:9*

That being said, we need to remember that the men that God has put over us do battle with sin all day long and are subject to the same temptations, weaknesses, and sin nature as all of us. Pray for them. In closing, we want you to understand that the the two most perverted doctrines by false teachers and apostates is the doctrines of salvation and holiness. Salvation establishes an eternal relationship with God. Holiness maintains fellowship in that relationship between God and the Bible believer.

Holiness is but a theoretical doctrine until it is put into practice in our lives. The words that relate to personal holiness, the holiness of God, and holy places occupy a prominent place in Scripture. Words that relate to these three are used in the Bible a minimum of 1,076 times in 996 verses. Hence, God places a great deal of importance on holiness because He is holy. Salvation is even

referred to as holiness in *Hebrews 12:14*. Holiness in our lives magnifies the power of the Holy Ghost into our hearts. The personality of the Bible is manifested in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why the Bible is a living book. We close with *Hebrews12:9-14*:

> [9] Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? [10] For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. [11] Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. [12] Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; [13] And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. [14] Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: *Hebrews 12:9-14*