

“You and Your Beliefs”--Introduction

Intro: Do you know what you believe?

Do you know what you believe about...God, the Bible, Man, Sin, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, Angels and Demons, the Church, the End Times?

All of us believe something about these matters. What we believe may be right, or it may be wrong. We're talking about doctrine. Systematic Theology.

New Series--"You and Your Beliefs"

Q: What do you believe about...

1. The Doctrine of God: Theology Proper
2. The Doctrine of the Scriptures: Bibliology
3. The Doctrine of Jesus Christ: Christology
4. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: Pneumatology
5. The Doctrine of Man: Anthropology
6. The Doctrine of Sin: Harmartiology
7. The Doctrine of Salvation: Soteriology
8. The Doctrine of the Church: Ecclesiology
9. The Doctrine of Angels: Angelology
10. The Doctrine of Last Things: Eschatology

Aim of Series:

a) To spend 2 weeks per doctrine

b) To survey the Scriptures and develop a concise statement of the essentials for each doctrine (Ask the question, "What would you die for in this doctrine?")

Examples of Essentials (test for Orthodoxy):

--The Deity of Jesus Christ (both God and Man)

--The Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Scriptures

--The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Examples of Non-Essentials (not a test for Orthodoxy):

--How many angels could sit on the head of a pin?

--Dichotomy/Trichotomy view of Man

--Systems of Eschatology?

Chart: "Hierarchy of Beliefs" by Ken Bickel—We have different levels of "belief;" we have dogma (biblical absolutes), doctrine (biblical convictions), and tradition (personal preferences); give examples...

Q: How do we determine what we believe? How do we do theology?

Key: Our Systematic Theology must grow out of our Bible Study (exegesis).

This is critical. Often we get the tables turned...

Illust: We "know" what we believe, and go to the Bible to find a verse!

Resources: I will be using the following resources in this study...

--The Bible (!)

--Class notes and materials from Dr. Victor Matthews ("Christian Life Class")

--Know the Truth, Milne

--Elemental Theology, Bancroft

--Personal Studies

The Doctrine of God

Q: What do you believe about God?

Key: Your concept of God, more than anything else, determines your beliefs and practices in life. The way you view God affects how you live.

Q: Do you know one of Satan's primary objectives?

A: To get people to think wrong thoughts about God.

Eg--Gen 3:1-10

3:1 "Yea, hath God said..."

Q: What did Satan attack?

A: Satan attacks the authority of God, namely the authority of His Word.

3:4-5 "You shall not die; For God knows..."

Q: What did Satan attack?

A: The Wisdom and Plan of God

Illust: The real problem with Evolution is here. As a system, it attacks the integrity of what the Scriptures say about God. Did God really create the world like Genesis says He did? Listen. Once you discredit God as Creator, there no basis for Him to be Redeemer.

Your "Theology Proper" is what you believe about God.

J. B. Phillips, in his book,
We wrongly think of God like the following.

1. A Resident Policeman--God is our Conscience.
2. A Parental Hangover
3. A Grand Old Man--God is sentimental, even forgetful (that's why we pray, to remind Him of things...)

Discuss: What are other examples of wrong views of God?

Q: Why do we have wrong views of God?

A: We've been influenced by various things in our past.

Discuss: What influences have shaped the way we view God?

1. Parents
2. Church
3. The Bible
4. Preachers/Speakers
5. Friends/Peers

I'll be honest. I'd like to think that we as a church have the primary influence on the way people attending WBC view God and life. But we compete (and often lose!) with some powerful forces...

Eg--Barbers/Beauticians--A lot of "theology" is discussed in the shop!

Eg--Talk Shows--Oprah, Geraldo, Dr. Phil

Eg—Popular music

Key: These people influence people's theology. They are "theologians" (not in the good sense) because they shape the way people view God and life.

Q: How should we view God? What is the right view of God?

A: We should view God the way He describes Himself in Scripture.

Illust:

Challenge: We need to "re-teach" our consciences about God. Many people struggle with guilt that shouldn't, and others don't that should...because they have wrong thoughts and wrong images about God.

Illust:

Next Week:

How Does God Reveal Himself in the Scriptures?

I. The Attributes of God

II. The Activities of God

III. The Names of God

I. The Attributes of God

Q: What's an attribute? Qualities and characteristics of God

Q: Name some of God's attributes with references for each...

1. God is a Spirit

Jn 4:24 "God is a Spirit..."

2. Infinite

Ps 147:5 "Great is our Lord...His understanding is infinite."

3. Unchanging

Mal 3:6 "For I am the LORD; I change not..."

4. Perfect

Mt 5:48 "Be perfect...your Father in heaven is perfect."

5.

Warning: We don't know a person just because we know details about him.

Eg--Take for instance Bill Gates. I can know the number of hairs on his head, his weight, the color of his eyes, his IQ, the size of his foot. I could know all of these attributes of his, and still not KNOW HIM AS A PERSON.

So it is with God. I can know details about God, and still not know the Person of God. Why is that?

II. The Activities of God

III. The Names of God

[\[1\]](#) Revision of series taught at WBC in 1992.

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