

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 2/1/06 Wednesday evening

"You and Your Beliefs"--Theology Proper

Do you know what you believe?

All of us have beliefs. We believe things about sports teams, which schools offer the best education, politics, which grocery store offers the best products, and so on. We also have beliefs about such vital subjects as: God, the Bible, Man, Sin, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, Angels and Demons, the Church, the End Times?

Our beliefs are held because of past influences.

Discuss: What are some examples of influences that affect beliefs? Our parents, our friends, television, school, books, music, and so on. What's the problem with those influences? They can be mistaken and erroneous.

Is there an influence that is absolutely true and reliable? Yes! God has revealed Himself in His Word, the Bible. That is the source of truth from which we are seeking answers in this current series...

Current Series--"You and Your Beliefs"

Series Overview:

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

Q: Where do you look in the Bible to find out what you should believe about these topics?

A: There is no one place! God did not give us a book in the Bible where He listed what we should believe per se.

Key: That's known as "Systematic Theology."

Definition: "Theology is the science of God, or more fully, thought and speech which issue from a knowledge

of God." (Bruce Milne, 11)

Systematic theology is the attempt to arrange systematically what we believe about God and God's truth.

See Diagram: Theological Encyclopedia

Bible Study (Exegesis) >>Systematic Theology>>Christian Experience

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?")

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.

Last Week: Wrong Conceptions we have about God...

This week, let's explore the question... What is the right view of God? Of course, the answer is that we should view God the way He describes Himself in Scripture. That raises the question...

How Does God Reveal Himself in the Scriptures?

He reveals Himself in three ways...

I. The Attributes of God

II. The Activities of God

III. The Names of God

I. The Attributes of God--What Is God Like?

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

There are many attributes of God listed in Scripture. Name some of God's attributes with references for each...

God is...

--Holy (Is 6:3; I Pt 1:17) = absolutely unique

--Perfect (Mt 5:48)

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

--Infinite (Ps 147:5) = without limitation

1. Omnipotent (Gen 17:1)

2. Omnipresent (Ps 139:7-12)

3. Omniscient (Ps 147:5)

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

--Self-Existent (Gen 1:1; Is 40:13; Job 38:4) = depends on nothing else

--A Spirit (Jn 4:24)

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

--Just and Righteous (Hos 14:9; I Jn 1:9)

--True (Ps 31:5)

--Faithful (I Jn 1:9)

--Unchanging (Mal 3:6) = immutable; always consistent

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

--Love (I Jn 4:8) = always does what is best

--Good (Ex 33:19; Rom 2:4)

--Gracious (Ex 33:19)

--Merciful (Tit 3:5)

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--What Has God Done?

The following activities of God are presented in Scripture:

1. God decreed all that should ever come to pass (Eph 1:11; II Tm 1:9).

2. God created the heavens and the earth (Gen 1-2).
3. God revealed Himself to mankind:
 - through Creation (Ps 19:1)
 - through His Word (Ps 119; II Tim 3:16-17; II Pt 1:19-21)
 - through His Son (Heb 1:1-3)
4. God has redeemed a people for Himself (Ex 6:6; Gal 3:13; Rev 5:9)

Discuss: Why does God want us to know that He is the author of these activities?

III. The Names of God

While there are many names for God, each reveals some distinct aspect of His character and grace.

1. Elohim -- God

*2,550 times in OT

*"All Powerful"--the word declares God to be the Supreme, Eternal, Almighty, the Creator (Gen 1:1-2:3)

See: II Samuel 22:31-33

2. Jehovah (Yahweh) -- LORD

*6,823 times in OT

*This is the name God gave to Moses in Ex 3:14, "I AM that I AM."

*Covenant Redeemer

The name probably comes from the verb "to be" and signifies that God will become whatever His people need in order to fulfill His will.

3. Adonai --Lord

*340 times in OT

*emphasizes Absolute Sovereignty of God over everything

*Isaiah 6:1, 8

4. Compound names of God

Purpose: To show how practical God wants to be in the lives of His people!

- a) El Shaddai -- God Almighty (Gen 17:1)
- b) El Elyon -- The Most High God (Ps 91:1)
- c) El Olam -- The Everlasting God (Gen 21:33)
- d) El Roe -- The God that Sees me (Gen 16:13)
- e) Jehovah-Sabaoth -- The LORD of Hosts (Joshua 5:13, 14)
- f) Jehovah-Jireh -- The LORD will provide (Gen 22:14)
- g) Jehovah-Rapha -- The LORD that heals (Ex 15:26)
- h) Jehovah-Nissi -- The LORD my banner (Ex 17:15)
- i) Jehovah-M'qaddishkem -- The LORD that sanctifies (Ex 31:13)
- j) Jehovah-Shalom -- The LORD of Peace (Jd 6:24)
- k) Jehovah-Rohi -- The LORD is my Shepherd (Ps 23:1)
- l) Jehovah-Tsidkenu -- The LORD our Righteousness (Jer 23:6)
- m) Jehovah-Shammah -- The LORD is there (Ezek 48:35)

5. Jesus

Key: In the NT, the name of "Jesus" fulfills and possesses all the truth contained in the names God used to reveal Himself in the OT. That's why salvation begins by believing on His name (Jn 1:12). That's also why we pray in His name (Jn 14:13, 14).

Discuss: What does the fact that God uses various names teach us about Him?

Conclusion:

Discuss: In light of Who God Is, what is the appropriate response to God?

Knowing the truth about God should cause us to do three things...

(see V. Matthews, Christian Life syllabus)

1. Worship (Jn 4:23-24)
2. Praise (I Chr 29:11-13)
3. Obedience (Deut 7:7-11)

