

DISTILLED DOCTRINE

Deuteronomy 32:1-4 Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. 2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: 3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. 4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

THESIS: To show that pure doctrine must be followed by fruitful lives.

INTRO.: A. Moses uses the vehicle of music to impart sound doctrine (cf. 31:30). He could have titled this song "Our Rock" (cf. vv.4,15,18,30,31) or "Their rock is not as our Rock"! (This is obviously the first "Rock Music!" It isn't "hard rock" – it is Solid Rock!)

B. The text verse is v.2 where Moses emphasizes doctrine. He says he will teach "**DISTILLED DOCTRINE**" i.e., he will extract truth and refine it so it will produce blessings. "**My doctrine shall drop as rain, my speech shall distill as the dew...upon the tender herb...as the showers upon the grass.**" Distilled water is purified water. **DISTILLED DOCTRINE** is pure doctrine.

TRANS.: Today there is a dearth of pure or "DISTILLED DOCTRINE" in the land. Bible doctrine must be the common denominator among God's people. Preaching must be doctrinal (instructive). There is a dearth of sound doctrine today. Why? Christians have little discernment. Let's look at the spectrum of viewpoints among groups today...

I. THE 'NO DOCTRINE' CROWD:

A. "Entertain Me!"

ILLUS.: A lady came to the preacher one day and said "That was a great sermon, there weren't no doctrine or nuttin' in it!"

1. Our brains have been shifted into neutral due to TV, movies and the media.
2. We only do not read books, but we don't even read THE BOOK!
3. We avoid anything that forces us to use our minds.

ILLUS.: The Pastor gave in to a request to invite a special well-known blind singer in for a service. The church was packed. He was helped to the platform and sang "What a Friend..." and got many "Amens"! The crowd was teary eyed and ecstatic as he sang with pathos and feeling. Then he announced his next song would be "I didn't know God made honky-tonk angels" The crowd responded the same way. It was the presentation, not the content that was the key ingredient! So it is in many "no doctrine" churches.

- a. The content is overlooked because of the entertainment value.

ILLUS.: This is why crowds will pay and pack out a music concert but complain when the offering plate is passed and stay home from church if the teaching/preaching is doctrinal! "*What is said makes little difference because what is said is **not heard!***" - Vaughn

- b. If a speaker can tell jokes and sad stories he becomes popular, but laughing and crying is not an evidence of Spirit-power.
- c. Style, not content, becomes the standard.

ILLUS.: "Genuine emotion is when God makes His truth live in our hearts. In God-given emotion the brain is never put out of gear." - Vaughn "Emotionalism" originates from without and as soon as the external stimulus is removed it is gone. The heart may be briefly warmed but the head remains empty.

One preacher was criticized for doctrinal preaching: "God doesn't want your education." The preacher responded: "Neither will God bless your ignorance."

- d. Strong emotions often accompany good preaching and teaching, but it is not the standard of measure.

ILLUS.: Moses uses music (emotion) as a vehicle to communicate sound doctrine and evoked varied emotions of regret, repentance, conviction, etc. of a spiritual nature. Clapping, shouting, waving hands, "amens," etc. are biblical, as are tears, sorrow, etc., but there must be a balance.

II. THE 'ALL DOCTRINE' CROWD:

A. A "Head Trip": 2 Cor. 3:6

1. All doctrine churches are sound in doctrine and generally *sound asleep!*
2. The Bible warns that "knowledge puffeth up" - your head may be swollen with truth and your life devoid of Spirit fullness.
3. Some are "doers" only – these are "hearers" only.
4. The No Doctrine crowd thrives on emotion – the All Doctrine crowd downgrades experience.

ILLUS.: Bible truths lead to experiences which are emotional: pardon for sin, answered prayer, praise, obedience, thanksgiving, etc. The filling of the Spirit may produce joy, tears or both. In some circles anything which raises the pulse rate beyond 72 beats is suspect or considered demonic!

5. Doctrine should not be mere theory – but real life.

III. THE 'FALSE DOCTRINE' CROWD:

A. "Is It Relevant?"

1. The "theology of relevance" distorts doctrine (Gothard, Schuller, Rick Warren, Joel Osteen) to meet needs; its roots are in psychology, more than the Bible.
2. First the reliability of Scripture was questioned and then the relevance of Scripture.

ILLUS.: We are witnessing the replacement of the Bible with mental health science or psychology. This was popularized in the 50's & 60's with Narramore and Gothard, and now has proliferated to Swindoll, Dobson, and those mentioned above. They say "Of course the Bible is good, but it is not enough." In 1880 one of every four college students were Bible majors. In 1980 one of four were psychology majors!

3. The emphasis has shifted from holiness (God's and man's) to practicality and relevance.
4. Someone has defined heresy as "truth out of balance."
5. The doctrine of grace has been stretched to where accountability and all restrictions are termed legalistic.

ILLUS.: This group says "back off doctrine – it interferes with our lifestyle!"

IV. THE 'ANY DOCTRINE' CROWD:

A. "Sloppy Agape":

1. This crowd chooses a church on the basis of atmosphere, not doctrine.
2. This is the "love covers all" crowd (Moral Majority, Promise Keepers, etc.).

ILLUS.: "Revival" is when everyone "gets the spirit" – Baptists, Catholics, and Mormons. Forget doctrinal differences. Biblical unity is based on truth, not experience!!! Truth has always been divisive. (Amos 3:3) This group eliminates truth to create harmony and unity. But the Bible basis for fellowship is doctrine.

2 John 9-10 *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:*

3. Love without truth leads to emotionalism and heresy.

V. THE 'GOOD DOCTRINE' CROWD:

A. "Truth on Fire":

Jeremiah 20:9 *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*

1. The Bible is for reading and heeding. 2 Tim. 3:16
2. Creed precedes conduct.
3. Doctrine must not only inform, but it must also inspire.

ILLUS.: As the bone structure of our body gives form to our flesh, so our experience and practice must conform to God's Word.

4. Some preaching binds people to a man, great preaching binds men to God.
5. We need doctrine which has been distilled – purified from impurities.

CONCL.: Sound doctrine is like the "small rain upon the tender herb, as the showers upon the grass" – it "publishes the name of the Lord" and "ascribes greatness to our God."

Commitment must follow conviction. **DISTILLED DOCTRINE** must produce definite decisions. Belief must be followed with behavior. If you believe in Christ – trust Him – obey Him! Salvation, baptism, membership, stewardship,...