Why is it important to learn the doctrine of Christ?

Intro:
- doctrine is not popular in religion and churches today – doctrine shunned to promote church growth

- illus.: Rick Warren, Seven things a church must adopt to grow dramatically (church growth movement, purpose driven church movement). — postmodern society — rf. many churches today
- notes: take from the Saddleback Community Church "Building a Purpose-Driven Church" seminar held in Southern California - 1998
  - Rick Warren started the church in January, 1980, in his home
  - he built the church into a superchurch, gave seminars, “Building a Purpose-Driven Church”
  - wrote the book “The Purpose Driven Life” published August 2002
  - he also has
    - books: “The Purpose-Driven Church” and “Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry” and others
    - website: “Purpose Driven Church”
    - network: “Purpose Driven Network”

- not review principles 1-5 for this lesson

- #6 Doctrinal instruction should not be given to the church as a whole on Sunday.
  - should be given in sub-groups, apart from the regular church services, as an option for interested parties
  - i.e.,
    - not proclaim the "whole counsel of God" from the pulpit (Acts 20:20-31)
    - never teach doctrine, or have any evidence of doctrinal positions communicated on church sign or literature available at Sunday service
    - never say the word “denomination” or talk about other religions to point out their error

- this lesson:
  - Why is it important to learn doctrine? – unlike what other religions say
What is doctrine?
- **doctrine:** that which is taught, or the act of teaching (instructing) (Vine’s)
  - **teaching:** the Greek is translated “doctrine” and “teaching”
    - **translations vary,** the KJV may read “doctrine” and the AS may read “teaching”

- **Eph. 4:14** there are different religious doctrines (teachings) in the world - one is right, all others are wrong
  - **illus.: rf** - Matt. 16:12 Jesus warns apostles to beware of the Pharisees doctrine (teaching)
  - **illus.: rf** - 1 Tim. 4:1 Paul warns of false doctrines entering in the later times – doctrines of demons

- **Mk. 1:27** Jesus’ doctrine (teaching) was new, different from other religions (Jew, Gentile)
  - **Jn. 7:16-17** Jesus’ doctrine (teaching) is that of His Father
  - **illus.: the high priest questioned Jesus about His doctrine,** Jewish trial before crucifixion (Jn. 18:19)
  - **illus.: Sermon on the Mount** – you have heard. . . , but I say. . . . (Matt. 5:21f)

- **Acts 5:28; 17:19** the apostles’ doctrine (doctrine of Christ) was different from other religions (Jew, Gentile)
  - as Christians, we study and learn the doctrine of Christ, rejecting all other doctrines

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It’s important to learn the doctrine so you do the right things – know you’re in right church, doing right things
- **Acts 2:42** church, steadfast in apostle’s doctrine (teaching)
  - can’t please God if don’t know doctrine
  - can’t worship or serve God if don’t know doctrine
  - can’t know if you’re in the right church if don’t know doctrine
  - **illus.: Bible student question, “how can you tell whether you’re in the right church”**
    - learn doctrine: salvation, baptism, worship, church, etc. - examine church

- **Mk. 7:7-9** if we teach and practice human religious doctrines, our worship is vain
  - Hos. 4:6 “My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. . . .”
  - if we don’t know the doctrine of Christ, we could be worshiping in vain, destroyed

- **Tit. 2:7-8** we have to know doctrine to be good examples, purity of doctrine – do right things
  - we have to know Christ’s doctrine so we can obey, do the right things
It’s important to learn the doctrine to be saved – go to heaven
- Jn. 12:47-48 Jesus’ word will judge us – have to know doctrine (teaching) to be saved
- 2 Jn. 1:9 must abide in teaching (doctrine) of Christ to be saved – go too far, we’re lost
- Col. 3:17 must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus
- illus.: become Christian, know fundamental doctrine of salvation, then grow and mature learning more and more and applying to life

- Rom. 6:17 obey doctrine (teaching) from heart, saved
- illus.: Rick Warren, church growth, don’t teach doctrine in the assembly
  - churches today that don’t teach doctrine aren’t teaching people how to be saved
  - they’re telling people what they want to hear

- Col. 2:20-23 if we live according to human religious doctrines, (vs. 22) we live in sin (vs. 23)
  - we have to learn Christ’s doctrine to be saved, and grow spiritually

It’s important to learn the doctrine to be a leader in the church
- 1 Tim. 4:13 in the church we give attention to doctrine (teaching)
  - leaders in the church are giving attention: teaching, example, practice

- 1 Tim. 4:6 in the church we point out false doctrine (vs. 1-5), nourished on words of faith and sound doctrine
  - leaders on the church are teaching and pointing out false doctrine, so all are nourished spiritually

- Tit. 1:9; 2:1 we teach sound doctrine and refute false doctrine in the church

- illus.: contrast denominational wisdom to not teach doctrine, not point out and refute false doctrine
  (Rick Warren, Seven things a church must adopt to grow dramatically)
  - #7 A spirit of compromise must prevail in the church that is to experience dynamic growth.
    - embrace of contemporary culture and style
      - What works? things that are the least offensive, and what is positive and uplifting — nothing negative
      - church leader’s attitude must be (Waren): "Don't try to tell me the Bible requires holiness and a style for worship and ministry that is different from that of the world." This "grace-in-your-face" attitude is so prevalent today because of church elders who are not willing, or not aware of how, to instruct ones to behave in the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15).
      - i.e.,
        - never tell anyone they’re wrong, always find a way to agree with everyone
        - never reprove and rebuke — only exhort (2 Tim. 4:2)
        - tickle people’s ears (2 Tim. 4:3)
        - don’t contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 1:3)

- to be a leader in the “Lord’s church”, you have to know the doctrine, to lead by doing and teach the things of God
  - illus.: friend leading friend, teacher leading student, elder leading flock
important to learn doctrine: do right things, be saved, be leader in church

➤ It’s important to learn the doctrine to lead people to Christ with the gospel – help them get to heaven
- 1 Tim. 1:3-4a, 7, 10 must know doctrine and teach doctrine to save people - lead people to Christ

➤ - 1 Tim. 4:16 pay close attention to doctrine (teaching) save self and others

- the best thing we can do to help someone is learn the doctrine of Christ, then we can help others obey Jesus and be saved

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➤ How do we learn doctrine? (not point of this lesson) – quick overview – rf. series on learning
- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 learn Scriptures – all Scripture profitable for doctrine (teaching)
  - we must study and learn the Bible, to learn the doctrine

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Summary / Inv.
- you can’t do anything without first learning the doctrine of Christ
  - illus.: be saved, become a Christian, serve God, teacher others, be a leader in the church

- Are you studying and learning the doctrine of Christ?
  - illus.: personal Bible study on what you personally need to learn
  - illus.: church Bible study, program of teaching overseen by elders

- Are you memorizing the doctrine of Christ?
  - do you know principles, verses teaching the principles

- If you are young, are you working toward knowing the doctrine well enough to be a church leader, and teach the lost?
  - illus.: teach Bible class
  - illus.: teach friends and family, lead to Christ with the gospel

- Why is it important to learn the doctrine of Christ?
  - to do the right things
  - to be saved
  - to be a leader in the Lord’s church
  - to lead people to Christ with the gospel

- inv.: do you need to obey the doctrine of Christ?