



**Old Testament Reading – Jeremiah 2:1-13 – New Testament
Reading – Jude 1:1-25**

**This I Believe: (Introductory Sermon # 2)
“The Essential Doctrines of the Christian Faith”
2 Timothy 3:1-17**

Doctrinal integrity was the battle for the 1st century Church, it is the battle for the 21st century Church, and it will be the battle until the rapture of the Church.

- Satan’s strongest attack against the Church today is from false teachers, false prophets, false apostles, false pastors, false preachers, and false Christians, who are more concerned about getting all the blessings of God they think they deserve, rather than understanding what God has done through Jesus Christ to give them what they could never deserve.

- According to Titus 1:9, the essential calling of a pastor is to, **“Hold fast the faithful word, which is in accordance with the teaching, so he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict it.”**
- It is the pastor’s primary responsibility to equip the Church to stand firm against those who would, in any way, diminish the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith, and if he doesn’t do that, he is not a God-called pastor.
- A pastor who abdicates that primary responsibility becomes a false teacher and contributes to the theological weakness of today’s Church.

Today’s false teachers have led today’s Church to embrace a revived form of theological liberalism; that God is such a loving God, even if there is a literal hell, He will not send anyone to it.

- These pastors took off their belt of truth and embraced the lies and fables of men.
- These pastors took off their breastplate of righteousness and replaced it with the cloak of social justice and good works.
- These pastors laid aside the sword of the Spirit, which is the unchanging Word of God, and accepted the ever-changing, false philosophies of the world.
- These pastors traded their shoes of peace for the sandals of personal pride and the praise of the unbelieving world.
- While some still wear the helmet of salvation, they camouflage it so they won’t stand out as being different from the world.
- The Apostle John said, they have succumbed to religious, or spiritual harlotry, and leading others to follow their pathway.
 - **Joshua Harris**, pastor, and author of “I Kissed Dating Goodbye,” wrote on Instagram that he was no longer a Christian – that he had **“fallen away”** from the true faith.
 - **Marty Sampson**, the writer of many popular worship songs, wrote on Instagram, **“Christianity is no longer for me – I’m**

genuinely losing my faith, and it doesn't bother me. I am so happy now."

- **John Cooper**, lead singer for the Christian Rock Band "Skillet" – **"Today's generation is learning who God is from praise songs rather than from God's Word – we have led a generation away from the supremacy of God's Word and the value of teaching God's Word."**

We are seeing the tragic failure of the hyper-evangelistic, contemporary church-growth movement that filled churches with unconverted members.

- For every gain in church membership that was made by some manipulative method to reach the lost, there was a loss of doctrinal and theological truth as basic convictions were compromised.
- For every gain in converts by the carnal schemes of men, there was a lack of spiritual understanding on the part of the new believer. That lack of discipleship resulted in a lack of spiritual growth and a lack of complete transformation.

What is done in every local church on the Lord's Day will bring glory to the Lord, or glory to man.

- If it is done in the power of the flesh, no matter how well-intended, it will fall short of the glory of God and will only serve to glorify man.
- If it is done in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it lifts up the name of Jesus, it will draw men to see Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and it will glorify God throughout all ages, world without end.

1. Sound Doctrine is the Cure for Apostasy – "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- "All Scripture" included the Old Testament, as well as that which was being written by the Apostles, which became the foundation for the Christian Faith.

- “Divinely inspired” means “God-breathed” – what men wrote, in their language, and with their understanding, was ordained of God and written for His purpose, which was to give “life” to those who would read it.
- The Apostle Paul said the Scriptures were profitable for:
 - **Doctrine** – the truth about God, about man, about the world we live in, and the world to come.
 - **Reproof and correction** – rebuking our false concepts about God, about man, about the world we live in, and the world to come.
 - **Instruction in righteousness** – telling us how we can live in true righteousness – not the false righteousness of religion, but in the righteousness that was imputed to us when we received Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.
 - **Thoroughly equipped for every good work** – God speaks to us through His Word, and when we obey what He says, we become thoroughly equipped for the work He assigns us.

“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our Lord stands forever.”
Isaiah 40:8

2. False Doctrine is the Cause of Apostasy – 2nd Timothy 3:1ff – “But know this, in the last days perilous times will come.”

While these characteristics describe the sinful world at any age, in the context of this passage, Paul is describing the Church in the last days of the church age. In essence, it will look just like the world, with a “form of godliness,” while denying the truth about the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith.

- In 1 Timothy 4:1-2, Paul said in the last days of the church age, **“some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”**

- Paul was referring to the charlatans, the imposters, the false teachers and preachers who would enter churches; claiming to be God's man to help that church reach a new generation, when in fact, they were Satan's men, sent to make sure that local church died due to the lack of doctrinal preaching.
- In verse 13, Paul said, **“Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”**

3. Sound Doctrine is the Contrast to Apostasy – 2 Timothy 3:10-14

Paul said deceptive teachers and false preachers would arise in the last days of the church age.

- Verse 10 – ***“BUT YOU be careful to follow my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions.”***

Paul said dangerous times and dangerous men would arise in the last days of the church age.

- Verse 14 – **“BUT YOU continue in the things you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.”**

The Satanic spirit of these last days is not stronger than the Holy Spirit Who lives within us. 1 John 4:4

- Christians are not bound by the spirit of the age.
- Christians are not slaves to the religious systems of the world.
- There is hope, triumphant, victorious hope, but it is in Christ, and Christ alone.