

“Rebuke them sharply”—that’s what Paul told Titus to do to these mixers (Titus 1:13-14). And his instructions to Timothy were no less serious—“Charge some that they teach no other doctrine” (1 Timothy 6:3); “If anyone teaches otherwise...withdraw yourself” (1 Timothy 6:3-5).

Sound doctrine has a practical aim; in fact, sound (healthy) doctrine is the only doctrine that produces true spiritual health, because it’s the only doctrine that “accords with godliness” (1 Timothy 6:3; Titus 1:1). Godliness, righteousness, love, faith, reverence, patience, submissiveness, self-control, etc. (1 Timothy 1:5; Titus 2:1-12)—only one “nourished” (1 Timothy 4:6) in sound doctrine will produce these fruits in their purest form.

On the other hand, unsound doctrine ruins spiritual health (2 Timothy 2:14). Change, add to, or take from sound doctrine and there will be some ugly fruit—unnecessary disputes, envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, greed, ungodliness, etc. (1 Timothy 1:3-4; 6:3-12; 2 Timothy 2:14-18). Bottom line—sound (healthy) doctrine makes us healthy; unsound (unhealthy) doctrine makes us sick.

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (1 Timothy 4:16).

Written by: Brian Gibson (Plain Words from God’s Word Facebook Group)

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com



His Commands are Not Burdensome

One of the challenges that prohibits many people from becoming Christians is the perceived loss of things they can do. They mistakenly view Christianity and the Bible as nothing more than a rulebook, a list of things that they can and cannot do. While it is true that the Bible permits and forbids certain actions, there is much more to the Christian way of life than simply “thou shalt” and “thou shalt not”. Of course, many commands in the Bible are what people would generally agree with. Most people do not look kindly upon stealing, or murder, or lying.

Still though, this is a major barrier to entry for a considerable number of people. “You mean to tell me I can’t smoke anymore?” “I have to go to church every Sunday and Wednesday?” “I have to control my speech and anger?” “I can’t buy a lottery ticket for just \$5 for fun?” and the list goes on. The challenge is that these people have an ingrained habit for these and other vices or ways of life, and are reluctant to let them go. These are exactly the kind of people that Jesus was mentioning in Matthew 7:13-14. The wide gate is wide enough to bring all sorts of sinful vices with you, but the narrow gate doesn’t have room for all of these things. You’ll have to let them go to successfully walk the Christian life, and many will see that and say “No thanks, I’d rather keep my way of life.”

In 1 John 5:3, John says “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” I could easily hear a skeptic or an atheist saying “So God only loves you if you do what He says?”, which completely misses the point. God’s commandments are not a burden to bear. In fact Jesus Himself said in John 10:10 “.... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” Does this sound like what you would expect from a tyrannical God Who only wishes to have servants?

One of the most well-known parts of the Bible is the Ten Commandments, found in Exodus 20. Yet God certainly gave the Israelites much more than 10 commandments. If you count out the number of “commands” that God gave to Israel in Exodus-Deuteronomy, the number can go as high as 613. 613 commandments certainly sounds burdensome, especially considering those were the days when you could be stoned for certain sins. But God is the same yesterday, today and forever. These commands were not given simply to control the Israelites or to restrict them.

I would need a substantially larger bulletin to go into full detail, but I will mention Exodus 15:26 as a brief summary. God said that if Israel would heed His commands, He would spare them from the diseases that He brought upon the Egyptians. Many of the commands of the Law of Moses have practical benefits, whether the ritual cleansings or the dietary restrictions. If Israel would heed God’s nonburdensome commands, they indeed would have life and have it more abundantly.

But we are not bound by the Law of Moses these days. We live under a new and better covenant, and one notable change is there are not as many “thou shalt nots” in the New Testament. For example, there are very few dietary restrictions (Acts 15:29, 1 Timothy 4:3-4). We are not required to make a yearly pilgrimage to Jerusalem. We are not required to ritualistically cleanse ourselves due to physical illness. Yet even with the commands that are given in the New Testament, they are not burdensome. We will have an abundant spiritual life if we heed God’s commands, and our physical lives will also be improved as well.

The Christian life really isn’t as restrictive as some out there believe. A Christian is not required to sequester themselves away from this life entirely, partaking only the most miniscule aspects possible to avoid breaking a command. A Christian is more than capable of leading a happy and productive physical life as well as a spiritual one, all while abiding by God’s commands.

Written by: Daniel Young

Sound Doctrine

“Sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1), or “sound words” (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13)—that’s how the Holy Spirit describes the gospel in these letters to Timothy and Titus.

“Sound” is translated from the Greek word, *hugiaino*, which means “to be sound, to be well, to be healthy” (Thayer and Smith). While sometimes used to describe physical health (Luke 7:10; 3 John 1:2), it clearly has reference to spiritual health in the passages above. Let’s see what else is said in these letters to Timothy and Titus about sound doctrine.

Jesus Christ is THE source of sound doctrine. “If anyone...does not consent to wholesome (sound) words, **even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ...**” (1 Timothy 6:3). And those “words” include the ones He spoke through His apostles and prophets (Ephesians 3:1-5), words preserved for us in the New Testament.

Sound doctrine, then, and the doctrine of Christ are one and the same, and that better be what we’re following. The only way to be “sound in the faith” (Titus 1:13) is to “speak...sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1), and then practice what we preach. Preach sound doctrine, even when “they will not endure sound doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2-3); “hold fast the pattern of sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13); “continue in the things which you have learned” (2 Timothy 3:14)—these are the instructions Paul gave Timothy. Paul did commend Timothy, because at least to that point, he had “carefully followed” sound doctrine (1 Timothy 4:6), and that’s the commendation we should all seek.

It’s impossible to follow man’s teaching and still be sound in the faith. Mix with the doctrine of Christ the “commandments of men” (Titus 1:14), and the result is unsound doctrine—no matter how wise it sounds, no matter how much it helps the church to “grow,” and no matter how popular it may be to the masses. ...

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