

## **Doctrine Matters**

2 Cor. 11:12

"Those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are" ~ 2 Cor. 11:12 ~

The statement above was made by the apostle Paul. The context shows that he was speaking of evil men who sought to be "regarded" as Paul and other apostles of the Lord. Paul, however, has severe scorn and rebuke for these ambitious men. In vss 13-15, he states, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds."

Why would Paul dare to be so harsh and pass such judgment? It was because of their teachings. They taught DIFFERENTLY from what the Lord's apostles taught by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As such, they were giving people a false hope in regard to their salvation. Earlier in this chapter (vss. 3-4), Paul said of these false teachers, "But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully." (Paul wrote similar words in his other epistles: (cf. Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 3:11; Gal. 1:6-9; Eph. 5:6; Phil. 3:2; Col. 2:4, 8, 18; 1 Thess. 2:14-16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2:2-4, 9-11; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 4:1-2, 16; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Titus 1:9-11)

Those who preach "other gospels", i.e., messages that the apostles did not preach, are FALSE TEACHERS! Their doctrine is FALSE DOCTRINE!

False doctrine results in the damnation of both the teacher and his hearer. (Note especially the "hearer" in 1 Tim. 4:16 – "...both save thyself, AND THEM THAT HEAR THEE." [Preaching ACCURATELY saves, both the preacher and the hearers.] and, 2 Tim. 4:3-4 – "...THEY (i.e., the hearers) WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE, but after their own lusts...heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears...turn away...from the truth...unto fables.)

A most relevant question for everyone...DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE REALITY OF FALSE DOCTRINE?

A related question will perhaps drive the point home. DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE REALITY OF HELL?

If there was no such thing as false teaching, why would there be a need for HELL?  
Beware of those who come in sheep's clothing...false apostles disguised as apostles of Christ...those WHO DESIRE TO BE REGARDED AS AN APOSTLE IN WHAT THEY TEACH!

TEST THEM! As the apostle John warned in 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

They are false if their preaching does not match the preaching of the Lord's apostles!  
Now, what did the Lord's apostles tell people to do to be saved???  
What did the preacher who preached to you, tell you to do to be saved???  
Did their messages match???

This is why doctrine is so important in religion.

Jesus taught:

"Take heed WHAT ye hear" ~ Mark 4:24

"Take heed HOW ye hear" ~ Luke 8:18