

Study Guide

Crucial Christian Convictions

Living Truth Ministries

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Part 1 “Living with Biblical Convictions”

1. If Christianity is based on objective truth (like the “beans in the jar” illustration) what are the implications of this concerning our lives and our attitude toward evangelism?

2. Explain the difference between subjective and objective truth?
Which category does the Christian faith fall under and why?
See Ps. 25:4-5; 43:3; 119:30; Is. 45:19; John 14:6

3. Why is a clear understanding of “Christian Doctrine” so important in the Christian’s life?

4. What are the implications for the Christian from the illustration of the “pyramid”?

5. Why did Jesus teach more about belief (doctrine) than behavior?

6. What is the significance of the word “therefore” (or similar words) as seen in Rom. 12:1; Eph. 4:1; Col. 3:1

7. On several occasions Paul says “Do you not know” (See 1 Cor 6:18; Rom 6:3; Rom 6:16; Rom. 11:12; 1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 5:6). What is the significance of that statement.

8. What is suggested as a probable reason for the increasing need for personal counseling in our day?

(See Answers on P. 5)

Part 2 "Convictions About Scripture"

1. Charles outlines the 2 basic stories of the Old Testament and the basic story of the New Testament. What are they?

2. The New Testament is a continuation of the Old Testament story. Explain.

3. Why was the Reformation so significant to the Evangelical position on the authority of Scripture ?

4. What is one of the primary causes for the decline in attendance in many churches today?

5. How should we respond if we are asked questions about the authority of scripture and we simply do not have an answer. What advice does Billy Graham, C.H. Spurgeon and John Stott give when faced with this dilemma?

6. "The Bible is not only an authority because of its content; it is authoritative because of its origin." What is that origin and what "proofs" do we have regarding it.

7. It is important to see how prophecy plays an important role in the inspiration of scripture. What are some Old Testament prophecies about Jesus? How is Ps. 22 related to His Death?

8. Why is it crucial that the foundation of our convictions is our conviction about scripture?

(See Answers On P. 6 & 7)

Part 3 "Convictions about the Trinity"

1. Charles states "There are two primary ways in which we know anything" - 'observation' and 'revelation'. Why is this so important to understand when dealing with our subject, the Trinity?

2. What can we derive about the Holy Spirit from the story of Ananias (See Acts 5:3-4)

3. The concept of "the Trinity" is difficult for us to understand, and since the word "Trinity" is never used in scripture, many find it difficult to accept. How do we resolve this dilemma?

4. Charles explains that a Theophany or Christophany is an appearance by God, or Christ, incarnate in physical form prior to His birth at Bethlehem. Can you give some examples of this taking place?

5. Charles states, "in the teaching of Jesus, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are together and distinct." What do we learn about the Trinity from John 14:26; John 16:15; & Matt. 28:19?

6. What practical lessons do we learn from the Trinity that we can apply to our lives today?

(See Answers On P. 8 & 9)

Part 4 "Convictions about Humanity & the Deity of Christ"

1. What can we derive about the nature of Jesus from the following verses: John 8: 40; Acts 2: 22; Rom. 5: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 21; 1 Tim. 2: 5.
What do we derive about the nature of Jesus from these verses: John 1: 1; John 1: 18; John 20: 28; Titus 2: 13; Heb 1: 8

2. Charles says, "certain things true of Jesus are not true of human beings". How does John 8 shed light on this statement?

3. If Jesus' claims about Himself were false, what 2 options might we concluded? If His claims about Himself were true, what must we conclude?

4. What was the people's assessment of who Jesus was? (See John 7: 12, 20; 8: 58)

5. What is the strongest evidence to show that Jesus is indeed God?

6. If Jesus is God, how is it that "there are certain things true of Jesus Christ which are not true of God." In what 4 ways does Charles suggest this is true? (See John 1: 18; 1 John 4: 12; 1 Tim. 6: 16; James 1: 13; Heb. 4: 15; Heb. 5: 8; Luke 2: 52; 1 Tim. 1: 17; 1 Tim. 6: 15-16)

7. Jesus is both man and God. How are these two issues reconciled? 1-10

(See Answers On P. 10)

LEADERS GUIDE (Answer Sheet)
Part 1 "Living with Biblical Convictions"

1. The gospel is not a "preference" suitable for some and not to others. It is objective truth and we take it to people because it is true and not just that it is convenient or comfortable for us.
2. Subjective truth says "This may be true for you, but it's not true for me." – personal preference
Objective truth says "There is an exact number of beans in the jar" – fact.
The Christian faith falls into the category of objective truth.
3. Without a clear understanding of "Christian Doctrine" we can too easy quote verses and texts out of their biblical or doctrinal context, and give them a meaning that they may not really have.
4. There are certain things which are visible and certain things which are invisible. What are visible are our actions. What are invisible are our beliefs. Our actions are a result of what lies under the surface, what we believe. Those beliefs cause us to develop our values, - what is important and what isn't important, where do we spend our energy.
5. What we believe is the cause of our behavior. If there is a disconnect between what you believe and how you behave, the reality is you don't actually believe it.
6. This word marks the transition in Paul's letters from theological doctrine to ethical behaviour?
7. If we knew the things mentioned in these verse our behaviour would change and we would life a holy life.
8. Martin Lloyd-Jones made the observation that there is a rise in the need for personal counseling when there is a reduction in biblical preaching. He said, "...I teach people the Word of God, it looks after their behavioural issues."

LEADERS GUIDE (Answer Sheet)
Part 2 "Convictions About Scripture"

1. The OT 1) tells the story of Israel and God's dealing with the Nation of Israel (Gen. 1 – 11) 2) The rest of the OT is the story of keeping the right people (Israel) in the right place for the right purpose (which never materialized).
In the NT we get the whole purpose for which God set apart the nation of Israel, that God would bring Christ, the Messiah and through Him, the church would be His agent to minister to the world.
2. God called Abraham and promised to give him a son, a family, and a nation. God promised to bless all the nations of the world through Abraham's seed, Christ. (see Gen 12:2-3; Gal. 3:16). Christ made provision for people to be reconciled to God. (see Rom. 5:10) Those who are reconciled to God, His church, are to continue His work until every nation, every tribe, every tongue are incorporated into the church (see Matt. 28:19) to become His bride (see Rev. 21:2)
3. It declared that the Bible is self-authenticating, clear to the rational reader, is its own interpreter and it is sufficient of itself to be the only source of Christian doctrine. It set the people free from the official interpretation of the church and gave people the liberty to think for themselves and read Scripture for themselves.
4. Those churches and denominations that undermined the authority of Scripture, are on the decline without exception - because they have no message left.
5. Accept the authority of Scripture; let it loose; acknowledge that some things are hidden from us (See Deut. 29:29; Is. 40:8)
6. The origin is the inspiration of scripture
Scriptures own testimony. (See 11 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:21)
The personality of the writer comes through
There is a remarkable unity that runs right the way through
There are 333 separate prophecies in the Old Testament.
The Old Testament tells us very specific details about Christ including the place of His birth and the nature of His birth
7. Micah said He would be born in Bethlehem (See Micah 5:2)
Hosea said He would come from Egypt (See Hosea 11:1)
He was described as one who was mocked and scorned (See Is. 53:3; Ps. 22:6)
Isaiah described His death (See Is. 53)
Christ identified Himself as the One referred to in Ps. 22
8. If Scripture is not reliable, if it's not true, nothing else that you believe can be held with certainty. We must understand and believe that it has been given to us by God Himself.

LEADERS GUIDE (Answer Sheet)
Part 3 "Convictions about the Trinity"

1. Observation is learning by seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling. We see God in creation,— that is observation (Ps. 19; Rom. 1:20). But we cannot 'know' about the Trinity through observation. That comes through revelation. Revelation is learning through information that could not be known purely by observation. We learn about God's character through revelation. (Deut. 29:29). There are certain things that can only be "spiritually discerned", revealed to us by the Spirit of God.-(2 Cor. 2:14) The person "without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."
2. Acts. 5:3 "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men but to God"
3. There are a number of things which our finite minds cannot understand of the infinite, and God, of course is infinite. To reduce God to some comprehensive, understandable description is impossible. So we have to look at that which God has revealed and say there are lots of ends here that don't tie up to the logical, rational mind but I have to accept this as being His revelation.
4. Christophany appearances are often referred to in the OT as "the angel of the Lord" who appears.
In Is. 6:8, Isaiah had a vision of God and said "Here am I, send me". But John 12:41 says "Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him."
In Genesis 18 Abraham met a man when he was talking about Sodom and Gomorrah, he referred to him as "the Lord". When Moses met the angel of the Lord in the burning bush and had a conversation with Him, it was God Himself, but in a physical manifestation.
In Judges 13 Samson's parents met the angel of the Lord; that was clearly again an incarnate appearance of God.
5. In John 14:26 the Holy Spirit was sent by God in Jesus name
In John 16:15 What belongs to the Father belongs to Jesus and the Spirit makes it known to us
In Matt. 28:19 Jesus tells us to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
6. 1) We were made for relationship. The mutual interdependence of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is to be expressed in our interdependence on God and on others. It was not good for man to be alone.
2) We were made to love and to be loved just as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit loved one another before the creation of the world.
3) We were made to be part of God's church. As God does not exist in isolation but in unity together, then the Christian life cannot be lived in isolation but must be lived in unity together. Our horizontal relationships with one another enrich the vertical relationship we enjoy with God.

LEADERS GUIDE (Answer Sheet)
Part 4 “Convictions about Humanity & the Deity of Christ”

1. The first set of verses refer to Him as “man”. The second set of verses refer to Him as “God”.
2. I’m not from down here. I’m from up there. I don’t belong to this world (vs. 23)
I am not here on my own; but my Father sent me (vs. 42)
If anyone keeps my word, he will never see death (vs. 51)
Before Abraham was born, I am (vs. 58)
By expressing His pre-existence, that He dwelt in heaven with the Father long before He ever appeared on this earth, He proves His deity and unity with the Father – that He is God.
3. That He was either a bad man (telling lies) or He was a mad man (deluded and some kind of mental case)
If they are true, He must be God.
4. He was a good man (vs. 12); He was a deceiver (a bad man) (vs. 12); He was demon-possessed (a mad man) (Vs. 20)); He was God (8:58)
5. Jesus told His disciples that He would die and rise again before He was crucified. “If the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus was to be presented to a court of law with a jury, the jury would have to return the verdict He had been raised from the dead, because the alternatives would not be feasible” (J.N.D. Anderson in “The Evidence For The Resurrection).
6. God cannot be seen (Jesus could); God cannot be tempted by evil (Jesus was); God is omniscient (Jesus learned); God cannot die (Jesus died).
7. Recognize that Jesus Christ was never, ever, less than God, but he acted on earth as though He was never, ever, more than a human being. He performed miracles as a man, the same as Moses, Joshua, John, Paul and others.