

Box 80A

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

by

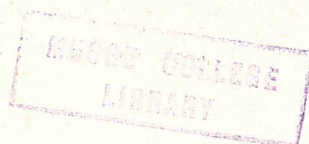
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"The Protestant Faith"

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THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

The Bible enunciates an important principle of human behaviour in a verse in Proverbs 23:7 which reads "As a man thinketh in his heart so he is".

Modern western life (of which Australia is a part) has very little thought for anything else except having a good time and seeking its own pleasure. The emptiness of modern western life and thought means that we have no principles nor determination by which to resist the inroads of error, whether in the form of immorality or Communism. We modern Christians are involved in our Western predicament of unbelief. Our neighbours don't believe, the group in which we mix don't believe and as a consequence we are tempted to water down our own faith. As a whole it is true to say that we modern Christians have relaxed our trust in God as Sovereign Lord, the Creator and Controller of all. We have relaxed our belief in God's holiness, and so in His judgment, in spite of the fact that the Bible clearly says that God's judgment is so complete that even every idle word will come up for examination. We have relaxed our conviction on the centrality of Jesus Christ in history, Jesus Who came from God to be our Saviour, Who is the One through Whom God has come into a relationship with mankind for the purpose of blessing and salvation.

"As a man thinks, so he is". Our modern Christianity has become weak in faith and so is flabby in witness. It has no real message to the God-forgetting society around us. As individuals we engage in little personal evangelism, and as congregations we have a very weak witness. I do not say that we don't invite people to church, but do we testify to Jesus Christ as the only Mediator between God and man? Because our beliefs are weak we turn aside from evangelism whether personal or corporate and instead engage our attention in building up our institutions and church organisations. These

church institutions and organizations appear to be more tangible to those weak in faith because they are things of this world. If we modern Christians are to be saved in the Judgment which is inevitable, we must deepen our faith in God as Sovereign Lord, in the Holy God Who judges, and yet the loving God Who saves. We need to renew our faith in the purposes of God which find expression in Jesus Christ crucified, risen and coming again. For God's purposes did not cease 2,000 years ago at the resurrection but are still being completed and will be completed. We need to renew our faith in Christ as Lord and in His coming kingdom. If we believe these things we will have something to say to our God-forgotten community, but we cannot generate a renewed faith out of our own resources. First we need to pray for one another, for faith is the gift of God; and secondly we need to have fellowship with one another on the basis of our common faith; for fire kindles fire, and fellowship strengthens faith.

"As a man thinks, so he is". This principle implies that if we are to be Christians we need to keep in the forefront of our minds the facts of revelation. We should think constantly on the great truths that God is Creator and Judge and Saviour; that we have a great future inheritance;; that Jesus Christ is the One in Whom God has a relationship with us, and through Whom we become the sons of God and inheritors of God's purposes. Jesus Christ is Lord!

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12.9.76

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THE PROTESTANT FAITH
is broadcast every Sunday at
8:25 p.m. over Radio 2CH

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