

## **Doctrine and Practice, Inseparable.** **pp. 207, 208**

Truth is so vast and its implications so great, that the mind is compelled to analyze, dissect and separate in order to attain to some semblance of understanding, but both teacher and taught should ever remember that truth so dissected is dead: we are but conducting a post-mortem examination. Consequently we differentiate between faith and works, and can consider each separately, yet in strict truth “faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone” (James ii. 17), and so are works without faith. Again, we differentiate most markedly between imputed righteousness and practical righteousness, yet if imputed righteousness never manifests itself in practical righteousness, the original reckoning is vain, being unfruitful.

For the purposes of clearer understanding we speak of Doctrine and Practice, and point out that whereas Eph. i.-iii. contains seven sections devoted to doctrinal truth, Eph. iv.-vi. contains seven corresponding sections devoted to practical truth, but if we imagine it to be possible to receive, believe and enjoy the revelation of the doctrinal section while ignoring the practical teaching of the corresponding section, we are in grievous error. The doctrine cannot be divorced from its divinely described goal, namely, “that we should be holy and without blame”. So also the revelation contained in Eph. i. 15-23 presupposes the enlightenment of the eyes: “the eyes of your understanding having been enlightened” (i. 18, perfect, passive participle). The fact that salvation is by grace, through faith, and not of works is not to be separated from the equally emphasized fact that it is nevertheless “unto good works” (Eph. ii. 8-10). The doctrine of Eph. i.-iii. and the practice of Eph. iv.-vi. make one undivided whole, and any attempt to explain the one without the other is vain and must end in confusion. In John’s Gospel the Saviour has given one or two words that point in this direction.

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine” (John vii. 17).

“Will do” is the simple future, but this is not what the original says. The R.V. is correct and reads: “If any man willeth to do His will”, showing that the “will” of the person is involved. The same care is called for in translating John v. 40, where the A.V. reads, “Ye will not come to Me”, which is given a force nearer to that of the original if made to read, “Ye are not willing to come to Me”. Other examples of the truth “WILL TO DO” precedes knowledge of doctrine can easily be found.

“If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed” (John viii. 31).

This word “continue” is the translation of *meno*, a key word of John’s Gospel, mostly translated “abide” (see viii. 35). So John xv. 9 says “*continue* ye in My love”, but John xv. 10 says, “Ye shall *abide* in My love”. While a different word is used in John viii. 44, there appears to be a reference to the danger of the negative side of this truth, for it says of the devil that he “abode not in the truth”.

First then we have “the will to do”, followed by the taking up of a permanent abode, making the word of the Lord our dwelling-place, our atmosphere, our environment: “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32). Here the knowledge of truth which flows out of this abiding, leads to liberty, and makes *free*. While the truth is necessarily expressed in language, a knowledge of grammar is essential to its interpretation, yet nothing is said of grammar, of the laws of interpretation, of literary ability: what is stressed is consistent, corresponding practice.

This is one of the primary lessons which all must learn and practice, if they would understand doctrine aright.

## TO OLD AND NEW READERS.

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May we, with becoming humility, invite the reader to consider the testimony supplied by the Index to Volume XXXIII, which is incorporated with the present issue. There will be found valuable *expository* articles, such as those on “The Acts”, “John’s Gospel”, and “II Timothy”; *Dispensational truth* both in its positive presentation, as in “Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth” and “Time and Place”, and in those articles which “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered” the reader will see that the witness for which *The Berean Expositor* was raised up is still living and vigorous. *Devotional* and *Practical* articles also find their place, as such Series as “Worship”, “The Pearl of Parables”, and “Trust” will reveal. The earnest student who seeks the equipment provided by the Word is also catered for, the articles entitled “Ephesia” and “Thoroughly Furnished” being of peculiar interest to all engaged in *ministry*.

We make no comparison with other publications, but we do earnestly commend *The Berean Expositor* to every believer who would obey the injunction of II Tim. ii. 15, and who would emulate the Bereans (Acts xvii. 11).