

Title: LOGOS: DOCTRINE AND GOOD NEWS, JOHN 1:1-18  
(Chatham, NJ; 01/03/16, AM) [Pt – Topical: Essential Ideas]

Theme: John substantiates the Christian faith in the doctrine of the “logos,” but he also derives several pieces of good news from it.

Purpose: To promote the understanding that doctrine plays an essential role in the practice of our faith and to demonstrate the good news that comes from the teaching about the nature of Christ.

Introduction:

1. This will be only a brief re-visit of the class Steve Kujan taught several weeks ago. I’m sure he did a fine job.
2. Let’s begin with a question. What do you think of when you hear the words: dogma, doctrine, and tradition?
3. Negative for some, sterile and dry for others, even exciting for a few people?
4. Today I want to leave you with the impression that doctrine is essential and at least not boring.

#### I. Dogma, Doctrine, Tradition

- A. Our faith rests on distinct teachings, not merely experience
  1. The faith once delivered, Jude 3
  2. Hold to the “traditions” or teachings, 2 Thess. 2:15
  3. Though we may come to Christ by a variety of experiences, our experience can only be correct if it is founded on these teachings, esp. the one here in John 1
  4. This is not only the foundation for our faith, but also the foundation for numerous other values that we hold dear.
  5. Some atheists even recognize that they borrow many of their ideas from Christianity (see article).
- B. The nature of Christ: John’s sure foundation
  1. Christ set apart from all others by who he is: the son of God, creator and sustainer of the universe
  2. All others are nothing greater than those who claim to represent God; whereas, Jesus is God
  3. More than a mere man, the Word became flesh (1:14) and lived among us
  4. It is a bold claim that would be blasphemous were it not true
- C. The “Logos”
  1. Greeks: the omnipresent wisdom or rationality by which all things are steered
  2. Stoics: common law of nature immanent in the universe and maintaining its unity; the divine fire; the soul of the universe
  3. Hebrew tradition: God spoke the world into existence
  4. More than an impersonal cosmic power like “the force”
  5. His words are a sovereign choice by a being that stands above his creation, not something that merely emanates from it
  6. God speaks; His mind is revealed in his Laws
  7. Now, through Christ, the Word, we see and hear Him fully, 1:18

#### II. Good News from Dogma . . . Note the contrasts with negatives

- A. Presence of Darkness, yet the darkness has not overcome it, 1:5
  1. We live in enemy territory: a godless atmosphere and an evil climate
  2. It has affected all of us
  3. Though it seemed as if the darkness defeated Jesus, he triumphed
  4. Yet the light shines on, despite all appearances
  5. 1 John 2:8, “the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining”

- B. The world did not know him and his own rejected him, yet to all who received him . . . 1:12
  - 1. He gave us the right to become children of God, a step beyond our common humanity
  - 2. A spiritual rebirth: born of God, not man
  - 3. Even Nicodemus could not grasp the nature of this birth in John 3
  - 4. It is a sovereign activity of the God who speaks, creates, and redeems
  - 5. God became flesh to give us a personal invitation
  - 6. We must reject the darkness and receive the light that is His Son
  
- C. Though no one has ever seen God, Jesus has made him "known"
  - 1. Moses encountered the back of God
  - 2. Ezekiel described him in bold visions and images
  - 3. But no one has seen him face to face or fully revealed Him like Christ did
  - 4. Jesus has "exegeted" him, made him known
  - 5. Bruner, p. 40:

Conclusions:

- 1. The foundation of your belief lies in who Jesus is: this teaching changes everything you know about religion and philosophy.
- 2. In the flesh, God has come to invite us to know him fully, to become a child of God, and to experience the new birth.
- 3. You cannot enter the Kingdom without doing that.
- 4. It demands belief, confession of sin, repentance, and baptism.
- 5. Come to the light today.