

SPEAKERS

October 2 – Charles Korhonen,
Holy Communion

October 9 – Paul Coponen

October 16 – Ken Storm

October 23 – Charles Korhonen,
Potluck Meal Following Service

October 30 – Herb Jarvi

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study:
7:00 p.m.

CONTACT

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Sound Doctrine

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” - 2 Timothy 4:3

Paul was exhorting Timothy to guard against false doctrine. He foresaw the time when the world would flock to teachings that stir the human intellect and that stimulate its emotions rather than to those teachings that preach repentance. Paul targeted spiritual teachings as opposed to secular teachings, though both are seductive, because he wanted to expose the greater danger of the pulpit itself. He believed that it was impossible for a person to distinguish sound doctrine from false doctrine—especially when both come from the same pulpit and when both are based on the Bible: impossible, that is, unless one is led by the Holy Spirit.

We might question how two opposing doctrines can be preached from the same pulpit? Further, how could this happen in a living church of God without someone noticing? In answer to the first question, it happened to the church of Thyatira. There the priests of Baal were permitted to teach their lies to unsuspecting people. According to Jesus, this church had good-hearted souls who did not want to offend anybody: *“I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first”* (Revelation 2:19). Yet Jesus was not pleased with this church because they invited false teachers to join their ranks. These false teachers may have been well-known in the land, may have had advocates within the church and may have had the confidence of the church body, maybe they were even family members, but at the very least the leaders didn’t *“...try the spirits whether they are of God”* (1 John 4:1). Perhaps there was fear that trying the spirits against the Word might have led the sleepy coexistence amongst the people to erupt into an awakened spiritual conflict. The false teachers undoubtedly spoke good-sounding words that comforted the listener making everything seem virtuous. To this inept conduct Jesus said, *“...I will give unto every one of you according to your works”* (Rev 2:23).

Regarding the second question posed above; there were church members at Thyatira who did notice the false teachings. Although the church leaders were ultimately accountable for the pulpit, the church members also had an obligation in this matter. The Old Testament prophet Ezekiel indicated that doctrinal problems should be brought to the attention of the church leaders rather than to complain about them amongst themselves. If the leaders subsequently found the teaching in question to be scripturally incorrect, they were to communicate that finding to the others. Then *“...whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head”* (Ezekiel 33:4). However, if one were to remain knowingly silent, God would hold that person guilty; *“But if the...people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them...his blood will I require at the watchman's hand”* (Ezekiel 33:6). Jesus said to the ones who sounded the warning, *“...I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come”* (Rev 2:24-25). Unfortunately, the church leaders took no action—this inaction will require an answer on the Last Day.

What was the false doctrine referred to by Paul? Apostle John answers this question: *“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world”* (1 John 4:2-3). John was saying that it is one thing to confess with the mouth that Jesus was once flesh and blood but it is quite another thing to confess from the heart that He is still here today. Just as God lived in a tent so many years ago, accordingly the Son of God lives in the physical body of each believer today, which is the New Testament temple of God (1 Cor 3:16). And as it was in the Old Testament it is still at the door of His temple where Jesus meets and speaks and forgives all who cry unto Him (Exodus 29:42). Thus, all who willingly come to this temple door to confess their sins are saved unto eternal life in heaven if God grants them the faith to believe the word of reconciliation preached to them by the believer, *“...be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee”* (Matthew 9:2). These believers are those who *“...are of God...and have overcome”* sin (1 John 4:4). On the other hand, those spirits who preach of other ways to be saved *“...are of the world”* (1 John 4:5). They preach a false doctrine.

Dear reader, fervently pray that you will not sleepily accept whatever comes from the pulpit but that, as a spirit-led believer, you will judge all spirits, including your own, by the Word of God to determine whether they align with it or not. As in Thyatira, the modern church today must also be warned to guard against false doctrine and be encouraged to speak up before it is too late; merely discussing church problems behind the scenes is unacceptable.

God's Peace,

Charles Korhonen