

Dogma and Doctrine

The Unity definition is very simple. Dogma and Doctrine translate to rules and if there is one thing against which Unity folks rebels is rules. Don't tell me what to do. I know what is best for me and I arrive at my good through using my spiritual toolbox. Well, let's take a look at what these terms really mean.

Dogma by English Thesaurus means: creed, doctrine, code of belief, system of belief, canon, belief, view, and tenets just to list a few. Webster's Dictionary says that dogma is:

1 a : something held as an established opinion; especially : a definite authoritative tenet **b** : a code of such tenets <pedagogical dogma> **c** : a point of view or tenet put forth as authoritative without adequate grounds
2 : a doctrine or body of doctrines concerning faith or morals formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by a church

Doctrine by English Thesaurus means: policy, principle, set of guidelines, canon or dogma. Webster's Dictionary says that doctrine is:

1 archaic : Teaching, Instruction
a : something that is taught
b : a principle or position or the body of principles in a branch of knowledge or system of belief :
c : a principle of law established through past decisions
d : a statement of fundamental government policy especially in international relations **e** : a military principle or set of strategies.

doctrine of church--A teaching peculiar to a church or to churches in general¹

doctrine of Unity, value of the--Unity doctrine is of practical, everyday value to everyone who follows its instructions because it shows man that he is his own minister, lawyer, and doctor and that he has within himself the storehouse from which he can supply every need. It is the doctrine that Jesus proclaimed with original simplicity. It asks man to return again to the estate of simplicity in which he was as a little child, believing implicitly what the Father tells him from the inner recesses of his own being. It has been found to be a good doctrine because it has opened to man a new world, and he sees how, through it, shall be brought about the fulfillment of the promise:² "And he [God] shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, anymore: the first things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).³

¹ The Revealing Word p 57 Charles Fillmore

² The Revealing Word p 57 Charles Fillmore

³ Holy Bible NIV

There is a general belief among Unity folks that proclaims just what Charles Fillmore states above in his discourse on the value of Unity doctrine that it is the Christ in each of us that makes all things possible and not a set of rules by which we live in the kingdom of God or we perish outside the gates of the mansion.

But we have to believe that it takes dogma and doctrine to help us practice the principles that become habits of the good that God has for us. It is the dogma and doctrine of our personal belief system that help us stand upon the foundation of solid principle and stand unwavering in the breath of God. It is dogma and doctrine that keep us from learning the behavioral habits of always seeking to take the right fork in the road. Our steadfastness in the spiritual life much depends on attaining understanding and once a thing is understood it is surely a part of our nature and if it is understood in a righteous manner then we walk always in the light.

In unity we say that Jesus taught using four methods; 1) Parable 2) Miracle 3) Precept and 4) Example. Everything Jesus taught was for our benefit and the method of *example* we so want to follow is an example of the dogma that we are want to avoid lest we be controlled by something other than our so called “free will.”

Anytime we stiffen our back and resist anything we must always ask the question, “of what benefit is my resistance?” The very nature of Divine creation is that of cooperation. All things must cooperate in order that the whole may function no matter what it is. If we resist our teachings because we think that the teaching might control us we have to know what the beneficial results are.

In Romans 8:28-33 we read,

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

We are asked to do nothing save those two greatest commandments given by Jesus.

Mark 12:29-31 . . . *'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind*

*and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*⁴

How simple and how wonderful the Grace of God is demonstrated that we are given this wonderful manner in which to grow close to the Kingdom and to finally achieve the understanding we all have longed to attain. Why, then, must we resist the Truth by trying to remain the controlling factor in our lives instead of being in control of our lives by obeying the laws of cooperation, love of God and love for one another?

True, as Charles Fillmore stated, everything we could ever desire is contained within us as the Christ consciousness and the ever powerful activity of the Holy Spirit. But we are to remember that the Christ consciousness and the Holy Spirit, are the doors we must open and the activity we must tap into are those through whom the Source (God) operates. In Jesus two greatest commandments are contained a powerful set of principle, dogma and doctrine that we must not even consider resisting as dogma and doctrine. It is our belief system.

⁴ Holy Bible NIV