

WEEK THREE – APOSTLES DOCTRINE

From the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden, the deception has continued. The fundamental flaw has been to weaken truth by exalting man to the position of god. The basis of salvation is in the recognised need for redemption through the appropriation of Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

Christ fulfilled His mission by imparting Gods word (Kingdom) and training others to obey the truth in living out those principles. He did this by:

- Appointing Apostles who had witnessed first-hand His manner of lifestyle
- Imparting truth and hope to His followers through the gospel
- Promising The Holy Spirit to those willing to receive Him
- Forming The Church as Gods instrument of Justice, Protection, and Training in Christian doctrine, and lifestyle unto maturity.

The early Apostles were charged with establishing the truths as taught by Jesus, **no more and no less**. The New Testament gospels are such truths. The letters to the churches are outlines of principles of belief and behaviour; Faith and Works.

The Apostles Creed is a summary of the intrinsic principles taught by them, for our safeguard and understanding.

The early church was not immune to the heresy and Gnosticism which flourished as differing sects sought to "add" their opinion or emphasis to the gospel.

Irenaeus (the Greek bishop), defended Christian theology by combating heresy and defining orthodoxy. One such sect was the Gnostics, from which we get the word Gnosticism (having knowledge). Do we see a parallel here with Adam, Eve, Serpent?

Many Gnostic texts don't deal in concepts of sin (transgressions against a divine law) and repentance, (turning away from sin) but with illusion (distortion of reality) and enlightenment. (associated terms and concepts with many Asian religions), such as Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)

AN INDELIBLE IMPRESSION FROM WHICH WE ARE STRUCK

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. ²We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. ³We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷And so you

became **a model** to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord's message **rang out from you** not only in Macedonia and Achaia—**your faith in God has become known everywhere**. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, ⁹ for **they themselves** report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you **turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God**, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

“Examples” (5179) (tupos from túpto = to strike, to smite with repeated strokes)

- Literally refers to a visible mark or impression made by a stroke or blow from an instrument or object. Coins were often “struck” (as they are still today)
- What is left after the stroke or blow is **called a print**, a figure or an **impression**.
- The most famous reference to a literal mark (tupos) is when Thomas doubted Jesus' resurrection from the dead declaring "Unless I shall see in His hands **the imprint** (tupos) of the nails" (John 20:25).
- Also, tupos properly means a "model" or "pattern" or "mold" into which clay or wax was pressed (or molds into which molten metal for castings was poured), that it might take the figure or exact shape of the mold.
- Our English word "**type**" as in **proto-type** is originally referred to an impression made by a die as that which is struck.

Tupos came to be used figuratively of a **pattern, mold, model**, or **copy of the original** whether a physical object, such as a statute, or a principle or virtue. Thus in a technical sense tupos is the **pattern in conformity** to which a thing must be made.

- In an ethical sense, tupos is a pattern of warning or an example to be imitated, as we see in **Paul's charge to Timothy**:

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an **example** (tupos - a pattern they believers are to emulate) of those who believe. (**1 Ti 4:12**).

Similarly Titus was "to be an example [tupos] of good deeds"

- Titus was to live so that his life would be cast like a “spiritual die” that would impress itself on others –
- All believers should strive to be "spiritual dies" to those around them, but this applies especially to leaders] see note Titus 2:7; Paul's exhortation "Brethren join in following my example", see note Philippians 3:17, the Thessalonian saints became "an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia" see note 1Thessalonians 1:7 cf 2Thes 3:9.

The early Christians didn't attend church, they WERE the Church; an active, energized body of believers equipped to change the world. Are we made from the same mould?

Further reference points weeks 1-2:

Apostle's creed

Nero

Emperor Constantine

The Edict of Milan

Revolt against Rome

Nero's revolt against Christians

The historian Tacitus

Emperor Decius

The great persecution by Emperor Diocletian. - Galerius

Hippolytus

Bishop of Rome -- Callistus in 217

The Didache

Catechumen

Catholic

Rufinus of Aquileia

Tertullian

Florinus, - A fellow student of Polycarp

Polycarp - Martyr church father and Presbyter of Smyrna AD 65-188 Disciple of John

Irenaeus – Bishop of Lyon AD 130-202 Last connection to Polycarp who heard Apostles.

Wrote Against Heresies (Gnosticism) having knowledge - can be dated to sometime between 174 and 189 AD