

Why Christians Differ Doctrinally - Part VI, The Origin of Doctrinal Differences

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[0 : 00] Currently, we are exploring the subject of how it is and why it is that there are so many doctrinal differences among believers. Why do Christians differ doctrinally?

I hope to, as a result of this introductory material that we have been providing for the last couple of weeks, and which will continue today because this background is very, very important, I hope to be able to explain to you the rationale and the reason why anybody believes anything about anything.

How it is that positions are reached and held and propagated. Because once you know this, you will be able to understand the dynamics behind it.

It will no longer be a puzzlement to you as to why it is that Christians differ doctrinally. They hold differing positions.

How did they arrive at them and why? This is what we are going to be exploring. And in preparation for that, I have some propositions that I want to share with you at the outset this morning.

[1 : 10] And then we will be turning to some Corinthian passages that will illustrate what we are talking about. All of these varying doctrinal positions that we will be considering have but one thing in common.

And that is each believes that theirs is the correct one and everybody else is wrong. That is a very, very common way to look at it.

And if you do not believe that, then what business do you have teaching what you are teaching, if you do not believe it to be true? So we are continuing to lay groundwork or background material that explains the how and the why that anyone believes anything about anything.

Matter of fact, there was a book written a number of years ago by Dr. James Sire, S-I-R-E. And I think, if I am not mistaken, the title of the book was, Why Believe Anything About Anything?

Interesting question. Why believe anything about anything? There is but one logical rationale for believing anything about anything.

[2 : 28] And that is because it corresponds to reality. There is true reality and there is perceived reality.

One is valid. True reality is valid. Perceived reality is imaginary.

It is simply the way somebody thinks that something is. But it isn't that way at all. They just think it is.

That is their perception of reality. And for some people, their perception becomes their reality. And they can become very dangerous people.

If a terrorist perceives a certain teaching to be real and true, that in serving their God, you best do that by destroying people who do not believe in him as you do, and you will be handsomely rewarded with the 72 dark-eyed virgins in heaven and the fruits and the dates and the nuts and all the rest that go with it.

[3 : 54] If that is your perception and you accept that as reality and act upon it, you can bring down the world trade centers.

You can kill multitudes of people with roadside bombs. If you allow your perception of reality to be acted upon because you are convinced that it isn't just a perception, it is real.

It is true to you. We have emphasized the fact that believing something does not make it so.

It doesn't make any difference how strongly or how long you believe in it. That does not make it true. And we need to understand that.

We are talking about the difference between subjectivity and objectivity. And all of this, of course, points out the critical need for exposure to truth and not fiction.

[5 : 03] Objectivity is factual. Subjectivity is wishful. You can take just about any historical subject and apply this kind of reasoning to it, and the distinction becomes very, very critical.

I'm thinking perhaps of that which is the very backbone of biblical Christianity, and that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Is that factual or is it fanciful?

Some take the position which I think philosophically and logically is completely untenable. If that is you, if you as a Christian believe that Jesus Christ was physically resurrected from the dead, then he was.

If you, however, happen to not believe that, then he wasn't. Which one is correct? Well, they're both correct.

If you believe it, it's true for you. If you don't believe it, that's true for you. So, name your poison. Take whichever way you want. And they would tell us that when it comes to spiritual matters and religious matters, you can actually do that.

[6 : 17] You can have it both ways. No, you can't. You can't have it both ways. The laws of logic will not permit that. When we say that we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as an objective fact, that means we believe it really, truly, physically, historically happened.

It did take place. It did not take place because we believe it took place. It took place whether we believe it or not. It happened. It is a fact of history.

It is not left to subjectivity. It is not left to personal opinion. It is not left to one's taste or viewpoint or preference. It is an objective fact.

It really did happen. It is not enhanced nor improved upon by your believing it. It happened.

Simple as that. That is, looking at it objectively. So, the basis for believing anything about religious truth or doctrine is identical for the basis of believing about anything else, whether politics, history, art, or the sciences.

[7 : 35] You believe that what is set forth represents reality, that what is set forth as a claim or position is really the way it is.

I really want you to understand this. Listen to me. There is not a different, special way of thinking about spiritual matters.

Christians really need to understand that. There is not a special, different way of thinking when it comes to spiritual matters.

We bring the same thought processes. We bring the same dynamic. We bring the same criteria. We bring the same issues of judging and evaluating to spiritual truths as we do to anything else, whether it is science, art, history, politics, you name it.

There is not a special way of thinking about religious things. It all comes under the purview of logic and rationale and reasoning and understanding and comprehension and data and information and processing it.

[8 : 51] And it works the same across the board for everything, including spiritual matters. Sometimes when we associate faith with an object, it is as though you take a quantum leap and now you are talking about a completely different area.

No, you aren't. The God of reality and the reason and logic that he put into place for our thinking and comprehension works the same way in spiritual things that it does in secular things.

There is no difference. The process of faith that a believer places in Jesus Christ is exactly the same process of faith that an unbeliever puts in atheism.

Same process. No distinction. No difference. The conclusion is radically different. But the process is the same.

It all has to do with processing information, reaching a conclusion. You do that on the basis of logic, reasoning, and thinking. Faith works the same across the board.

[10 : 09] It doesn't make any difference who is applying it. Whether it is an atheist or whether it is a devout Christian or whether it is a Muslim or whether it is a Christian scientist. It doesn't make any difference. Now, this is a really important point.

And I want you to understand this from the standpoint of logic and philosophy. It is absolutely critical that you pick up on this. When an atheist says there is no God, he is exercising faith.

He believes there is no God. He is trusting in that concept. He is confident. He is believing. He has placed his faith in the idea that there is no God.

And the way he works that, the way he implements that belief system, is identical to the way the Christian does. No different. Faith is the same for believers, unbelievers.

It's the same. Our problem is we automatically associate something spiritual or religious with faith. But it need not be the case at all.

[11 : 24] Everybody exercises faith about a whole host of things all day long. You cannot live without it. You cannot function without it. When an atheist says there is no God, he is putting his faith, his trust, his confidence in that concept.

When a Christian says there not only is a God, but Jesus Christ is his son, and God sent his son to this earth to do for us what we couldn't do for ourselves, and I put my faith and my trust and my belief in that.

That is exactly the same way an atheist believes. The difference is in the object of your belief. Christian faith works no differently, operates no differently from the Muslim faith or the Jehovah's Witnesses.

It works the same way. It is a conscious, volitional placing of your confidence or trust in whatever. The thing that makes the difference is the object of your trust.

It is absolutely imperative that you understand that. Faith is something everyone participates in, whether they realize it or not.

[12 : 46] Whether they acknowledge it or not. We all operate on the basis of faith, and there is not a different kind of faith for Christians.

There is a different object of our faith. That makes all the difference in the world. So, positions taken, conclusions reached, begin in the minds of someone, almost always an individual.

The individual becomes passionate about that, or obsessed, if you will, and begins to think that everyone should believe this.

This person can be an innovator, a pioneer, someone who comes up with an idea, and they are so sold on it, so convinced, they become passionate about it, and they get the feeling that everybody ought to believe this.

And that works that way across the board for everything. Not just religion. Not just spiritual things. Works this way in science. Louis Pasteur, Madame Curie, are perfect examples of that.

[14 : 06] And how they discovered the true origin of germs, etc. And the whole pasteurization process. They became convinced of that scientifically.

Back in the, what, 19, probably teens or twenties, a brilliant young Jewish man by the name of Albert Einstein.

Einstein developed some theories. And one had to do with the theory of relativity.

And a host of other things that were very upsetting to the standard scientific community of the day. And not too many would agree with him, except men like Niels Bohr, and some of those who had the kind of intellect that they could stay on the same page with Einstein.

But he became so convinced of his theories that he just thought they ought to be propagated, and everybody ought to believe them. And one time he reduced this to E equals MC squared.

[15 : 22] Wow! The atomic age was born. We were off and running. It was a whole new ball game from there on out. Enter the atomic bomb, the ending of World War II, and a whole host of other things that go along with it.

All started in the mind of one man, thinking, and reasoning, and processing, and concluding, and reaching a position, and then being passionate enough about it to become an evangelist for the cause.

And you know what his message was? You know what his evangel was? You know what the gospel was that he propagated? E equals MC squared. Wow! Changed the world.

It started in the mind of one man. And that's almost always the way it begins. Frequent and dramatic is the way it works in politics and in religion.

And there are just untold numbers of examples. Years ago, a man by the name of Jimmy Carter was a former governor of Georgia.

[16 : 37] And a peanut farmer. He got this really weird idea that he ought to be the President of the United States.

And he started making appearances and going around the country and shaking hands and walking up to people and saying, Hi, my name is Jimmy Carter and I'm running for President.

And people looked at him and said, President of what? President of the United States. Peanut farmer.

Former Georgia governor. We don't know anything about this guy. But you know what? He had a passion and a drive. And he persisted.

And he won the Democratic nomination and defeated Gerald Ford in the election. And became our President. Regardless of what you think of the man or his politics.

[17 : 41] He was convinced of something. He was passionate about it. Didn't give up. And where did all this start? Where do you suppose the idea originated that Jimmy Carter ought to be the President of the United States?

Where do you suppose that idea originated? In Jimmy Carter's mind. Didn't originate in mine. Originated in his.

That's the way. That's the way everything works. It starts with an idea. Now, if it is an idea that is just kept in the mind, then it goes nowhere and nothing happens.

But if it is an idea that one feels they can't keep in their mind because it is such a good idea, everybody has got to hear about it. Everybody has got to know it. Then you become an evangelist for it.

You propagate it. You disseminate it. You talk to people about it. You promote it. And the next thing you know, more and more people buy into it.

[18 : 50] They think it is a good idea. And more and more people buy into it. So, you start out with it in your mind. You talk to those close to you about it. And they are supportive.

And the next thing you know, you have a following. And the following grows into a movement.

And the movement can shake a continent and change the world. And where did it all start? With one person.

I don't know who the originator of this was. But the year was about 17... Oh, let me see.

Any of you historians know when the Boston Tea Party was? It was around 1775 or 76. And what happened was, Great Britain had been coming down on the colonists with this and that and laws and requirements and taxes and demands and all the rest of it.

[20 : 01] And finally, the colonialists got fed up with it. And the straw that broke the camel's back was, They put a tax on tea. Now, if you are not a tea drinker, you can't appreciate this.

But if you were a limey, if you were an Englishman, as most of the colonists were in the 1700s, you don't mess with an Englishman's tea.

I mean, they got their limits. And that's one of them. And when they put a tax on tea coming into the colonies, somebody said, I don't know who it was.

Might have been Sam Adams. Might have been John Adams. Might have been Jefferson. It might have been somebody that we've never even heard of. But somebody said, you know what we ought to do?

We ought to intercept that ship in the Boston Harbor. We ought to take that tea that's on board and throw it overboard. Just throw it right in the bay. And we'll show His Majesty what we think of his tea tax.

[21 : 13] That was the original Boston Tea Party. Today, there is another tea party. Tea Party. Controversial. Some swear by it.

Some swear at it. They use the word tea. T-E-A to stand for taxed enough already. And they are becoming a movement.

Don't know whose mind it started in. Don't know whose mind started the original one. But I do know that things have a way of growing when somebody gets an idea and they insist on exporting it.

Next thing you know, there are followers. Then there is a movement. Then there is major motion. Barack Obama was an obscure Illinois senator who was given the platform at a Democratic National Convention.

And he electrified the conventioners with his rhetoric and his oratory. And he had the place jumping.

[22 : 26] And people were asking the question, Is this the one we've been waiting for? And eventually, he was given the nomination of the Democratic Party.

And do you know what everybody was saying across the country? All the news media and everybody was saying, Who is this man? We don't know anything about him. He's a stranger.

We don't know this about him. We don't know that about him. But do you know what? He had a passion. He had an idea. He thought that he, apart from the fact that he was a black man and nobody would have given him much of a chance to begin with, he thought that he was qualified and ought to be President of the United States.

And he gained a following. That became a movement. And the next thing you know, he's occupying the White House. Now, it doesn't make any difference what you think of the man's politics.

What I want you to understand is how this happened. How this took place. How is it that things come to be when it just starts out as an idea in somebody's mind?

[23 : 41] Listen, this is the way everything happens. It begins in the mind of someone. Now, if it just stays there, nothing happens. But if passion is applied, intensity is applied, then we have what we call a radical.

An extremist. And understand this, for good or ill, nothing happens till someone gets radical or extreme.

And if you are going to label someone an extremist or a radical, the question then becomes, extreme compared to what? It all depends on the basis for comparison.

If there is no radicalism, there is no passion, there is no extremism, the idea just stays in the mind of the individual and it dies there and nothing happens.

Nothing changes. Nothing moves. Do you know what that's called? That's called the status quo. That's where most of us live. In the status quo.

[24 : 53] We are not movers and shakers. Most of us are followers. Leaders have passion. Leaders become intense.

Leaders become extremists. Leaders become radical. That's the only way anything changes. Nothing changes till somebody gets radical. I don't care what it's about.

Whether it's art, politics, religion, law, it doesn't make any difference. Somebody has to think outside the box. Nothing happens till someone thinks outside the box. Because as long as everybody stays in the box, everything is the same, stays the same, nothing changes.

Same old, same old. But somebody comes along with a brilliant idea. And they start to sell it. And that's what changes everything.

It may be good. It may be ill. It may be Nazism. It may be communism. It may be Christianity. It all depends. It works the same way. That's what I'm saying.

[25 : 54] There is no distinction. There is no... This is the way people think and how they reach the conclusions they do. Which means more and more importance needs to be placed upon, exposed to the right information.

That is so very critical. So very critical. Ronald Reagan's motto was, cut taxes, reduce government, peace through strength, trust but verify.

Why? Conservatism was resurrected from Barry Goldwater. And it swept him into office with a huge majority. What was he? He won 49 of 50 states.

Or maybe he won all 50. I'm not sure. And you know, Ronald Reagan had a passion. And he exported it to many Americans.

And other officials throughout the world bought into it. Had the same passion and the same vision. And one of them was a woman by the name of Margaret Thatcher.

[27 : 12] And she impacted Great Britain the way Ronald Reagan impacted the United States. And somebody else was thinking along the same line.

And his name was Lech Berlinsa. He was a Polish dock worker. A laborer. A nobody.

But he had an idea. And you know what his idea was? It was really radical. Really extreme. I mean, this man was an extremist.

He had the audacity to believe that the Polish people ought to be free. Why, whoever heard of such a ridiculous thing? And he began stumping for it.

And he began organizing strikes at the dockworks. And they threatened him. And they brought him in. And they questioned him. And they persecuted him. And they threatened him some more.

[28 : 08] This was the Soviet satellite. Poland. Poland. And somebody else bought into the same idea. Nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come.

And the fourth figure in this miraculous undertaking that was to be realized was named Pope John Paul II.

Poland. He was a native son of Poland. He shared Walens' dream that Poland ought to be a free people.

And he began stumping. And he began using his papal office and influence to propagate this idea. This idea that the Polish people should be free.

And Ronald Reagan went to West Germany and said, Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall. And it was the right idea at the right time.

[29 : 13] And there's nothing as powerful as that. And what happened? These four, Reagan, Thatcher, Lech Walesa, and Pope John Paul II, were virtually leaders responsible for the toppling of what was then the United Soviet Socialist Republic.

And all of its satellites came crumbling down. The Berlin Wall came down. People were no longer shot, killed for trying to cross over the wall. Where did it all start?

It started in somebody's mind. And they propagated it and promoted it. And it caught on. The media says it had legs.

It took off. And the next thing you know, it became a consuming fire. And people were buying into it by the millions. That's the way it all starts.

It doesn't make any difference what it is. The battle goes on. It goes on today for hearts and minds. And you hear this expression given a lot. And we talk about this being peculiar to the schools in our educational process.

[30 : 32] That there is a battle going on for hearts and minds. And that is so true. Because, and it is hearts and minds. It's not just hearts.

Not just minds. We need both. Because the mind is the intellect. It is the decider. It is the processor. It is the conclusion maker.

But the heart is where the action is. That's where the movement comes in. If you are not touched in the heart, you will not be moved.

You will not put legs behind the idea. Passion is a product of the heart. It may begin in the mind with an idea.

But it is fueled and fired by the heart. That's the emotion. Emotion has the word motion in it because it refers to movement.

[31 : 32] Nothing happens as long as it just stays in the mind. But you get the heart involved. And you give it legs. It begins to move.

So the battle is for hearts and minds. Because the mind is the thinker. And the heart promotes the doing. It is a beautiful thing. Intellect without passion goes nowhere.

Passion without intellect is a dangerous loose cannon. You don't know where it's going. Cannot be trusted. Only people with both, passion and intellect, get things done.

Only they are movers and shakers, while the others are the moved and the shaken. They are the leaders and the followers. And they are always associated with what the mass would call extremism or radicalism.

And sometimes what passes off for radicalism is nothing more than just plain old simple logic. I want to give you a radical idea. This is a really, this is really radical.

[32 : 47] Now, I mean, I'm talking. What do I know about finance? Next to nothing. What do I know about international finance? Less than nothing.

Nothing. What do I know about big time economics and the stock market? Nothing. I just as soon take my money and go to Las Vegas as go to the stock market.

I know people know it and study it and can make money at it. But I wouldn't trust myself to try to do that. But I'm going to give you something really, really radical.

There probably isn't a senator or a member of the House of Representatives who wouldn't look at this idea. Well, there might be an exception. I would hope that there would be at least one exception in the House of Representatives.

You know who I'm talking about. My radical plan is for the United States government, for our Congress, for those who are in charge of taxpayers' money and spending our dollars, if they would function and operate with the same kind of arithmetic that you have to use when you sit down at the kitchen table to pay your monthly bills.

[34 : 08] Now, that's radical. I would be so radical as to take Keynesian economics that say deficits don't matter.

National debt doesn't matter. You can go on and on and on with deficit financing and it doesn't matter. I would take that whole concept and scrap it.

And say the government can't buy this and do this because the government can't afford it.

Period. Over and out. Next topic. But that's unheard of in our government. We have a special kind of mathematics, a special kind of arithmetic for our government.

Oh, yeah. You just think so. If we continue on this course that we are on now, with income and outgo as it is, national bankruptcy is absolutely inevitable.

[35 : 21] This is not an opinion. Do the math. There is no such thing as special arithmetic for Congress.

They act like it. But there isn't. Now, what I am saying is really radical. And that is, the government ought to pay as it goes.

There are things that they cannot afford. That's extremism. And it would be looked upon as completely unworkable, illogical, impractical, impossible. But then again, they would never know because they've never tried it.

All of these things come about, the ideas, etc. Because of the power of personality, armed with an argument, energized and motivated, we would hope, by the God factor.

And I want you to look at this passage in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2. Because Paul is going to provide a passion and an idea, but it is going to be coupled with the God factor.

[36 : 37] And so much of what we have been talking about is not. When the God factor comes into play, everything changes. 1 Corinthians 2, I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

In other words, Paul is telling us here that he had zero confidence in his ability to explain or put over what his message was.

No wonder he was scared to death, which is exactly what he's saying here. I didn't come to you with a brimful of confidence. I didn't come to you with the idea that I've got a great idea here and I know I can put it over.

He came with trembling and fear and doubts and inadequacy and everything. And the only thing that made any difference was the fact that this was not only Paul's passion, this was God's passion.

[38 : 01] This was Christ's passion. In other words, don't look to me for eloquence and oratory because you're not going to find it.

He didn't have it. And he knew he didn't have it. Paul is saying here, look, I am not an apollos. I don't have the gift of oratory.

I cannot speak with enticing words and man's wisdom that can just hold an audience on the edge of their seat with my command of the language and just really wow them.

I don't have that. I don't have that. So if God isn't in this, if God isn't doing it, it isn't going to be done. Because in and of myself, I'm scared to death and petrified.

I know I'm not up to this. It was in demonstration of the spirit and of power that your faith, your confidence, your trust should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

[39 : 20] Yeah. That is wonderful. Paul is not at all concerned about trying to convince people with his clever arguments because he's saying, I don't have any.

I don't have any. But because God is in this thing, he is behind it. He is my motivation. He is the one who is stimulating and spurring this thing on.

I have great confidence. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God through faith unto salvation to everyone who believes.

I don't want your faith to stand in the wisdom of men or the cleverness of ideas, but in the power of God. Just a beautiful concept. And while we're in Corinthians, come over, please, to chapter 10 of 2 Corinthians.

Chapter 10, 2 Corinthians. And verse 10.

[40 : 34] 2 Corinthians 10. Paul said he's talking about the recipients of his earlier letters and probably the Corinthians as well included. And Paul said, I know.

I know how you feel about me and I know what you think about me. For his letters, Paul referring to his own letters, say they are weighty and powerful.

But his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine? The apostle Paul.

These people who were on the receiving end of his letters say, you know what? You read Paul's letters and they are really something. I mean, they really get your attention.

He really lays it out. It is just remarkable to read this guy's letters. But have you ever heard him speak? He's nothing.

[41 : 36] He can't hold a candle to a polish. Now, there is a polished speaker. A polish. He can really wow the crowd. But Paul, his speech is contemptible.

His bodily presence is not much to look at. His bodily presence is contemptible. I mean, he is anything but tall, dark, and handsome.

He's kind of homely. Bald. Has a big nose. Walks with a limp. This is what tradition says about describing Paul the apostle.

We don't know how accurate it was. But he's certainly no specimen of humanity. And when you listen to him, not very compelling at all.

So, what was the secret of this man's success? Content, content, content.

[42 : 45] Content. He may have been a less than adequate delivery service of the material. But he was God's choice.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. Content. He had something really different.

Something worth listening to. Something compelling. Something above and beyond mere human logic and reasoning. That's what made Paul successful.

It was his message. If the message is adequate, the messenger is insignificant. So many times people get caught up in the messenger.

They never hear the message. There is charisma, personality, charm, humor.

[43 : 50] People just get all caught up in that. So that the content that the person delivers is strictly secondary. And it leaves people saying, I don't know.

I don't know what he was talking about. I don't know what he said. But he sure did say it nice, didn't he? Well, what good is that for anybody? What a beautiful thought.

His bodily presence is weak. His speech is contemptible. Well, he wasn't bothered by that. That did not trouble him at all. I want you to look at one more while we're real close to the neighborhood.

Chapter 11. 2 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 6. Paul said, Now, this is not a real good expression.

Rude in speech means simply, it doesn't mean that Paul was rude or that he behaved in a rude manner or treated people rudely. It meant that his speech, his elocution, his delivery, his word formulation was nothing special.

[45 : 11] Sometimes you might even have difficulty following him. Though I be rude in speech, lacking in speech, no oratorical skills. Yet, not in knowledge.

I may not have the greatest oratory or delivery system in the world, but I'll tell you what. I've got content. I've got content because of the source from which I obtained it.

And for that, of course, he was not apologizing. It is a beautiful, beautiful thing. All of this simply relates to how it is and why it is that people believe anything about anything.

It starts in the mind of someone. They propagate it. And people are impressed by it or, in some cases, turned off by it. Let me give you an illustration in closing here.

Because people are impressed when certain people are impressed with certain people. Did you get that?

[46 : 21] Think about it. People are impressed when certain people are impressed with certain people. There isn't anybody here who doesn't know of or remember the Beatles.

The Fab Four or is it the Fab Five? Four. I don't remember. I am not a great Beatles fan. But my son owns a library of books on the Beatles.

He's an authority on the Beatles. He could tell you everything about the Beatles. He's a big Beatles fan. And when the Beatles came over here and appeared on the Ed Sullivan Hour, they just took the nation by storm.

I mean, they were just a huge, huge hit from across the pond. Everybody fell in love with the Beatles. They had this funny-looking haircut and they sang their songs and everything. And the whole nation just seemingly got caught up in this.

Everybody was impressed with it. Well, not everybody. But most people were really impressed by the Beatles. But you know who the Beatles were impressed by?

[47 : 38] Maharishi Yoga. An Indian guru, mystic, steeped in Eastern occult mysticism, religion.

And the Fab Four got caught up in this man and his teachings. And they took him on board as a tutor.

And he was teaching them all about Hinduism and Eastern mysticism and what it meant to be a guru and a follower of the guru.

And they bought into the whole thing. And Eastern mysticism made an incredible impact in the Western world through the Beatles.

Because people were really impressed with the Beatles. And if there was something that the Beatles were impressed with, they were impressed with that.

[48 : 47] And we have not to this day recovered from the impact of transcendental meditation, Eastern mysticism, New Ageism, and the occult.

That's all part of the mix. Because people become impressed with people who are impressed with certain people. That's how stuff gets propagated.

And listen, understand. It has nothing to do with whether it is good or bad. That's just the way it works. It has nothing to do with whether it is good or evil.

That's just the way it works. People are impacted and influenced by others. It starts in the mind, usually, of just one.

Parents, family, community, all contribute to this. Negatively or positively.

[49 : 47] It is a powerful, powerful thing. And you take groups like the Amish. And their emphasis upon family.

Why do the Amish believe what they believe? In most cases, it's because that's what their family believes. And that's what their parents believe.

And that's what their grandparents believe. And you've got a whole sect of people, Amish-like people in Canada, called the Hutterites, that are along the same line. You've got the same thing with Mormons.

Why are most Mormons Mormons? Because they were born and reared as a Mormon. Oh, they have their converts. And they send their missionaries around.

And they do recruit people. And they add people to their number. But by and large, most of them were born in that and were influenced by parents.

[50 : 48] Why are most Christians Christians? More often than not, it's because they were born and raised in a Christian home. Now, we know that doesn't make them Christians.

But that's the thing that impacts and influences them. Same thing is true of a family who is into the occult and devil worship. Where in the world did they get that?

Well, they were probably influenced by the family into which they were born. This is why most people are Muslims. This is why most people are Roman Catholics.

This is why most people are Protestants. This is why most people... But none of those things, by way of background or influence, are any guarantee that the position they hold is truthful or is based in reality.

It's just that that's how and why they came to hold it. That's why most Methodists are Methodists. And most Baptists are Baptists.

[51 : 46] And most Presbyterians are Presbyterians. I say most. Not all. There are converts along the way. But most tend to follow what they were born into. And when it comes to why Christians differ and believe things radically different when it comes to doctrine, it all depends on what they are exposed to.

Now, in the next few sessions that we have, we are going back in church history, back to the second and third century, and there we will be discovering how and why some people adopted the position that they held and that they are still propagated today, almost 2,000 years later.

There are belief systems out there that are in vogue today that started way back then, and some of them with a man by the name of Origen.

Probably never heard of him. O-R-I-G-E-N. A man of tremendous intellect and influence. Had a very large impact on early Christians.

As well as Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo. Probably one of the most brilliant thinkers that ever lived. And he had an enormous impact on what became Roman Catholicism.

[53 : 08] And is still referred to today as an Augustinian order. After Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk. So, these are things that we are going to be looking at, and we will explain how and where and why and when our dispensational distinctives started to surface.

And what is, by far and away, in my opinion at least, the most beneficial, the most helpful, the most important thing to keep in mind when you are interpreting Scripture, I think, more than anything else in the whole wide world that I have ever come across.

And that's what I want to share with you next week. Got five minutes for Q&A.; Anybody? Comments or questions? John, could we get a microphone, please?

Okay. John Aikens over here has a question or comment.

It's okay. I just remember when we were studying in John once, I wrote down, and I think it was in, well, I know where it is. I marked it here.

[54 : 33] In John 6, 25 and 26, it's the story where they followed him in the boat and wondered why he got where he got to, where Jesus got to. And he said that you are following me for something to eat, not for the miracles and things like that.

And he saw everything as spiritual, you know, every part of your life. And when you mentioned that you don't think different when you're thinking spiritual versus non-spiritual, that passage came to mind.

Absolutely. It's a good illustration of it, yeah. And then you were talking about governments and spending. I saw a program, I think it was yesterday, Greece is close to defaulting on loans, and all the other governments are propping them up because if they don't, then they're all going to follow suit.

Yeah, yeah. I really do. I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I really, really do expect a worldwide economic collapse.

I just don't see how we can possibly avoid it. But then again, I don't know anything about finances, but I know a little bit about arithmetic, and I know how to add two and two.

[55 : 44] And I'll tell you what, there is not a special kind of arithmetic devised for nations in trouble. Two and two is still four for everybody.

And I really do think that there is going to be an economic collapse. I don't see how we can avoid it, and it will not be just the United States. It will be most, if not all, of the world because we're so interrelated and interconnected.

Other comments or questions? All right, I'm going to let you go three minutes early, provided you don't tell anybody.

Don't want the word to get around that I dismiss early. May we stand, we'll have a word of prayer. Father, we are grateful for information that you have provided in your word as to how things work and how belief systems originate.

And we want to be able to understand these as fully as possible so we can expose ourselves to that which we need to be exposed and then become passionate and extremists about the right kind of things to make an impact upon a lost and dying world.

[56 : 53] Thank you for the truth of the passages that we've looked at in Corinthians, for the principles that are in place and have been from time immemorial. We bless you for it in Christ's name.

Amen.