## To The Testimony! Bible Study Materials

# **What We Believe**

A Survey of Bible Doctrines

## **Teacher's Guide**

"To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20

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New Boston Baptist Church New Boston, New Hampshire



www.newbostonbaptist.org

What We Believe: A Survey of Bible Doctrines— Teacher's Guide

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#### The Doctrinal Foundation of To The Testimony! Materials:

We believe that the autographa of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by God, and so they constitute inerrant, ultimate, and infallible authority in all matters of faith and practice, as well as any other matter that they may address. We are thankful for God's providential work of preservation, and we appreciate faithful translation and textual criticism.

We believe in one God who exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, virgin born, fully God and fully man, that He lived a sinless and miraculous life, that He died as a vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind, and that He arose bodily from the grave.

We believe that men are conceived in sin. Their only hope of redemption and salvation from hell fire is personal faith in Christ's work on the cross on their behalf. Saving faith involves repentance, requires a prior work of God's Spirit, and produces evidence of a changed and fruitful life.

We believe that Christ will return soon. We are premillennial and pretribulational in our eschatology, and we affirm Ryrie's *sine qua non* of dispensational hermeneutics: (1) God's glory is central to God's plan; (2) an ecclesial distinction must be maintained between Israel and the local church; and (3) a literal one-to-one correspondence must be followed in the hermeneutics of prophecy and fulfillment.

We believe in the autonomy of the local church, the separation of church and state, two church offices, and two ordinances. We are Baptist in our polity.

We believe that Christians ought to live with separatist convictions, a desire to be holy and to separate from those who do not. We desire to be passionate about our stand against the unbelief of liberalism and the compromise of new evangelicalism.

#### Teaching Goals Reflected in To the Testimony! Materials:

Teaching the Bible must begin with the truth of 2 Tim. 3:15: "the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The first demonstration of the power of the Word of God in a life is the salvation of the soul. Wisdom unto salvation through faith in Christ is the product of the Spirit of God's illumination of those who study the pages of the Bible. The Bible teacher ministers so that men and women might come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. This is his first work. No man will understand the Bible until he has first made peace with its Author (1 Cor. 2:12-14). There is no dichotomy between teaching God's Word and winning souls to Christ (1 Tim. 4:16).

The next goal of the faithful teacher of the Bible is spiritual maturity for his students. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 expresses this desire well: "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Teaching *all Scripture* perfects

God's people. Hobby horses and trendy topics can be tempting as popular substitutes for a disciplined and expositional commitment to *all Scripture*. Balance is also important to faithfulness to *all Scripture*. Overlooking some Scriptures with an unbalanced focus on others can skew theological conclusions. The faithful teacher may not solve all the mysteries theological systems seem to solve, but his balanced approach to disciplined exposition will treat all sound doctrine fully.

Another commitment the teacher must make to reach his goal of spiritually mature students is practical application. Many teachers are willing to profit from the Scripture in the area of doctrine, but they are afraid to use the Bible as a tool of reproof and correction. Teachers have to be negative at times and practical at all times. The Scripture was not meant merely to give us something to think about, but to give us something which changes our lives. God has revealed His will because He desires men to obey (Deut. 29:29).

2 Tim. 4:1-5 concludes our understanding of the teacher's mission. Paul does not promise Timothy that crowds will applaud his superior techniques and entertaining methods. He simply tells him that doctrine will require endurance. Our students must learn how to endure Bible teaching in order to grow. We need to be careful not to make the Bible too easy. In our efforts to take away the pain of Bible study, we very well may rob our students of the gain God desires for them.

#### Suggestions For Using To The Testimony! Materials:

#### Preparation:

Your *To The Testimony!* materials will require that you spend time with your Bibles. You should begin by working your way through a student lesson. Prayerfully read the related passages. As you study the passages covered by the lesson, write down the answers and applications which you desire to emphasize to your class in response to the questions you find in the student lesson. This preparation will help you see the lesson from the student's point of view, and it will ensure that your students are fed from your labors. Working through a lesson will also help you understand what may be unclear to your students and what may need clarification during the class time. You may develop questions of your own for class time.

After completing the student version of the lesson, consult your teacher's manual for the answers, applications, and commentary resources found there. Emphasize the conclusions the Lord brought to your mind during your personal study, and use the teacher's manual to supplement that understanding. When you complete this process, you should prayerfully consider the effect you want these passages to have on your students. Write down two or three main applications, attitudes, or actions you want the students in your class to adopt as a result of that lesson.

#### Presentation:

As a teacher of the Bible, you want to encourage learning in your students. Learning is accomplished not simply by hearing a lecture in the classroom, but also by wrestling with the material in a personal way. As a teacher, you want to encour-

age discussion in the classroom to reward those who have wrestled with the material on their own. Listening can be as important to teaching as instructing. Your *To The Testimony!* materials are especially suited to encourage classroom discussion. The class format should include time for students to volunteer their answers to the student manual questions. This is the core of the learning process during the classroom session.

In addition to the student responses, the classroom session should focus attention on the applications the Lord has placed on your heart for your class. The student responses will often serve as a lead-in for a point you want to emphasize. The student's attention is usually especially well-focused just after another student responds to a question.

To The Testimony! materials contain some special tools in addition to the lesson questions, which are designed to help encourage discussion in the class. Key words highlight key points in the simple From The Honeycomb word studies. Use these at your discretion to help clarify a key word or drive home a key application. Interesting Insight! paragraphs are excerpts from other authors relevant to the lesson. The design here is to help students value the work others have done to help us understand the Scripture. Real Life? boxes conclude many of the lessons in order to challenge the student to apply in a practical situation the principles and applications you have taught him. These situations will help to make the convictions your students are developing more concrete and real.

#### Pace:

A given number of lessons may or may not require the same number of weeks. Pace yourself. Tangents can be tremendous learning adventures in the classroom, and good class discussion will occasionally mean that a full lesson will not be possible in one week. Each lesson follows an outline, and these can be used to help break down the lesson into more manageable pieces. It is important not to overwhelm your class in order to obtain an arbitrary rate of progress. Give your class time to learn and digest what they are learning. Regular review is important to the learning process.

#### About the Author of What We Believe - A Survey of Bible Doctrines:

Kevin Hobi has been the pastor of New Boston Baptist Church in New Boston, NH since August 2007. New Boston Baptist Church is an independent fundamental family in Christ that is honored to associate with the Northeast Regular Baptist Fellowship of Churches and the American Council of Christian Churches. Kevin is also a member of the IBFNA and the FBFI. Kevin's ministry experience includes 11 years of service as Associate Pastor at The Baptist Church of Danbury, CT.

Kevin trusted Christ as his personal Savior as a boy growing up under the ministry of Pastor John Ashbrook and Bible Community Church. He is a graduate of Mentor Christian School, a day school ministry of that church. He trained for ministry at the Bible Institute of Ohio and Bob Jones University, earning a BA in history,

and an MA and PhD in theology. He also earned an MBA from Western Connecticut State University.

Kevin and his wife Maureen have been blessed with three children: Brandon, Kara, and Kent, a daughter-in-law Carrie, and a son-in-law Matt.

#### The Purpose of What We Believe:

The purpose of the *What We Believe* Bible study lessons is to teach a comprehensive survey of the major themes of the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). They reflect the pastoral concern that every believer should know what he believes. Focused on the first-order concerns of Protestant orthodoxy, the study is designed to be useful in a multi-denominational sense, even though the author is a Baptist by conviction. The lesson on eschatology, however, does reflect a premillennial interpretation of last things, and the study employs a dispensational hermeneutic throughout, which is especially noticeable in its treatment of ecclesiology and eschatology.

The lessons seek to be both practical and balanced, without generating speculative controversy. They are a study in systematic theology (asking, "What is true?") that seeks to implement the tools of biblical theology (asking, "What is revealed?"). The admonition of Deut. 29:29 is a guiding principle: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

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