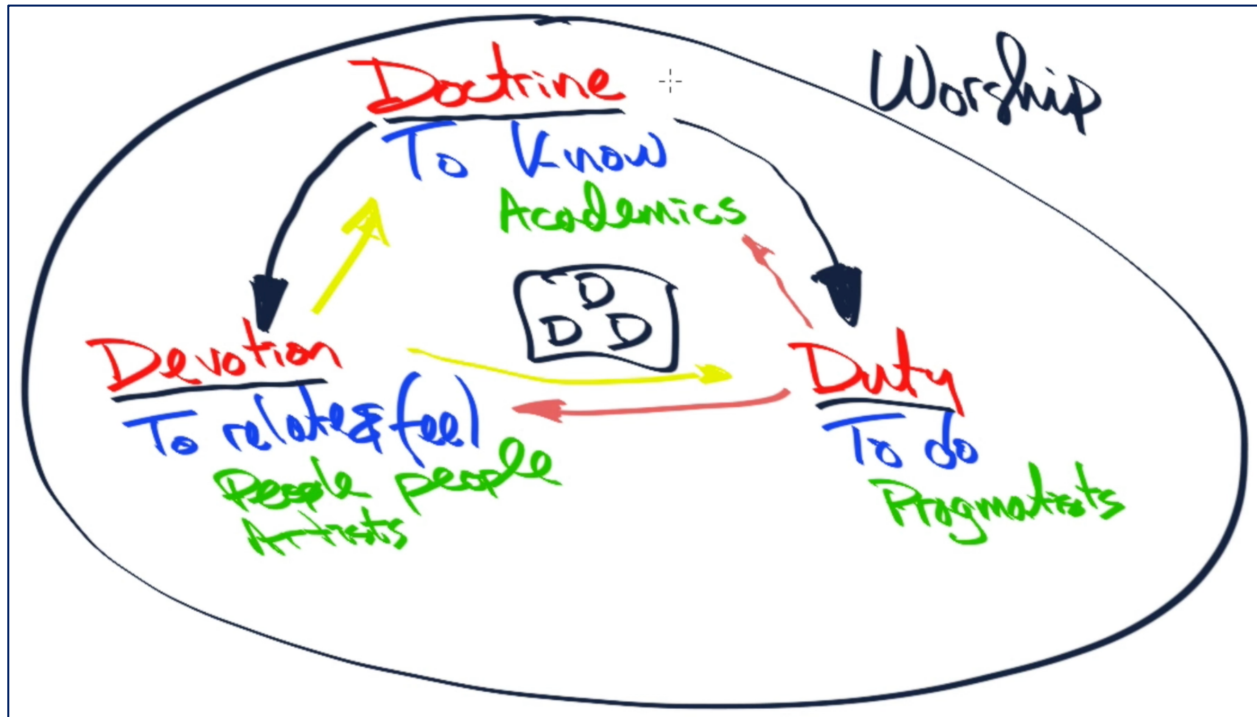


Introduction to Doctrine: Doctrine, Devotion, and Duty

I want to suggest a way in which we differ from each other. And knowing about this might be helpful to us as we think about ourselves and each other. There are different core motivations that people or groups of people have.



So one core motivation that a lot of people have is to know. They want to learn, they want to understand, and knowing is very important to them.

To some people, what's really important is to do. They want to take action. That's what really matters.

And another group of people want to relate and often feel. This is what's really important as they engage in the world.

And so the people who want to know things... often we see them as academics. They think school is a wonderful place to be. To consume knowledge that other people have produced, and then to create new knowledge, is a wonderful place to be.

People who want to do, we often can think of them as pragmatists. They say, "You know what? You might come up with all sorts of knowledge. but what us is it unless you've done something? Right? Show me what you've done not what you know." And so to pragmatists, doing is really important.

And to relate and to feel is very often in the realm of either "people people" or often this is the world of artists. That it's not about taking action; it's about not about head knowledge; it's about engagement in the rest of who we are, in our emotion and in our relationships with people.

When we think about this in the world of the church, there are different areas that relate to these. And so often we'll think of the world of knowledge as doctrine. And so the question is: what do we know about God? and how can we know that? and how can we learn more about him?

When we think about doing, we think about duty. It's a world of ethics. It's a world of responsibility. It's a world of getting things done.

And in people and artists this is a world of devotion, of devotionals, of relationship, of engaging with people in very personal ways.

Our goal in looking at doctrine, is not to have doctrine be on its own as a separate thing. But our doctrine should drive us into action. It should inform our duty. It should show us and motivate us to take action in the world. Doctrine without action is dead doctrine. Also, our hope is that our doctrine leads to devotion. It leads to relationship with God and to know him more, and to know other people, and to have a real sense, a feeling of his presence. Our goal is not that doctrine live on its own, but our doctrine drives us to action, it drives us into duty, and it takes us deeper into devotion, into relation with God and experience with God, and in depth of relationship with each other.

And in some real sense, when we take this whole trio, we might say that our goal is worship. And worship is not just about a feeling. It is about action, and it is about knowledge. And ideally, it's at the sweet spot where all these things are happening together, that our doctrine, our devotion, and our duty are deeply integrated.

So, there are other ways in which the flow might be the opposite direction. So, there are rich ways in which a relationship with people and with God drive us to deeper understanding of him, and drive us to a stronger engagement in action. And then the other can be true as well, that when we do things it drives us further into our knowledge, in recognizing limitations of our knowledge, and better understanding of who God is, and it can drive us into relationship with God and with each other. And so we see those directions as well.

As we look at this segment of the doctrine of our church, our hope is that this doctrine would be driving us into a kind of worship that is based on knowledge, it leads to action, and it deeply engages us with each other and with God.