



UNITY: THE FORGOTTEN TREASURE

ETC Course Handout - Lesson 10

Our Core Doctrines

Course Section	Section 2 - A Reconstruction of Our Theological Conclusions
Book Connection	Chapter 9 - The Core Doctrines
Lesson Aim	Prioritize Gospel-centered truths and distinguish them from other important but less central conclusions.

Key Scriptures

1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; Galatians 1:6-9.

1. The Gospel Has Priority

- Christian doctrine is not a flat list in which every conclusion functions identically.
- The Gospel identifies the saving work of Christ and therefore occupies a governing place in Christian faith and fellowship.

Notes:

2. Three Categories of Biblical Truth

- Chapter 9 organizes biblical truths by their relationship to the Gospel and to Christian life.
- The purpose is not to minimize Scripture but to handle its teachings with appropriate weight.

Notes:

THINK ABOUT IT

What doctrine have you treated as a test of fellowship even though it may not be central to the Gospel?

3. Core Truth and Shared Identity

- Believers are joined to Christ through the Gospel, not through identical answers to every theological question.
- Core doctrines help identify the shared confession around which Christians recognize one another.

Notes:

4. Mistaken Handling of Scripture

- Problems arise when secondary deductions are promoted to the level of essential Gospel truth.
- Problems also arise when central truths are diluted in the name of peace.

Notes:

5. A Better Doctrinal Posture

- Hold core truths firmly, pursue all biblical truth seriously, and avoid using secondary conclusions as weapons against fellow believers.

Notes:

Study & Application

Use these after the lesson and related book reading. The complete chapter study-question set remains in the textbook.

1. Why is the Gospel uniquely important in organizing Christian doctrine?

2. What is gained by distinguishing categories of biblical truth?

3. How can Christians minimize Scripture while trying to emphasize unity?

4. How can Christians exaggerate secondary doctrines while claiming to defend truth?

KEY TAKEAWAY: Biblical unity becomes clearer when the Gospel remains central and other truths are given their proper weight.

Next: Complete the 7-question Lesson 10 online quiz.