

Sermon Notes

2/6/11

REFLECTIONS

Are We
Vaccinating
People Against
Truth?





REFLECTIONS

Vaccination: Medicine given in an attempt to protect against disease. Polio, Diphtheria, Whooping cough, and other diseases have been either eradicated or significantly reduced by using vaccinations. We vaccinate our children, ourselves, and the elderly to avoid getting the illness for which the vaccine has been developed.

Vaccines typically use compromised or even dead viruses which are introduced into the patient causing their immune system to launch an attack on the viruses and produce antibodies which give the body a defense force if it is invaded by the actual disease. The body is thus prepared to destroy the invading disease elements before it can gain a foothold and inflict the actual disease. A little exposure is designed to prevent a full-blown infection.

When I consider the ideas behind the vaccination strategy for disease prevention, I can see in it a metaphor for what seems to be happening in the Church, only with negative results rather than the positive outcomes credited to medical vaccinations. What if in our efforts to please people who come to our churches we begin to water down the Gospel? What if we ignore the reality of sin and evil in the hearts of men by our teachings? What if, even in a well-meaning way, we convince our children that the Bible is nothing more than a collection of stories with good moral lessons but leave them with doubts about their truth? Are we not in a very real way “vaccinating” them against the truth which tells us that man is a spiritually dead soul in need of being reborn in Jesus?

When Jesus confronted the Pharisees about their hypocrisy in the 23rd chapter of Matthew, He focused on their heart and compared the sickness of their spiritual heart to their behaviors and found them in great need of repentance. He declared to them... *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."*²⁸ *"Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."* (Matthew 23:27-28 NKJ)

The Pharisees were well known for their efforts to proselytize men into becoming as they were and Jesus pointed out that what they had

done was to essentially ruin them spiritually in the process. By the teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees, men were misled into being the same type of hypocrite that their teachers were. The proselytes were inoculated against the truth of the Scriptures and thus became like their leaders who lived in hypocrisy and with great errors in their teachings.

When leaders are burdened with doubts about the truth and veracity of the Word themselves, they can hardly help but infect those they are leading with the same doubts. We read of leaders who are advocating ideas that are heretical to the Word of God. Telling their followers that they cannot really know truth but must, instead, embrace ambiguity and not to take seriously the claims of inerrancy attributed to God's Word, they vaccinate their listeners with enough doubt to lead them to reject the truth. Creation becomes to them a combination of evolution, earthly philosophies regarding beginnings, and rejection of the book of Genesis. Children influenced by these doubting teachers are then made quite vulnerable to the secularized belief systems of the public educational establishment. Ultimately, they reject the truth of God in exchange for the lie and become foolish in their substitution of error for truth.

How can we reverse these trends and inoculate ourselves and our children against the lies instead of against the truth? Let's examine some of the possibilities. First and foremost we must treat the Word with reverence and make certain that our study and preparation are in keeping with the importance of our mission which is to prepare the saints for the work of the ministry. Secondly, we must be prepared to address and answer the questions that are on the minds of our children and young adults. The questions that are actually being asked. Let's give them confidence in the Word by answering questions regarding beginnings and defending the inerrancy of the Scriptures against the onslaught of lies that modern society offers in their explanations of things like creation, the flood, and ultimately about sin and death. Let's purpose not to just tell stories but to connect those accounts to the Lord Himself and how He deals with the sin of man as we fill their hearts with the truth.

The reality of sin, life and death is described simply by the writer of Hebrews. *And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,*²⁸ *so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.* (Hebrews 9:27-28 NKJ) Let's be certain to be faithful to the Word. Let's purpose to not allow our efforts to vaccinate our people against the truth, but to fully embrace it instead. Let's learn it, love it and share it. **Pastor Doug**