

# Letters: The necessity of theology and doctrine for ministry

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RE:[Voices: The necessity of theology and doctrine for ministry](#)

Joshua Sharp's recent op-ed about the need for theology and doctrine in ministry resonates with this pastor.

Focusing on just Sharp's first point about how to address the lack of doctrine in the American church, I encourage every pastor to preach the Bible. Go to the text, and let it speak instead of hunting passages that might support a great sermon idea you have.

If your church still has Sunday morning Bible study groups, use a curriculum that walks you through books of the Bible, and direct home groups or cell groups to do the same.

Yes, encourage Christians to read good books, but stop basing a majority of small group time on Christian-themed books. Go to the source. Read the Bible!

Baptists were once known as "people of the book." Recapture that. The best and most abundant source of information about God, his commands, promises and desires for his church are in the Bible.

In my little over 25 years in ministry, I have encountered many church staff who are embarrassed by portions of Scripture. As a result, they don't preach or teach these passages. In such gatherings, there will be poorly formed or misshapen theologies.

One ought to have a theology for everything he or she does. I know that sounds extreme, but if we are Christ's body and we exist to bring him glory, how can we not?

I have a theology for where I buy groceries, how I raise my children, when I turn my cell phone off, how I talk to people, how I spend money. I even have a well-developed theology about the use of the word "random."

So, Mr. Sharp, live and preach theology and doctrine. If our doctrines happen to differ, let's grab a cup of coffee and a Bible and see where God takes us.

*Mathew St. John*

*Anson, Texas*