

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:9

Question: "Do you know **why** you are a Baptist, and could **you** defend your beliefs of doctrine from God's Word?"

TO ASSIST US IN PREVENTING "*SHIPWRECK*" (1 Tim 1:19) AND BEING "*SWAYED BY EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE*" (Eph 4:14), LET US CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TOOL:

The Reference Triangle

Purpose: To equip our children (as they mature in the Lord) in the defense of their faith and that from the Word of God.

Scope: The Old and New Testaments (2 Tim 3:16) with as many points of doctrine that you can support from Scripture.

Plan: Obtain supporting passages from predetermined areas of doctrine while hearing the preaching of God's Word and while doing your **own personal study**. Notate these passages either in the back of your Bible or on a separate sheet of paper that is kept in your Bible (or both).

Application: Study and teach the individual doctrines as you are prepared to do so. Then, using the supporting passages of Scripture you have collected, choose your "**Reference Triangle**" to equip your son or daughter in defending these doctrines from the Bible and from memory.

1. Select the strongest verse or passage that supports the particular doctrine.
2. Commit this verse/passage to memory.
3. Select two other verses or passages that also support the particular doctrine.
4. Cross reference all three selected verses/passages in your Bible (or on your separate sheet if you are not comfortable with writing in your Bible).
5. These three selections now represent your "reference triangle" which you can repeat with as many important doctrines as you wish.

Note: The added benefit of committing the primary verse or passage to memory will allow your son or daughter to be ready with an answer whether they have access to a Bible or not, and it will also be in accordance with the Lord's command for them to hide God's Word in their hearts (Ps 119:11).

Suggested Doctrinal Topics (By NO means a complete listing):

Deity of Christ, Salvation by grace, Eternal security of the believer, Inspiration of Scripture, Preservation of Scripture, Verbal plenary of Scripture, Sufficiency of Scripture, The verity of Scripture, The purity of Scripture, The Trinity, The Virgin Birth, The Blood of Christ, The Depravity of Man, Personal evangelism, The six-day creation, Geocentricity, Personal and ecclesiastical separation, A Biblical worldview, The Rapture / Pre-tribulation, Repentance, Conversion / Regeneration, The Local Church, Prayer, Baptist Distinctives, etc.

Why a "Triangle"?

We know from God's Word that every verse has its "mate" (Isa 34:16), and "...a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Eccl 4:12). Considering these passages and the many times in Scripture that the Lord has chosen to confirm his Word or doctrine in "threes", a triangle seemed most fitting. How many records of "threes" from the Bible can you think of?

For observation and instances, here are just a few that I came up with for this study: The Trinity (1 Jn 5:7-8); "Lovest thou me?" (Jn 21:15-17); Peter's denial (Matt 26:34); "I come quickly" (Rev 22:7, 12, 20); Christ's post-resurrection appearances (Jn 21:14); Christ's invitation (Rev 22:17); Discipleship "ye cannot" (Lk 14:26-27, 33); "not worthy of me" (Matt 10:37-38); Command for Peter to ".kill and eat" (Acts 10:13, 15-16); Christ's desert experience: Satan's temptations / Christ's rebuke with the Word of God (Matt 4:1-11); Christ's Gethsemane prayers and petitions to His disciple to pray (Matt 26:36-44); Jonah's three days in Hell and rebuilding of the "Temple", Christ's bodily resurrection (Matt 26:61)....and the "list" goes on and on...

Examples:

Salvation by Grace: **Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 2:16, Romans 5:1 (see below)

Inspiration of Scripture: **2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Peter 1:21

Preservation of Scripture: ** Psalm 12:6-7, 1 Peter 1:23-25, Mark 13:31

(Note: ** denotes passage committed to memory)

