

## **Professional Definitions Essential for Discussion of Theology in any Religion.**

**Doctrine:** Unchangeable truth necessary for Salvation as stated in the Holy Writing. The Sacred text is the starting point and the final point for doctrines. Example: Jesus said: "The person who hears my word and believes in Him who sent me has everlasting life, and shall never come under judgment, but has passed from death to life already." John 5:24

**Dogma:** Change very slowly, sometimes over hundreds of years. Additional required beliefs put forth by the religious, and often denominational authority, as necessary for membership. Sometimes put forth by the authority as necessary for salvation from their point of view. Example: The Second Vatican Council address many issues that had been brewing for over four-hundred years.

**Teaching:** Required beliefs or rules of behavior that may change rapidly. The source is the religious authority. Example: Divorce and remarriage.

**Practice:** Change very easily, even from location to location within the same denomination. The participants of the faith are the authority with or without their leaders. Examples include the placement of a holiday decoration on the property, or the style of music, or the preaching style.

**\*\*\*\* Very Important Note:** Before entering into a discussion using these four terms clarify the use of Doctrine and Dogma. Some professionals in Religion reverse the meaning of these words or they even try to use them interchangeably. Before beginning a discussion that may need specific clarification of terms be sure to agree which term will mean the unchangeable truth and which one will be the word to determine the required belief that will change but extremely slowly, sometimes over hundreds of years.

+++++ Many people believe Religion presents all of the issues of any sexual orientation other than Heterosexuality as condemned and defined by God and unchangeable, in other words as Doctrine. In fact it is all a matter of Teaching as will be shown by the end of this workshop.