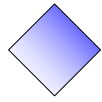


The Voice of Truth



May 18, 2014

Lack of Knowledge

By Jimmy Pettigrew

God had a controversy with his people because there was no knowledge of Him in the land. *"Hear the word of Jehovah, ye children of Israel; for Jehovah hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor goodness, nor knowledge of God in the land."* (**Hosea 4:1**) The basis for destruction was the lack of knowledge. *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children."* (**Hosea 4:6**)

It was not that knowledge was not available, but that they had rejected it and it is seen as a rejection to God! Indeed, knowledge is priceless! *"Receive my instruction, and not silver; And knowledge rather than choice gold."* (**Proverbs 8:10**) The knowledge of the ways of God is always a greater possession than material wealth like silver and gold. The things of God are always best for us. Thus, only *"fools hate knowledge"* (**Proverbs 1:22**). But, *"Wise men lay up knowledge..."* (**Proverbs 10:14**) *"For wisdom shall enter into thy heart, And knowledge shall be pleasant unto thy soul"* (**Proverbs 2:10**). "For wisdom is a defence, even as money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom preserveth the life of him that hath it" (**Ecclesiastes 7:12**).

God intended that knowledge play a vital role in the lives of His people. We are to be (1) *"filled with all knowledge"* (**Romans 15:14; Colossians 1:9**); we are to abound in knowledge (**2 Corinthians 8:7**); We are (2) to *grow in knowledge* (**2 Peter 3: 18; Colossians 1:10**). Knowledge is one of the (3) *Christian virtues we are to add to our lives* (**2 Peter 1:5-11**). In fact, God places such a premium on knowledge that the word "knowledge" itself is the key word of one of the epistles - **2 Peter**. In fact, God places such a premium on knowledge that He told Israel that (4) He desired *"Knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings"* (**Hosea 6:6**).

How is your knowledge of God's Word? "Can you prove when and where the church was established? Where is Jesus' sermon on the new birth found in the New Testament? Who was the first Gentile convert? Who accompanied Paul on his first missionary tour? A test was conducted with a freshman class at a College Bible department, in which 91% of those who took the examination were members of the church. Some of the results obtained from this test are interesting.

1. 33% of the students did not know that Jonah was a prophet who was on a ship bound for Tarshish and 33% did not know he preached in Nineveh.
2. 17% did not know **Romans** was the sixth book in the New Testament.
3. 31 % did not know that **Jude** follows **3 John**.
4. 55% did not know who wrote **2 Timothy**.
5. 45% did not know who wrote **Revelation**.
6. 21 % did not know that Isaiah wrote **Isaiah**.
7. 56% did not know that Luke wrote **Acts**.
8. 20% did not know that Lydia sold purple.
9. 92% did not know that Christ's conversation with Nicodemus on the new birth is found in the gospel of **John**.
10. 87% did not know from which cities Moses sent the spies out against Canaan.

Let us notice some of the curses and tragedies of ignorance. (1) Ignorance was one of the sins which crucified Jesus (**Acts 3:17; Luke 23:34; 1 Corinthians 2:8**). (2) Ignorance alienates one from the life of **God** (**Ephesians 4:18**). (3) Ignorance precipitates the establishment of one's own righteousness (**Romans 10:3**). (4) Ignorance causes the individual to err (**Matthew 22:29; 2 Peter 3:1-9; Acts 17:29-30**). (5) Ignorance leads people to wrest the scriptures to their own destruction (**2 Peter 3:16**). (6) Ignorance causes people to be destroyed (**Hosea 4:6; Isaiah 5:13**). (7) Ignorance will keep one from being converted scripturally (**Matthew 13:15**). (8) Ignorance will

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Lack of Knowledge
Pages 2 to 3 - "The Wisdom In God's Word"

Pages 3 to 4 - Sinning Against Wisdom | HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU ARE SLIPPING
Page 4 - The Nature Of The Kingdom Of God | What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Continued from Page One, "Lack of Knowledge"

cause people to ultimately be lost (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Acts 17:30-31**).

With ignorance prevailing as it does among members of the body of the Lord, let us now read **Hosea 4:6** and

tremble: *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge. I will also reject thee."* ♦

"The Wisdom In God's Word"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Just last week I was studying with a person concerning the wisdom in God's word. Since that time, the subject has been on my mind, and I thought it might be a worthwhile study for our dear readers. By observing society, we can see that a familiarity with and a knowledge of the word of God is lacking in this world. Seeing that this is the case, man has a need for obtaining the wisdom of God found in His word. How can this be done? Is this even possible? I believe we can have access to the wisdom of God, but society at large has refused it. Why do I say this? Please read carefully the verses listed below and note what God's word can do, as well as its connection to wisdom and understanding.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (**Psalms 119:11**).

"I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word" (**Psalms 119:16**).

"Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (**Psalms 119:34**).

"Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed" (**Psalms 119:80**).

"O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts." (**Psalms 119:97-100**).

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (**Psalms 119:130**).

Based upon the above passages, we know God's wisdom is accessible to man through the written word. What are some applications we can make in our lives to the wisdom found in God's word?

Remember It.

David realized that the wisdom that God reveals needs

to be remembered at all times (**Ps. 119:11, 16**). In fact, the first psalm shows that the righteous will gladly meditate on God's law at all times (**Ps. 1:2**). Remembering God's wisdom is not simply a mental exercise without application. In reality, it is remembering that can keep us from sin. Jesus showed us this when He was tempted by Satan and used Scripture to defeat him (**Matt. 4:1-11; I Pet. 2:21-22**).

It Will Not Put Us To Shame.

David understood that when his heart was "sound" in God's statutes, he would not be put to shame! (**Ps. 119:80**). Do we understand this? Sadly, we find people who are put to shame in life because they try to "muddle through" life without the wisdom found in God's word! In fact, when our hearts are "sound" (healthy, sincere, undefiled) with God's wisdom, there is no occasion for shame! We see a New Testament counterpart to **Psalms 119:80** when we read **II Timothy 2:15** and there learn about the workman who *"needeth not to be ashamed"* when he handles the word of truth accurately! There are a lot of things that can put men to shame, but knowing God's word will not do it!

Obey It.

Please notice that it is not enough simply to "know" God's word, but it is necessary to APPLY what we learn (**Ps. 119:34; Rom. 10:16; Heb. 5:9; Rev. 22:14**; etc.). We need to "keep" and "observe" what we learn! Jesus taught this truth when He discussed the wise man that not only heard the word, but OBEYED it as well (**Matt. 7:21-27**). What a tragedy it is to see people who know what to do to please God, but refuse to do it! (Is this you, dear one?) Let us determine to meditate, study, and obey what we learn in the wisdom found in God's word.

It Makes Us Wiser Than The World.

Regardless of the wisdom the world may proclaim, the wisdom found in God's word makes us wiser than the world (**Ps. 119:97-100**). This should not be surprising, seeing that God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's (**Isa. 55:8-9**). God looks on the world's wisdom as

Continued from Page Two, "The Wisdom In God's Word"

foolishness that passes away (**I Cor. 1:18-21; II Jn. 2:17**). Let us take heed to God's word and thank Him for the

access to such wisdom that will lead us from earth to Heaven! *Credit: The Old Paths - 3/27/11* ♦

Sinnyng Against Wisdom By Jonathan L. Perz

Using the literary device of personification, Solomon describes wisdom in some of the strongest terms possible—he speaks of wisdom in terms of life and death. He writes, "For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord; but he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death" (**Proverbs 8:35-36**).

Ensnared within this life and death concept of the importance of wisdom. Solomon also sets forth the idea of "sinning against" wisdom as a wrong against our own soul. Have you ever imagined wisdom in those terms? Have you ever considered whether or not you have sinned against wisdom? Do you wrong your own soul?

If any man could speak of the value of wisdom, Solomon could. The annals of Israel's history say this of Solomon: "And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men..." (**1 Kings 4:29-31a**).

This, of course, adds all the more significance to his evaluation of wisdom. So important is wisdom, that the language he uses almost makes you think that he is speaking of finding or hating God, and not merely wisdom. Yet, he is eloquently exalting the value of wisdom.

How is it that one sins against wisdom? In the simplest of terms, to sin is to transgress, or to fall short of or go beyond. It means to miss the mark (cf. **1 John 3:4—KJV**). To sin against wisdom suggests the idea of wandering from the way of wisdom.

When it comes to wisdom, one of the greatest contrasts we must learn as Christians is the difference between the wisdom of God, which Solomon extols, and the wisdom of men, which is often shed in a foolish light in comparison. One consistently leads to eternal life, whereas the other is rooted in the ways of this world, which are despised and condemned by God.

The Holy Spirit tells us through the apostle Paul, "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be

wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (**1 Cor. 3:18**). This suggests that those who are so enamored with the wisdom of this world will inevitably be blind to the wisdom of God. By failing to see the difference, they sin against wisdom. The only remedy is for one to become a fool in the ways of this world so that he may become wise in the ways of God.

This same sin against wisdom can be seen in those who reject, or even mock, the cross of Jesus. Earlier in the same epistle Paul wrote, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those of us who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (**1 Cor. 1:18-25**).

Not only does the wisdom of God render foolish the wisdom of men, its fruit is righteous whereas the fruit of the wisdom of men is sinful. Consider the inspired words of James who writes, "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (**James 3:13-18**). This also manifests how we can sin against the wisdom of God, by attributing the fruit of

Continued on Page Four

Continued from Page Three, "Sinning Against Wisdom"

God to the wisdom of men and the fruit of men to the wisdom of God.

While there is much more that is written about wisdom, the basic fact of the matter is that a fool will have no heart for wisdom (**Prov. 17:16; 24:7**), whereas an understanding

man will not only seek it; he will find it, keep it and live by it. *"He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good"* (**Prov. 19:8**). In another place, the wise man writes, *"Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding"* (**Prov. 23:23**). *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com* ♦

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU ARE SLIPPING

If you were closer to God than you are right now, you have slipped. A man doesn't slip all at once. Usually it is quite gradual and unnoticed.

- 1) He forgets to read his Bible, cuts himself off from the spiritual nourishment. He is too busy.
- 2) He ceases to pray. He no longer asks God to supply wisdom and guidance, bless others, and forgive sins.
- 3) He begins to criticize others. He tries to ease his conscience by making others as he is. He finds fault with the preacher, and criticizes the elders.
- 4) He no longer feels he should win people to the Lord. He talks of wasting money on missionary work.
- 5) He becomes irregular in attending church service. The preacher affords him no comfort in his downward walk.
- 6) He stops giving. Things have tightened up as he has to meet his bills. ♦

The Nature Of The Kingdom Of God

IS NOT

- 1. Of This World (**John 18:36**).
- 2. Eating and Drinking (**Rom. 14:17**).
- 3. In Word (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
- 4. With Observation (**Luke 17:20**).

IS

- 1. In Power (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
- 2. Righteousness (**Rom. 14:17**).
- 3. Peace (**Rom. 14:17**).
- 4. Joy (**Rom. 14:17**).
- 5. Within You (**Luke 17:21**).
- 6. Unshakable (**Heb. 12:28**). ♦

*Truth is truth even if no one believes it.
Error is error if everyone believes it. ♦*

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - **Rom. 10:17** m. **10:9-10** ; **1 Pet. 3:21** ; **John 6:45; 17:3**
- Believe - **Heb. 11:6**; **John 6:29; 8:24**
- Repent - **Luke 13:3**; **Acts 3:19; 17:30**
- Confess the Lord - **Matt. 10:32-33**; **Romans 10:9-10**; **1 Pet. 3:21**
- Be Baptized - **Mark 16:16**; **Acts 22:16**; **Gal. 3:26-27**
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - **Acts 2:42**; **2 Tim. 3:14-17**

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month