

Knowing

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God's plan of salvation and receiving it by faith, rather than hoping for it or trying to work for it.

Duration: 9:52

Scripture: Luke 19:10, John 3:16, Acts 16:31, Romans 3:23, Romans 10:3, 2 Corinthians 11:14, Galatians 6:7

Topics: "Biblical Illiteracy", "Spiritual Deception"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses concern about the widespread ignorance of the gospel message among the people, despite living in a country with an abundance of Bibles. He highlights the deceptive tactics of Satan, who disguises himself as an angel of light and his ministers as apostles of Christ. The speaker emphasizes the importance of reading the Bible regularly and not relying solely on preachers for spiritual guidance. He also criticizes the tendency of people to follow second-hand ideas and traditions instead of seeking the truth directly from the Bible. The sermon concludes with a reference to Paul's letter to the Romans, where he laments the ignorance of God's righteousness and the substitution of personal ideas and religion.

Transcript

I'm continually alarmed at the appalling ignorance of the gospel message. This is supposed to be a Christian country, and we can be thankful that for the most part the principles of our government are built on Christian principles, and in that sense it is a Christian country. But when it comes to the average person understanding the gospel message or the way of salvation, it's shocking to find that the multitudes are living in utter confusion.

If we didn't have a Bible, we should expect people to be groping around in the fog. But since we're living in a land with an abundance of Bibles, we should expect men and women would be clear as to God's plan of salvation. There seems to be only one intelligent answer to this perplexing problem, and it is this.

The people of America are not reading their Bible. It takes time and self-discipline to read the Bible regularly, and since time is a scarce item in our fast-moving age, the majority of men are listening to preachers instead of reading the Holy Scriptures. During a period of prosperity, the second-hand items have a very low value.

Everyone is buying the new product, but when it comes to an understanding of the plan of salvation, the majority are content to listen to the second-hand, handed-down ideas and traditions of men rather than to get it firsthand right from the Bible. Sorry for a man who is confused about salvation if he doesn't own a Bible, but I can't feel too sorry for the man who owns a Bible but won't read it. He well deserves to be in the fog.

Then again, there is a third class of people who do read the Bible but are little profited by it, because they will not allow the Bible to change some of their moth-covered, wrong conceptions of God's dealings with sinners. The Bible promises a blessing to the person who, with an open mind and heart, will search the Scriptures. Ignorance of the Scriptures is not a new thing.

In Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 10, he expresses his concern and grief of his own nation. In verse 3 he says, For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. That's exactly what men and women are doing today, turning from the clear statements and facts of the gospel and substituting religion or ideas of their own.

Paul was not speaking about the heathen, but he was talking about the ultra-religious, and I believe that among earth's population today, the very religious are the most confused. In verse 2 of Romans 10, Paul acknowledges that his people are sincere. He says they have a deal of God.

They are earnest in all their religious endeavors, but not according to knowledge. There is no lack in our times of religious activity. Many valuable man-hours are spent in absolute sincerity to promote various phases of religion, but a very high percentage of the work is done without the understanding of the plan of salvation.

Just recently I was speaking to a more-than-average church worker. He was pretty well educated in his religion, evidently a faithful, earnest worker. After a while I dared to give him the number one question, Are you saved? He seemed a little shocked that I should ask that question after hearing about all his earnest work in the church, but would you believe it? The best answer he could give me is, I hope so.

Isn't that sad? Working hard for the Lord, having a deal of God, but absolutely no assurance of salvation. I soon found that, like Paul's friends, he was trying to work or to earn his seat in heaven, totally ignorant that the Scriptures plainly declare that salvation is altogether by grace, through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast. A hard worker for God, but not saved.

Still in his sins, totally ignorant of God's way of salvation. Of course he knew that Christ died for sinners, but he wasn't depending upon that for his salvation. It was no more than a mere historical fact.

It's exceedingly sad when a person has to say, I hope I am saved. Paul said, I know whom I have believed. Peter said, Now I know.

John in his epistle writes, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know, K-N-O-W, that ye have eternal life. A hope-soul salvation isn't worth five cents. It's a fearful thing to die if all you can say is, I hope I am saved.

A person's mind must be warped by Satan if he is content to hope when God insists that he should know. This is the great work of Satan. At times he carries on with a roaring line, but more often he deceives men, posing as an angel of light.

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he says in chapter 11, verse 14, that Satan is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers are deceitful workers under the disguise of apostles of Christ. The Bible says, Be not deceived, God is not mocked. The majority of confused people are deceived people, and when they allow the word of God to enlighten them, they are delivered from that confusion and find God's salvation amazingly clear and simple.

If I have a confused but honest listener, let me state in very simple language the Bible facts of the gospel. The Bible says that you have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Don't try to deny it, because it's true.

God can have no fellowship with you because you have sinned against him. You may ask for forgiveness, but no forgiveness is offered to the person who asks for forgiveness. That sin or those sins must be punished before they can be forgiven.

Unless Christ has died for your sins, you could ask for forgiveness until you're blue in the face and still not be forgiven. Learn this important Bible truth, that sins can be forgiven only through Christ and his atoning sacrifice. You must receive him as your substitute.

You must believe that he died to cancel your sin debt, otherwise you will never be saved. Without the shedding of blood is no remission. Christ hath once suffered for sins adjust for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

He was wounded for our transgression. In his own body, he bore our sins while hanging on the old rugged cross. God can pardon and forgive the person who will claim his son as Lord and Savior, but the rest who try to save themselves will never be forgiven.

Since my salvation from start to finish depends upon Christ and his atoning sacrifice, my safety for time and for eternity depends upon his work. If his work was a perfect work, I have a perfect salvation. If his substitutionary work of paying for my sins was an imperfect work, I have a poor, flimsy salvation.

Thank God all that Christ ever did carries the stamp of perfection. If you are depending upon your church membership for salvation, you will never be able to say, I know. If you are depending upon your baptism or your sprinkling, you will never be able to say, I know.

If you are depending upon your activity in religious affairs, such as teaching a class or president of a circle, you will never be able to say, I know. These things may be proper in their respective places, but they become a death cap when a person rests upon them as a basis of salvation. It's Christ and Christ alone who must do the saving, and he will only save those who confess their sinnership.

If you do not see yourself as an undone sinner, there is no salvation for you. He came to seek and to save the lost. If you have a desire to settle this all-important matter of your soul's salvation today, you may do so.

For the moment you will tell God that you will rest upon Christ and his atoning, sin-cleansing sacrifice alone, he will give you that very moment eternal life, and his word assures that all who have eternal life will never perish. That's not hard to understand. Don't make it hard.

Take God at his word. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

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