



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

“The Errors that Spring from Ignorance of God’s Word”



“Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God,”

Matthew 22:29.

The enemy of the gospel is not in the least concerned with truth, when challenging the gospel message.

That is seen in the question posed by these Sadducees. The case they suppose, regarding whose wife a woman, who married a succession of brothers, would be in the resurrection is ludicrously improbable. But that meant nothing to those opposed to the truth of God. All these men were concerned with was confounding Christ and putting Him to silence and thereby add to their standing in the eyes of the people. Of course, the plan did not work! The Saviour makes clear that the errors of the Sadducees sprang from their ignorance of the Holy Scriptures and of the power of God.

It should be noted that their ignorance was two-fold. They did, of course, know much about the “letter” of the Holy Scriptures. They were familiar with its historical narratives and its moral injunctions. However, they knew nothing of the “spirit” of God’s Word and were, therefore, in ignorance of its power and authority.

Please learn:

I. SUCH IGNORANCE IS THE SOURCE OF MOST RELIGIOUS ERROR

This is true throughout the history of mankind. “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not,” John 1:10.

1. Since the Scriptures are the only source of a full revelation of God, ignorance of them breeds ignorance of God. In the time of King Josiah, the nation of Judah was governed to a great degree in ignorance of God’s Law. When a copy of the law was uncovered in the temple and read before the king, he was astounded and feared greatly because he discovered the error that they were living in, as a result of their ignorance.

“Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us,” 2 Kings 22:13.

It cannot but be that a person or a nation which lives without consulting the “map of life”, which the Bible most certainly is, will take the wrong path and walk and live in defiance of God! As a result of that, they will bring ruin upon their heads. That is the story of Ulster and the United Kingdom.

2. It is for this reason that the devil targets the Bible. He can strike a mighty blow at the present and future wellbeing of God’s people, if he can somehow remove the Holy Scriptures from their rightful place as the sole authority of all that we believe and do. “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light



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of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," 2 Corinthians 4:4. The light of the knowledge of God shines from the Bible alone.

Its removal from a people is a worse catastrophe than was the loss of his eyes for Samson!

3. Such ignorance is a fearful thing. It is a fearful thing for sinners and saints.

Such ignorance for the sinner means hell. He can never gain heaven without the guidance of God's Word. It is by its means that God shows to men the path to heaven and eternal salvation. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life," Psalm 16:11. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," John 14:6. For the saint, the loss of the light of God's Word will mean hell on earth! "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," 1 Timothy 4:1. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come," 2 Timothy 3:1.

Without the warnings of the Bible to alert us and warn us, we would be overtaken and overwhelmed by the floods of wickedness that would inundate this world.

4. Here is why preaching the Bible is the minister's chief duty. Preaching is the equivalent of holding up a lantern in the midst of darkness for a people to see the path ahead and avoid the pitfalls. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee," 1 Timothy 4:16. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine," 2 Timothy 4:2. The minister should be as the lighthouse, sending out a warning of the dangers of the rocks of perdition. "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," Acts 20:31.

II. IGNORANCE OF THE SCRIPTURES SETS MEN IN OPEN REBELLION AGAINST GOD

1. That is why these Sadducees opposed the Lord Jesus. Having rejected the Word of God they were under the rule of that which was false and deceiving.

Sinful man and God agree on absolutely nothing! "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Romans 8:7. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God," James 4:4. God and sinful man are incompatible.

2. That is why the "renovation" resulting from a little religion being introduced into our lives by partaking of baptism or the Lord's Table or even attending God's house will not fit us for heaven. What we need is not renovation but regeneration! We must be "born again", John 3:3. We must be made new creatures.

That is what happens when a sinner becomes the subject of God's gracious power through the believing of the gospel. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Corinthians 5:17. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life," John 5:24.

The blessing of the new birth is for those who hear and heed the gospel.

3. If the gospel is taken away, then such truth is lost to needy men and they be-



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come wanderers in spiritual darkness and ignorance, stumbling their way to certain damnation. Man's views and notions and the devil's delusions and deceptions take the place of God's eternal and unerring Word and it is cast aside. The Saviour referred to just such an apostasy in Luke 19: 14. "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." That is the natural disposition of men. It is the disposition that dominates the thinking of our legislators and parliamentarians. God's truth is out and man's speculations are in!

Psalm 2: 1-3 maps out for us the developments amongst the nations in the closing days of this age. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." The result will be a repeating of the darkness that enshrouded Europe before the mercy of God brought forth His light and truth through the labours of such men as Luther and Calvin. The final apostasy draws on and it will be marked by darkness. "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," Isaiah 60:2-3.

That "arising" is the shining forth of God's light upon Israel at His return. Only then shall the world be delivered from darkness. ". . . the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea," Isaiah 11:9.

III. THE POWER OF GOD IS KNOWN ONLY THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

According to our text, ignorance of the power of God goes hand in hand with ignorance of the Scriptures. We cannot know or experience one without knowing or experiencing the other.

1. That religion which is void of a scriptural basis is a dead and deceitful religion. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away," 2 Timothy 3:5. The religion of man, particularly in the last days, will bear a likeness to true religion but it is, in truth, lifeless. The religions of the Muslim, the Buddhist, the Hindu, the Sikh and the countless other religions invented by men and devils, are all fraudulent. They proclaim a god who does not exist any more than did the gods of the heathen round about ancient Israel. "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: they have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: they have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them," Psalm 115:4-8. "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God," Isaiah 44:6.

2. It is in the gospel that the soul-saving, life-changing power of God is revealed. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," Romans 1:16. "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," 2 Timothy 3:15.

The power of God is displayed through His Word. It is His chosen instrument by which He conveys His mind and will and purpose unto men. That is why the Saviour exercised His



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public ministry through preaching the Word of God. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God," 1 Corinthians 1:18. Those who would experience God's power in their lives must take themselves not to a priest or to any ordinance established by men but to the Word of God. It is from it that light will come, that wisdom is imparted, that salvation is obtained. (Psalm 119:130; Psalm 19:7; 1 Peter 1:23.)

3. That power is experienced chiefly under the preaching of the gospel. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God," 1 Corinthians 1:18. That is what God has ordained and purposed. Private reading of God's Word is a marvellous means of grace and personal spiritual advance, but it is by the public preaching of God's Word, with the assistance and aid of the Holy Spirit, that men are enlightened about their lost condition and the means that God has opened up for their escape.

- * *Under preaching Christ is revealed to the soul.*
- * *Under preaching man is confronted with himself.*
- * *Under preaching faith and repentance are born.*
- * *Under preaching the soul is drawn to Christ.*

The history of God's dealings with men show that this is so.

These verses from God's Word illustrate the truths that I have just stated. Do look them up and study them carefully.

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn," Zechariah 12:10.

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts 2:37.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John 12:32.

May the Lord accomplish His merciful purpose in many hearts through these words. Amen.