

In search of...

Truth & Right

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He Who Knows Not

In my high school days, my biology teacher kept some brief expressions of wisdom written on a small section of blackboard that was near the ceiling on the front wall of his class room. He left some of them there for several weeks before he would replace them with others. Five decades and more have passed, but they have not erased a few of those wise sayings from my mind. I may not remember the exact wording in every case, but the general thoughts still linger.

One of those expressions was about knowledge as the following words suggest:

"He who knows not and knows that he knows not is simple, teach him.
He who knows not and knows not that he knows not is a fool, avoid him.
He who knows and knows not that he knows is asleep, awake him.
He who knows and knows that he knows is wise, follow him."

Do you fit into this picture somewhere? Try to find yourself.

Many things are involved in one's personality other than knowledge or the lack of it. The statements quoted

above do not take into consideration the various attitudes and dispositions that may determine one's usefulness or his tendency to cause trouble. Meekness, humility, and unselfishness as well as pride, selfishness, and arrogance may be present to bless or curse any one of us. Knowledge is important but not all important. In this article we desire to think of knowledge as suggested in the writing which the teacher placed on the board before us youngsters more than fifty years ago.

Are there some who know not and know that they know not? We all fit into this class. We may know somewhat on a few subjects, but we may know almost nothing about many other fields of learning. One who is a wonderful surgeon may know little about farming. Neither the farmer nor the surgeon may know any great amount about computers. It pays us all to keep enough humility to avoid being a "know-it-all" and to have respect for the knowledge and ability that others have.

Many are very much lacking in Bible knowledge. This is serious because one may perish spiritually for lack of knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6). Some who are not good Bible students can make erroneous statements about spiritual

things and then affirm or contend for them with a dogmatic attitude that is very offensive. Such people can become great problems in the Lord's church. If they realized their lack of knowledge they could be taught, but those with deep seated prejudice are hard to teach. They are like concrete in that their minds are thoroughly mixed and well hardened. In a lifetime, a faithful and devout Christian who is well informed may have occasion to spend hundreds of hours trying to help men who are ignorant of the truth but who think they are certainly right. All of us need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God so that we may open our hearts to more truth.

I knew a young man who was working with his hands several hours per week in order to pay his way through school. He had a willingness to work, but he would gladly volunteer to do things which he could not do. The things he did might be such that it would take a second person much time to tear out before the job could be started. Zeal and willingness to work are not enough. It takes some "know how." It would have been better if the first person had taken time to learn what he was doing before he rushed in where he could only make things worse.

There are those who know not and know not that they know not. These are the very people who can lead a faction in bringing some unscriptural doctrine or practice into the Lord's church. "They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 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" (Romans 10:2-3). This is the very picture of factionalism within the church. These leaders in digression may be bold, shrewd, and capable leaders of men, but they have not done their home work in Bible study. They are ignorant of God's righteousness, while they look

at humble people who have carefully studied the Bible so that they cannot follow along in their digression and consider them ignorant and unlearned.

Some are quick to criticize and discourage others who are trying to develop their talents when the critics themselves cannot do as well as those they discourage. Some who have great ability seem not to realize that they do, so they hold back while people with less ability push themselves into positions of responsibility to the embarrassment of the church. If one is invited to the feast, the Lord would advise him to take a lower seat and be invited to take a higher place. This can be misused. The man who knows and knows not that he knows needs to be awakened to his ability and step forward humbly to carry his part of the load. An inexperienced song leader who has ability needs experience, help, and encouragement. The thing he does not need is sarcastic criticism from a poor song leader who has had much experience. So it is with humble people who are trying to learn to speak before an audience. Help may come from good students of ability, while cutting and hurtful remarks may be made by people who have pride without skill.

The skilled song leader need not boast. The good elder is not an egotist. The able speaker may be humble. The rich man need not make a display of his wealth. The self righteous may thank God that he is so good and not like the publican over there. The publican may obtain mercy as he prays with an earnest and humble heart that realizes his need of forgiveness (Luke 18:9-14). It seems that the most ignorant may be the most dogmatic and the egotist may have little on which to base his pride. It may be hard for each person to see himself as others see him. It takes great humility and much Bible study for one to see himself as God sees him.

It is wonderful for a congregation to have a good number

of humble men who have studied and exercised their senses to the extent that they can and will boldly and effectively uphold the right and lead the body in the way of truth. These men know and know that they know the will of God for they have spent much time in diligent study (Hebrews 5:12-14).

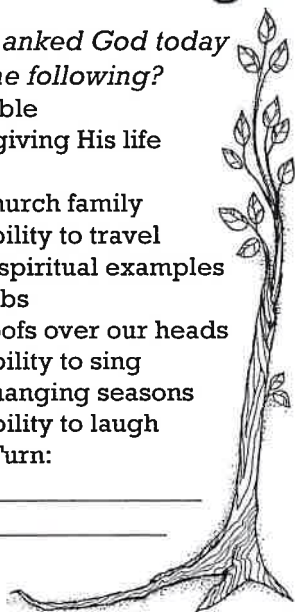
The scribes and many other Jews knew to expect a Messiah, so they could tell that He was to be born in Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah and of the house of David, but they had so many false concepts that had grown out of their own desires that they did not recognize the Christ when He did come. They had overlooked passages like Isaiah 53 which pictured a suffering Savior who was like the lamb rather than like the wolf. When the meek and lowly Man from Nazareth came along they mocked, scourged, and crucified Him. How do you think we would have acted if we had lived then and had been taught by the scribes and Pharisees? They all had access to the teachings of the great prophets who were holy men who spake as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance (II Peter 1:21). They also had false teachers; so many were led by the doctrines of men. Let us all examine ourselves whether we are in the faith (II Corinthians 13:5; II Peter 2:1-3). It is not unusual to have men who speak evil of the way of truth. We need to follow the Lord in His teaching and in His manner of life. The scribes and many other Jews knew not and knew not that they knew not. They had deep seated prejudices rather than knowledge so that even the Master Teacher found their eyes closed, ears stopped, and hearts hardened so that they could not be taught (Matthew 13:15; 21:31, 32). The ignorance of some allows them to boast of their knowledge when they should be very ashamed of their lack of knowledge when truth was within easy reach.

Irven Lee

dear God,
thanks for this
beautiful life
and forgive me if
i dont love it
enough.

*Have you thanked God today
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- The ability to travel
- Good spiritual examples
- Our jobs
- The roofs over our heads
- The ability to sing
- The changing seasons
- The ability to laugh
- Your Turn:



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Christian Q&A

Don Jr. & Loretta Coen have been members at the Wellsburg church of Christ for several years.

When were you baptized?

Don: At a very young age.

Loretta: At a very young age.

What is your favorite hymn that we sing? Why?

Don: "God Is Alive," because a lot of people do not think that He exists.

Loretta: "Be With Me, Lord," because I cannot imagine dealing with life's problems without a faith in God.

What is an effective way that you spread God's Word? Why is this effective?

Don: Leaving the bulletin at work. A lot of my coworkers don't attend church.

Loretta: Sometimes if you voice a little knowledge, people pay attention.

What advice would you give someone who is new to the Church?

Don: Surround yourself with other Christians.

Loretta: Attend services, study, keep an open mind.

What do you want others to know about your religion?

Loretta: It's the answer to the after life, for one reason, it's a retreat! Most people seek a retreat.



What is your favorite Bible verse? Why?

Don: John 3:16, The love that is shown.

Loretta: John 1:14 – And the Word was made flesh (Christ) Full of grace and truth- isn't that what we look for every day- good news. Love. Truth. And that famous person Jesus was real!

What individual from the Bible do you most look up to? Why?

Don: Paul. All the things he went through but he never gave up.

