

WILL KNOWLEDGE SAVE?

In chapter four of Hosea, God condemns Israel for her refusal to obey His Word. In verse 1 we note, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.” What a desolate condition!

This was a time when there is no truth. A time where the mercy of God is not accepted nor is the knowledge of His goodness respected.

God says that the people have separated themselves by “swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery...” (cf. Hos.4:2). In verse 6 the ancient prophet penned words of destruction due to the malady of the time, hear him, “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 will also forget thy children.”

It is the case that the people of Hosea’s day had refused to acquire and live by knowledge of the Word of God. They never thought of the penalty for their neglect in all likelihood. They were going along to get along and practicing the same sins as the people about them while God had commanded them to be separate or different from those nations around them, but this seems to have never entered their thought process. They wanted to be like the nations about them when they desired a king. God granted them their wish, but their desire led to great suffering and turmoil.

As Hosea writes God is rejecting His priests and His people. He even forgets their children. A calamity exists in the land that does not respect and know God. We are taught in the Scriptures that eternal life is to “know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). It is rather obvious that there is trouble in our land this day in the year of our Lord, 2009.

Unless we come to a knowledge of God, man will be lost. We remember a classic passage in Judges 2:10 that address situations like this. “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.” The first generation out of Egyptian bondage perished in the wilderness.

The second generation is the one that Judges is addressing who were faithful. The third generation was lost because they did not know the Lord. They served Balaam while forsaking the Lord.

Are we talking about an antiquated condition? No! A thousand times NO! We are describing present day America. We are talking about a time when God is respected less and less. There is lying, swearing, killing, stealing, adultery and the list goes on and on. Filth and turmoil fill our news programs while the Bible is closed on the shelf and most of all closed to our hearts. Jesus said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). Knowledge alone will not save. It must be applied to the heart of man. The condition of our time is such that we had better WAKE UP, OPEN UP and READ UP if we want to GO UP to heaven some day. All one has to do is read the front page of the newspaper and we see Hosea all over again.

Harrell Davidson
Obion, TN



BELVEDERE BEACON
Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
SUNDAY: WEDNESDAY:
Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am. Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.
Morning Worship 11.00 am.
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.
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“That You May Grow Thereby”

We probably have no dearer statement in Scripture on just how Christian growth comes than 1 Peter 2:2: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” There is set before us (1) The Word of God, (2) The purity of it, (3) The nutrition therein, (4) The appetite that we must have for it, and (5) The growth that thus comes. It could not be plainer, and yet many have expressed our day as being the “time for church growth emphasis.” By that is meant, *Meet and talk about growth*, but *doing* very little of it! Why is so little accomplished in a time of workshops, seminars, and “encounters” supposedly related to growth? One thing is certain: In such meetings, very little Bible is presented. A second thing is evident: Fun, games, “Gymnastics for Christ: “Jogging for Jesus; “Kung-Fu For the King,” (and for the aged, “Dominoes for Deity”), etc., will entertain, but will not make for church growth. If a religious body drew from all over a metropolitan area, and had 10,000 people for every service, if drawn by the *fun*, the social, and the entertaining; growth, as God calls growth, is still not there!

Application of the Word makes for growth. In what ways should one desire to grow? (1) From being a babe to being full-grown and mature, (2) From being non-spiritual to being spiritual, (3) From having no or very little knowledge to really possessing a fine Bible knowledge, and (4) From being one of little or no discernment to having great discerning skill. There is no way on earth to achieve this apart from a continual study of the Word of God!

A good portion of the problems to come upon the church in all of her history has been from those with little knowledge or discernment, grabbing a point of truth or a half-truth, and then rushing forward to divide the body of Christ; yea, desiring to be teachers, but understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm (1 Tim. 1:7). When all is said and done, our need is to grow—to grow in keeping with what the Lord said about growth, and really, that is the one protection we have, if we do not grow, we will always be “fair game” for those out to damage our souls!

Bill Jackson
Deceased

During the latter part of last week there has been much discussion in the media about a statement that the President made at the conclusion of his press conference on Wednesday night. In answer to a question, he began by making it clear that he didn't have all the facts and then proceeded to make a judgment on the situation. This created a veritable firestorm with some decrying the statement that was made and others supporting it.

This is an example of the very thing that our Lord taught against when He said: "*Judge not, that ye be not judged*" (Matthew 7:1). He did not teach that we should not judge at all but that rather we should be careful before we make a judgment. Jesus also taught: "*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment*" (John 7:24). There is a place for judging but it must be a "*righteous judgment*" that involves knowing the facts and making a judgment based on the facts.

Sadly, too many, Christians included will make a judgment without being fully aware of the facts and thus condemn another. For instance, some Christians have "jumped to conclusions" when they saw a brother or sister come out of an establishment that only sold alcoholic beverages that were to be consumed on the premises and "spread the word" that the brother or sister concerned had been out "drinking." Such may or may not be the case. Perhaps the brother was an electrician or plumber and in the course of his work had entered the premises to make repairs. It may have been that this sister was delivering something to the owner or manager of the business. It is these kinds of judgments that Jesus condemns in Matthew 7.

However, there is another area in which brethren can violate Jesus' teaching concerning judgment. I have recently been in discussion with a preacher who chooses to ignore the facts or does not want to know the facts, the evidence so that he will not make a "*righteous judgment*" because it would involve making a "*righteous judgment*" against a brother that he holds in high regard. When one chooses to ignore the facts or will not look at the facts, that one then violates the teaching of Christ concerning judgment.

Brethren, we need to take into account all that Jesus taught regarding judging. We must avoid making a judgment simply based on the appearance or on our preconceived ideas as to what has taken place. Further, we must not neglect using "*righteous judgment*" either by ignoring the facts or evidence or refusing to look at the evidence and thereby allowing one to continue in their sinful ways because we are not willing to practice "*righteous judgment*." May we never be too quick in "jumping to conclusions" and judging and condemning someone without knowledge of the truth of the situation and may we never be guilty of avoiding "*righteous judgment*" by ignoring facts or refusing to examine the evidence because we know that to face the facts and examine the evidence would mean that we would have to practice scriptural discipline on one we love and respect. However, if we truly love and respect them, we should be willing to practice "*righteous judgment*" because we love the soul of the one we love and respect.

Ken Chumbley

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick's aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron's sister who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, Lanny Niver together with his daughter, and Tim Smith.

Sister Grimsley was still not able to be out because of sickness.

Lanny Niver was not able to be out last Sunday but hopes to be here today.

The Wilsons were out of town for the weekend. Steven received a good report from his doctor in the follow up following his surgery.

Ron Wilson has gone to Houston to bring Kimberly back after her internship there.

Following some light hearted discussion Wednesday night on the subject of sermons, I think this article is appropriate – Ken Chumbley:

MINIMIZING THE SERMON

The following exchange originally appeared in The British Weekly a few years ago:

Dear Sir:

It seems ministers feel their sermons are very important and spend a great deal of time preparing them. I have been attending church quite regularly for the past thirty years, and I have probably heard 3,000 sermons. To my consternation, I discovered that I cannot remember a single one. I wonder if a minister's time might be more profitably spent on something else?

Sincerely,

(Signed by a reader)

For several weeks a firestorm of responses appeared on the editorial page.

The uproar finally came to a close with the following letter:

Dear Sir:

I have been married for thirty years. During that time, I have eaten 32,580 meals, mostly of my wife's cooking. Suddenly, I have discovered that I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, I have received nourishment from every single one of them. I have the distinct impression that without them, I would have starved to death long ago.

Sincerely,

(Signed by a reader)