

# Words of Truth

## “I Speak This To Your Shame”

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Anytime one fails to please God, that person should be ashamed (Ezra 9:6 and Jeremiah 3:25). When one is unashamed of their transgression, that means they’ve walked completely away from God (Jeremiah 6:15 and Jeremiah 8:12). We know that there is not one sin that is above another (James 2:10-12 and II John 9). Thus, all sins should cause us equal shame. When one lies, they should feel as though they’ve murdered someone. Both sinners are equally outside of Christ (Revelation 22:14-15). Sin should cause us to abhor ourselves (Job 42:6). Times wherein we need to repent and be restored are times of sorrow in that we’ve erred from the faith (Lamentations 3:40-54).

There are times throughout the Bible when the Lord pointed out the shameful acts of those who erred. There is one time in particular that we are going to discuss in our study here. The church of Christ in Corinth had many problems to deal with. Among those many problems there was the sin of ignorance. Notice the Scripture wherein we find the title of this lesson: *“Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame”* (I Corinthians 15:34).

The church of Christ in Corinth is not much different from many so-called “churches of Christ” in the world today. There are many sins found among those who wear the right name (church of Christ), but follow the wrong god (cf. I John 3:8-10). I recently was told of a sign, in front of a building saying the church of Christ meets inside, that read like this: “We are not perfect, just forgiven.” This is an example of ignorance among so-called “churches of Christ” today. This is a statement of ignorance because God’s people are expected to be perfect and sinless (Genesis 6:9, Genesis 17:1, Deuteronomy 18:13, Ezekiel 28:15, Matthew 5:48, Romans 6:1-2, II Corinthians 7:1, II Corinthians 13:11, Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 1:28, I Thessalonians 4:7, Hebrews 12:14, I Peter 1:13-16, and Revelation 3:2).

Ignorance has been a plaque among those who claim to be God’s people for thousands of years. As Paul said, that is a shameful thing. God’s people are supposed to be students of the Bible (II Timothy 2:14-18). We are not supposed to be ignorant. Let’s begin the next portion of our study by noticing some things that the Bible says about ignorance.

### Some Revealed Truths Concerning Ignorance

Ignorance is not acceptable to God (Acts 3:14-19, Acts 17:30, and I Peter 1:13-14). Ignorance stems from having a blind heart and a vain mind (Ephesians 4:17-19). It does not matter how zealous one is, their ignorance is inexcusable to the Lord (Romans 10:1-3). Ignorance makes you an easy target for the temptations that exist in this world (II Corinthians 2:11). As you can see, there is nothing good that can come from ignorance. (That is unless you think being lost and headed toward Hell is a good thing.) Therefore, we need to examine the way to avoid ignorance.

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## Escaping Ignorance To Be Saved

The opposite of ignorance is knowledge. We know that one is lost through ignorance. What do you think that means knowledge can do? Notice a few Scriptures that will answer this question: *“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure... And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins... And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free... Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth... Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”* (Isaiah 33:6, Luke 1:76-77, John 8:32, John 17:17, and I Timothy 2:4).

Imagine for a moment that you are caught in a building that is burning up in flames. You have knowledge that there is a ladder that will take you from danger to safety. Would you just sit on that knowledge or would you work to get to that ladder? We know that knowledge is the ladder we must use to escape the fires of Hell. Getting to that ladder involves multiple things.

To get to knowledge we have to be willing to study the Scriptures (John 5:39 and Acts 17:10-11). To get to knowledge we have to be willing to learn from the Scriptures (Ezra 7:10 and Romans 15:4). This means, we have to know faithful teachers who can assist us in learning (Ecclesiastes 12:9, Acts 8:30-31, II Timothy 2:2, and Titus 2:3-5). Then, we have to be willing to practice and hold tight to the truths we learn (Colossians 2:7, II Thessalonians 2:15, II Timothy 3:14, and James 1:21-25). Yet, there are people that will not even begin the process of learning (Proverbs 1:7). These are people who hate being taught (Proverbs 23:9). It takes the opposite mentality to find knowledge.

### **You Have To Love Instruction To Find Knowledge**

Do you love to learn? Do you love to study and meditate upon the Scriptures (Psalms 119:97-100)? Can you get lost in studying and thinking about the Scriptures (cf. Joshua 1:7-8)? Consider that, we have to love to learn to gain knowledge. Notice this God inspired Proverb: *“Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish”* (Proverbs 12:1).

On the other hand, what do you suppose contributes to a person being lost? If someone does not love to learn the truth can you imagine them being saved? Notice the Bible answer to our question: *“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved”* (II Thessalonians 2:10). To avoid being damned, we have to keep a strong hold on our love for the truth and our love of learning.

### **Conclusion**

The ignorance that continues in “churches of Christ” will cause many to be lost. Again, this is not a new problem among those claiming to be God’s people (Isaiah 5:13 and Hosea 4:1-6). Therefore, since this is an old problem, we need to make sure that we do not follow in the ways of ignorance. We all need to look back on our days of ignorance and be ashamed. We need to keep our heads in the Scriptures and our class discussions growing more and more into meaty subject matters (Hebrews 5:12-6:2). We need to commit more truth to memory (I Corinthians 15:1-2). We need to help each other learn so that we’ll never hear the statement, “I speak this to your shame” (concerning our knowledge of the truth)!