

Sermon Mark S. Aites
THE RESULTS OF SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE
(Based on outline by Mark Lewis, *The Restorer*, March 1986)

INTRODUCTION:

1. One of the things we learn as children, is that study is hard, but things such as basketball and volleyball are fun.
2. It is more entertaining and fun to sit down in front of a TV screen, than to pick up a book and study it.
3. Often children will moan at the thought of having to study for various classes and tests; instead of getting to be outside riding bikes or having some other kind of fun.
4. Unfortunately, there is a spiritual side to this as well.
5. In many corners of our brotherhood, we are fighting a raging battle against "The Modern Age of Entertainment."
 - 1) Instead of using the word of God to convert precious souls to Christ, we have instead seen the use of entertainment gimmicks to get people to attend services.
 - 2) The irony in this is that man has turned to his own foolish devices to accomplish God's purposes.
 - 3) It is not as though God has left us without a means to accomplish His will (**Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:21-23; Psa. 1:1-2**).
7. When Paul gave instruction to the young preacher Timothy, he said:
1 Tim. 4:15 *Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*
8. In this lesson I want to suggest to you some six things, based upon an article by Mark Lewis in the *Restorer* in March of 1986, which are the result of spiritual ignorance.

DISCUSSION:

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

I. SIN.

- A. **Psa. 14:4** *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.*
 1. The apparent or implied thought is that the condition of spiritual ignorance will lead one into wickedness.
 2. A modern rendering says, "Won't you evil people learn?"
- B. It is sad when elderships and evangelists have to spend their time working to convert their own people (note **Heb. 5:12-14**).
 1. We battle those in the church who would be in immoral relationships, or worldly in thought, who will go out of there way to defend social drinking, dancing, smoking, gambling, immodest dress, etc.
 2. And the sad reality is that it leaves us precious little time to seek and save the lost that are still in the world.
- C. And what else is disturbing in this matter, is that there are preachers and elders that are not taking a stand against these things, but rather have chosen to cater to it!
- D. In **Hosea. 4:6**, God had a strong indictment against the religious leaders of that day.
- E. There are brethren scratching their heads, trying to figure out what to do with their declining numbers?

1. They have turned to sports and entertainment and gimmicks and they watch the declining morals in the congregation.
2. And the sad part is that they wonder why?

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

II. SELF-DECEPTION.

- A. **Rom. 10:3** *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.*
1. Paul saw this first hand, people establishing their own system of righteousness.
 2. Even Jesus was witness to this, as the scribes and Pharisees had their rules and regulations which they established and enforced (**Matt. 13:15; Matt. 15:9**).
- B. For centuries, one religion maintained control of its people by keeping them ignorant.
1. No one had a copy of the Bible to go buy for themselves.
 2. They had to rely upon the priest to be able to know the will of God.
 3. Being at their mercy, so to speak, they could not be like the Bereans of **Acts 17:11**, who *searched the Scriptures daily* to make sure what they were taught was the truth.
- C. In bro. Lewis's article, in reflecting upon the way so many churches operate today, he said:
"Pablum in the pulpit works wonders for those who like nice cathedrals and huge salaries. And while the preachers preach nothing, the flocks revel in thinking they are all right with God."
1. Are they sincere in what they are doing? Most certainly they are, however, it is a matter of deceit.
 2. **Prov. 14:12** *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

III. INGRATITUDE.

- A. **Hos. 2:8** *For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.*
1. What is obvious in this text, is that since the people were ignorant of the true and living God, they chose to praise those gods which were false.
 2. We look at this with amazement, and wonder how they could be so foolish; even to the point that they were constructing their own gods? (**Isa. 44:9ff**).
- B. We have those today, who through spiritual ignorance, are turning to science and the theory of evolution.
1. They are buying into the ridiculous explanations that are being taught in schools that everything evolved over time.
 2. It is sad to see intelligent individuals taken in through their own spiritual ignorance.
- C. We have those, who through weakness, have made silver and gold their gods.
1. They worship the god of mammon (**Matt. 6:24**); the Syriac god of riches.

2. The dollar is what they treasure and worship.
 3. Paul warned: *For the love of money is the root of all evil... (1 Tim. 6:10).*
- D. For others, their spiritual ignorance has caused them to put sports and entertainment ahead of God.
1. It is amazing how many, over the years, were not able to attend services, but you could count on them being at a football game in adverse weather conditions.
 2. I knew a man in Tennessee who claimed that he couldn't come and sit for an hour on a pew on a Sunday morning because it was uncomfortable.
 - 1) Interestingly enough, I saw this same individual sitting on stone bleachers for Friday night football games in blowing snow.
 - 2) **Matt. 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
- E. If we can get Christians to spend some time in meaningful and purposeful Bible study, they will learn that there is nothing more important than God!
1. They will learn to have gratitude in their hearts for all that He has done, and realize that it is God which has blessed them.
 2. But if they remain ignorant, then the only thing they will abound in is ingratitude.

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

IV. A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

- A. **Acts 13:27** *For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.*
- B. Lets say this plainly and in very simple terms: If the Jews had known their Old Testament Scriptures, they would have known Christ.
1. How could they not have known Him when the evidence was, so to speak, right in front of their noses?
 2. There are more than 300 prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament. We might understand a number of these being overlooked; but several hundred prophecies?
 3. When you have that much evidence, where is the excuse for such ignorance?
 4. Consider these verses: **Psa. 22:1, 7-8, 16-18; Isa. 53:3-5.**
 5. We look at this and say to ourselves, "How could they have not seen this?" But watch out, because we have the very same type of problem today!
- C. There are people who sit in a church building and may have done so for years, but they still are void of spiritual knowledge.
1. Old saying: "Sitting in a church building will not make you a Christian, any more than sitting in a chicken coup will make you a chicken."
 2. Sitting in the building will not impart spiritual knowledge to you by osmosis.
- D. We looked at **Acts 13:27**, but in this we need to note that Paul mentions that the prophets were read *every sabbath day*.
1. And yet ignorance still abounded concerning Christ.
 2. Scripture is read and preached from this pulpit, but that alone will not insure that we won't have spiritual ignorance.
 3. On a number of occasions precious souls have been occupying the pews even in

- this auditorium, who according to Scripture, are not in a right relationship with God.
4. They would rather convince themselves that everything is alright and remain spiritually ignorant of the truth. And in this, it breaks the heart to see it happen.

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

V. SELF-HATRED.

- A. **Prov. 15:32** *He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. (cf. Prov. 19:8).*
- B. One would tend to wonder about someone who purposely would starve their own soul.
 1. Many times we don't think that we are starving our souls; but when we spend time in our worldly pursuits to the neglect of those things which are spiritual in nature, that is exactly what we are doing.
 2. Have you considered that because we spend so much time in these other things, that we have allowed it to prevent us from sharing the gospel with others?
 3. Not only are we showing a lack of love for our own soul, but also the souls of others.
- C. A fair question to ask would be, do you love yourself enough to nourish your own soul?
 1. **Job 23:12** *I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.*
 2. Is this how you view Scripture?
- D. **Matt. 22:39** tells us that we should love our neighbors as ourselves.
 1. Tragically, if we don't love ourselves enough to feed our souls, then it is little wonder that we don't seek to share the gospel message with others.
 2. James tells us that it is the word which is able to save our souls (**James 1:21**); do we believe it?

SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE LEADS TO...

VI. FOOLISHNESS.

- A. **Prov. 1:7** *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
Jer. 4:22 *For my people is foolish, they have not known me.*
- B. In our culture, we know that the word *fool* has a bad connotation to it.
 1. *Fool* - "a person lacking in judgment or prudence; a harmlessly deranged person or one lacking in common powers of understanding." (Websters)
 2. No one wants to be thought of as a fool; but if we are not good Bible students, then that is exactly what we are.
 3. There are far too many in the church today that no more about what is on TV or in the movies, than what is in the Bible.
 4. There are far too many who know more about sports than what the Bible teaches.
 5. Scripture bears out for us that a fool will not study; he will not meditate day and night upon the word of God.
- C. God's children of old suffered for their foolishness (**Isa. 5:13**). How sad that God's own people suffered for their spiritual ignorance.

- D. How sad that the Lord's church today must suffer from those who choose to be ignorant of God's Word.
1. How sad that so much of our time and attention has to be focused inwardly instead of moving forward seeking and saving the lost.
 2. It is a reason for concern, especially in view of the church at Ephesus (**Rev. 2**), who had been good at refuting false teaching, but had *left their first love*.
 3. Jesus came to seek and save the lost (**Luke 19:10**). The early church was diligent in seeking and saving the lost (**Acts 5:41**). It should be the same with the church today.
 4. What a shame that so much time and effort has to be put forward just to keep house.

CONCLUSION:

1. **2 Tim. 2:15** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
2. **Acts 17:11** *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*