

## IGNORANCE by Pastor Anthony Higginson

### Introduction

The truth is, many of us are told when we go to primary school to concentrate, doing what the teacher says so we will be ready to enter what we termed as being '**the big school**'. Many children became somewhat afraid of the so called, '**big school**', that fear made many of them work hard so as to not feel overwhelmed when they arrived. They are told when they arrive 'work hard because College will demand that you work hard'. When they arrive at College they are then told 'work hard because University will demand it from you'. Though many students like to party, some however, do work and study. Those who do study are told 'when you get into the real world they will demand their pound of flesh from you so work hard and get a good degree'. They get to work and their boss says, **the secret of working in this company is to keep your head down, keep your nose clean, do your job and show a good attitude and learn as much as you can, because if you don't someone else is ready to take your job**. So what do they do? They work hard and learn as much as is needed to, rather than learning as much as they can. As time passes by and promotions are not seized, life hits a state of plateau and why, because there are no more needs, reasons, pressure or desires in which to further push themselves forward. The truth is most of us are looking for a mansion life on easy street, which in essence, is no more than us choosing to live life by the law of the least effort.

When people become saved they are full of thankfulness and energy, so much so that they buy a bible, attend a class or two, so as to further progress their faith. They find a church, develop a new social/spiritual class of friends whereby, very quickly, social needs tend to override spiritual needs. When acceptable levels of understanding are reached, growth plateaus and when growth plateaus, Sunday church ignorantly becomes a way for believers to masquerade their lack of spirituality and depth. What people do not realise by allowing their life to plateau out, is that they are in fact drifting backwards and why, because God is moving forward as well as the people around them moving forward. We must learn to understand that nothing in the kingdom of God ever stands still, as the kingdom everyday is forcefully being advanced.

If I were to use terms such as, *unconsciousness, oblivion, mental darkness, un-enlightenment, un-intelligence, greenness*, all of which are dictionary definitions of one word, what word would you think I am describing? **IGNORANCE**.

#### **- Ignorance defined.**

**Ignorance** is the fruit of an end result, an end result of a **process** involving a person's lack of understanding, enlightenment a lack of incite revelation and education, all of which then produces a fruit called ignorance.

**John 4:22** *You Samaritans worship what **you do not know**; we worship **what we do know**, for salvation is from the Jews. To **know** is to be enlightened, whereas to **not know** is to be **unconsciously oblivious or green about an issue, person or subject**.*

Here this woman had been found worshipping God but she does **not know** God: **This is Ignorance** produced within her, a spiritual **unconscious oblivious, mental darkness, so much so she has no idea who she is worshipping**.

Each and every Sunday, people attend church, people worship with mental darkness, un-enlightenment and oblivion, all of which are filling people's hearts resulting in many believers being ignorant of both God's word and His ways. If people knew the God they professed and worshipped then they would not be found praying for things He will not do, for God to answer their prayers would mean it **contradicts God's own character**, not to mention **contra dine His own word**.

#### **- Ignorance is a process.**

**John 4: 9-25** Look at the process in the Samaritan woman.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) **Meaning she was informed of her own history.** Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." **Jesus was telling her that she suffered from mental and spiritual darkness and why, because she has no clue of who Jesus is.**

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" **She demonstrates that she has education and intelligence and knows a little about the bible, but still she doesn't know who Jesus is which is a lot like you and me.**

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." **Jesus is now giving her spiritual enlightenment as he is revealing himself to her.**

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." **She is now excited and has a measure of spiritual desire.**

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." **She seems to move out of her spiritual enlightenment into her natural understanding as now she becomes sheepishly defensive of that which was now being revealed to her.**

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." **Now she clearly is out of her enlightened state, as she is found sharing her theological historical perceptions with Jesus.**

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." **She was both impressed & informed, so much so that she later is recorded telling everyone in her village, but whether she actually got upgrade I am not sure.**

**Just like the children studying in school, college and university and then in the workplace, need tends to push people towards seeking enlightenment.**

**Acts 17:19-35** **Look at the Ignorance in the Aeropagus**

Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Aeropagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Aeropagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or

silver or stone—an image made by man's design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." At that, Paul left the Council. A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Aeropagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

**Every day it was recorded that they sat doing nothing, both discussing and listening to the latest ideas, whereas believers each and every Sunday also are found sat listening to the latest revelations. Not only are believers found sat listening to revelations, but more worryingly we are still found to be ignorant of God, His word and His ways. May I suggest that though we are far more informed than the Aeropagus were, we are in fact guiltier than they, for though we live in two different camps entirely, we still seem to have produced as a church the same fruit!**

**The myth of the 21st Century Evangelical Christian believer** is to believe and think that because you are born again you therefore know God, which is simply not the truth. It is this thought that develops and gives way to further ignorance. When you became born again you were **introduced** to Christ and his forgiveness, tasting of His goodness for it's the goodness of God that leads to repentance says Romans.

Being **introduced** to God, **Knowing of him**, are not the same as **knowing Him intimately or knowing His ways**.

**It was said of Moses that the people of Israel knew of God but Moses knew His ways.**

**John 4:22** *You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.*

To worship what *you don't know* sounds stupid as it implies a person is uninformed.

To worship what *we do know* means something has been revealed, so much so that the scales or veil over our hearts, minds and consciences, has been lifted.

To say salvation is from the Jews implies, 'enlightenment' has become my experience and from that revelatory enlightenment, knowledge and education has now been formed within me.

1. Ignorance can come from a lack of knowledge on a given subject.
2. Ignorance can come via one's inability to remain focused.
3. Ignorance can come via a total lack of awareness to what is happening around us.
4. Ignorance can come via a lack of sensitivity to other people's needs.
5. Ignorance can come as a result of one's desire to learn and upgrade themselves.
6. Ignorance can be the result of an internal blind spot.

Having said all this pleading ignorance is by no means a case for the defence.

## **- Pleading Ignorance is no case for the defence**

### **The Narrow Door Luke 13:22-30**

Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

"But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

**The effects of ignorance can cost you your very life.**

## **Conclusion**

**Romans 9:30-33 Israel's unbelief.**

What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

Israel's unconsciousness, oblivion, mental darkness, un-enlightenment and greenness resulted in them becoming **IGNORANT about God and His ways.**

**Satan also was ignorant** to the things of God for had he known, he would never have crucified Jesus Christ. Satan's ignorance has placed him as a defeated foe and enemy of God and His church which will inevitably result in the church one day throwing him and his demonic angels into the lake of fire.

**• When you become spiritually ignorant you stand in the way of progress.**

**A Crippled Woman Healed on the Sabbath Luke 13:10-17**

On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath." The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?" When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.