

Being Willingly Ignorant

By Ron Boatwright

There are many in today's world who are willingly ignorant of God's word. This spiritual ignorance is even in the Lord's church. God's word says, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth...being overflowed with water perished" (2 Peter 3:5-6). Those who are willingly ignorant of God's word end up being "scoffers, walking after their own lusts" (2 Peter 3:3). People are willingly ignorant "because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved, and for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

When people demand to hear only the "positive" they want to be "willingly ignorant." They are basically saying, "Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isaiah 30:10). God's complete truth of both the positive and negative is necessary for our salvation. We must declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The apostle Paul warns us, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned to fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Some think if they ignore what God's word says on certain subjects that they don't like such as: marriage divorce & remarriage, dancing, drinking alcohol, instrumental music, denominationalism, etc., that they will somehow disappear. Pretending that these scriptures do not exist will not make them go away. Even though people try to ignore what the Lord says, Jesus says, "the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). But many don't want to hear the truth of God's word. They exist "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling" (Ephesians 4:18-19). It is sad and hopeless when people become past feeling.

Many people don't want to know the truth of God's word, so they close their ears to the truth. Jesus says, "For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them" (Matthew 13:15).

There is much false doctrine which is being taught today that is designed to cause people to be eternally lost. They do not have the proper knowledge and love of God's word. God says, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you" (Hosea 4:6). There are those who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:2-3). Being ignorant of God's righteousness encourages people to establish their own righteousness. Concerning those who are ignorant of God's righteousness, Jesus says, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark

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7:7). Even though many people may be sincere, they are sincerely wrong if they are following the doctrines of men. All who follow the doctrines of men will be eternally lost.

What should you do in order to "make your calling and election sure"? (2 Peter 1:10). Only by the truth of God's word can we go to heaven. Jesus says, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). We must "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame" (1 Corinthians 15:34). This same shameful condition exists today, even in the Lord's church. This is the reason many congregations of the Lord's church are apostatizing. We should "no longer be children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting" (Ephesians 4:14). In order to not be willingly ignorant, we must "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). We can only rightly divide and understand God's truth when we diligently study it.

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A DEACON?

Terry Joe Kee

The shepherds have put before us the names of three men to serve in addition to the ones who are already serving as deacons in the church at Greensboro Road. So, what are their duties? Why are we appointing additional men to this position? Why are men made deacons? Some have thought at times that this is some honor bestowed upon someone and a title given to an individual to give him a place of importance in the church. The worst thing a church can do is to appoint men for whom there is no work.

If the church is to accomplish and serve as God intended, we must restore the New Testament church in the area of deacons, with an understanding of what their duties and responsibilities are.

Too often deacons do not know what they are supposed to be doing. They often have no idea what their work is. Some have the idea they are "junior elders" or those who help in "running the church." The shepherds have the complete oversight of *all* the work of the church. This includes all the work of the deacons. They can offer any assistance that is needed by deacons to accomplish their work.

Some have falsely believed that the deacons oversee the material, and the elders oversee the spiritual needs of the church. But this is not scriptural. There is no place where I find a division of our labors. Sometimes this has caused harm in churches where some thought the deacons could make decisions without regard for the elders. Some churches have become divided and split when deacons have taken too much authority and tried to work separately from the shepherds. Where do we read of deacons having *authority*? Do deacons have oversight in the church? Elders oversee and deacons serve when the church is well organized and scripturally functioning in the work of the Lord.

Deacons are given responsibilities not assigned to just any member of the church. They are given assignments to plan and execute in areas assigned by the shepherds. If these are not "special servants," then why must they meet certain qualifications before they can be appointed to this office? Often troubles arise when elders do not make it clear what the deacons are expected to do and what their jobs are. A deacon who is chosen and then not given any direction or any work to do is nothing more than a title given to an individual. Elders should discuss the work that is needed to be done and counsel should be given to help deacons to be successful in their efforts.

If a church is functioning properly, shepherds must be shepherding and deacons must be serving in their special areas of responsibilities. Let the overseers oversee and the deacons serve and the church will be blessed.

NEWS AND NOTES

“I was sick, and ye visited me...” (Matthew 25:36)

Remember in Prayer:

Myra Preston is in Arkansas Continued Care Hospital, room 201, undergoing therapy and showing improvement.

Mittie Stallings is in NEA Baptist, room 5201, recovering from a broken hip and surgery.

Reginald Read is recovering from a heart ablation which he had last week.

Marshall Lands continues to improve at home after his long stay in the hospital.

Jim Johnson is slowly improving but is not strong enough to be able to be out yet.

Arnold Kelley, our missionary in Mississippi, is in an ICU room now and is in critical condition. His wife Susan is very ill at home.

Sympathy is extended to Marian Mangrum and daughters at the passing of Thad Mangrum, who passed away last week. His funeral was last Wednesday at Phillips Funeral Home in Paragould.

Please check the bulletin boards for updates on Prayer Request Lists.

Please update us if needed.

Also please pray for these who are directly or indirectly affected by Covid-19,
and please keep us updated.

Tim and Traci Johnson (son and daughter-in-law of James and Sandra Johnson).

Tim remains in ICU at NEA Baptist but is improving. Traci is now in Encompass, Room 206 by the window.

In Other News:

Children and Teens:

Ages from Babies to 6th grade are invited to continue the routine of going before Bible class to Room 4 on Sunday a.m. and Wednesday p.m. to pick up a Bible study/activity packet to carry to the auditorium and work on during each Bible class period.

Teens, please go to your classroom to get your Bible study packet to work on in auditorium during class time or at home if you prefer!

Those Privileged To Serve

January 31, 2021

SUNDAY MORNING

Song Leader: Mark Wooten
Opening Prayer: J. L. May
Closing Prayer: Reginald Read
Bible Reading: Craig Nelson
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

LORD’S TABLE

Presiding: Scottie Blanchard
Mike Felts Dan Nichols
Jack Johnson Jimmie Powell
Tom Carner Carlos Wood

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Randy Oden

SUNDAY EVENING

Song Leader: Scottie Blanchard
Opening Prayer: Stan Honeycutt
Closing Prayer: David Dye
Preacher: J. L. May

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

February 3, 2021

Song Leader: *Singing Night*
Opening Prayer: Terry Joe Kee

Closing Prayer: Ryan Manley
DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER

February 3, 2021

J. L. May

NUMBERS FOR THE WEEK

Week Of

January 24, 2021

Sunday Bible Study 60
Sunday AM Worship 98
Sunday PM Worship 84
Wednesday Bible Study 75
Contribution \$4637

**“Remove not the
ancient landmark,
which thy fathers
have set.”**

Proverbs 22:28

The Friend of Truth



Greensboro Road church of Christ

Jonesboro, Arkansas 72405

(870) 932-3920

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)

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KeeNotes

We are so richly blessed to be citizens in the eternal kingdom. As citizens we all need to find our places of need and seek to step in and fulfill our roles. Each member has a place and a role to fulfill. When we all work together it is a beautiful sight and a wonderful place to live and work. If ever we are not united and working together in the kingdom, the church suffers, and we need to repent.

We have been blessed this year as many of our members have repented of their past neglect and are working diligently to do better and to work harder. We have had numerous public responses to the Lord’s invitation this year and this past week was no exception. We had six who came asking for our prayers to be lifted to heaven in their behalf.

Scottie Blanchard, Stacy Eddleman, Jan Hopkins, Paula Presley, Carlos Wood, and Patricia Wood all came asking for the church to pray for them. All were asking to be forgiven for their past sins, unfaithfulness, and lack of effort in the vineyard. They wanted to be, and were, restored to the Lord. It is always a joy to go to God on the behalf of ourselves, but even more when we can go there for another. It truly rejoices the heart to see tender hearts who want to do right and grow in Christ, who want to do better and are asking for forgiveness and strength. They also were asking for opportunities to grow and become stronger in Christ. Our prayers ascended to heaven for them and our continuing prayers are for all of us as we labor together in the vineyard of the Lord.

We are choosing additional deacons. A deacon is a servant under the oversight of the elders. His work is to do whatever works need to be done. All members of the church are to be servants, but these select men are chosen to take on specific works for which they are deemed qualified to perform. Deacons do not make policies or decisions for the church. They do not rule or oversee. They are not shepherds and should not be considered to do the work of shepherds. Their role is to be servants serving in specific roles with specific responsibilities. Also remember that neither shepherds nor deacons are appointed to a lifetime appointment. When their work is finished, or they can no longer perform their duties, they should be wise enough to step aside. May God bless us all as we work together as citizens in the eternal kingdom.

SHEPHERDS

Dan Nichols
Randy Oden

DEACONS

Scottie Blanchard
Jerry Dodson
Mike Felts
Jason Garland
Marshall Lands
Mark Wooten

EVANGELIST

Terry Joe Kee

MISSIONARIES

Samrit Kammanee
Arnold Kelley
Micah Robertson, Montana
Warren, PA

SERVICES

SUNDAY

Classes 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.
5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the Word of God
Romans 10:17
Believe the Word of God
John 8:24
Repent of your sins
Luke 13:3
Confess your faith in Jesus
as the Son of God
Romans 10:9,10
Be Baptized for the
remission of your sins
Acts 2:38
Live faithfully
Revelation 2:10

*“Lift up your eyes, and
look on the fields; for they
are white already to
harvest.” (John 4:35)*

**Each One Invite One
in Twenty-One**