

July 10th, 2016
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Title: Acts Men
Sermon #7 Title: The Consequence of Ignorance
Sermon #7 Text: - (Acts 3:12-20)

I read a story about a Junior High Student who won first prize at the Idaho Falls Science Fair in April 26, 1997. – He embraced a project to have a particular chemical banned by Congress for environmental reasons, and he surveyed 50 people to find out what the political temperature was for such a project. In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical “dihydrogen monoxide.” – And He listed the reasons:

1. Can cause excessive sweating and vomiting.
2. It is a major component in acid rain.
3. It can cause severe burns in its gaseous state.
4. Accidental inhalation can kill you.
5. It decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes.
6. It has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.

Forty-three said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew that the chemical was H₂O (water).

The student said the purpose of his experiment was to show how people are so conditioned to junk science, and environmental alarmist type thinking, that we could scare people into banning water!

It is the same way with junk religion, and junk theology. – Ignorance may not just show up on an embarrassing survey, it can be downright deadly.

Hosea the prophet said in Hosea 4:6 - “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge”

“What you don’t know can not only kill you, but it can condemn you!”

- “Little Frankie was thirsty and got him a drink, but little Frankie is no more, for what he thought was H₂O was H₂SO₄”

“This is why Discipleship, and learning the scriptures are so important, and so paramount – the lack of it, caused many Jews and even their leaders to not only miss the Messiah – but to be found fighting against the God that wanted to save them.”

In the first eleven verses of chapter 3 the Lord did a marvelous thing. – Through Peter and John he healed a man well-known for being a lame beggar.

- It is a Beautiful miracle and a magnificent moment.
- It was a miracle of mercy, and might, and it drew a multitude, so much so that Peter began to preach, and explain what had happened.

- An older preacher said of this man, “He couldn’t walk, he couldn’t work and he couldn’t worship – until he looked to Jesus”

- They saw what they saw, and still didn't know what they were looking at! –

When Peter began to explain what they were looking at, their ignorance (and I do not say that as an insult) began to shine like the noonday sun! – Underneath the lens of the truth, like a surgeon peeling through the layers of a patient, 4 findings come to light.

“Ignorance did not excuse them, but rather it explained them.

- Their Ignorance of what happened did four things:

#1 – Exposed a Failure of their Faith – vs 12-13

(Now these weren't unbelievers *that* God is, but they would demonstrate that they had no knowledge of *WHO* God is, or *WHAT* God has said.)

The first things that Peter exposes, is that they saw too much in men.

A. They Saw Too Much in Men

The primary point that Peter was making had nothing to do with their marveling, because miracles are marvelous things. The problem was not that they marveled, but that they marveled at Peter and John!

1.) “why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we made this man to walk?”

*Note – Peter's address here hints at what they were thinking:

a.) That they had power!

- all throughout the Bible the men of God spend great

amounts of time, and go to great lengths to express the fact that they have no inherent power!

*Note – In and of ourselves we have no authority, and we have no ability, and when God does something through the obedience of His children, a failing faith will see the man rather than seeing the power behind the man.

- In Genesis 41 Pharaoh said to Joseph, I've heard you can interpret my dreams, and the Bible says Joseph said to him plainly in verse 16 – “And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”

- Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:28-30 – Daniel explained, “There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets . . . (it's not me)”

- John the Baptist came declaring in John 3 – “I am not the Christ, and I told you that.”

- Peter answering Cornelius in Acts 10 – don't look at me

- Paul in Act 14, when the People of Lycaoniam said of him and Barnabas, - the “gods have come down in the likeness of men.”

- I have never figured out what is wrong the God of the Bible. – Men will see His miracles, Hear the Music of His Mercy, and are willing to give credit and glory to anyone, anywhere, and any god – BUT the God of the Bible.

- These Jews had no doubt seen or at least heard of the Miracles of Jesus. – Prior to that, though they had learned and been taught of all the Miraculous workings of God in the Old Testament – Out of Egypt, through the Wilderness, and into

the Promised Land – then through the Prophets, the captivities, the victories and the judgments

- And they still were quick to want a man to have such power!

(b.) That they had Piety – “or holiness we made this man to walk.”

- Some in the crowd thought that Peter and John were all powerful.

- Some in the crowd thought Peter and John were all holy – and that this was their secret!

- They thought that holiness was the key to power!

- Holiness is the Key to Holiness!

- it may be required for growth in fellowship

- it may be required for purity in worship

- it may be required for an obedient life

- it has never been the source for power that belongs only to God.

- Write this down – “The first flaw in anyone’s faith is when they are willing to look to men of God, but not through the men of God to see the God of that man.”

2 Corinthians 3:5 – “Our sufficiency (competence) is from God and not from us.”

2 Corinthians 4:7 – “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

B. They Knew Too Little of God

1.) – “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus.”

a.) Of these thousands of Jews, Peter just indicted them for not knowing the God they worshipped.

b.) verse 20-25 – Peter again turns to the Old Testament scriptures and shows to them that they may have known the “words of the Bible” but they did not know The Word of the LORD or the LORD of the WORD.

c.) verse 22-23 – is a quote from Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19

d.) verse vs 24- Peter points to Samuel and All the Prophets

e.) verse 25 – Peter quotes Genesis 12:3

*Note – Now note the summary of Peter’s point in verse 26– “Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you.”

*Note – Now here is my primary point – They all knew what the Bible said, but had no earthly idea of what the Bible meant!

(The world is saturated with people who can quote the scriptures – they know the words of the Bible, they know the verses, themes, and passages of the Bible – but have no clue about what the Bible means.)

As one man said, “It is categorically inexcusable to be in darkness in the midst of clear sunlight!”

Edward Farley – ““Why is it that the vast majority of Christian believers remain largely unexposed to Christian learning--to historical-critical studies of the Bible, the content and structure of the great doctrines, to two thousand years of classic works on the Christian life, to basic disciplines of theology, biblical languages and ethics? Why do bankers, lawyers, farmers, physicians, homemakers, scientists, salespeople, managers of all sorts, people who carry out all kinds of complicated tasks in their work and home, remain in a literalist, elementary school level in their religious understanding? How is it that high school age church members move easily and quickly into the complex world of computers, foreign languages, DNA and calculus, and cannot even make a beginning in historical-critical interpretation of a single text of Scripture? How is it possible one can attend or even teach Sunday School for decades and at the end of that lack the interpretive skills of someone who has taken three or four weeks in an introductory course in the Bible at a university or seminary?”

#2 – Revealed a Crime against the King – vs 14-15

- The first thing to realize is that their ignorance that they committed a Crime against the King of Heaven and Earth.

A. Historically For Israel

1.) This is not metaphorical, it is historical, and Peter reads the indictment like a prosecuting attorney.

a.) you insisted on the murder of Jesus
Read - vs 13-15 – “...the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But

ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.”

2.) They were literally guilty of judicial murder!

a.) From an earthly standpoint – they had railroaded an innocent man, knew what they were doing, and did it anyway!

B. Morally For the Jews – That historical act revealed their moral condition!

1.) They were eternally guilty of high treason

a.) Because you didn’t know the Word of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob – You Denied the Holy One, you Denied the Just One.

2.) When faced with choosing between a man who takes lives, and a man who gives life – you chose the man who takes lives!

- That was a picture of their heart, and a picture of their soul, and a picture of their minds. – This was the kind of people that these Jews were!

- They were debased, they were diabolical, and they were determined not to let Jesus get away with saying that He is the Son of God, and they would go to any means to do it.

#3 – Displayed a Fact of Sovereign Truth – vs-17 – “I wot (know) that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.”

(Now note this – Peter spends 4 verses declaring them to be guilty of premeditated murder – and then says, you did it through ignorance.)

- Now how can it be both? – How can they be guilty of their premeditated murder, and still be said to have done it in ignorance?

- Even when they knew what they were doing – they didn't know what they were doing.

(Even though they were ignorant of the truth, they were guilty of their hearts!)

- they didn't have to want to kill him

- they didn't have to enjoy it

Many a people have done what turned out to be egregious acts, but with noble intentions.

- This was God's noble act, but they had egregious intentions! 1st Corinthians 2:7-8 – "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

- Even knowing that they were crucifying an innocent man, and even knowing that they hostile to the man from God – they still had no idea of the magnitude of their actions, or the movements of the Sovereign Lord.

- Read verse 18 – "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

#4 – Conveyed a Need to Repent – vs 19-20

*Note – Here is the Grace that follows the guilt! – Here is the light that follows the dark and the offer that follows the indictment.

A. Knowledge Demands Repentance – "Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out . . ."

1.) Now you know what you could have known

2.) Now you know what you should have known

3.) Now – Like Cain – "if thou does well, wilt thou not be accepted!"

a.) The Way of Cain was not that he offered the wrong sacrifice before God, the way of Cain was that he would NOT offer the right sacrifice before God once he knew!

- Ignorant Guilt – Was Still Guilt! Knowledgeable Unrepentance is double Guilt!

- Even in the Levitical law, there were required sacrifices for unintentional sins, and ignorantly trespassing the law. – Yet there were different sacrifices for willful and knowledgeable sin.

- Listen to Jesus explanation of punishment by parable – Luke 12:47-48 – "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

- Ignorance is not an escape, but Knowledge is an opportunity! – Knowledge is to produce Repentance! – A change of mind.

James 4:17 – “To him to knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

B. Repentance Leads to Refreshment!

1.) “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;”

a.) Contextually, he is speaking about that wonderful time when the Saints are gathered with the Savior! – When the saved and the Savior are together forever!

- He calls it a time of “Refreshing” – It is the only time in the Bible that this word is used – “to breathe again” to “recover breath” – some say the word means “REVIVAL”

b.) the word “when” is a complex word – it means both “when” and “that” or “in order that” – and it has a double meaning – meaning both NOW and LATER.

In the fullest sense of the New Testament teaching, there is a “breathing again” – when we know our sins are blotted out. – But there will be an ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT on that day when we are together with the Lord!

Conclusion: - There are two things that speak of this “refreshing” from repenting! –

- The blotting out of sins

- The Presence of the Lord

- Up to this point they had been fighting against the Lord – for them to repent would be for them to yield to the Lord, and surrender to the one that they had been fighting.

- Every time Peter preached, he preached to a point, and then put the people on the spot – to choose!

