

## Biblically Illiterate

There are many problems in the world today, and I think there are so many problems that people just can't comprehend, not only the problems but how to solve those problems. But I see one of the fastest growing problems is that of biblical illiteracy. This problem is not only found in the people of the world but is also found in the church.

One respected person who did a survey said this: "Some Americans still revere the Bible, but by and large, they don't read it, and because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates." Well, how bad is it? Consider these results from various surveys.

- Fewer than half of all adults can name the four Gospels.
- Many professing Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples.
- Sixty percent of Americans can't name even five of the Ten Commandments.
- Eighty-two percent of Americans believe God helps those who help themselves. They believe that's a Bible verse; of course, it isn't.
- Twelve percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife.
- A survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over fifty percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife.
- A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham.

Another respected person who does surveys said: "Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate." Biblical illiteracy is like a poison. Wreaking havoc in the lives of individuals in

our churches and in our communities, our world. Let's take a look at the poison of biblical illiteracy.

First of all, its effect on individuals. God's people have always been destroyed by lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:1 says: *Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.* That sounds familiar today in America.

Hosea 4:6: *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

I also see that, where there is lack of God's Word, the people faint, in other words, weaken.

Amos 8:11-13: *<sup>11</sup>Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: <sup>12</sup>And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. <sup>13</sup>In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.*

When people ignore God and His Word, there comes a time when God says enough is enough. Without the Word of the Lord, in ignorance, people make the wrong choices. When they stumble, they don't know where to turn, and without knowledge of God's Word, a person has no real direction or guidance in

life. Psalm 119:105 says: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

I also see that, without knowledge of God's Word, a person has no true joy or peace in life. Psalm 119:111 says this: *Thy testimonies... and this is God's Word, the testimonies, God's Word... have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.*

And then, again, in Psalm 119:165 it says: *Great peace have they which love thy law... This is God's Word... and nothing shall offend them.* The word "offend" means to cause hurt or resentment, to cause irritation or anger. When a person gets into God's Word, a peace that passes all human understanding is experienced. Nothing can take that peace from a person who is listening to God through His Word.

Philippians 4:7 says: *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* How many lives are being destroyed? How many people are stumbling through life because they do not have the light of God's Word guiding them?

It's a poison of biblical illiteracy and its effects on churches. Churches languish for a lack of teachers. Teachers are few because of lack of knowledge. Hebrews 5:12: *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Churches are led astray by false teachers and false doctrine. Without knowledge how can the ignorant know what is false? Second Peter 2:1-3: *<sup>1</sup>But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring*

*in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. <sup>2</sup>And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. <sup>3</sup>And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*

How many people are giving into the heresies and the feigned words of these so-called evangelist preachers on TV and radio who say, "Send in a thousand dollars and I'll see to it... or God will see to it that you'll get tenfold of that one thousand dollars. Send your seed money in," they tell you.

One will even tell you that they will send you a packet of water from the Jordan River and that water will heal you. Well, if you go back and read in the Old Testament, you'll find that a man by the name of Naaman was told to go dip in the Jordan River, and the Jordan River was so dirty he didn't want to dip in it. God help you if you get that so-called Jordan River water from that person who's selling it on TV or on the radio or wherever they're selling it at and you drink that stuff, God help you. I really don't think it's water from the Jordan River. I think it's tap water or whatever, wherever they get that stuff from, but don't fall for this stuff.

The Bible says that they're going to come, and, folks, they're here now. How many churches are dying on the vine or into wholesale apostasy because their members cannot discern between truth and error?

What about the poison of biblical illiteracy and its effect on communities? Our standards of morality are distorted. Good is seen as evil and evil is seen as good. Isaiah 5:20 says: *Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil*

*that put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.*

God says in Isaiah 5:20 that nothing but grief... and this is woe... is in store for those communities, those nations who refuse to listen, twist or ignore God's Word. Those people who try to say that ungodly living or a particular sin named in the Word of God is simply a matter of a person's interpretation. They are in for grief. People had better listen to God's interpretation. When he says sin is sin, it's sin. When God names sin, it is sin. Sin has not changed since the Garden of Eden. Sin is still sin. God is still good and He never changes, and good is still good and evil is still evil.

We slaughter the innocent... abortion. The abortions in this country, millions have been killed. We slaughter the innocent, sparing the guilty. In other words, that person in prison needs to be treated better than that baby in the womb that hasn't been born but is still a human being. That person in prison is treated better. No capital punishment for capital crimes.

In today's society, the wicked, sinful person is rewarded with prestige, honor, money, and they are esteemed by the world as being so great that all of us and that all of the children growing up should be like them. God help us!

Adultery is looked upon lightly. Fornication as an affair, a relationship. Homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle. And this next word that I'm going to use may shock you and it may offend you, but today, if you are a "queer," you have arrived in the world's sight. Look around. From the advertisements I see, the queers made it. TV shows, men marrying men; women marrying women; men saying they are not really men but in reality are

women; and on and on it goes. But one day, God will say that's enough.

If God lets America get away with what's happening today, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. I've got news for you. God is not going to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. What God is going to do unless people quit being illiterate is to bring His wrath down upon this country and the world without apology.

Someone has said, "I don't believe you should be so harsh in calling a person's personal preference a sin." Why not? God does. Revelation 21:8 says, *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

First Corinthians 6:9: *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind.*

God does not hate anyone. God hates sin. God says, *Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame,* I Corinthians 15:34. What is God saying? "Christian, quit being illiterate."

The poison of such things I have mentioned destroys our families and communities. Consider how the moral fabric of our nation and others in the world are becoming unraveled when everyone does what is right in his own eyes instead of doing what is right in God's sight.

What can we do? First, give your life to the Lord. Get saved. Receive Jesus as your Savior. Now, I have nothing to gain by you receiving Jesus as your Savior, but you on the other hand have everything to lose if you don't receive Him. By not receiving the free gift of eternal life offered to you by Jesus, all that awaits you is a devil's hell. There is coming a time when you leave this world without receiving Christ as your Savior that you will stand before Him. *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,* Matthew 25:41.

Receive Jesus. Ask Him to come into your heart. Be sorry for the sin. Ask Him to forgive you. Ask Him to save you.

And the second thing is to a saved person. Get things right with God. Quit being illiterate. Get into the Word of God. Quit being ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Get a backbone. Stand up for the Lord. Be a workman as we see in II Timothy 2:15, and remember this, *Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people,* Proverbs 14:34.

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