

# For Lack of Knowledge

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn to the book of Hosea this morning for Sunday School, please. Hosea. If you found Daniel, just keep going a little bit and you'll hit Hosea. That's the book immediately following Daniel.

Now that I've said that, I'm going to double check. Yes, it is. Okay. So it's the first book of the Minor Prophets immediately following Daniel. And we're going to look at a few verses and then apply them this morning.

And kind of like this morning's message, this has application with some current events that are going on.

So Hosea chapter 4, we'll start reading in verse number 1. The Bible says, Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel. For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.

Why is the Lord having a controversy with the inhabitants? He goes on and tells them in the next phrase of this verse, Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

[ 1 : 04 ] By swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish with the beasts of the field and with the fowls of heaven.

Yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. So we're talking with what Hosea is doing is passing a condemnation upon the house of Israel, upon the land of Israel. Obviously Hosea prophesied before the events that we were talking about in the morning service.

This is well before the events of the book of Daniel. God is looking at His children. He's looking at the people of Israel, His chosen people. And He is, through the prophet Hosea, delivering a message of condemnation.

Because, number one, there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. He goes on to talk about the sins that they're committing, swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery.

And, of course, application could be made to our modern-day American society through all of that. But that's not where we're going this morning. Let's continue reading just a little bit.

[ 2 : 15 ] Verse number four. Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another, for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother.

Verse number six, along with the end of verse number one, is kind of where we're talking from this morning, where we're teaching from. 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.

So, he says, my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. What knowledge specifically are we talking about? Tie back to verse number one. There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

So, we're going to do a Sunday school lesson this morning for just a little bit, called For Lack of Knowledge. For Lack of Knowledge. Let's pray together. Father, we thank you so much for the blessings you've rained down on us already this morning.

[ 3 : 23 ] And, Lord, I pray that you would bless in this Sunday school time, that you would bless the lesson here, that you would bless the lesson in the other classes that are going on, Lord, that you would strengthen us in our faith, strengthen us in you, that you would also challenge and convict us if necessary.

Lord, we pray that you would be magnified, and that you would work in our lives through the teaching of your word. In Jesus' name, amen. So, Hosea is preaching and prophesying to the land of Israel.

Now, Hosea is preached from oftentimes the fact that God spoke to Hosea and told him to marry an adulterous woman as a picture of God's relationship with Israel, who, even though being chosen of God, were often adulterous against him in the fact that they paid no attention to him.

They often turned after the idols of the people around them, the pagan gods of the people around them. In this particular instance, though, God is condemning them because there is no knowledge of God in the land.

My people, he says, are destroyed for lack of knowledge. I want to read you part of an article that I printed out here. This is a Fox News article.

[ 4 : 35 ] I want to read this to you as part of the lesson. As the deadline for the apocalypse passed in the Pacific Islands, New Zealand and Australia, it seems the end of the world prediction is fizzling.

Twitter users around the world express their mock disappointment to the non-rapture. Daniel Borman tweeted, I'm from New Zealand.

It is 6 p.m. The world has not ended. No earthquakes here. All waiting for the rapture can relax for now. Hashtag rapture.

In Australia, John Gall tweeted, Hashtag rapture time here in Melbourne. A rather quiet sort of rapture, if you ask me. Also writing, Well, we have had this hashtag rapture going for 50 minutes now.

So far, it hasn't interrupted my fish and chips. And glass of stout. Similarly disappointed, a name I cannot pronounce, wrote, So it's 637 here in Brisbane, Australia.

[ 5 : 42 ] I should say this all in Australian accent, shouldn't I? But they typed it so the accent is not necessary. It is 637 p.m. here in Brisbane, Australia. No earthquakes. No beaming up of Christians.

No zombie apocalypse. No surprises. Ha ha. Some had shut themselves inside to pray for mercy as they waited for the world's end.

Others met for tearful last lunches with their children and prepared to leave behind homes and pets as they were swept up to heaven. How many people on here are on Twitter now called X?

How many people know that last week the rapture was supposed to happen? Yes, there was a prediction that last week the rapture was supposed to happen. Guess what? If it did, y'all are in serious trouble.

Oh yeah, me too. Say, yeah, that was hilarious, Brother Scott. That was... Did you know that that article I just read you was not printed last week? This article was actually published May 21st, 2011.

- [ 6 : 46 ]    Everything comes around. Everything old is new. As mentioned in the first, we're not facing anything that we haven't faced before. And the problem is, 14 short years ago...  
Now, the older I get, the less time 14 years is. When I was 14 years old, 14 was an eternity because it was the entirety of my lifespan. Now that I am years old, 14, not so much anymore.  
And I can remember farther back than 14 years. I can imagine that I remember things even farther back than that. But 14... But 14 years and we're doing the same thing again.  
Matter of fact, we're doing the same thing on the same platform. Only it's called X instead of Twitter now. You probably got a little bit of a clue that the article was old because it kept saying Twitter.  
The thing of it is, it all comes around again, all the things we face again, and all the people that are caught up in the fervor. See, it wasn't the fact that unbelievers were caught up in hashtag rapture, whether we're talking about 2011 or we're talking about last week.
- [ 7 : 56 ]    We're talking about people who are professed Christians. Not my place to judge them whether they are or not. We're talking about people who go to church. We're talking about people who call themselves Christians, who say that they're born again, and yet they were caught up in this.  
They were caught up in this doctrinal error because that's what it is. It's not just a harmless little thing that happened. And we're going to get to why it's not harmless here in a minute.  
But they were caught up in this professing Christians. Not unbelievers, not just children, but adults who should know better were caught up into this foolishness, not only in 2011, but we didn't learn our lesson, so we're doing it again in 2025.  
Now, I don't know if it'll be another 14 years and come around again. I don't know if it happened 14 years before 2011. I doubt it because I don't know how long Twitter's been around. But you've got to come back to a time when I was a teenager when there was no such thing as social media or the Internet, and life was so much simpler.  
That's an old man talking. Yeah, right there. By the way, this is an aside. This is not part of the lesson. But if you are on social media, and I am on social media. I have a Facebook account. I have an X account.
- [ 9 : 14 ]    If you're on social media, use it with discernment. Use it carefully. Don't go down the rabbit hole. The rabbit hole is dangerous. It looks innocuous.  
It looks not harmful. Don't go down the rabbit hole. Don't doom scroll. There's a reason they call it doom scrolling. It's because you do that long enough, and your mind starts getting depressed, starts getting messed up.  
Just do what you have to do and move on. That's your free advice for the day. Take it. Leave it. That's your business. But anyway, we're back to the false rapture. Now, the thing of it is, the false rapture is based on a true doctrine.  
We know that the rapture is a biblical doctrine. We know that the rapture is something that is eventually going to happen. You read 1 Thessalonians. As a matter of fact, turn over there, if you will, to 1 Thessalonians and chapter 4.  
If I can get my fingers to work. 2 Thessalonians won't do. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 and verse number 13. How often have we heard these verses read at funerals and such as a great comfort to people, and they are.
- [ 10 : 25 ]    1 Thessalonians chapter 4, verse number 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren. Now, that's an interesting way to start out. Paul says, I don't want you to be ignorant.

Now, ignorant can be used as an insult, but we have to be careful to understand what ignorance actually is. Ignorance is not necessarily an insult.

To be willfully ignorant, which the Bible talks about in another place, is bad. But to be ignorant just means you don't know. There are things that I am ignorant of because I don't know them.

And the problem is, I don't know what I'm ignorant about because I don't know what I don't know. And that's true of everybody. Nobody has complete knowledge. Nobody understands everything. Nobody knows everything.

So, to an extent, we're all ignorant. Ignorant is not the same as dumb. It's not. It is not a lack of intelligence.

[ 11 : 25 ] Now, there are people who would consider that to be the same thing. It's not. Ignorance is not a lack of intelligence. Ignorance is a lack of knowledge. Two entirely different things.

You can fix. You ever heard you can't fix stupid? You can fix ignorance. That's one of the reasons we have teaching Sunday school class. That's one of the reasons we do what we do, is so that we learn more about God's Word.

And we'll get to that even more here in just a moment. So, Paul starts off, the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul starts off saying, I don't want you to be ignorant about this. This is something you should know about and something you should understand.

So, he says, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. He doesn't say we're not supposed to sorrow, because this is read often at funerals at graveside services.

This passage is often read. Notice he doesn't say we're not to sorrow. It's all right to grieve. Grieving is natural and normal and human, and it's okay. But it says we're not to sorrow as those which have no hope.

[ 12 : 30 ] If you've ever been to a Christian funeral and to a funeral of a lost person with a primarily lost family, you know the difference in the atmosphere. You know the difference in the spirit of the services.

There are people there that are grieving because they have no hope. In a Christian funeral, we're grieving because we miss our loved ones, but we have hope that we will be reunited one day, whether through what we're reading about or when our time comes to join them up in heaven.

So, we're to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain under the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. So, there we have encapsulated the doctrine of what we call the rapture. People will quibble with you. They'll say rapture is not a biblical term.

[ 13 : 49 ] It's not a word found in the Bible. They're right. It's a word that we use to describe this particular doctrine that the Bible was just talking about in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4.

The lesson today is not about the particulars of the doctrine of the rapture, when it's going to happen, how it's going to happen, things such as that, except we'll touch on it just in passing a little bit. So, what we've got are people who understand that this is a biblical doctrine.

What they don't understand, or what they appear not to know, is the teaching about the timing of the rapture, as told us in the Gospel of Matthew and in the Gospel of Mark.

In Matthew chapter 24, verse number 36, the Bible says, Mark chapter 13, Jesus said, But of that day and that hour knoweth no man know not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

So, what we know through the teaching of God's Word and by comparing Scripture to Scripture, that the rapture is a true doctrine, but nobody knows when it's going to happen.

[ 15 : 02 ] Nobody, we know that the return of Jesus Christ, what is called the revelation of Jesus Christ, is actual returning to the earth to rule and reign for a thousand years. We know this is a true doctrine, but we also don't know when that's going to happen, other than it's going to be seven years after the rapture.

And again, not going to get bogged down in all of this. If you've been taught differently, you know, I'm not going to argue with you about it afterwards. I'm just not. So, Lord bless you, I love you.

I'm up here teaching. Anyway, the point I'm making is that these are true biblical doctrines, and people understood, these people who were deceived, understood that this is a doctrine, but they did not know enough.

They were ignorant of the fact that we're never going to know when it is. It is going to happen. It is going to happen suddenly. It is going to happen without warning. I heard somebody, I didn't listen to the message, but I saw the title of a message by a preacher one time was, The Signs of the Rapture.

There are no signs to the rapture. I may not, we believe in a doctrine of the imminency of the rapture. What that means is it could happen at any moment.

[ 16 : 17 ] There is nothing yet to be fulfilled. There is nothing that has to happen before the rapture can happen. It could happen any moment. It could happen before I get done teaching this lesson, and all God's people said amen.

So, they were partially knowledgeable, partially ignorant. They did not have the knowledge that they're supposed to have. Say, well, why would this be so, Brother Scott?

Number one, there is a failure amongst Christians to attend church, to be where we're going to get teaching and preaching, like we're supposed to be getting, to help us to grow.

So, you know, the Bible tells us that the preacher, pastors, evangelists were given to the church so that we could be edified, so that we could be built up.

There's a reason that they're there. So, part of it is Christians are not attending church like they should. Part of it is Christians are not attending the churches that they should. They're attending churches that instead of teaching them and preaching to them the truths, regardless of how it's going to go down, not worrying about the reception of said truth, but rather worried about the delivery of truth.

[ 17 : 29 ] People are choosing instead to go to places that make them feel good. I'm sorry, but Bible truth is not always going to make you feel good. Matter of fact, I remember the day I got saved.

I remember it quite vividly. Can I tell you that before we got to the point where I got saved, bowed my head and got saved, that I was miserable? I was terribly under conviction.

I was sitting in a pew in the back of Marion Avenue Baptist Church, and that skinny preacher up there was pointing his finger straight at me and preaching the devil out of me. Do you believe that that man had the gall to tell me I was a sinner?

Me, directly. That doesn't matter that there were a hundred other people in the auditorium with me. He was picking me out. Had the gall to tell me I was a sinner, and that I couldn't do anything about it, and that because of that sin, I was going to go to hell.

Now, this is not something that makes you feel good. It's not designed to make you feel good. Matter of fact, it's designed to make you feel bad because it's the truth, and you need conviction of sin. You need to understand these things.

[ 18 : 34 ] But then he went on to tell me that Jesus loves me in spite of my sin. Not in my sin, in spite of my sin. Not just, oh, we're going to gloss it over. But he loves me in spite of my sin.

And that if I would accept, he made a payment for that sin. He took the debt I couldn't pay, and he paid it on the cross. And he rose again three days later to show that that payment was accepted.

And that if I put my faith and trust in him, and in that payment he made for me, my sins would be wiped away. Gone. Far as the east is from the west.

Buried in the depths of the sea of God's forgetfulness. And in that moment, I bowed my head. I didn't even wait for the, it was in the invitation, but he called for people to come forward.

I didn't come, I didn't, I came forward, but I was already saved when I went forward because I bowed my head in that pew, and I called on Jesus Christ, and I asked him to save me. Why did you do that? Because somebody preached me the truth.

[ 19 : 32 ] And that truth made me feel bad. Truth does not always make you feel good, but people are choosing because they don't understand that fact that truth doesn't always make you feel good.

People are choosing to go to churches that just make them feel good and entertain them. We have no shortage of entertainment in our society today. If you want to be entertained, turn on a football game.

Okay, that's not always true. Some football games are just terrible to watch. If you want to be entertained, there is no shortage of things to entertain you. The church should not be for entertainment. That's not why we're here.

We're here to worship. We're here to help each other. We're here to be edified. And we're here to be convicted. We're here to learn the truths of God's word. The problem is people are not.

So people are not going to church. People are not going to the right churches. And people are not studying their Bibles for themselves. We are called to study and meditate upon God's word for ourselves individually.

[ 20 : 29 ] There was a study that Baylor did in 2010. Works out well since the whole first false rapture thing I read was from 2011. Professing Christians who answered a poll said, do you read the Bible several times a week, weekly, about weekly, at least once a month, or rarely or never?

Those are their choices. Several times a week, 34%. One-third of the people surveyed professing Christians, mind you. Now, that doesn't mean that they were actually Christians.

It's just people who said they were Christians. But people who said they were Christians, 34%, only 34% read their Bible several times a week. Only 10% read their Bible weekly.

That's W-E-E-K-L-Y, not E-A. 10% read their Bible weekly. 11% read their Bible about weekly.

You know, I'm picking it up once a week, once every couple weeks. 11% read their Bible at least once a month. This is not corporate worship.

[ 21 : 40 ] This is not reading the Bible during Sunday school. This is their own personal time. 11% of people who professed to be Christians took the survey, read their Bible at least once a month.

This is the one that, rarely or never, 34%. Get that.

People who professed to be Christians, who said they loved the Lord Jesus Christ, who have God's Word. Because we're in America here, we have this Word readily available.

I mean, last I knew, you could walk into Dollar Tree and buy it for a buck. I mean, it may be a buck fifty now, because Dollar Tree just is false advertising anymore. But we can get our hands on the Bible easily, readily, no worries.

And yet, of professing Christians in this survey in 2010, one-third never picked up their Bible. Maybe they took it to church with them, maybe they didn't, because if they're going to a church for entertainment, why bring the Bible?

[ 22 : 42 ] I've been in one of those churches, if you brought your Bible, you couldn't read it anyway, because they keep the lights turned off where you're sitting. Drives me crazy. So anyways, we've got a very large portion of the professing Christian world that are ignorant.

They're tossed about by every wave of doctrine. They're here, they're there, they're following this, because it said this was going to happen on X.

On Twitter. It sounds so much easier to say Twitter. I don't know why X just doesn't... Anyway, it doesn't matter. I heard about it on social media, so it must be happening. What? That is a wonderful place to base your doctrine upon.

Facebook doctrine. This is great. No, no, no, no, no. Our doctrine must be based upon the Word of God, and if we're going to base our doctrine on the Word of God, if we're going to live our lives according to the doctrine of God's Word, we have to know God's Word.

Now, mind you, again, you're never going to know God's Word completely. I've been saved 36 years. I read my Bible through more than once each year. I study.

[ 23 : 57 ] I read other books. I teach. I preach. If you don't study, you can't teach. It's just what it is. You don't just get up and make these things up and start blowing and blustering. At least you're not supposed to.

That's a whole other lesson. No rabbit trails. No rabbit trails. The thing of it is, the preacher shouldn't be the only one studying. Preacher shouldn't be the only one meditating.

Preacher shouldn't be the only one reading. We have to know the Word of God. We're never going to know it completely. That's where I was going. I was trying to remember how I got to where I was. We're never going to know it completely because it is God's Word.

If it was written by a man, I would have the possibility with enough study of understanding everything that was written. You pick out any textbook that you want to.

I don't care if it's college level, graduate level. You pick up any textbook that you want to. And you hand it to somebody who's willing to take the time to think and to study. To read, think, and study. And there is the possibility that that person eventually will understand everything in that textbook because it was written by a human being.

[ 25 : 03 ] And what any human being writes, any other given human being with enough time, trouble, and effort can understand what the first human being wrote. This is not written by a human being.

This was written by the Holy Spirit of God delivered through human beings. Which means no matter how much we study it, no matter how much we read it, no matter how much we prayerfully meditate upon it, we will always be learning.

And quite frankly, that excites the living out of me. I love the fact that there is always more to learn about God. I've heard people say, I can hardly wait to get to heaven where I understand everything.

I am sorry to disappoint you. That's not going to happen. If you understand everything, there is a fancy word for that. That means, it's called omniscience. You know everything, you understand everything, you are omniscient.

Guess what? There's only one being who is omniscient. And that is God himself. Which means, when you get up to heaven, you're not going to understand everything.

[ 26 : 05 ] It also means that throughout all of eternity, we're going to be learning. Now, I know some of you, that depresses. Me, it excites. I love learning more about God.

I love learning more about God's word. I love finding something in the scriptures I hadn't seen before. And I anticipate and look forward to spending the entirety of eternity digging deeper in God's word and having he himself, perhaps, teach me from his word.

Having the apostle Paul maybe get up to teach a class. Now, wouldn't that be great? No more of this chubby, bald guy up here. Get the apostle Paul up and have him teach it.

Now, he may be a chubby, bald guy too. I don't know. But he's not going to be this chubby, bald guy. Get the apostle Paul get up there and say, this is how the Holy Spirit moved in my heart to write this.

And this is what he showed me. And did you ever think about this? No, I hadn't thought about that. That excites me. And think of it as, you don't have to wait to heaven. You've got the Holy Spirit dwelling inside you right now to show you things from the word.

[ 27 : 12 ] But only if you read it. And prayerfully meditate upon it. And study it. So we've got a whole great big group of professing Christianity who is willfully ignorant.

They're not going to church. They're not going to churches that teach them proper doctrine. And they are not studying the Bibles for themselves. And so what happens? They get sucked into all these crazy fads.

They get sucked. You ever wonder why so many people who started out in a Baptist church end up in a cult? And it happens. Why so many people who started out in a fundamental Baptist church end up in some crazy charismatic thing?

It happens. Why is that? Because they didn't take responsibility themselves for learning the right doctrines. They did not get in there.

They are destroyed, as Hosea wrote, destroyed for a lack of knowledge. So real quick, before we close the lesson, three things about the lack of knowledge.

[ 28 : 15 ] Lack of knowledge, number one, destroys believers. Lack of knowledge destroys believers. 2 Thessalonians 2, verse number one says, Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

He's writing to the Thessalonians to reinforce the doctrine of the day of Christ because they had received letters that had troubled them. They were not firm in their knowledge, and they weren't firm in their belief.

And so he was writing to confirm and to strengthen them in that belief. 2 Thessalonians 2, verse number 15 says, Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.

He is not talking about vain traditions as received but from our fathers, which is mentioned elsewhere. The traditions he's talking about are biblical traditions, understanding the scriptures and living by what the scriptures say.

The problem is people don't do that. They don't have the knowledge of the scriptures and the knowledge of doctrine that they should have. And because of that, they are drawn away.



[ 29 : 36 ] They are drawn away into cults. They are drawn away into different isms of Christianity, false doctrines of Christianity.

They are drawn away into the world. They turn their backs on religion. They turn their backs on Christianity. And they go off into the world. Are they saved or not? They profess to be. It's not my place to judge that.

Quite frankly, standing before you, the only two people who know whether I'm saved or not are myself and the Lord. Because you can get up and you can teach without being saved.

It happens. So let's not be too quick to judge just because somebody got drawn off into the world or they got drawn off into some craziness. Let's not be too quick to judge that they are or are not saved.

They may not be. That would be an easy explanation for why they were drawn away. But they also may be, but they were ignorant. They were not grounded in their faith. They were torn away by waves of doctrine, pulling them this way, pulling them that way, moving them away from the safe harbor of God's word.

[ 30 : 41 ] A lack of knowledge destroys believers. You can imagine these folks who were posting on X and other places, whether you're talking about 2011 or last week, these professing Christians who were falling for this and were posting things, you can imagine they feel pretty foolish right now.

There are a lot of people going back and deleting posts. Sorry, the internet is forever. Which again, if you're on social media, be very careful what you post because even if you delete it, it's not gone.

Remember that before you lose your temper and write something you shouldn't write. Take two breaths, write it, delete it. Wait two days. And if it still seems like a good idea, pray about it and then don't do it anyway.

Be firm. I'm not gonna get, again, no rabbit trail, no rabbit trail, no rabbit trail. But you can imagine the people who fell for this and posted things and were weeping with their families and gathering together.

Maybe some, and I've heard of this, that people fall for this sort of scam and they actually give away their goods, give away their money. I'm not gonna need this anymore because on Thursday, Jesus is coming back and it won't do me any good to have my 401k, so here you have it.

[ 31 : 57 ] And you can imagine right now, they're feeling pretty foolish. Can't believe I fell for that. I can't believe, you know what?

The whole thing must not be true. Christianity is false. I can't, I feel foolish. That means that none of it's right. These people are all deluded.

They're still following this. Not me. I've been awakened. I woke up now. And I'm not gonna fall for this anymore. I'm not gonna look foolish. I'm not gonna be torn away by this stuff.

So I'm gonna, y'all are just naive. Not me anymore. See, it destroyed their faith. And there are people that that happens to. Because, not because God let them down, but because in their ignorance, they believed something that was not doctrinally true and because they put their entirety of their faith in a non-doctrinal belief, a false doctrine, when it was exposed as false, they were destroyed.

Lack of knowledge destroys believer. Not only that though, but it dismays unbelievers. A lack of knowledge on our part dismays unbelievers.

[ 33 : 13 ] The Lord Jesus Christ said in Matthew chapter five, starting at verse number 14, ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. In other words, our testimony and the way we behave is supposed to be a witness and a testimony to people around us, not to make us look good.

The point is not that I am to have people look at me and say, he's a great guy. He has wonderful character. He has a sterling reputation. That's not the point.

The point of our conversation is to point people to God. To glorify, that they'd look at us and say, you know, that Christianity must have something to it. If he's behaving this way and he's doing these sort of things and he's showing God's love this way, you know what?

There must be something to that. Maybe I should look into it myself. Maybe I should listen to what he says. Maybe I should go to church with him. Maybe I should read that tract that he gave me. It's not about us.

[ 34 : 20 ] It's about him. But the trouble is, when we fall for something like this, we invite people to mock us. The world out there is looking. The world paints with a broad brush.

The world will look at every professing Christian, and again, that's a very large term in and of itself, but they will paint with a broad brush saying that, oh, look, these people that believe that this rapture was coming and it hasn't come, it's like that post I read a moment ago that ended with ha, ha.

They start turning. They start mocking. Instead of being the right testimony and the right witness, we live our lives, we put everything on a false doctrine, that doctrine is proved false in front of the world, and we open up God for mocking.

Instead of glorifying God with our lives, we are opening up God to be mocked because of our lack of understanding, because of our lack of knowledge, because we could not be bothered to search it out.

We could not be bothered to compare Scripture to Scripture. We could not be bothered to go to somebody more biblically knowledgeable than ourselves, to go to the pastor, for instance, or to one of the deacons, or to a Sunday school teacher, or to somebody who's been down the road farther than we have, though those, as I get older, those are harder to find.

[ 35 : 49 ] But we could not be bothered to go to people that have a greater biblical knowledge than ourselves and say, listen, I read this, I heard this, somebody told me this, I was thinking about this, what do you think?

And let them teach us. Did you know that teaching does not have to be in a group situation like this? You can go to the pastor and ask him questions yourself.

I know, right there, right? You can go to a deacon and you can ask him questions yourself. Sunday school teachers, hey, you got a minute?

You can have one-on-one conversations, it's okay. Invite me out for a coffee and I'll spend all the time you want with you, especially if it's good coffee. It doesn't have to be good coffee as long as it's coffee, but if it's good coffee, especially.

But it's because of our unwillingness to be taught, our unwillingness to invest time and effort into learning, we open up God for mockery.

[ 36 : 51 ] And we do it publicly, for instance, on social media. And then the people that we should be witnessing to no longer listen to us because they believe us to be fools.

Rightfully or wrongfully, we have made a fool of ourselves, we have opened God to mockery, and we have lost our ability to witness to the people that we should be telling about God because we've opened him up for mockery.

So number one, lack of knowledge destroys believers. Number two, a lack of knowledge dismays unbelievers. And number three, a lack of knowledge delights our adversary. Never lose sight of the fact that the Christian life is a continual spiritual battle.

We are not called to just cruise. We have enemies. The world is our enemy. Our flesh is our enemy. And there is an actual, real, spiritual being called Satan who is our adversary. And he delights in us making God look bad. He delights in us losing our ability to witness or to testify.

[ 38 : 03 ] He delights in believers in their ignorance, believing something false and then falling by the wayside or being driven into a cult or whatever.

He delights in this. In 2 Samuel, we have the story of David and Bathsheba. How that David committed adultery with Bathsheba, murdered her husband to cover it up.

God sent a prophet named Nathan to David. And Nathan, in one of the more famous rebukes in the Bible, told David a story about a man who had great flocks and his neighbor who only had one little lamb.

And when someone came to visit the man who had the great flocks, hundreds and hundreds of sheep, he didn't kill one of his own sheep to provide for his visitor. He stole the sheep from the man who only had that one.

David was enraged. Promised great punishment to the man who had done such a thing. And Nathan, Nathan didn't cower, didn't back down.

[ 39 : 12 ] Nathan looked straight at David and said, Thou art the man. Now, to David's credit, he repented of his sin and got right with God. But even when we repent of our sin and get right with God, there are consequences to our actions.

So Nathan looked at David and part of what he said to him was, in 2 Samuel 12, verse 14, How be it? Because by this deed, thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

Say, what's that mean? That means that when we have a lack of knowledge and we bring shame unto God, it causes those who blaspheme the Lord, it gives great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

The world out there, the people who don't believe in God and think Christianity is just nothing and foolishness, they see stuff like we've been talking about, the fake rapture, and they laugh.

They point, they blaspheme against God. See, I told you, your sky father wasn't anybody real. Told ya. Not only does it give the world occasion to blaspheme, it gives the enemy, Satan himself, a chance to blaspheme, working through and around us, just making, setting ourselves up for mockery, but more than setting ourselves up for mockery and blasphemy, it sets God up for mockery and blasphemy.

[ 40 : 36 ] Titus chapter 2, verse number 1, and we're done. Verse numbers 1 through 8. Bible says, But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine, that the age of men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith.

Notice the emphasis here. Sound doctrine, sound in faith, in charity, and patience. The aged women, likewise. This is not something we're just preaching to the guys. We're all supposed to be sound in faith, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands.

Why? That the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded, in all things, showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Notice that last phrase, he that is of the contrary part, that be the enemies of God, that Nathan told David he had given them occasion to blaspheme, by living sound doctrine, by being sound in faith, he that is of the contrary part, the enemies of the Lord, may be ashamed.

So the question becomes to us, by the way which we live in this doctrine that we hold, are we giving the enemy occasion to blaspheme God, or are we giving them occasion to be ashamed themselves?

[ 42 : 26 ] It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to be sound in doctrine, to be faithful in church, to listen, to pay attention, to learn, to read and study individually, ourselves.

Yes, the pastor should study. Yes, the Sunday school teacher should study. But can I tell you that each and every single one of us here this morning should study, should read, should study, should understand, should ask questions.

It's okay to ask a question. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Let's strive that we're not one of those people about whom that can be said.

Let's pray together this morning. Amen.