

THE SOUTHWESTERNER



Home of the Southwest School of Bible Studies

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THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

CODY WESTBROOK

Courage without direction will become cruel, vociferous, reckless, and finally, destructive. This is why the apostle Peter lists “knowledge” as the second of the seven Christian Graces. Zeal without knowledge is useless. It must have guidance and direction. It needs a compass to direct it in the way that it should go. This was one of the primary problems with the Jews in Paul’s time. Remember what he wrote in Romans 10:2-3?

For I bear them witness that they 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.

Because they rejected knowledge (Hos. 4:6) they had no idea how to properly channel their energies in service to God. Paul, of course, could give expert testimony to this because his unguided zeal caused him to make havoc of the church before his conversion (1 Tim. 1:13). However, knowledge redirected his zeal, and he became ready to die for the Lord Jesus (Acts 21:13).

The knowledge that Peter mentions is not the initial knowledge that produces faith and brings one to Christ. Rather, it is the continued spiritual education that produces perfection and maturity in the child of God. Peter referenced it previously in 1 Peter 2:2 when he said, “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby.” The Hebrews writer scolded Christians because they were not in pursuit of this knowledge. They ought to have been able to handle the “meatier” items of God’s word but they had not grown to the point that enabled them to digest it.

But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:12-14).

The continual acquisition of knowledge is vital to our spiritual well-being. It satisfies our spiritual appetites, and makes us fruitful in the service of the King (1 Tim. 4:6; Col. 1:9-11; 2 Pet. 1:8).

In a world of skepticism and doubt, it is important to note that the pursuit of knowledge is not only necessary, it is possible. God created the mind of man with the ability to know reality. Jesus plainly said, “... If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32). Paul admonished, “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). The idea that we cannot know the truth is destructive and false. In fact, it is the absence of knowledge that destroys God’s people (c.f. Hos. 4:6). No one can live a faithful Christian life without knowing God, and His will. Such knowledge will enable us to escape the pollutions of this world, and to enjoy the abundant life (2 Pet. 2:20; John 17:3; 10:10).

The more we know about God and His expectations for our life, the more we understand and are able to make application. As virtue grows out of faith we gain this knowledge or insight. As Paul said in Ephesians 1:18,

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

Further knowledge causes us to

abound....in all judgment, they you may approve the things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ... (Phil. 1:9-11).

Through knowledge we are we become the people that God wants us to be!

SW



SWSBS Monday
Evening Bible Class
Aug. 19-Oct. 14, 7:00 pm
(ALL ARE WELCOME)



THE TEARS OF JESUS

John Haffner '10

According to prophecy, our Lord was to be a man of sorrows (Isaiah 53:3). The Bible records many intensely sad and trying moments Jesus faced. If we were in His position, we would no doubt find many occasions to cry over our difficult circumstances. However, it is interesting to note that when the Bible describes Him weeping, Jesus sheds tears for others. There are three such recorded instances in the New Testament. Our Lord wept at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), He wept upon seeing and considering the state of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), and He wept when He prayed (Hebrews 5:7).

After the death of Lazarus, we find one of the most beautiful windows into the caring nature of the Lord Christ. We read not only of His tears, but of the reaction of the Jews, "See how He loved him!" (John 11:35-36). Yes, He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality (1 Timothy 6:15-16), but He is also a man who has lost a friend. Of course, the power of His divinity is on display when the Lord raises up Lazarus, calling him from the tomb (John 11:43-44). We shouldn't overlook the power of His humanity on display as well. The Messiah lived as a servant. He humbled Himself, coming in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:5-8). This is the promise of "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)

and "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). Jesus wept over losing a friend, even knowing He would raise him.

Immediately following the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we see a change come over Jesus. As He approaches the city, He weeps over their spiritual state and approaching destruction (Luke 19:41-44). Jesus weeps over their false belief. Although they welcome Him, the people will later reject their Messiah and cry out for His death (Luke 23:23). They are like sheep not having a proper shepherd (Mark 6:34). They reject the one who is the good shepherd (John 10:14-15) and the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). So often we create our own bad circumstances through poor decision making. This is especially bad when we have fallen in the same trap before; we should have learned something from the experience. The Bible explains how the people had Moses and the prophets to teach them, and yet they still failed to comprehend the promise of the Messiah (Luke 16:29; John 5:45-47).

The writer of the book of Hebrews describes Jesus as praying with "vehement cries and tears" (Hebrews 5:5-9). Many Bible commentators consider this a reference to what must have occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane. Although the Gospel accounts do not specifically mention tears at this scene, they do describe Jesus as "being in agony" as well as "sorrowful and deeply distressed" (Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46). This most intense moment for our Lord shows His great devotion, to God and to man. Sorrowful for the wickedness and separation of transgression, yet committed to the cause, Jesus says, "not My will, but Yours, be done (Luke 22:42). The Lord's obedience is consistently on display for our edification. Doing the will of the Father was His business and His food (Luke 2:49; John 4:34). The Hebrews writer would also announce Jesus as the creator of the faith "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (Hebrews 12:2).

Tracing the tears of Jesus through the Bible we learn of God's amazing care. Most powerfully, the Lord cried out to the Father in the garden concerning the sins of all mankind. Jesus' loving kindness is also evident in lamenting a single city, Jerusalem so far from what they could have been. His Divine concern is also seen in weeping for one man, a close friend like Lazarus. What awesome compassion is seen in the tears of our selfless redeemer!

From Faith to Faith, Granbury Street Church of Christ Weekly Bulletin, July 7, 2019.

SW

What rational person is arrogant enough to boast, “I know everything there is to know”?

ATHEISM BELIEVES THAT EVERYTHING CAME FROM NOTHING

Atheism believes that ultimately something accidentally originated from nothing. But this is a logical impossibility. If something came from nothing, then nothing is more powerful than something. Let atheists explain how this is possible.

ATHEISM BELIEVES NON-LIFE GAVE BIRTH TO THE LIVING

We know from observation and common sense that a living entity can become nonliving. Such happens constantly in the biological world and ultimately will be the experience of mankind generally (as long as things continue as they are). But where is the evidence that a non-living object can, by its own power, become a life-sustained thing? The atheist cannot even begin to explain this phenomenon.

ATHEISM BELIEVES THE UNIVERSE CREATED AND ORGANIZED ITSELF

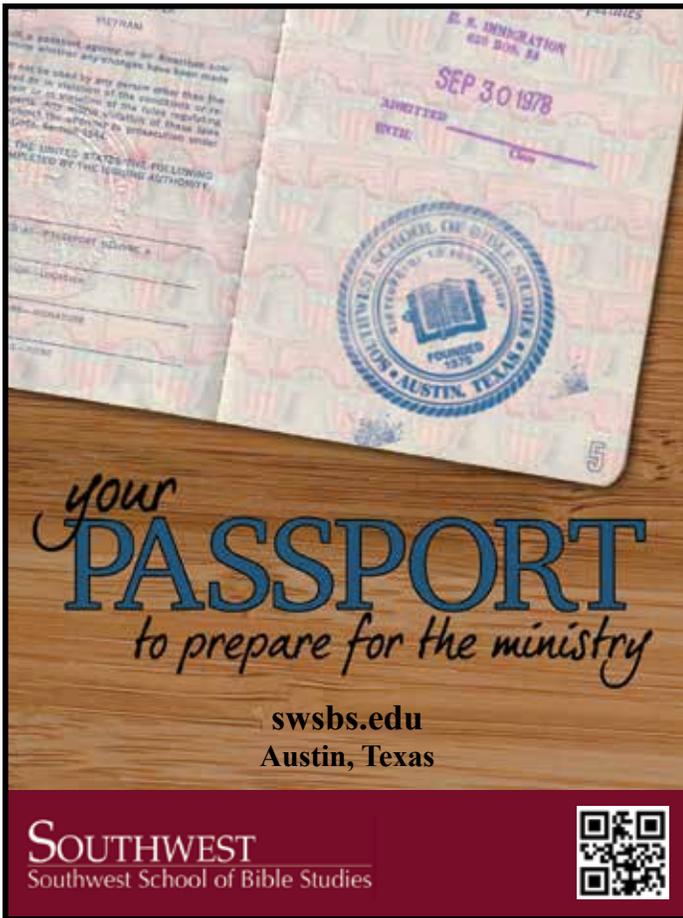
The atheist cannot explain, in any rational way, how our well-ordered universe came into being or how it operates as it does.

First, inanimate matter does not have the innate power to create itself. But inanimate matter exists. Thus, some extraneous, non-material force must have created the universe and its inhabitants. Second, a stationary object will remain stationary unless force is applied to it from another source. Clearly then, some non-stationary force must have been responsible for the movements now common within the universe. There is no natural explanation for that power.

The precise order within our universe — e.g., the constant, predictable movement of the earth around the sun and the moon’s clock-like circulation around our planet — cannot be explained in any self-generated fashion. Some intelligent force, namely God, is the orchestrating source behind the intricacies of our wonderful universe.

Christian Courier, September, 2018

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ATHEISM: AN ABSURD SYSTEM OF FAITH

Wayne Jackson

Atheism prides itself on being intellectual. At the same time, the skeptic fires illogical missiles at those who believe in God. Its bankrupt illogical faith peddles fairytales as “scientific” and “rational” explanations of the origins of the universe and the phenomenon of life. But atheism’s faith hasn’t a shred of credible evidence. They are believers in the unbelievable! Consider some of the twisted thoughts of this societal cult.

ATHEISM BELIEVES IT HAS ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE

The atheist contends that the intelligent mind must believe that God does not exist. However, he cannot logically argue “I know there is no God” because he would have to claim that he knows everything there is to know. Otherwise, the one thing he does not know might be the fact that God does exist.

Record for the Week of August 25, 2019

Bible Class	156
Morning Assembly.....	215
Evening Assembly	162
Iglesia de Cristo	
Morning Assembly.....	N/A
Contribution	\$N/A

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PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

Everett Clare, father of **Elaine Hopkins** is now in West Oaks Rehab recovering from his recent hospitalization.

Augie Godfrey, 2 year old nephew of **Clay & Carlie Bond** is on life support in a San Antonio Hospital after a near drowning.

Health Concerns: Tom Genduso, Charles Houston, Caroline Little Pat Lyckman, Clarence Whetstone, Angela Young.

Shut-ins: Jeannette Hansen, Rosemary Garrett, Jon Little, Bobby Johnson, Elvira Martinez, Ginny Oswald, Jan Smith, Bonnie Thetford.

Others: Sonny & Lee Barr, Bill Ellison, Bonnie Gomer, CK Holt, Deborah Hoover, Nell McCown, Bill & Nancy Ponds, Kay Westbrook, Gib Young.

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WORSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES: Sunday, Bible Classes 9:30 am, Worship 10:30 am and 6:00 pm

Tuesday, 10:00 am (September-May), Men's and Ladies' Bible Classes | Wednesday, Bible Classes, 7:00 pm

RADIO PROGRAM – *The Word of Life* | Sunday, 7:30 am | KLBK, 590-AM and 99.7 FM | online at swcofc.org/word-of-life