

Ignorance

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Introduction

Scripture places a premium on knowledge (John 8:31-32; 2 Tim. 2:15-17). Ignorance is a distinct spiritual danger (Hos. 4:6; Rom. 1:18-23, 28).

John 8:31-32 (NASB95) — 31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

2 Timothy 2:15-17 (NASB95) — 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. 16 But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, 17 and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

Hosea 4:6 (NASB95) — 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Romans 1:18-23 (NASB95) — 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Romans 1:28 (NASB95) — 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

Ignorance Defined

The Greek word for knowledge, *gnōsis*, comes from the root *gnō*. This root is embedded in the Greek words for ignorance, *agnoeō*, *agnoēma* and *agnoia* though in the negative form. If Gnosticism represents a prideful overemphasis on knowledge, ignorance signifies an equally erroneous under emphasis on understanding.

Biblically speaking, an ignorant person is uninformed. Lack of knowledge may be the result of inattention. Sin is often rooted in moral blindness. Lacking spiritual discernment, individuals engage in reprehensible behavior, transgressing the will of God, yet unaware of their offense.

In this lesson, we shall consider Scriptures that discuss the problem of ignorance, in which the aforementioned Greek words may be found. Ignorance is not bliss. Rather, it is characteristic of sinful humanity, bringing mankind under divine judgment. Let us, therefore, strive for a proper understanding of God's Word, acknowledging the authority of the apostolic office. Moreover, let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices, but recognize the cunning craftiness of our adversary.

Verb Agnoeō

Thomas defines the verb ἀγνοέω [agnoeō], a compound of the negative prefix and the same as *ginōskō* [from a primitive root *gnō-*; to come to know, recognize, perceive], as “to be ignorant, not to know” [50]. BDAG say it means “(1) to be uninformed about, not to know, be ignorant (of); (2) to pay little or no attention to, not to recognize, disregard, ignore; (3) to fail to understand, with implication of lack of capacity or ability, not to understand; (4) to be unaware about one's wrongdoing, lapse/do wrong/sin unintentionally.” This word occurs 22x in the NT (Mark 9:32; Luke 9:45; Acts 13:27; 17:23; Rom. 1:13; 2:4; 6:3; 7:1; 10:3; 11:25; 1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; 14:38 [2x]; 2 Cor. 1:8; 2:11; 6:9; Gal. 1:22; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 5:2; 2 Pet. 2:12).

*Mark 9:32 (NASB95) — 32 But they did ***not *understand** this statement, and they were afraid to ask Him.*

*Luke 9:45 (NASB95) — 45 But they did ***not *understand** this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this statement.*

*Acts 13:27 (NASB95) — 27 “For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, ***recognizing *neither** Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him.*

*Acts 17:23 (NASB95) — 23 “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ***ignorance**, this I proclaim to you.*

*Romans 1:13 (NASB95) — 13 I do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.*

*Romans 2:4 (NASB95) — 4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, ***not *knowing** that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*

*Romans 6:3 (NASB95) — 3 Or do you ***not *know** that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?*

*Romans 7:1 (NASB95) — 1 Or do you ***not *know**, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?*

*Romans 10:3 (NASB95) — 3 For ***not *knowing** about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.*

*Romans 11:25 (NASB95) — 25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be ***uninformed** of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;*

*1 Corinthians 10:1 (NASB95) — 1 For I do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;*

*1 Corinthians 12:1 (NASB95) — 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ***unaware**.*

*1 Corinthians 14:38 (NASB95) — 38 But if anyone does ***not *recognize** this, he is ***not *recognized**.*

*2 Corinthians 1:8 (NASB95) — 8 For we do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;*

*2 Corinthians 2:11 (NASB95) — 11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are ***not *ignorant** of his schemes.*

*2 Corinthians 6:9 (NASB95) — 9 as ***unknown** yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death,*

*Galatians 1:22 (NASB95) — 22 I was still ***unknown** by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ;*

*1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NASB95) — 13 But we do not want you to be ***uninformed**, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.*

*1 Timothy 1:13 (NASB95) — 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ***ignorantly** in unbelief;*

*Hebrews 5:2 (NASB95) — 2 he can deal gently with the ***ignorant** and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness;*

*2 Peter 2:12 (NASB95) — 12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have ***no *knowledge**, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed,*

Noun Agnoēma

Thomas defines ἀγνόημα [agnoēma], derived from agnoeō [to be ignorant, not to know], as “a sin of ignorance” [51]. BDAG say it refers to “sin committed in ignorance/unintentionally.” This word occurs once in the NT (Heb. 9:7).

*Hebrews 9:7 (NASB95) — 7 but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the *sins of the people committed in *ignorance.*

Noun Agnoia

Thomas defines the noun ἄγνοια [agnoia], derived from agnoeō [to be ignorant, not to know], as “ignorance” [52]. BDAG say it refers to “(1) in a general sense lack of information about something, ignorance; (2) specifically, lack of information that may result in reprehensible conduct, ignorance, unawareness, lack of discernment. In our literature, of unawareness in relation to deity or of unintentional or involuntary (as opposed to deliberate) moral lapses; (a) of those who condemned Jesus acted in ignorance = you were unaware of what you were doing; (b) almost = sin.” This word occurs 4x in the NT (Acts 3:17; 17:30; Eph. 4:18; 1 Pet. 1:14).

*Acts 3:17 (NASB95) — 17 “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in *ignorance, just as your rulers did also.*

*Acts 17:30 (NASB95) — 30 “Therefore having overlooked the times of *ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,*

*Ephesians 4:18 (NASB95) — 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the *ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;*

*1 Peter 1:14 (NASB95) — 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your *ignorance,*

Ignorance Discussed

Regarding God’s Creatures

The Example of Sinful Humanity (1 Pet. 1:14-16; cf. also 2:1-3).

*1 Peter 1:14-16 ... 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your *ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (NASB95)*

1 Peter 2:1-3 ... 1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by

it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. (NASB95)

The Example of the Gentiles (Acts 17:22-23, 30-31; Eph. 4:17-19).

*Acts 17:22-23 ... 22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. 23 “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ***ignorance**, this I proclaim to you. (NASB95)*

*Acts 17:30-31 ... 30 “Therefore having overlooked the times of ***ignorance**, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (NASB95)*

*Ephesians 4:17-19 ... 17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ***ignorance** that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. (NASB95)*

The Example of the Jews (Acts 3:17; cf. also Luke 23:34; Acts 13:27).

*Acts 3:17-19 ... 17 “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ***ignorance**, just as your rulers did also. 18 “But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; (NASB95)*

Luke 23:34 ... 34 But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves. (NASB95)

*Acts 13:27 ... 27 “For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, ***recognizing** neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him. (NASB95)*

Regarding God’s Truth

The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus (Mark 9:32; Luke 9:45).

Mark 9:30-32 ... 30 From there they went out and began to go through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know about it. 31 For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him;

*and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.” 32 But they did not ***understand** this statement, and they were afraid to ask Him. (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:43-45 ... 43 And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples, 44 “Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.” 45 But they did not ***understand** this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this statement. (NASB95)*

The Kindness and Righteousness of God (Rom. 2:4-11; 10:1-3).

*Romans 2:4-11 ... 4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, ***not *knowing** that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who will render to each person according to his deeds: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God. (NASB95)*

*Romans 10:1-3 ... 1 Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. 2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For ***not *knowing** about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. (NASB95)*

The Nature of Conversion (Rom. 6:1-4).

*Romans 6:1-4 ... 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you ***not *know** that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (NASB95)*

The Jurisdiction of Law (Rom. 7:1-4).

*Romans 7:1-4 ... 1 Or do you ***not *know**, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? 2 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. 3 So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man. 4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law*

through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. (NASB95)

The Hardening of Israel (Rom. 11:25-32).

*Romans 11:25-32 ... 25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be ***uninformed** of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.” 27 “This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.” 28 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; 29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. 32 For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all. (NASB95)*

The Nature of Biblical Symbolism (1 Cor. 10:1-12).

*1 Corinthians 10:1-12 ... 1 For I do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.” 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. (NASB95)*

The Nature of Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-7).

*1 Corinthians 12:1-7 ... 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ***unaware**. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (NASB95)*

The Nature of Christian Hope (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ... 13 But we do not want you to be ***uninformed**, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. (NASB95)*

The Nature of Priestly Service (Heb. 5:1-6; 9:6-14).

*Hebrews 5:1-6 ... 1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; 2 he can deal gently with the ***ignorant** and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; 3 and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. 4 And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. 5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”; 6 just as He says also in another passage, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” (NASB95)*

*Hebrews 9:6-14 ... 6 Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, 7 but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the ***sins** of the people committed in ***ignorance**. 8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, 9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, 10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. 11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (NASB95)*

Regarding God's Apostles

Apostolic Ministry (Rom. 1:13-15; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 6:4-10; Gal. 1:21-24).

*Romans 1:13-15 ... 13 I do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit*

among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. (NASB95)

*2 Corinthians 1:8-9 ... 8 For we do not want you to be ***unaware**, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; (NASB95)*

*2 Corinthians 6:4-10 ... 4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, 5 in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger, 6 in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, 7 in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, 8 by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; regarded as deceivers and yet true; 9 as ***unknown** yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, 10 as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things. (NASB95)*

*Galatians 1:21-24 ... 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 I was still ***unknown** by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; 23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." 24 And they were glorifying God because of me. (NASB95)*

Apostolic Authority (1 Cor. 14:37-38; cf. also 2:12-13; 2 Pet. 3:1-2; 1 John 4:6).

*1 Corinthians 14:37-38 ... 37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. 38 But if anyone does ***not *recognize** this, he is ***not *recognized**. (NASB95)*

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 ... 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. (NASB95)

2 Peter 3:1-2 ... 1 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles. (NASB95)

1 John 4:6 ... 6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. (NASB95)

Regarding God's Opponent

Satan's Devices (2 Cor. 2:5-11; cf. also 4:3-4; 11:2-3, 13-15; Eph. 4:26-27; 1 Pet. 5:8).

*2 Corinthians 2:5-11 ... 5 But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree—in order not to say too much—to all of you. 6 Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, 7 so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. 9 For to this end also I wrote, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. 10 But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ***ignorant** of his schemes. (NASB95)*

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 ... 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 11:2-3 ... 2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 ... 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. (NASB95)

Ephesians 4:26-27 ... 26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. (NASB95)

1 Peter 5:8 ... 8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (NASB95)

Conclusion

Before learning the truth, a person may be ignorant and honest, sincere but mistaken. After hearing the gospel, ignorance is removed and honesty is tested. When confronted with the truth, Saul of Tarsus believed and obeyed (1 Tim. 1:12-16; Acts 23:1; 26:9-20). Like false teachers of old, one may reject the truth, persisting in ignorance and dishonesty (2 Pet. 2:9-16; Jude 10-11). Will we accept the truth, and thus remain honest? Will we reject the truth, and thus forfeit our integrity?

*1 Timothy 1:12-16 ... 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ***ignorantly** in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. 16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. (NASB95)*

Acts 23:1 ... 1 Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, "Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day." (NASB95)

Acts 26:9-20 ... 9 "So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. 11 "And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities. 12 "While so engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. 14 "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; 17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' 19 "So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. (NASB95)

*2 Peter 2:9-16 ... 9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, 11 whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. 12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they ***have *no *knowledge**, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, 13 suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their*

deceptions, as they carouse with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; 15 forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16 but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet. (NASB95)

Jude 10-11 ... 10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. (NASB95)