

YOU ARE IN ERROR BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE SCRIPTURES OR THE POWER OF GOD

Lack of understanding in Scripture and God's power breeds error – Dr Avitus Leonard

Abstract:

This paper investigates the core reasons of the errors prevalent in contemporary Christian groups, blaming them mostly on a lack of thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and an inadequate awareness of God's power. Because of these shortcomings, there is a concerning dependence on popular opinion rather than biblical truth, widespread confusion, and spiritual immaturity. These failings have the effect of weakening the church's witness and diminishing its ability to influence society for the better. The article makes the case for a renewed dedication to studying God's Word, a closer relationship with His might, and a deliberate effort toward spiritual development and maturity within the church in order to overcome these problems. The church may reorient itself, fortify the body of Christ, and restore its position as a lighthouse of truth and clarity in a world spoiled by confusion and darkness by adhering to these core values. This transformation is necessary not just for the church's health, but also for its ability to carry out its purpose of becoming the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Keywords: *Understanding, Scripture, God's Power, Error, Enlightenment, Faith, Empowerment*

Introduction:

"You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God." This profound statement, taken from Matthew 22:29, encapsulates a significant issue facing many believers today. In this passage, Jesus rebukes the Sadducees for their misunderstanding of the resurrection, but His words resonate beyond that specific context. They point to a broader problem within the body of Christ: many believers speak of God, yet they do not truly know Him, nor do they understand His power. This lack of knowledge has led to widespread error, not only in personal faith but also in the collective life of the church. One of the most significant challenges facing believers today is a misunderstanding of the concept of love. The Bible clearly states, ***"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love"*** (1 John 4:8). Yet, despite this clear teaching, love remains a contentious issue among many Christians. This

disconnects stems from a failure to grasp the full depth of God's love as revealed in Scripture. When believers do not understand God's love, their relationships, both within and outside the church, suffer. Love becomes conditional, transactional, or entirely absent, leading to division, judgment, and conflict within the body of Christ.

This issue of ignorance is not new. Jerome, an early Church Father, famously said, **"Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."** His words echo the sentiment of Jesus' rebuke in Matthew 22:29. To know Christ, one must know the Scriptures, for they testify about Him (John 5:39). Without a deep understanding of the Bible, believers are left vulnerable to error, easily swayed by false teachings, and unable to discern truth from falsehood. Plato, the ancient philosopher, also recognized the danger of ignorance, stating, **"Ignorance is the beginning of evils."** In the context of the church, this ignorance leads to spiritual decay, where believers are unable to live out their faith authentically or effectively. Many Christian communities today find themselves in significant error because they neither know the Scriptures nor understand the power of God. This lack of knowledge is not a minor issue; it is a profound and pervasive problem that has allowed ignorance to take root and grow within the body of Christ. We are witnessing a time when fraudulent practices and misguided teachings go undetected because many people within the church are living in denial or are desperately clinging to practices, they mistakenly equate with true spirituality.

This crisis is not just about the actions of a few individuals but reflects a broader spiritual and existential dilemma that many people face today. These dilemmas raise deep questions about faith, meaning, and the nature of God, and yet, instead of drawing closer to the truth, many find themselves further away, ensnared in confusion and error. The errors that pervade our society are not isolated; they affect everyone, from the highest echelons of society down to the average person. It's a mistake to think that such errors are someone else's problem. The attitude of **"minding my own business"** has fostered a generation of Christians who are irresponsible and disengaged from the issues affecting the body of Christ. When the Apostle Paul instructed believers to **"mind your own business"** (1 Thessalonians 4:11), he wasn't advocating for complacency in the face of societal or spiritual errors. He wasn't telling Christians to ignore the wrongs around them. Instead, Paul's exhortation was meant to encourage believers to live quietly and diligently, focusing on their own responsibilities, but not at the expense of ignoring the larger context of their faith and community. If Paul had intended for Christians to completely isolate themselves from the problems around them, his rebuke of the Galatians for being **"bewitched"** (Galatians 3:1) would make no sense. Paul was not a double-minded or dualistic person; he understood that faith involves both personal integrity and communal responsibility.

A significant issue today is that many people do not read or understand the Word of God within its proper context. This lack of contextual understanding leads them into serious error. Christians must

remember that confusion among brothers and sisters in Christ weakens the church's message. Instead of attracting people to the faith, this confusion repels them. When people do not know the Scriptures or the power of God, they lose the ability to discern truth from falsehood, leading to spiritual decay and a loss of the church's credibility. The tragedy is that many people who need help believe they are the ones capable of helping others. Those who are spiritually or psychologically unwell often think they are healthy enough to diagnose others' ailments. Those in need of healing believe they can heal others, and those who need to learn believe they are qualified to teach. This confusion is dangerous and leads to a cycle of immaturity within the community. When immature leaders and spiritual novices take charge, the result is a church where the teachings are shallow, and the people are confused and misguided.

Another pervasive error in the church today is the reliance on popularity rather than truth. We hear phrases like **"so-and-so says this," "everybody is saying that," or "many people believe this,"** as if truth is determined by majority opinion. Christianity, however, is not a popularity contest. The foundation of the church is not built on what people think or say but on the revelation of Jesus Christ. When Jesus asked His disciples, **"Who do people say I am?"** (Matthew 16:13), He wasn't interested in public opinion polls; He was leading them to understand the profound truth of His identity, which Peter correctly identified as **"the Messiah, the Son of the living God"** (Matthew 16:16). In this context, we see that many today are providing only the popular answers, without understanding the real Jesus. This reliance on popular opinion rather than scriptural truth is another reason why so many are in error. The church's message becomes diluted when it is shaped by what is trendy or widely accepted rather than by what is true.

Fools may not have true followers, but they do have companions—fellow fools who share in their folly. In contrast, mature believers have true followers because they learn from one another and grow together. If you find yourself in a group where there is no mutual learning, where friends do not challenge or inspire each other to grow, it's a clear indication that you are in a spiritually dangerous environment. The Bible warns us that **"the companion of fools suffers harm"** (Proverbs 13:20). A community that does not foster growth and maturity will inevitably lead to spiritual stagnation and error. This situation reflects a deeper issue within the church today—an unwillingness to engage in true spiritual growth and a preference for comfort over challenge. Many Christians prefer to stay in their comfort zones, surrounded by people who will not challenge their beliefs or behaviors. This creates an environment where errors can thrive because there is no accountability or impetus for change. The Apostle Paul's admonition in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 is particularly relevant today: **"For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."** This prophecy is manifesting in many Christian communities, where the truth of the Scriptures is being replaced by teachings that are more palatable or convenient.

The remedy for this widespread error is a return to the Scriptures and a deeper understanding of the power of God. It requires a commitment to study the Bible diligently and to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in applying its truths to our lives. The Bible is not just a book to be read; it is the living Word of God, meant to be studied, meditated upon, and lived out. As Psalm 119:105 says, **"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."** The Scriptures illuminate the way forward, providing wisdom and direction in a world filled with confusion and error. Moreover, understanding the power of God is crucial. The power that raised Jesus from the dead (Ephesians 1:19-20) is the same power that is available to believers today. This power is not just a concept to be understood intellectually but a reality to be experienced. It transforms lives, heals the sick, breaks chains of bondage, and brings the dead to life. When believers truly grasp the power of God, they are equipped to live out their faith boldly and to overcome the challenges they face. However, this understanding of God's power must be rooted in humility. The Bible warns against pride and self-reliance. In 1 Corinthians 10:12, Paul writes, **"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"** Spiritual pride is a dangerous trap that can lead to error. True spiritual maturity recognizes the need for continual growth and dependence on God.

The challenges facing many Christian communities today are rooted in a profound deficiency in the knowledge of the Scriptures and an inadequate understanding of the power of God. This shortfall is not merely an intellectual gap but a spiritual void that has allowed confusion to spread within the body of Christ. The ramifications of this ignorance are far-reaching, affecting not only individual believers but entire congregations and, by extension, the global church. When the foundational truths of Christianity are neglected, the church becomes susceptible to errors that distort its message and weaken its influence in the world. This situation is reminiscent of the warning in Hosea 4:6, where God declares, **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."** The absence of a deep and accurate understanding of the Scriptures leads to spiritual blindness. **Believers who are not grounded in the Word of God become easy prey for false teachings and deceptive practices.** Without the light of Scripture to guide them, they stumble in the darkness, unable to discern truth from error. This lack of discernment is particularly dangerous in an age where misinformation can spread rapidly, often under the guise of spiritual truth. Moreover, the failure to comprehend the power of God further exacerbates this problem. The power of God is not just a theological concept but a living reality that transforms lives, heals the broken, and empowers believers to live victoriously. Ephesians 1:19-20 speaks of **"the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe,"** the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. This power is available to all believers, yet many live as though they are powerless, struggling with the same sins, fears, and doubts year after year. When the church fails to grasp the reality of God's power, it loses its ability to impact the world effectively. Instead of being a vibrant, dynamic force for change, it becomes a mere echo of the culture around it, conforming to societal norms rather than transforming them. So, then the way forward for the church is clear: a return to the Scriptures, a deeper reliance on the power of God, and a commitment to spiritual growth and maturity. By embracing these principles, the body of Christ can be strengthened,

errors can be corrected, and the church can once again fulfil its calling to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The journey may not be easy, and it will require humility, perseverance, and a willingness to be transformed by the renewing of the mind.

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