

## Know Ye Not

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*Know ye not* and *Do ye not know* are phrases found ten times in I Corinthians. These phrases denote: (1) A form of a question that takes for granted that the Corinthians know what Paul asks. The knowledge is assumed to already be acquired. How did this knowledge come about? The knowledge is gained through common experiences, common instruction (some by Paul himself) and common maxims. As Paul is writing to a fixed audience, he is able to assume that they know these things based upon a similar background with them. (2) The force of the question which is to have the Corinthians recall what they already know because it applies to the concepts that Paul wants to emphasize. They must take what they already know and build upon that knowledge as it applies to other concepts. (3) The factual nature of the knowledge stated indicating that it is indisputable. The logical force of this is that they should comply with the knowledge and its effects. In some way, this acquired knowledge will need to be applied to present circumstances.

The phrase *know ye not* is translated from the Greek words *ouk oidate* in each instance. The Greek word *ouk* is a negative particle. The Greek word *oidate* is a second plural verb properly translated “ye know or “know ye.” This word comes from *oida* one of several Greek words for *knowing*. W. E. Vine sets forth the following contrasts between *ginosko* and *oida*. First, *ginosko* frequently suggests inception or progress in knowledge, while *oida* suggests fullness of knowledge. John 8:55 is given as an example of each word, “ye have not known Him” (*ginosko*), i.e., begun to know, “but I know Him” (*oida*), i.e. ‘know Him perfectly;’ Second, *ginosko* frequently implies an active relation between the one who knows and the person or things known, *oida* expresses the fact that the object has simply come within the scope of the knower’s perception. (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, II, 298). Paul’s use of *oida* in the following passages indicates the he believes that his readers have full knowledge of the facts stated.

The *know ye not* formula is used by Paul to call attention to certain facts that are well-known and well-attested among a common group of people (Paul’s audience is the church at Corinth). The phrase forms the beginning of rhetorical questions and is an attention getting device that logically connects the knowledge assumed with the concepts or action desired by the apostle.

### God’s Dwelling Place

Paul declares, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (I Cor. 3:16). The divine indwelling is ascribed to all three persons of the Godhead (John 14:17, 23—God, Christ and the Holy Spirit). The indwelling Paul speaks of in I Cor. 3:16 is corporate: the Holy Spirit dwells in the church or temple of God (see Eph. 2:21, 22). What does this indwelling do? It identifies those who are God’s people. The presence of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit distinguishes between God’s people and those who are not God’s people. It unites all who belong to God in one spiritual body (I Cor. 12:13). It sanctifies or separates God’s people from the world in true holiness and godliness. What is it? It is the spiritual presence of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit in our lives. It does not empower miraculously. How is it indicated? It is indicated by promise of God (Acts 2:38) and is received through an obedient faith (Acts 5:32; Gal. 4:6). Only one such temple exists today and that is the spiritual body of Christ—the church of Christ.

### **Purging Evil From the Church**

Paul rebukes the Corinthian brethren for their lack of zeal for the purity of the church in I Cor. 5:6. He states, “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” Paul appeals to a common proverb to prove a point. Spiritually, leaven is used in both a good sense (Matt. 13:33) and a bad sense (Matt. 16:6-12) in the New Testament. Paul makes a spiritual application: evil spreads and corrupts in a congregation like leaven permeates a loaf of bread. To tolerate evil is to taint all with guilt and open the door for progression of that evil. If it’s okay for one, then it’s okay for all. Evil must be removed. Purge out the old leaven. This purging produces a new lump (a congregation free from evil).

### **Saints Will Judge the World and Angels**

Paul makes an argument from the major to the minor in I Cor. 6:2, 3. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” If a man is able (qualifies) to sit upon the Supreme Court of the land, then he is able to sit upon a local court. The saints shall judge the world. This does not preempt Christ as the judge of all men (II Cor. 5:10). It means that we will join with Christ in this judgment. There is a sense in which God’s Word is judging the world now (John 12:48; Heb. 4:12; I John 4:1). In verse 3, Paul writes, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?” Saints shall judge angels. This is a fact. If this is true, then saints are qualified to judge common affairs of life.

### **Unrighteous People Will Not Go To Heaven**

In I Cor. 6:9, 10, Paul mentions ten specific sins that will keep one from entering into heaven. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” The sins mentioned here define unrighteousness. Paul speaks with certainty as to who is righteous and who is unrighteous. The righteous have been cleansed, washed and sanctified through the precious blood of Christ and stand apart from the unrighteous. The righteous will enter into heavenly glory, but the unrighteous shall not inherit the eternal kingdom. The two groups are placed in strong contrast to each other in this passage. There is a distinct difference between the righteous and the unrighteous and both have different destinies.

### **The Church Belongs To Christ**

Two passages will be considered regarding the relationship of the Christian to Christ and the proper use of his body for Christ’s glory. “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid” (I Cor. 6:15). Also consider I Cor. 6:16, “What? Know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.” Paul points to a strong contrast between being members of Christ and members of a harlot. For a Christian to attempt to be both at the same time is incongruous and violates oneness with Christ. The contrast indicates that you cannot use the body for harlotry without discontinuing to use the body for Christ. Sin severs relationship with God. The act of fornication makes one body of two (physically speaking only). This does not constitute marriage. It constitutes a perversion of what God intended for marriage alone. “He who joins himself” is middle voice and indicates the subject participates in the results of the action. A choice is being made to corrupt the body by participating in a sinful act that

perverts what God intended for marriage alone. To flee fornication is to preserve purity of body and soul. To flee fornication preserves oneness with Christ.

### **Individual Christians Belong to Christ**

In I Cor. 6:19, Paul asks a question that asserts a fact stating the obvious. “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” The Holy Spirit is a gift from God (Acts 2:38). Paul affirms that the Holy Spirit is in the Christian (spiritual indwelling). Paul also affirms that this gift is from God. The consequence of this knowledge is that they belong to God individually. Each one redeemed by the blood of Christ becomes the Lord’s possession. Notice that Paul states a negative and a positive. The negative part is, “ye are not your own.” The positive part is, “for you were bought with a price.” The positive is proof of the negative! This fact is further proof that the body should not be used for fornication. Such a use would represent a breach in the redemptive purpose for which Christ died. We have been redeemed to glorify God in our body and in our spirit which are God’s.

### **God’s Workers Are To Be Provided For**

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach that God’s workers are to be provided for to sustain their lives and work for God. Paul declares, “Do ye not know that they which minister about the holy things live of the things of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?” (I Cor. 9:13). Paul alludes to the provisions that were made under the Old Testament Law for the priests and Levites. Temple workers are supported by things of the temple (offerings—money and sacrifices—meat). Paul further teaches that the Lord has ordained that those that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Those who preach the Gospel, by divine imperative, are to be financially compensated for their work to support their lives and their work for Christ’s sake.

### **Run the Race To Win**

The final phrase to be considered is found in I Cor. 9:24 where Paul writes, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.” Common experiences produce common knowledge. Paul refers to the Greek games that were familiar to all his readers. You cannot win the prize if you do not enter the race. You must run. You must run well. You must finish the race. Paul makes a spiritual application to the Christian life. The parallel to the games must not be stretched too far. All who desire can enter the Christian race. All can win if they compete lawfully and finish the course. Paul states this fact eloquently in II Tim. 4:6-8, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” Run the race to win!