

“Your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.” - **Romans 16:19**

**Genesis 2:17, CSB:** "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.""

**The more knowledgeable we become about evil, the more accepting we become of evil.**

- Paul indicates as much in **Romans 16:18** when he points out that those whom false teachers are apt to lead astray are those who are naive, that is, relatively unlearned in the faith and not wise to the way that Satan works in the world.
- Such people are particularly susceptible to false teaching, and the elders of the church need to keep a watchful eye on them.
- Although Paul wants the leaders of the church to pay close attention to the simple, he does not intend for those who are infants in Christ to stay that way.
- He wants everyone to grow to maturity in the Lord (**Eph. 4:11-16**).

**Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV)** <sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the **truth in love**, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, **joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.**

Simplicity is dependence on God and His Word. As young children rely on their parents without question, so must we rely on the Lord (**Matt. 18:1-4**).

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" <sup>2</sup>And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them <sup>3</sup>and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

- We are not to be simple-minded and content with our current knowledge of doctrine and present understanding of what a life pleasing to God entails.
- The more we know about the Lord and His character and faithfulness, the easier it is to have that simple, unquestioning reliance on Him that He seeks.
- The more we know Him, the more reasons we have to trust Him.

Knowing what biblical Christianity teaches is not difficult. Even unbelievers can know what the Bible says. But head knowledge is not enough. Doctrine must **penetrate our hearts** so that we are convicted to repent of sin and seek to do what is good.

- As we study the things of the Lord, let us continually ask Him to use what we study to bring us to repentance and to establish our hearts with the desire and understanding needed to do what He seeks from us.

**Proverbs 14:16 - Matthew 10:16 - 1 Corinthians 14:20 - James 3:13-18**

1. DOES IT BUILD
  2. IS IT TRUE
- } GODS RELATIONSHIP WITH US IS BASED ON HIS PROVISION AND OUR TRUST

- It is not just in the news alone that fosters our knowledge of evil.
- It is in the TV shows and entertainment we embrace.
- It is the dangers online in the violent and horrifying video games that young people play.
- In these, we are becoming wise concerning evil and ignorant concerning the good.
- Some say these things are acceptable, **just a part of our culture**, they do not affect them.
- Believing we need to know such things so as to be relevant to the culture around us.
- This is self-deception because it stands in contrast to the Word from **Romans 16:19**.

**When I embrace the things that God tells me to be innocent of, I lose that innocence**.

- I invite into my soul the very things that God says He finds abominable!
- I discredit God and His commandments for me.

**The more knowledgeable we become about evil, the more accepting we become of evil.**

<https://cityonahilltc.org/innocent-concerning-evil/>

