

"I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

Sins through Ignorance

"And if a soul sins... and does not know, and he is guilty and bears his iniquity... the priest shall make an atonement for him for his ignorance in which he erred without knowing it, and it shall be forgiven him...
He has certainly trespassed against the LORD."
(Leviticus 5:17-19 MKJV)

Eric Brown wondered if it was sin to not eat right or to do anything wrong ignorantly. He wrote:

I do think it is a sin to not eat right if we know better and people of course suffer the consequences of their eating habits regardless if they know better. However isn't it true that in ignorance God does not see it as sin? Romans 4:15 'For the Law brings wrath, but where there is no Law there is no transgression.' Or am I misunderstanding what God means?

Paul and Victor's reply:

Hi Eric,

Sin is breaking the Law, whether in ignorance or not. But there is a difference with God between one sinning ignorantly and one sinning with consciousness of wrongdoing. Paul writes:

"The one who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and insolent. **But I obtained mercy, because being ignorant, I did it in unbelief**" (1 Timothy 1:13 MKJV).

In other words, when you *know* better, if you don't *do* better, you'll be judged more severely.

"And that servant who knew his Lord's will and did not prepare, nor did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he not knowing, and doing things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For to whomever much is given, of him much shall be required. And to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47-48 MKJV).

As for the Scripture you mention, it's helpful to look at it in context:

Romans 4:9-16 MKJV

(9) Is this blessedness then on the circumcision only, or on the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

(10) How then was it reckoned? Being in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

(11) And he received a sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith while still uncircumcised; so that he might be the father of all those believing through uncircumcision, for righteousness to be imputed to them also;

(12) and a father of circumcision not to those of the circumcision only, but also to those walking by the steps of the faith of our father Abraham during uncircumcision.

(13) For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

(14) For if they of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is made of no effect;

(15) because the Law works out wrath, for where no Law is, there is no transgression.

(16) Therefore it is of faith so that it might be according to grace; for the promise to be made sure to all the seed, not only to that which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

“No transgression” doesn’t mean “no consequences whatsoever.” For example, not long ago there was no speed limit on Montana’s highways. That meant you didn’t have to worry about the police (“wrath”) ticketing you (“transgression”) if you were responsibly driving 85 mph on a straight stretch of road on a sunny day. But if you drove at an inadvisable speed in a blizzard or on a winding section of road with ice, you could end up in a serious accident. Having no law to comply with doesn’t suspend reality and the consequences of recklessness.

If you don’t know you’re violating a law, whether it be of God or man, are you sinning? If you’re drinking fluoridated water, not knowing fluoride is in there or that it’s toxic, are you sinning? Yes, you would be sinning against your body, but according to your motive, you wouldn’t necessarily be sinning against God. He knows the heart and judges accordingly. Those who are His can drink deadly things and not be hurt (Mark 16:18). But woe to us if we know better and tempt God!

“Jesus said to him, ‘It is written again, You shall not tempt the Lord your God’” (Matthew 4:7 MKJV).

What more do the Scriptures have to say about sinning in ignorance against the commandments of God?

Leviticus 4:2-4 ESV

(2) Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone **sins unintentionally** in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them,

(3) if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then **he shall offer for the sin that he has committed** a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering.

(4) He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD and lay his hand on the head of the bull and kill the bull before the LORD.

Leviticus 4:13-15 MKJV

(13) And if the whole company of Israel **sins through ignorance, and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly**, and if they do that which ought not to be done to any of all the commands of the LORD, and **are guilty**;

(14) when the sin is known which they have sinned against it, then the congregation shall bring near a young bull for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

(15) And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the young bull before the LORD, and the young bull shall be killed before the LORD.

We see that there must be blood atonement for sins of ignorance when those sins are made known. They were sins before they were known to be such.

“When a ruler **has sinned and through ignorance** has acted against one of the commands of the LORD his God, which is not to be done, and **is guilty**; or if his sin which he has sinned shall be made known to him, he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish” (Leviticus 4:22-23 MKJV).

Leviticus 4:27-35 MKJV

(27) And if any one of the people of the land **sins through ignorance**, by doing that which is not to be done against one of the commands of the LORD, and **is guilty**;

(28) or if his sin which he has sinned shall be made known to him, then he shall bring his offering, a ewe of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has sinned.

(29) And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.

(30) And the priest shall take of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood of it at the bottom of the altar.

(31) And he shall take away all its fat, as the fat is taken away from the sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall burn it on the altar for a sweet savor to the LORD. And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and **it shall be forgiven him**.

Leviticus 5:15-16 MKJV

(15) If a soul commits a trespass and **sins through ignorance** in the holy things of the LORD, then he shall bring for his trespass to the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flock, together with an amount set by you, by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering.

(16) And he shall make it good in which he has sinned, in the holy thing, and he shall add the fifth part of it, and give it to the priest. And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and **it shall be forgiven him**.

Leviticus 5:17-19 MKJV

(17) And **if a soul sins**, and he has done that which ought not to be done, any one from all the commands of the LORD, and **does not know**, and **he is guilty and bears his iniquity**;

(18) then he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, at your evaluation, for a trespass offering, to the priest. **And the priest shall make an atonement for him for his ignorance in which he erred without knowing it, and it shall be forgiven him**.

(19) It is a trespass offering. **He has certainly trespassed against the LORD**.

Numbers 15:22-29 MKJV

(22) And if you have erred and have not done all these commandments which the LORD has spoken to Moses,

(23) all that the LORD has commanded you by the hand of Moses from the day that the LORD commanded, and onward in your generations,

(24) then it shall be **if it is committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation**, all the congregation shall offer up one young bull for a burnt offering, for a sweet savor to the LORD, with its food offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering.

(25) And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for **it is ignorance**. And they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for **their ignorance**.

(26) And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the sons of Israel and the stranger that lives among them, since **all the people were in ignorance**.

(27) And **if one soul sins through ignorance**, then he shall bring a female goat of the first year for a sin offering.

(28) And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul, when **he sins through error before the LORD**, to make an atonement for him. **And it shall be forgiven him**.

(29) And you shall have **one law for him who acts through ignorance**; for him that is native among the sons of Israel and for the alien that resides among them.

“Whoever sins is guilty of breaking God’s Law, because sin is a breaking of the Law” (1 John 3:4 GNB).

Sin is sin, willful or ignorant. All sin has consequence; it cuts us off from God and must be neutralized if we are to be reconnected with our Life Source, rid ourselves of corruption, and have peace and prosperity.

“Do not be deceived; evil companionships corrupt good habits. **Be righteously awake, and sin not**; for some have **ignorance of God**. I speak this to **your shame**” (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 MKJV).

That’s why we teach the Law of God. Many are ignorant of God’s ways - His Laws - and are therefore ignorant of God. How can they be convinced of sin if they don’t know they’re sinning? And if they aren’t convinced of their sins, how can they repent and turn to their glorious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in order to be saved?

1 Timothy 1:8-11 MKJV

(8) But we know that the Law is good if a man uses it lawfully,

(9) knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous one, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

(10) for fornicators, for homosexuals, for slave-traders, for liars, for perjurers, and anything else that is contrary to sound doctrine,

(11) according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

I didn’t know I was any of those things until I was personally convicted by God through the knowledge of His Laws and ways.

Now, concerning diet, you may ask, “What commandment of God is broken in eating chemically-grown, processed food?” Essentially, these:

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit in you, Whom you have of God? And you are not your own, for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 MKJV).

“And the nations were full of wrath, and Your wrath came, and the time of the judging of the dead, and to give the reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to the ones fearing Your Name, to the small and to the great, and to **destroy those destroying the earth**” (Revelation 11:18 MKJV).

Those supporting the conventional chemical food industry are destroying the earth and its inhabitants. Have you never heard of the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico, created by the highly-intensive chemical agriculture of the American prairies? That is but one small indication of the havoc being wreaked.

“Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews, or to the Greeks or to the church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved” (1 Corinthians 10:31-33 MKJV).

You can’t glorify God while you’re destroying yourself, the earth, and those who would follow your example. But you bring life-giving truth when demonstrating a lawful example of right living.

Once you know what to do, you mustn’t go back to your ways of ignorance:

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should not walk from now on as other nations walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ephesians 4:17-18 MKJV).

“Therefore girding up the loins of your mind, being sober, perfectly hope for the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One Who has called you, you also become holy in all conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy’” (1 Peter 1:14-16 MKJV).

“Truly, then, God overlooking the times of ignorance, now He strictly commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day in which He is going to judge the world in righteousness by a Man Whom He appointed, having given proof to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31 MKJV)

What is ignorance if not lack of knowledge? What happens when we lack knowledge? We sin, and what does sin do, if not bring death?

“And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you in the night, and I will cut off your mother. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge [ignorance]**. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the Law of your God, I will also forget your sons, even I” (Hosea 4:5-6 MKJV).

“**Every man is stupid for lack of knowledge**; every refiner is put to shame by the graven

image; for his molten image is a lie, and no breath is in them” (Jeremiah 10:14 MKJV).

Forgetting the Law of God and choosing their own ways, people bring destruction on themselves and their children. Only God’s way brings life. All other ways bring death, which is the absolute lesson for mankind since Adam followed Eve and ate from the Tree of Knowledge.

Trusting themselves, men die prematurely or violently in their ignorance. But God keeps the righteous, those who return and trust in Him, though they may be ignorant and err in some things for a time.

Think about it: If God doesn’t keep you, what chance do you have? Where is God when men die prematurely or violently because of ignorance? Didn’t Jesus warn unrepentant sinners they would reap accordingly?

“Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were sinners above all men who lived in Jerusalem? I tell you, No. But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:4-5 MKJV).

They may have disobeyed their parents or committed adultery or cursed God. They may have been lusting and prospecting for gold. They may have stolen someone else’s claim. One way or another, they were walking in sin and perished. The sin and the consequences may not seem related, but they always are.

God explained to the Israelites why they were suffering many things on account of a cause hidden from their eyes:

Malachi 3:7-10 MKJV

(7) From the days of your fathers, you have turned aside from My statutes, and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of Hosts. But you say, “In what way shall we return?”

(8) Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me. But you say, “In what have we robbed You?” In the tithe and the offering!

(9) You are cursed with a curse; for you are robbing Me, the nation, all of it.

(10) Bring all the tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house. And test Me now with this, says the LORD of Hosts, to see if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you, and pour out a blessing for you, until there is not enough room.

The people of God suffer for the same reason today, not honoring Him or His gathering in His people:

“For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and many sleep” (1 Corinthians 11:29-30 MKJV).

There are many examples of people perishing for both sins of ignorance and sins in knowledge.

When the sin nature rules, ignorance is deadly. When righteousness reigns through Christ, mercy prevails:

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whom the Lord will by no means charge with sin” (Romans 4:7-8 HNV).

Sin brings consequence, corruption, and death. For a lack of knowledge of God, people are being destroyed every minute in this world by diet, GMO's, vaccinations, radiation, medications, fluoridated water - you name it. But if we walk with the Lord, fearing Him, He'll give us the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to deal righteously with all that pertains to us.

He'll keep us as He takes us, step by step, on the path of truth. And wherever it's impossible to do what's normally needful, the Lord either shows a way where there is no way, or He covers for us. He is a just and merciful God.

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