

How many times in sharing the gospel and witnessing to people do you hear the same things come out of their mouths like what came out of this young man named Ignorance? They are very smart, wise, intellectual people, and yet concerning the message of the cross of Jesus Christ and salvation, they are very ignorant as our character portrays. The spirits of conceit and ignorance go hand-in-hand with regards to religion. Ignorance = Counterfeit Christianity.

- **IGNORANCE** means; to have a lack of knowledge or information, unfamiliarity with. You’ve heard the saying, “ignorance is bliss”; well not when it comes to eternal salvation it isn’t.
- **CONCEIT**, the country from where he comes, means; excessive pride in oneself, vanity, narcissism, egotism and self-admiration.

The crooked path that he’s been walking on shows that many have tried to access heaven from it but it’s a short cut full of selfish man-made religion. **Psalm 125:5** says; “*As for such as turn aside to their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them away with the workers of iniquity.*” **Proverbs 26:12** also says; “*Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*” Ignorance is very cocky, extremely confident in his conviction, especially about religion. We don’t see him fleeing his country of conceit as Christian fled from the City of Destruction yet still walks with an air of confidence, truly wants to go to heaven.

Over the years, I’ve rarely spoken with non-Christians who are passionate about going to hell! They all want to go to heaven and in their ignorance and self-justification believe they will. Who doesn’t want to go to heaven, the comfort and beauty of it; you’ll be in total health, never lack anything, and never cry again, you’ll walk on streets of gold, have your own mansion, and so on! We are also seeing a resurgence of people wanting religion in these days, or a higher power, or a belief that they can hang their hat on so to speak. In many cases, you may see a person like Ignorance with other true Christians walking down the same road and by their external characteristics may assume they all believe the same, but not so! Ignorance seems very knowledgeable about the Word of God, he prays, fasts, pays tithes, gives alms, lives a good life, repays everyone he owns, he’s a good citizen etc. Like countless millions around the world, he believes he has God’s favor by being socially respectable, financially established and devoted to his family and relatives... but he has refused to pass through the wicket gate, Jesus Christ, that’s what makes him and true Christians different. Jesus called the Pharisees as those who were blind leading the blind; they had a perverted sense of grace and could not even recognize their Messiah who was standing right in front of them due to their...religion!

Luke 18:9-14 says; “*Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’” **John 10:1** says; “*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*”*

Ignorance is well aware of the Wicket gate, Jesus, as is the entire world, but sees it very inconvenient to access; it’s out of the way, not needful as he and his countrymen have their own way to heaven. Interestingly he says that he doesn’t even believe there is understanding as to how to get to the gate, but instead of asking directions or instructions, he brushes it off and shows he has no desire for it! As is the belief today that all religions lead to God or heaven, Ignorance believes all crooked paths, world religions and man-made belief systems will lead to heaven where everyone will unequivocally gain access to it! How erroneous! Here we see his blatant ignorance as he denies the **EXCLUSIVITY** of accessing heaven only through Jesus Christ – the Wicket gate which is God’s clear term of salvation. His allegiance is not to the pursuit of truth, but rather to vain and crooked tradition that is according to man’s devising! The religion in his country of Conceit is their own made up one, it’s their own gospel, a little of this and a little of that! It is traditional, moralistic, man-centered, broad, wide and moderate. **John 14:6** says; “*Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”* Total exclusivity through Jesus Christ! Jesus says in **John 10:1**; “*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*”

It's exasperating at times sharing the gospel with people such as Ignorance and their conceit. They are walking in total darkness yet believe they are in the light. Jesus says in **Matthew 6:23**; *"But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"* **Proverbs 26:5** says; *"Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."* **John 9:39-41**; *"And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.' Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."*

The greatest fool is he who trusts in his own righteousness and human efforts to gain acceptance with God. Jesus says in **Matthew 7:21-23**; *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' Shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"* **Luke 13:24-28**; *"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out."*

Is your faith in your own cleverly devised plan of salvation, your denomination, a religious structure based on good works by dotting all the 'i's' and crossing all the 't's', and not believing in the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the only way to heaven and eternal life? If so, you can repent and receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour for the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life in heaven.

