

4.5.21 - Knowing vs Understanding

We find so often that people do not act like they say they believe. There are many reasons for this behavior, but we would like to explore what is implied by the title i.e. some people just do not know what the application of the knowledge looks like. My wife posted a meme on FaceBook with the caption, "Never be afraid to try something new. Remember amateurs built the Ark... professionals built the Titanic." You would expect someone who posted that would be willing to try almost anything new. Well that is not my wife. Her behavior is closer to "Don't try anything new unless forced to do so." We are going to explore the question, "Why the disconnect?"

Many of the journeys into naturism include a time of study i.e. gaining knowledge. The first venue is approached with fear even though the information said frequently they would be accepted which is usually the largest fear. Once you live through your first activity, your fear level is greatly reduced. The person is now beginning to understand the knowledge they collected. Most people will admit that they did not understand the benefits until they experienced a naturist activity by being naked not just observing others who were naked. A simpler example would be reading how to ride a bicycle to gain knowledge. You could even watch people riding bicycles to learn more. You don't understand how to ride until you get on one and learn to keep it upright as you go from point A to point B.

Many textile believers agree with **Psa 139:14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.** but have no trouble using the same Bible that the verse comes from to justify covering the "marvelous...works". As with a car, the outward appearance is a large part of its appraisal. We are sure the car body designer would be very discouraged if everyone who bought the car that he designed would keep it covered as much as possible. Why would it be any different with our Designer. How can you say **for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:** without displaying the exterior of that wonderful work? It needs to be protected from lust you say. Where in your Bible does it say you need to prevent lust? Let's see if we understand this right, you may not display His wonderful works because it will produce lust in the heart of another of His creatures with a freewill. It seems that if he has a free will, he can choose to lust or not lust. If he can't make that choice, he does not have a freewill. God gave all of us a freewill. Your clothing or lack of clothing will not change the luster's freewill since it is God given. As we have mentioned many times in these articles, clothing can cause more lust than a naked body. The clothing can be used to accent and enhance the parts that are supposed

to cause lust and hide the parts that would destroy lust. Added to that the fact that the imagination makes what is covered much more exciting than the real naked object would be.

Notice the lack of understanding surrounding Psalm 139:14. How many believers do you know who would use that verse to justify being naked in the proper setting (a naturist venue)? Most believers have heard or read, and many memorized this verse. They know the verse, but they do not understand it. Along that same line, they know the verses about lust, but do not understand that clothing doesn't/can't prevent lust.

Most people believe that humans are God's masterpiece of creation. We are allowed to view a sunset, or a sunrise if you get up that early, with unprotected eyes...no covering for the scene, we can view great vistas the same way. We are even allowed to look at naked stars. We can look at the animals without clothing (naked) without feeling any shame doing so. If humans are God's greatest creation, why do they need to be covered all the time or most of the time? How can you cover the Master's work without offending the Master? I know, Adam and Eve sinned a long time ago and we are covering their sin. Who from? God who can see through everything...other people who have the same problem...from ourselves? We did not find any instructions from the Master about covering His masterpiece. Are the instructions coming from another source? Could we be following an enemy of the Master? Could we be making things worse by insisting that everyone follow our misunderstanding of the Master?

Another passage that is used to "prove" we need to be dressed at all times is Lev 18:6-19. We will use verse 9 as a sample **Lev 18:9 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.** The understanding usually given these verses is that you should not see any of your near kin naked. It is not hard to extend that to everybody. You do not need to do a lot of study on the verse and the others in the passage mentioned to see that this is a misunderstanding of the verse. The people you are most likely to see naked are the members of the family you live with. Accidentally seeing someone naked is not the same as uncovering their nakedness. Uncovering specifically means preparation for sex. When you read verse 20, you will notice the phrase is changed to "lie carnally with" which is much clearer even without looking up the Hebrew definitions. The Blue Letter Bible site has an "Outline of Bible Usage" section in the Lexicon. For the Hebrew word translated "lie" the Outline has only one word; copulation. Without much more study it is obvious that the author intended that

"uncover the nakedness of" is a euphemism for copulation also known as sex. With more study you can show that the Hebrew word translated "nakedness" is always associated with a body function such as sexual intercourse. This whole passage is listing the near relatives that should not be married or copulated with.

Another view of the problem is well illustrated by a joke I heard a long time ago and remember for some reason. A guy gets too close to the edge of a cliff and slips over the edge. He manages to catch a small branch to keep himself from going completely over the edge, but he is not able to get himself back up the cliff. He yells for help. After what seems like hours to him a booming voice calls out, "This is God, let go of the branch." There is a long pause while the branch is still tightly held. Finally, the guy yells out, "Is there anyone else up there to help me?"

We all believe that God is all knowing. In other words, He is always right, but when God suggest we let go of our "branch" we look for some other solution. To help you understand, here are a few "branches" that people hold unto looking for some other solution. Lots of naked bodies doing nonsexual things will only make my porn addiction worse. Being naked around other people would only make me feel worse about my ugly body. What will people think?

Another cause of knowledge without understanding is having two sets of rules for your life. I am a retired physics teacher. To simplify concepts in physics we idealized situations to the point it seemed there was a way that things worked in class and a different way in the real world. This phenomenon can happen in theology also. There is a way that things work according to the pastor and another way they seem to work outside the church. God needs to be simplified for us to understand Him even a little bit, but He intended us to apply what we learn. James 1:23-24 seems to imply applying what we learn: **For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.**

It is not always the pastor's fault, although we suspect that he never tried to apply what he teaches in the real world himself. We are good at using our church or preacher act in the right setting and a different act when away from church and the pastor. We are collecting knowledge in church but have no understanding of how to use it in the real world. We tell ourselves, "That works in church, but this is not church." You can read "My Chains are Gone" and know what it says well enough to get a 90 percent on a test about the contents, but until you experience large

quantities of time in nonsexual nudity, you do not understand the message. You will also probably keep your porn problem.

I remember when listening to sermons in many churches I attended, asking what do I do with all of that? It did not seem to apply to anything I was working with. I have also attended churches where I wished the application did not seem so clear. I had learned that I was wrong and needed to change. Knowledge does not seem to be the problem. How it applies to what we are living through is the problem. We have to keep looking for ways to apply what we know to gain understanding. Could meditation be asking how does my knowledge apply to what I am doing or planning to do?

The key is that just knowing that God created us as His masterpiece and intended for us to be naked and not ashamed, that God put us on display and that there is nothing shameful, dirty or perverted about our naked bodies, that we bear the very image and likeness of the Creator Himself is not enough. We now need to take that knowledge and live it out. We need to trust that God knew what he was doing and that today's "religious" might be just as messed up as the "religious" were when Jesus walked the Earth 2000 years ago. Our advice is to trust God, live as God intended and you'll find that you have knowledge and understanding!