



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 177 - Will We Ever Learn?

(2 Peter)

Gnosticism

Gnosticism's so-called secret knowledge gave it a distinct appeal to Gentile Christians. People of our day are also often drawn to claims of secret knowledge.

- What flaky religious teachings or philosophies are you familiar with?
- Do you know anyone who has left the Christian faith after getting swept up in these?
- Why do these appeal to some people?

Gnosticism was built around a so-called special knowledge *about* God. Christianity is an intimate knowledge of God—built on our relationship with Him as His children through Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

- How might our catechetical instruction and Christian confirmation give our young men and women a Gnostic impression that Christianity is only knowing *about* God, rather than being in a relationship where you know God personally?
- What things can we do to correct that mistaken impression, so they will see the need to stay in the church and build that life-long relationship?
- Why is it important to focus on what God is saying to all of us when we read Scripture? What's the danger of trying to figure out what a passage "means to me"?

Disposable Creation, Disposable Body

Our society has really become concerned about ecology, as is evidenced by the "green movement" all around us. Some believers have joined in to honor the God who created us—both body and soul—and the world in which we live. Others resist it, believing this is worshipping the creature and not the Creator.

- What parts of the green movement do you buy into? What parts go too far?
- Why should God's children lead the way in properly caring for our bodies as well as the world God has given us?
- How can we do this and not leave God out of the picture?

Gnosticism and Our View of Death

Some theologians argue we are still influenced by the Gnostic teaching that the spiritual is better than the physical, especially when we talk about death. We think like Gnostics when we think of our loved ones becoming angels, or when we focus more on the spirits of our departed loved ones being with God in the clouds, rather than on the future hope of the resurrection of their bodies, and their new life with us in the new heavens and the new earth.

- Why is it more important and comforting to focus on the resurrection at Judgment Day than on our souls resting with God in heaven after our death?
- Read the description of the martyrs beneath God's throne in Revelation 6:9-11. How does this passage remind us that even the souls of our loved ones in heaven are anxiously awaiting Judgment Day and the resurrection of their bodies?