

son? If he has never heard of the cure, if no one has told him about it, will he get well simply because he does not know anything about the remedy? No, in all of his ignorance, **he will die!**

Ignorance will not save a soul from sin. Neither will unbelief, disobedience, or unfaithfulness. Even in this secular world there are many laws. When we break them, we are required to pay the consequences, even though we might have been ignorant of them. The law enforcement officials would tell us that it was our responsibility to know the law and to obey it. God says, *“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse”* (Romans 1:20).

People in the world — and even Christians — try to soothe their consciences about the lost condition of many of their friends and loved ones by assuring themselves that it is not only the ones who are ignorant of God’s law that will be covered by His mercy, but also He surely would not condemn good moral people who love Him but have not obeyed His gospel and are not therefore a part of His spiritual family, the church. They want to think that God’s great umbrella of mercy will cover all the “good” people in the world.

Does that include the “good” people of pagan religions? Does that include the “good” people of the denominational world who are wearing names not found in the Scriptures, who are following doctrines written by men, who are depending on their own goodness to save them, instead of the blood of Christ?

Thank God we do have a Lord who loves us and has provided salvation for us. Let us read and study His word, seek to know His will, and let us obey Him so that our sins may be forgiven. And then let us busy ourselves with the task of taking the Gospel of salvation to the rest of the world, as Jesus commanded us to do when He said, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature...”* (Mark 16:15).

“The churches of Christ salute you”
(Romans 16:16).

WORLD EVANGELISM TRACTS

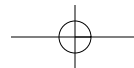
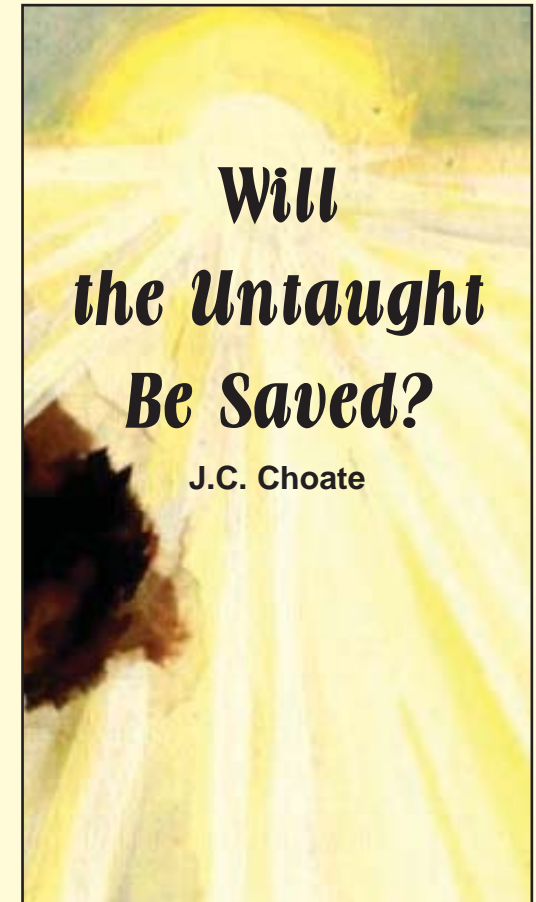
Phone: 662-283-1192

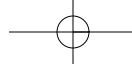
Choate@WorldEvangelism.org

www.WorldEvangelism.org

Request a free Bible Correspondence Course

Presented by the Church of Christ





Will the Untaught Be Saved?

J.C. Choate

The argument is made that those who have never heard the Gospel — the untaught — will be saved. If people do not know of God, if they have never heard of Jesus Christ, if the Gospel has never been preached to them, some raise the question, “How would they know of their lost condition, of their need to believe in Christ, or of their need for salvation?” Not knowing any of these things, the conclusion is reached by some that surely a just God could not condemn them and send them to hell.

But in the midst of this sympathetic reasoning, we must remember that **all** humans are sinners (Romans 3:23), and that it is not **God** who condemns us but the **unforgiven sin** in our lives. Left to ourselves, not one human who reaches maturity, realizing right from wrong, would escape hell, because **all are guilty of sin**.

A simple parallel and illustration of this condition would be the horror of some deadly disease sweeping through the world, infecting every human, with no vaccine available for protection, and no cure. **All would inevitably get the disease, and all would die.**

Realizing that just such a hopeless spiritual

condition gripped the world, the second thing we must remember is that Christ came and died on the cross to provide the way for man to be saved from his hopeless state (John 3:16). The vaccine has been provided! The cure has been poured out! **All can be saved from the deadly plague of sin!**

But *how* can the remedy of Christ’s blood save us from the disease of sin? Jesus, Himself, told us when He said, “*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*” (Mark 16:15,16).

It is therefore the responsibility of Christians to take the gospel, the good news of salvation, to those who are lost in sin. When hearers happily accept the message and obey God in the waters of baptism, they are forgiven of their sins, just as Jesus promised. The deadly disease has been cured and they can live!

But suppose we take that message of salvation to those who have not heard it, and they refuse to believe in the Lord and obey His commands. We would logically conclude that they would be lost, because they refused the one means of salvation.

Having considered these various points, let’s return to the argument that the Lord, in His

great mercy, *will surely save the untaught*. If such a thing should be true, then when we preached to that last group — the ones who heard the gospel but refused to obey it — *we were actually bringing the message of condemnation to them, not the gospel of salvation!*

You might ask, “How so?” Because, according to that false human logic, all of those who had not been taught would have been saved; but when they heard the Gospel and refused it, then they were condemned in their disbelief! If such logic were true, God should have simply kept the world in ignorance from the beginning. There would have been no need for Christ to have come and died; in fact, according to such reasoning, He died in vain, because *all* sinners could be saved by ignorance while only *a few*, in comparison, will humbly submit in obedience to the will of God!

Does this mean that God is unfair to condemn the untaught sinner, or that He is being merciless? No, it simply means that it is not ignorance which has the power to cleanse our souls of the blight of sin, but *the atoning blood of the Son of God*.

Returning to our illustration of a fatal disease sweeping through the population, will ignorance of the cure save even one sick per-

