

You may have heard that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. It may also be not so much dangerous as ill-used. I am reminded that as a youngster I once read the following:

*Heat the griddle or frying pan, and then test to see if it is hot enough. (To test the griddle, drop some water on it; and if the tiny bit of water sizzles and bounces, the griddle is ready).*

Now back then I really loved to have pancakes on Saturday mornings. So much so that I was granted the opportunity to serve the family by performing this task every week. It was a great responsibility and I was proud to be so trusted.

I wanted to do a good job, but there is nothing as nasty as trying to turn a pancake over that is only half-cooked because the griddle was not hot enough. So, my little bit of reading in one of Mom's cookbooks looked to be just what I needed.

Now even though I was in the kitchen, very close to the sink, it occurred to me that there was a source of water droplets that was much more convenient. So I would simply spit just a little bit onto the hot surface and watch the show. After all, I knew that the heat would kill the germs so that there was no danger to others.

I was soon to learn that there is a very big difference between something that is logically acceptable and that which is aesthetically appropriate. I don't know how many weeks that I got away with this technique, but one Saturday morning my Dad came roaring into the kitchen from his workshop. He had heard a suspicious sound, and let me know in no uncertain terms that I would have to determine the temperature of the griddle in another way.

This is one of those lessons in my life that will be a chapter in my book Dumb Things I have Done. The first of second volume, I'm not sure which at this point. But I learned that having the truth is not good if it makes people sick. This is essentially what Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 6:12, "Everything is permissible for me--but not everything is beneficial." We may have the truth, but present it in a manner that turns people away. We have to be sensitive to the needs of others, and give up the idea of being "right" so that we can win others.