

Despise Not Instruction

Proverbs 4:10-13 (KJV)

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

Hear and receive. Two different things . . . we can be rejecting instruction and/or correction WHILE hearing it.

Hearing isn't enough. We must receive.

If you are thinking of what you are going to say in your defense, whether of actions, intellect, or insecurities, while you are "hearing" instruction, you aren't receiving it. If you feel the need to explain why you "already know" or justify why you made the mistake - you aren't receiving instruction.

IMPORTANT FORMULA: Wisdom + Instruction = Life

The only hope for our sons to avoid the pitfalls of life are these verses and those like them.

We must not only insist on them "hearing AND receiving," but we must show them how it's done.

The future is bright for those who can weather the storms of life intact. Every ship carried spare sailcloth, spars, and wood. Storms were a common occurrence during maritime days. They happen. Life isn't defined by ability, speed, or talent when the seas are glassy. These are the times to instruct for the storms of life.

Too many times, we put emphasis on talent and ability and not enough talent on hearing and receiving instructions, but it is this ability alone that saves us when the storms of life are raging—our ability to hear the captain and receive his instructions.

We shouldn't put all the eggs of success in the basket of talent or ability.

The Bible very seldom praises talent or ability as a standalone virtue. It is usually in conjunction with other virtues like courage, honesty, commitment, etc.

Saul had all the earmarks of ability but was paralyzed when things didn't go according to plan. He went off half-cocked and lashed out in the wrong direction. He never had nor cultivated the ability to hear and receive instruction. He was always at odds with his prophet's directions/instructions.

Consider also Solomon was very wise, wealthy, and talented, BUT when instruction (being told what to do by someone) was removed from his life, he went astray . . . far, far astray. He did well until he finished his father's instructions and thought he was done receiving instruction in life; then, he undid everything he had inherited and built.

If we aren't careful, we will substitute talent, ability, and strength for hearing and receiving in our sons. In other words, we will take pride in their natural abilities and talents and pin their future on maximizing those things (equating success with ability and/or productivity) and not hearing and receiving instruction.

According to SCRIPTURE, it is more important for a son to hear and receive instruction and wisdom than to be capable, talented, strong, a go-getter, a money-making machine, smart, etc...

Proverbs 5:7-13 (KJV)

7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

10 Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger;

11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

(Both the words instruction and reproof here, though different words speak of being corrected by those over us - with instruction.)

Now, this is speaking of a successful man, by worldly standards, or it wouldn't have used the word WEALTH.

The lesson is: it doesn't matter how much money you are able to make, if you don't get wisdom and instruction, in the end, it will be taken by the worst kind of people from you . . . ALL because you hated instruction and your heart despised reproof.

The word *despised* in its root form in Hebrew means "sparks to fly off." Indicating the nature of steel and flint, meaning when reproof comes, you know what's in your heart by whether or not "sparks fly off." If they do, it can mean NOTHING else but something in your heart despises reproof. (You can't change the nature of the material by willpower. It is either flint or it isn't.) If the sparks fly off, we know it is time to find a place to pray through our spirit and die out to the flesh. It is time to allow God to change our heart.

It also means "to scorn or spurn." The word *spurn* is as follows:

1. To kick; to drive back or away, as with the foot.
2. To reject with disdain; to scorn to receive or accept. "What multitudes of rational beings spurn the offers of eternal happiness!"
3. To treat with contempt.

Verb Intransitive:

1. To manifest disdain in rejecting anything, as to spurn at the gracious offers of pardon.
2. To make contemptuous opposition; to manifest disdain in resistance.

ALL those who have responded consistently with this attitude towards instruction and/or reproof from those in spiritual oversight of them HAVE MADE SHIPWRECK . . . if they have not yet, they most certainly will.

Yet, it doesn't have to be that way!

God knows the frame and human nature of man and has prescribed EXACTLY what we need for our carnal nature.

Proverbs 8:32-36 (KJV)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

36 But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

God give me a heart to seek out wisdom, to yearn after instruction, and to refuse and despise it not so that I might find life and obtain favor of the LORD!

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