

Instruction – Pt 4 Fools incline not their ears to instruction

This is our fourth study on the topic of “instruction”. Previously we established that (1) we are to apply and incline our ears to instruction, and (2) we are to apply and incline our heart unto instruction. In this teaching we establish that (1) fools despise and hate instruction, (2) poverty and shame shall be to them, and (3) he that inclines not his ear to instruction despises his own soul.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Fools despise and hate instruction and incline not their ear to it.

“And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!” (Prov 5:12, 13), c.f. – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov.1: 7).

2. Poverty and shame shall be to them.

“Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured” (Prov.13: 18).

3. He that inclines not his ear to instruction despises his own soul

“He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding” (Prov.15: 32).

Additional information

Let us remember that Israel did not receive God’s instruction (Jer.6: 8 – “Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited”, c.f. – Jer.17: 23 – “But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction”).

Illustration to help apply our teaching to our life

Two weeks ago on the street a preacher spoke with a youth that professed salvation and was able to articulate his salvation experience. The youth was troubled about his continued issues with drug addiction and so the preacher gave him a copy of the scriptures, instructed him to read it daily, and get on his knees and pray, dying to his flesh. It was all too much for the street hardened youth who left.

Question to think about.

We could say that the street hardened youth, a weak brother in Christ, at the moment the preacher was exhorting him, cast the words of God behind him (Ps.50: 17), and that would be scripturally correct, but amongst all the need for instruction and exhortation what can we learn from our Father and how He treated Israel?

Our answer from the scriptures.

“The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex.34: 6).

Let us – “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering” (Col 3:12, also 2 Cor.6: 6). Finally my brethren – “be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2Tim 2:24 & 25), especially to our weaker brethren who have despised their own souls, and lived in poverty and shame. Let us instruct them in meekness, with all longsuffering and kindness. Amen!