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## Differences between a man who receives instruction & a man who does not (Instruction Pt 1)

This is our first study on the topic of "instruction". In this study we will establish that there are essentially two types of people in the world, those who receive instruction and those who do not. We will establish six points from the Scriptures:-

### Those who receive instruction

1. are wise
2. love knowledge
3. are honoured
4. get understanding
5. a wise son listens to his father
6. are wise in their latter end

### Those who do not receive instruction

1. are fools
2. are brutish
3. poverty & shame is on them
4. despiseth their own soul
5. are scorers
6. die without instruction.

Let us add a little more detail to our points:-

### 1. The wise receives instruction, whereas fools despise instruction.

Prov.1: 5 & 7 "A wise [man] will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels...The fear of the Lord [is] the beginning of knowledge: [but] fools despise wisdom and instruction."

See also Prov.8:33 & 9: 9.

The Scriptures are clear for those who have eyes to see, wise people **receive** instruction and fools do **not** receive instruction. Hence, the wise increase in learning and get wiser (Prov.9: 9) whereas the fool does not. Generally the wise man is a picture of the believer and the fool is a picture of the unbeliever, because generally when a person believes God, they are prepared to listen to His instruction, whereas the fool hates His instruction. And as we know from Scripture, "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" ( Ps.53: 1). However, this comparison of those who receive instruction and those who do not can also be seen in the lost man in his day-to-day life. Let me provide an example.

Before I was saved, I began my working career as an apprentice electrician who then after four years of training became registered. On my journey as an unsaved apprentice I was required to receive instruction from my tradesperson during my time with him, and most of the time I recognised his authority to give instruction and would listen. But as a young lad I had one characteristic that would often cause my father to reprimand me, and that was to tell him that I knew and understood what he was saying, often while he was giving his instruction, even though I did **not** know or understand. Well, I remember telling my Trades instructor on occasions during my apprenticeship that I could read the electrical drawings on the injection moulding machines that I was involved in maintaining. The magnitude of my folly, the result of my inability to listen to instruction (even though to the saved man, it was evident because I did not listen to the instruction in Scripture) resounded in my heart when, as a newly qualified tradesman I went to my first injection moulding machine by myself only to sit down with the drawings in my hands, asking myself why I did not understand them? I remember thinking, because you kept on telling the Tradesman that was instructing you, that you knew everything. What a lesson to learn! To realise that my lack of ability to receive instruction was evident even to my fellow unbelievers, because I had to return to the workshop and ask a fellow Tradesman for instruction, whilst there were likely other apprentices who **did** receive the instruction of their Trades instructor. Hence, although the Scriptures say that a wise man receives instruction and gets wiser, whereas those who refuseth reproof erreth and are fools, and we generally apply this to the wise being the saved man and he that refuseth reproof the lost man, I would suggest that the point is 100% applicable when the instructor is God, yet when the authority is a teacher or a tradesperson there will be some unsaved who do not receive their instruction and others that do receive their instruction. There are examples in scripture where God's children do receive His instruction and are wise, and those who do not receive instruction from God and are fools.

Do you receive God's instruction, and find yourself over the years getting wiser, or do you find you turn aside from God's instruction and therefore your faith is either stagnant or fading? You get to choose to receive and obey God's instruction or not, every time you read his Holy Writing, or listen to a message that is based on the Scriptures. No one else can decide for you. Are you a wise man, getting wiser or a fool?

## 2. Whoso loveth instruction loves knowledge, and whoso hateth instruction is brutish. Prov.12: 1 “Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof [is] brutish.”

Given that he who loves instruction is wise and he who hates instruction is a fool, it would not surprise us to read in our verse that whosoever hateth instruction is brutish, and there is a link between the brutish and the fool in Ps.49: 10. But what does it mean to be “brutish”? When you consider the Hebrew it will not surprise you that the Hebrew word translated “brutish” is also translated “fool”. The Oxford dictionary says that brute means “(Beast) not gifted with reason; stupid, sensual, unspirited, beast-like, cruel, or passionate.” So a person who hates instruction and counsel is called brutish, so God is not complimenting them, but pointing out that they lack ability to reason, which is most helpful for us when we seek to understand the lost man. It should not surprise us therefore, when we speak with the lost man, that they desire evidence, but then when we give them evidence they choose not to believe, which defies reason, but fits their lost, blind condition.

There is no sound reason for asserting that there is no God. There is no sound reason for asserting that the earth was made from nothing yet the belief in such doctrine is not derived from evidence alone but ends up with a man believing by “faith”. There is no sound reason for asserting that man came from apes and God is a liar, when the evidence that we are **not** from apes is even plain to a 10 year boy who once said, “So daddy, if we evolved from apes why are the apes still here, and so are we?”. Those who reject God because of lack of evidence, do so without sound evidence, because they lack the ability to reason. Why? Because they hate instruction and are brutish, because the devil has blinded their eyes and so they lack the ability to see true Spiritual things, they are all blind, they hate God’s instruction regardless of the evidence you put in front of their eyes. If you do not believe me then consider those who witnessed Jesus curing the blind man so that he could see, and yet there were some who did not believe that it was the same man (Jn.9: 18). What about those who saw a man being raised from the dead, and did not believe (Jn.11: 43–48)? They are blind, they could not see and so is the person who hates God’s instruction, they are unable to reason, are blind, and brutish, unable to reason. That should incline our ear unto the need for us to be charitable to the lost, just as the world tries to be charitable to the blind person who has lost the sight in his eyes. That should incline our hearts to show compassion to the lost when we are trying to persuade them to believe the gospel (Acts 26: 28), remembering that they have no ability to reason because the devil has blinded their eyes and their hearts.

Let us remember that those who love instruction love knowledge, and those who hate instruction are brutish and unable to reason.

## 3. Whoso loveth instruction is honoured, & those who refuse shall have poverty and shame.

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

Some of us might say, “if only this were the case, then the unsaved would be in poverty and shame, and not the rich.” So how does this verse apply to us today? I can understand how it might have applied to those in Israel’s time, because that is how God showed his blessing, as he did with Job, he prospered because of his faithfulness. Given that the world does not honour those who receive God’s instruction, but the Lord does honour them, then perhaps the same could be applied to the man who refuses God’s instruction, perhaps God will put them to shame and poverty for those who refuse His instruction? First, let us consider the meaning of poverty, which according to the Oxford dictionary means “indigence, want, scarcity” and one of the Hebrew words translated poverty is also translated “want”. Hence those who are in poverty are in “want” of what they most need. Now look at a man who rejects God, he remains in want of what he really needs all his life (a relationship with his Creator, that is what we are born for), hence he remains in want, he remains in poverty and shame all his life, because he refuses God’s instruction whereas the man who receives it will be honoured by God! Wow! We see this in wealthy TV stars or musicians like Michael Jackson who were exceedingly wealthy, yet live in shame and poverty of what their heart needs and what they were created for, to know and worship, and give thanks and glory to the Creator (Rom.1: 21). Let us remember that those who love instruction are honoured and those who refuse instruction shall have poverty and shame.

#### 4. Whoso loveth instruction gets understanding, whereas those who don't, despise their own soul.

Prov.15: 32 "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."

If our third point is hard on the non-believer, the Scriptures establish this point that the man who does not hear instruction despises his own soul whereas those who receive instruction get understanding. Think of those in our previous point who refuse instruction and live in poverty and shame regardless of the wealth or possessions they own.

How many of them love themselves, how many have a high self-esteem? How many young people today struggle with low self-esteem? How many people today commit suicide? How many young people cut themselves? How many young men change their outward appearance to a woman? Everyone in these groups must get to the point where they despise their own soul! And that is exactly what the devil wants. There may be believers that go through such experiences, but if they trust in God, if they receive His instruction then they will get understanding, whereas those who despise God's instruction either continue to spiral downwards or turn to false gods like Krishna for false comfort, whereas the only one that brings understanding to such pain, to such hatred of our own soul, is the Lord Jesus Christ who was whipped and beaten for our sin on the cross, even though he had no sin (2Cor.5: 21). Only He knows our pain, only He provides the remedy, but when we continue down a path of seeking instruction from anywhere other than God Almighty of the Scriptures, we will continue to despise our own soul.

#### 5. A wise son listens to his father's instruction, whereas scorners reject instruction.

Prov.13: 1 A wise son [heareth] his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

Our verse points out that a wise son listens to his father's instruction and Prov.15: 5 says that a foolish son despiseth his father's instruction. And this is backed up with the commandments in the Old (Deut. 21: 18) and New Testament for children to obey their parents, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord (Col. 3: 20). So for those parents today who do not believe in telling their children to do something or issuing them with an instruction, are they bringing up their children in the way that God requires? Why is it so important for a child to obey their parents? Because when they know the difference between good and evil and get saved, they are more likely to obey their heavenly Father, and hence why He says that it is well-pleasing that children obey their parents, and for those who do not, they are fools, and more likely to grow up, remaining fools. Yet society determines a law that makes it a crime to smack our children as God instructs us to (Prov.23: 13), and they wonder why children continue to be disobedient and rebellious. Let us encourage our children to hear instruction and not be foolish and despise their father's instruction as so many children in the world do, they hate to be told what to do by their parents.

#### 6. Whoso loveth instruction is wise in their latter years, whereas those who do not die without instruction.

Prov 19: 20 "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end." cp: Prov. 5: 23 "He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray."

Have you ever met old people who, even in their latter years continue to learn, continue to submit themselves to God's instruction? Have you ever met old people who, as they get older hearken less and less to instruction, they get grumpy and do not like doing what the nurses ask of them, do not like doing what their children ask of them? Well, those that love instruction are wise in their latter years whereas those who hate instruction all their life, **they** have been their own authority, they have **not** hearkened to God's instruction and so when they leave this earth, they die without instruction. Hence, as children they are fools, as adults they are not gifted with reason, and as elderly they have poverty and shame on their heads and end up dying without instruction. That is the way of the fool, that is the way of those who reject instruction, whereas those who are **wise** are wise in their latter years.

Having said what we have said let us say it again in this our first study on the topic of instruction. We have covered two groups, those who receive instruction and are wise, love knowledge, are honoured, get understanding, listen to their fathers and are wise in their latter ends; whereas those who do not receive instruction are fools, brutish, poverty and shame are on them, despise their own soul, are scorners and die without instruction.