

Teaching Values

Key Verse: *“He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.”*
—Proverbs 15:32

Selected Scripture
Proverbs 10:1-15:33

these proverbs appear to be plain, they are certainly worthy of careful and prayerful consideration. They would suggest to us a series of questions that each child of God should use for self-examination. The words “despiseth his own soul,” are actually referring to our being, or person. So with this in mind each person should ask of himself, or herself, Do I love instruction and knowledge? Am I seeking for it daily along the lines of God’s Word and providence? Are the purposes of my heart pure and upright, bringing with them a constant sense of the Lord’s favor?

To help us answer these questions, we need to look at the scripture, “Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge.” (Prov. 12:1) This refers to having a desire for everything that pertains to our loving Heavenly Father’s love and mercy. We know that, “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” (Ps. 34:18) This sincere sorrow for sin is the type of condition of heart that God requires in those who he calls to be of his household of faith. It points out that we must understand that we need God, and that we look to him to help us rise above our fallen fleshly tendencies. Those called according

to God's purpose know that their lowly estate in the present life is necessary. This discipline will help to prepare them for the glory and service awaiting them in the time to come. It will also lead the faithful away from the path of sin and ungodliness, to righteousness, faith, and trust in God.

No one can measure up to the glorious image of God as it was first represented in father Adam. We are told, "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) All have come short of God's standard and need divine mercy. We do also realize that those whom the Lord is calling, and who make an acceptable consecration, are covered under his "robe of righteousness." (Isa. 61:10) In this manner, our unwilling imperfections are covered, and God can perform his perfect work in us.

Since values can refer to those things that are desirable, useful, and important for us to use as the basis for our lives, we should look to God for the most treasured things. We have the promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." (chap. 26:3) The word "stayed" has many definitions, but the one that is most fitting is "to remain through" or "during." It implies the ability to overcome, or to endure—that our minds are being kept full of the precious promises of God. A mind full of his Word then causes us to ask if we are doing all that we can do to have it stay there. "The memory of the just is blessed." (Prov. 10:7) "The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life." (vs. 11) "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction." (vs. 17) This keeps God's truth in our memory, and then uses that instruction to serve God, and the cause of truth and righteousness. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath." (II Cor. 8:12) This desire is reflected in the words, "Whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8 ■