Dear Open Door Family,

Have you ever thought that you did not need the instructions that came with the item you had just purchased? So you set them aside and started to assemble the item only to discover you had made a mess of it? I've been there and done that - eventually I had to take it ALL apart and start over. If that is true in general, why do we think we can make our lives work apart from God and His Word? I was talking with someone a few years ago and trying to encourage them to start reading their Bible. They said things were going badly in their life and that they really wanted to change. I encouraged them, challenged them, and offered to meet with them. But in the end they did not pursue their relationship with God and eventually they drifted away. Making the extra effort of seeking out instruction - pursuing God through His Word seemed to them - too high a price to pay. So they did NOT make the investment of time and effort necessary. Or to say it more strongly, they DESPISED God's Word and the difference it could have made in their lives. To despise something is to hate it or dislike it very strongly. Look at what Proverbs says about instruction.

Proverbs 13.13 *(NET) The one who despises instruction will pay the penalty...*

Do I REALLY want to GROW? Am I willing to pay the price SO THAT I will grow and mature in my walk with God? It is impossible to grow in our Faith apart from a willingness to be IN the WORD of God. By that I mean way more than just daily devotions. That is the base and the starting point. But it cannot end there. I must VALUE God's Word enough to study it - to study it with others - as well as to learn with others as I take in the teaching of God's Word. Do I take time to THINK about God's Word - MEDITATE on it, looking at it from every angle? Do I make the effort to try and memorize or learn those verses that I want to impact me? This Proverb reminds me that if I do not seek to learn and grow I am DESPISING instruction and I will pay the price negatively. So if we are NOT getting into God's Word regularly - if we REFUSE to listen to instruction from God's Word and godly people who want to pour into our lives, then we WILL pay the PRICE in our lives.

PRAYER: O Lord, please keep me close; help me to be IN YOUR WORD - help me to receive instruction from those who are seeking to impact others with YOUR WORD. Please Lord God, help me NEVER to despise instruction.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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