

The Scorners Revealed

Proverbs talks about the simple ones. They are ignorant, unlearned, and naive. But the scorner is one who knows better and fights against the truth he knows. He rejects help from his authorities. Proverbs 9:7-9 says, He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

These verses provide a test that clearly reveals the scorner and contrasts him with the wise man. This scorner will become noticeable when he is corrected. He comes out of hiding when he is rebuked. He will bring shame upon the head of one who dares to approach him with some reproof. He smears the name of the one who rebukes him and even hates him.

The scorner is known for strained relationships with his authorities. He counts their wisdom as strange and misguided. He finds fault with every attempt they make to help him. They are either not kind enough, or not being fair to him. “Others are doing it,” he cries, “and you’re just picking on me.”

Eventually authorities are reluctant to address needs in the scorner’s life because the price for them is so high. The pain they go through to even talk about the problem is great. The intimidation they feel is overwhelming. The scorner has them right where his wicked heart wants them, in a corner with their hands tied. He can now have it his way and doesn’t need to hear from them.

But at the same time, these same authorities might be working with other wise men. They experience the love from a wise man who welcomes their help and their loving criticism. The wise man hears what they have to say even if they don’t get all their words laid out exactly right. He permits them to be human and welcomes their view of his life in spite of their own faltering. Proverbs 17:10 says, A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool. It’s not hard to reprove a wise man. It doesn’t take a lot of energy and planning and laying it all out perfectly. It doesn’t take many meetings.

This wise man grows in his understanding of truth and his personal holiness and righteousness. He is easy to teach, he is open to advice, and he welcomes evaluations of his life and habits. He has many friends, and people love him and look up to him. Often the scorner will become critical of him as he sees him growing. He notices the respect of many toward this wise man. The scorner begins to think that the authorities are “knocking him down” while giving the wise man an unfair place and position. Proverbs 9:12 says, If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself:

but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.” The wise man will receive a blessing for himself, but the scorner must carry his blame alone.

One would think that there would never be any scorners in the Church of Jesus Christ, but that’s not always so. The way of the scorner is so common to human hearts that it is found in almost every people group. Is that me? Is that you?

But God is not pleased with the scorner and his proud, selfish ways. If we want to be sure of Heaven, we must repent of any scorner thoughts and actions. We must humble our hearts and heed the help of our parents, brethren, or church leaders. We must honestly look at the questions, “How do others feel when they approach me with correction or help? How easy do I listen and receive? And do I love the ones who have spoken to me about need?” Will you and I be humble enough to ask our authorities how they see us, wise or scorner?

A hardened scorner reading this piece will begin to say, “But this writer doesn’t know my situation.” A wise man will say, “I see too many scorner tendencies in myself, and I want to be wiser.” Which crowd will we join, the wise or the scorner?

~Luke Bennetch