

**I. Exposition of the Text**

- A.** *It is better to bear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to bear the song of fools*
- 1)** The goodness of a wise rebuke
    - a)** As seen in the life of our Lord Christ Jesus (Mt 23:14, 14:31; Jn 4:17-18)
    - b)** The badness of a fool's rebuke (Psa 1:1)
  - 2)** What is meant by *the song of fools*?
- B.** *For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.*
- 1)** What is meant by *laughter of the fool*?
  - 2)** What is the character of the fool's laughter?: (i) unprofitable; (ii) hurtful; (iii) good only to be burned; (iv) quickly extinguished; (v) ends in darkness

**II. Doctrines from the Text**

- A.** When ought we receive rebukes?: (1) For our particular sins; (2) For our ignorance
- B.** Whence come such rebukes?: (1) From the Lord (2 Tim 3:16); (2) From the Church; (3) From the Natural Order (Pr 6:6-9); (4) From Unbelievers (Mt 6:46-47)
- C.** The Timeliness of this Instruction
- D.** Why is admonition better than accolades?
- 1)** It is Better in its Essence
    - a)** Correction is necessary for our growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ, whereas praise is not.
    - b)** To rebuke is more certainly genuine than praise (Job 20:5)
    - c)** Admonition is an active work which strengthens resolve.
    - d)** Admonition is an act of selfless love for the rebuker (Pr 27:5-6)
    - e)** To receive a rebuke is a great evidence of love (Pr 13:1)
  - 2)** It is Better in its Effects
    - a)** Rebuke is a better instructor in the fear of the Lord (Pr 15:32)
    - b)** Correction leads to humility, praise to pride.

- c)** Rebuke informs the conscience, whereas praise may affect only the actions (Pr 17:10)
  - d)** Rebukes can strengthen a relationship more than praise.
  - e)** Heeding the correction develops you into one who will help others one day as well (Pr 15:31)
- 3)** It is Better in its Ends
- a)** Heeding admonition has a common grace benefit (Pr 13:17-18)
  - b)** A wise rebukes explicitly has sanctification as its end, but flattery is self-serving (Pr 9:9)
  - c)** Repentance, which is the result of heeding a wise rebuke, shows forth the glory and grace of God (Jms 5:16a)
  - d)** A wise rebuke heeded leads to life everlasting, whereas the warmth of flattery fades into the fires of hell (Acts 12:21-23; Lk 6:25-26)

**III. Answering Objections to the Text**

- A.** *Objection 1:* But this person is simply wrong!
- B.** *Objection 2:* But this person is constantly criticizing!
- C.** *Objection 3:* Does this mean we can never offer encouragement?

**IV. Uses from the Text**

- A.** Questions for Self-Examination (1 Jn 1:9-10)
- B.** Warning about sins concerning the *song of fools*
- 1)** To the 'singer': (a) Do not write the song of fools; (b) Nor join in the song of fools
  - 2)** To the 'sung': (a) Do not seek out the song of fools; (b) Nor delight in the song of fools
- C.** Applications concerning the *rebuke of the wise* (1) To the rebuker: Be wise! (Gal 2:11-16); (2) To the rebuked (1 Sam 15:24-29)
- D.** Concluding considerations and applications
- 1)** The *songs of fools* contrasted with the *songs of Zion* (Col 3:16)
  - 2)** Every person shall hear a rebuke, whether now or at the last day (Psa 18:13, 15; 95:7b-8).
  - 3)** Enjoy the gift of friendship, not flattery.