

Obeying the Instruction of the Older

by William MacDonald

Young Christians should seek the guidance and wisdom of spiritual mentors, who can provide valuable insights and past experiences to help them navigate life's challenges.

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 1:8, Proverbs 4:1, Proverbs 13:20, Proverbs 15:22, Proverbs 19:20, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:2, Titus 2:3-5

Topics: "Mentorship", "Wisdom"

Description

William MacDonald emphasizes the importance of heeding the wisdom of older generations, as illustrated in Proverbs 4:1. He encourages young people to seek guidance from spiritual mentors who can provide valuable insights and practical knowledge gained from their experiences. By learning from the successes and failures of mature believers, young Christians can navigate life's challenges more effectively. MacDonald highlights that older saints are often willing to share their wisdom when asked, and that young individuals should honor and respect their contributions. Ultimately, seeking counsel from those who have walked the path before can prevent unnecessary mistakes and lead to a more fruitful spiritual life.

Transcript

“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.” (Prov. 4:1)

In the first four verses of Proverbs 4, Solomon describes how good advice can and should be passed down from one generation to another. He tells how his father had taught him, then urges his son, in turn, to pay attention to good doctrine and sound instruction.

It is sensible for young people to learn as much as possible from their earthly parents concerning the practical affairs of life. But it is also true that, in the spiritual sphere, every young Christian should have a spiritual mentor—someone to whom he can go with his questions, someone in whom he can confide, someone who will share from a rich store of experience and someone who will be candid in dealing with areas of need. If a parent can fill this role, all the better. But if not, someone else should be sought out.

Godly, mature believers have accumulated a vast amount of practical knowledge. No doubt they have experienced defeats, but they have learned valuable lessons from them and have learned how to avoid them the next time. Older Christians can often see aspects of a problem that young people might miss. And they have learned to be balanced and to avoid unreasonable extremes.

A wise young Timothy will cultivate a Paul, trying to draw on his wisdom and know-how. He will save himself from humiliations and blunders by checking first with someone who has been through it before him. Instead of treating old age with contempt, he will honor those who have fought in the conflict and have maintained a good record.

Generally speaking, older saints will not push themselves on the young. They know that no advice is as unwelcome as advice that is unsolicited. But, when asked, they are always glad to share insights that have been of help to them along the way.

So whether a young person is having a struggle with lust, or wants to know how to find God's guidance, or seeks to raise a family for the Lord, or wonders if God is calling him to the mission field, or needs help in managing his finances, or longs for a more effective prayer life--he would be wise to seek the help of a spiritual guide who can bring the light of Scripture to shine on the particular problem. Underneath those gray hairs there is often a fund of wisdom to be tapped. Why learn the hard way when you can profit from the insights and past experience of others?

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