

God's People Taught Down

"All your children shall be taught of the Lord." Isaiah 54:13

God's teaching does not leave a man where it found him— dead, stupified, worldly, unfeeling, and carnal. If he is in distress, it does not leave him in distress; if he feels guilty, it does not leave him guilty; if he is in darkness, it does not leave him in darkness; but it lifts him out of these evils. Thus God's people are continually led to come unto him for his instruction, because they feel that without his special teaching they can know nothing as they ought to know. No— the more they have, the more they want to have; for no sooner is the light withdrawn, than the darkness is more sensibly felt. If any text of scripture has been opened up to them, it makes them want to have others made known in a similar way; if they have had any consolation, and it is taken away, it makes them want it again. So that the more wise and spiritual God's people become; the more foolish and carnal they appear in their own eyes; the stronger they are in the Lord and in the power of his might; the more sensibly do they feel the weakness of their flesh— and the more they are enabled to walk closely with the Lord, the more they discover the wretched wanderings of their base and sinful hearts.

Here, then, we see how God's people are distinguished from all heady, high-minded professors. They grow upward— but God's people grow downward. Special and divine teachings do not lead the soul into pride, arrogance, and presumption— but they lead to humility, simplicity, sincerity, contrition, brokenness of heart, low views of self, and admiring views of the Lord.

'Natural wisdom' only hardens a man's heart, sears his conscience, and makes him more worldly-minded— spiritual teachings make the heart tender, the glory of God its great object, and spiritual communion with the Lord ardently desired.

— J.C Philpot