

Doctrine Trumps Money: Doctrine Must Be Priority One: Choose Truth over Silver & Knowledge over Gold, Prov 8:10; Matt 6:24; Jas 4:4

Verse 10: Doctrine Trumps Money:

Proverbs 8:10 - "Take my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choicest gold." (NASB)

1. This verse begins with a reiteration of the last phrase of verse 9. There the word *masa'* emphasized desire, this signifies interest in learning what's in the Bible and once found to seize and hold it.
2. In verse 10 the idea is expanded with the Qal imperative of the verb **לָקַח** *laqach*, used figuratively of "taking on" commands or instructions. Wisdom issues a command for the believer to take the responsibility of taking the initiative of doing so.
3. "In the qal the meaning of *laqach* extends from "take" or "seize," with the result to "take away," to "appropriate for oneself." The sense of one's own acquisition of learning is reflected in Proverbs 1:5; 9:9,¹ as well as our passage.
4. What the naïve and the fool are commanded to take is *instruction*: **מוֹסָר** *musar*. A better translation is "discipline from instruction." The word implies correction through education.
5. For wisdom to become developed in the soul of an individual, he must be authority oriented from the very beginning of the process: concentration on the teaching of the Word.
6. Here Wisdom issues a commandment to the believer to submit to her instructional discipline. But as you know the imperative mood is the farthest removed from reality of all the grammatical moods.
7. Volition can put the believer in front of the teaching but it does not necessarily respond to the instruction. It takes genuine humility for a person to totally submit to any system of authority; to do so within the structure of a local church under a human pastor is often found difficult to do.
8. That's why in many of these early Proverbs it is Wisdom that is speaking. It is the Word of God that mandates the believer to choose its discipline through instruction.
9. The mandate confirms the validity of Wisdom's target audience mentioned in:
Proverbs 8:5 - "O immature believers [**the naïve**] who are easily enticed, understand prudence—the assets of self-discipline and good judgment that provide discernment; O fools, understand how to apply doctrine with discernment."
10. The naïve and the fool are students without portfolio. They do not have wisdom due to lack of instruction. They must first make themselves available to hear the message before their volition can be challenged to choose for or against its content.

¹ H. Seebass, "לָקַח *laqach*," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 8:17; 21.

11. Therefore the opening command is saying to the naïve and the fool that they are students who need the discipline of divine instruction: “Make the choice to submit to my disciplinary instruction.”
12. Scripture indicates that one of the major distractions to making doctrine the number one priority in life is worldly gain, symbolized in this verse by the elements of silver and gold. The Lord addresses this problem in:
Matthew 6:24 - “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” (NASB)
13. James comments on this issue in:
James 4:4 - You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
14. If a believer chooses “to be a friend of the world,” he will reject the discipline required to orient and adjust to the instruction of the Word of God. But wisdom will put all this into perspective beginning with the third stanza.
15. The illustration of a worldly distraction from Wisdom’s instruction is silver followed by the assertion that gold is a distraction from acquiring her knowledge, **דַּאֲתַּ** *da’ath*.
Proverbs 8:10 - “Make the choice to seize my instruction [**אֱמֶת** *’emeth: truth*], not silver, and knowledge [**דַּאֲתַּ** *da’ath*] rather than choice gold.” (CTL)