

Scripture InSight

Bible Society in Northern Ireland

Scripture Reference: Proverbs 18: 2, 13, and 15

Bible Translation: New International Version

A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.

He who answers before listening – that is his folly and his shame.

The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.

Reflections:

Both in churches and wider society, we appear to value the airing of opinion rather than the bringing of wisdom and discernment to any issue. The net effect is that our own thinking seems to be shaped more by the radio phone-in and the argy bargo of politics than by the teaching of Scripture.

As these verses make clear, mere opinion is folly, but understanding and discernment are to be sought long before we speak. Verse 13 is particularly strong in its language. To answer before listening is not mere folly – it brings shame on those who do it.

The shame of instant opinion or the lack of discernment comes from our being flawed and sinful. Our minds have been scarred by the fall, and salvation is as much about the receiving of the mind as of the soul (as Romans 12.2 makes so clear).

The question for you - and me – is one which demands a clear answer. To what extent has my thinking and my mind been changed by my reading of Scripture and its application to my life by the Holy Spirit?



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