



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. (prchurchofchrist.org)

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JUMP START #261

1 Sam. 10:25,26-“ Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, and wrote them in the book and placed it before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his house. Saul also went to his house in Gibeah; and the valiant men whose hearts God had touched went with him. But certain worthless men said, ‘How can this one deliver us?’ And they despised him and did not bring him any present. But he kept silent.”

Saul had been appointed king of Israel—their first king. This wasn't the result of an election, but God chose him. Israel was celebrating. Our verses today show the contrast that has existed in every age and every generation. There are those who support and those who oppose. There are those that are kind and complimentary and there are those that are a stick in the mud. There are those whose hearts have been touched by God and there are those who are worthless.

The worthless complain and do nothing. They stand in the way and oppose progress. You find worthless employees. They show up, generally late, complain all day long, make the day extra long for everyone else, and do as little work as possible. The very minute the work day is over, they are gone, even when there is still work to be done. Worthless. Some families have worthless members. They bark out orders, make messes, complain and do not help out. Jesus referred to the one talent man, in Matt. 25, the one who buried his talent in the ground, as “good for nothing.” That's the same as worthless. Earlier in these studies we talked about Eli and his “worthless sons.”(1 Sam.2) What makes them worthless? It is not that they don't have a soul that God loves and Jesus died to redeem. That's not it. It has to do with being a team player, a contributor to life. Some take but never give. And what worthless people take the most is the spirit and energy of everyone else. Israel had the worthless ones.

But we also read about those valiant men whose hearts God had touched. Awesome statement!!!! Valiant ----bringing the idea of courageous, noble and honorable. Men, that God touched their hearts. God does that today through his word. You read a passage and it does something to you. It moves you to be better. It challenges you to do more. It causes you to look inward and make adjustments. It is in this way that the word of God is living and active as Hebrews tells us. (Hebrews 4:12) It's not stationary or dead. It's more than facts, it alive!!!

People whose hearts have been touched by God are incredible people. They are the best people on the planet. Because of God they walk with humility and kindness. They grasp righteousness and clothe themselves with Christ. They love the Lord, and all his ways. They busy themselves in the work of God.

They support the ones God has chosen, like King Saul. They defend what is right. They can be counted on and they have proven themselves dependable.

You find such people in many places. They may be in your family—and what a difference they make. They remind us, in kind ways, what God would want. Offensive shows, language, and behavior is frowned upon. But more than that, these kind of people are always thinking of others. They are the encouragers. They are the ones who go out at night to visit others. They call to see how some are doing. They are there with food in hand, when the occasion calls for it. Valiant, and touched by God. They are the heart of a congregation. They praise God and love the Lord.

Israel had both valiant men who were touched by God and worthless people. Which are you? It's easy to say who you want to be, but what would your family say? What would your co-workers say? What would the church members say? More than that, what would God say? We can call ourselves valiant, but that doesn't make us that way. It's what we do in our actions. That is the call.

A heart touched by God---I really like that expression. That's what I want. More, more about Jesus....let me walk close to thee each day.....those are more than hymns we sing, they are the way it is for those whose hearts have been touched by God.

Roger Shouse