



# THE EXHORTER

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

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## Jump Start # 1041

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*Ecclesiastes 12:1 "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no delight in them.'"*

We've been talking about raising children this week in our Jump Starts. Lessons on the family are so needed and important. I do not believe that we can have too many lessons on the home. There is a shift taking place in society. The "new Norm," isn't very normal to many of us. Same-sex marriages, legalizing drugs, blasphemous shows, sexting, Hollywood stars flaunting immoral lifestyles-this isn't our grandma's world anymore. Our passage talks about the evil days. The Ephesians were told to make the most of their time because the days are evil. Peter talked about those who had escaped the pollution of the world. The world is broken. It's time we realized that. It's time for moms and dads to get serious about their own faith and then the faith of their children.

Someone said, "If raising children was so easy, the whole process wouldn't have started with the word 'labor.'" For most parents, the teen years are the hardest. This is where so many issues and battles are fought. There are huge things that take place during the teen years. The child is transitioning to an adult. He learns to drive. He begins dating. The hormones are screaming in high gear. The issues of fitting in and belonging are felt the most in high school. Trying to figure out the next phase after high school is hard. Many get their first job during the teen years. There is so much going on. They often begin habits that will stay with them the rest of their lives. Some of these habits are terrible, such as smoking, lying, being lazy. Other habits can be incredible such as, walking every day with God, praying, having the heart of a servant.

There are four tough lessons teens learn.

**Not everyone will like you.** Some will not like you. Period. It doesn't matter how nice you are, what you do for them, or if you go out of your way for them, they simply have made up their minds that they will not like you. Some are not nice. Some are mean. Some are prejudiced. That's hard for young people to understand. It's hard for adults to understand, as well. You can't let that stop you or define you.

- **You can change.** No one has poured concrete around you. Your attitude, outlook, way of life can all change. It's up to you. You can be lazy or driven. You can dress neat or like a slob. You can work hard and get good grades or you can goof off and barely pass. You can embarrass your parents or make them proud of you. You choose. You can always change,

especially for the better. If you didn't do well in one class, then get after it the next semester. If your boss is on you for being late, change and get there early. You can change.

- **Worthwhile things do not come easy.** It's hard to make varsity, first chair or honor roll. It's easy to bomb out. It's easy to get in trouble. It's easy to get fired. It's easy to flunk out. The things of value take effort. If you want to learn an instrument, you have to devote time to it. If you want to do well in sports, you must work at it. The easy way is not always the best way. Put time into worthwhile things. Don't quit because something is hard.
- **Saying 'I'm sorry,' doesn't fix some things.** You need to be apologetic when you are wrong. You need to be the first to say, "I'm sorry. I was wrong." You need to mend bridges and make things right. However, there are consequences to your choices. Some are very serious. I've seen the eyes of a young man, full of tears, hands behind his back in handcuffs as he was led out of a courtroom to prison. He looked over his shoulder and told his parents, "I'm sorry." I've seen the demolished car of a teen that was driving way to fast. A passenger in the car was seriously injured. He told the other family that he was sorry. I'm sorry. That doesn't fix the drugs hiding in the locker. That doesn't take away the sex and possible pregnancy that happened. I'm sorry doesn't open the doors to a school that expelled you. I'm sorry doesn't get you back on the team after the coach said you violated the rules. I'm sorry doesn't let you take the test over after you were caught cheating. I'm sorry are great words and we ought to mean it. However, I'm sorry doesn't fix some things. You need to think about what you are doing. There are consequences to all choices

There are three lessons that parents need to share with their teens.

**1. God's people are not perfect, but Jesus is.** God's people for the most part are trying. God's people are amazing people. They go out of their way. They will be there to support, defend and help you. You can always count on God's people. Sure they have flaws, but they are miles ahead of the world. God's people are the best people on the face of the earth. They follow Jesus, who is perfect, all the time.

**2. The Bible is real.** It will stand the challenges of scientific evolutionists. It will stand the mockery of moderns who think that they know better ways. The Bible is helpful. The Bible is good. Keep it near you. Include it with you when you travel. Get the Bible apps on your phone and tablets. Know the book. Dig deep, lower your nets. Ask questions. There are great and powerful lessons that are life changing in the Bible. It will mold you into the best person that you can be. It will show you how to forgive and extend grace. It will build character and shape your thinking. It will take you to Heaven if you follow it.

**3. Worship is good.** God is pleased with worship. All of it is important. You need it. Worship will help you. Worship has a way of reminding us about God. We can forget. Worship has a way of getting our order in order. Worship reminds us that we are not alone. Worship reminds us that God is counting upon you. Worship often. Get to know other worshippers. Don't come sleepy or late. Don't come with a chip on your shoulder, looking for something wrong. Don't come to be thrilled or charmed. Don't enter bored and bothered. You'll leave that way. Come to worship God. Come before God.

Parents, hang in there. Especially those with teens. Those years do not have to be disasters. Communication, love, and staying on top of things is the key. Go out of your way to be there for them. Know who their friends are. Know what they are chatting and texting about. They'll fuss at you. They may not like you. They want more freedom that you are comfortable giving them. You don't want your child to be like all the other kids. You want your child to have a heart set upon God. Stay at it. Pray daily. We are all with you. Roger Shouse

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