



# 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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March 13, 2016

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**Deuteronomy 6:24** *“So the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today.”*

Our verse today comes from that powerful reminder that Moses gave Israel about teaching their children God's law. They were to instruct the child when he rose in the morning, when he ate and while they walked about places. God's law was to be a regular part of their conversation. Today, God's people continue to do that with their children. They understand that it's not the church's responsibility to teach their children, but the home. Children may only spend 3 or 4 hours a week in the church building. If that is the extent of their spiritual education, then they will likely fail with God. It's not uncommon for misguided parents to point fingers at the church when their children grow and show no interest in the Lord. The church has a role, but the home must be the first and most involved teacher.

In the midst of these principles, our verse is found. It was a reminder that Israel was to obey all of God's commands. It was a reminder that Israel's survival was based upon their faithfulness to God's word. It would be God that would win battles for Israel. It would be God that brought down walls, shut the mouths of lions and conquered giants. God would do this for Israel who trusted and obeyed the Lord.

This passage also states that observing all of God's statutes was for our good always. It's not just for God, but for us. That is a thought that is sometimes forgotten. God's commands keeps us from hurting ourselves. There are physical, emotional and definitely spiritual troubles that can be avoided if we follow God. The Proverb writer said concerning keeping wisdom, "For length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you" (3:2). There is personal benefits that come from obeying God. It's more than just the right thing to do. It's more than just pleasing the Lord. God's ways are always the best ways.

**(OVER)**

Consider some of the physical complications that come from not obeying God. Sexual diseases spread among those who live the careless life of fornication. Multiple sexual partners, not God's design for us, invites health problems. Addictions from drugs and alcohol ruin health. Booze flows today like a river in most college campuses. Young people are getting drunk on a regular basis, often every weekend, some even more. This wild partying is inviting a lifelong addiction to alcohol. It will be the ruination of many people.

Consider some of the emotional complications that come from not obeying God. Guilt, worry, stress steals our appetites, keeps us up at night and makes us look old. The fear of dying, the internal struggles that many deal with has led many to turn to pills to cope. Grief has crippled many families who do not understand nor know how to deal with such things. Family problems with prodigals, divorce, rebellious teens and shame plague many homes. The refusal to forgive or offer grace strains relationships and adds to the emotional burdens that drag many down. Selfishness and lacking the spirit of a servant leads to the "dog eat dog," grab what you can thinking that dominates society today. "Why should I?" isn't asked by one who walks with Jesus. It's asked by those who ignore God's word and have set a course to simply please self. Then there is that extreme emotional fear of death. Medical staff sees this every day. An elderly person, frail and nearing the end of their life, instead of being given comfort, the family pressures doctors to do surgeries that are risky and treatments that take away what little quality of life that they have. Why? Because they do not believe in anything on the other side of death. They must hold on to life, what little there is, as long as they can. And then, when death happens, these family members are stunned, clueless and lifeless at the funeral. God's word has answers. God's word has hope. But a life that ignores God will harm a person emotionally.

Then there is the greatest cost of not obeying God, the spiritual side of things. A life without God leads to a death without God. It leads to an eternity without God. Joy, peace, hope, optimism are found when one walks with the Lord. Forgiveness, trust and promises are with those who are with God. There is not an obsession about who sits in the Oval Office in Washington. There is a greater thought about who is sitting upon the throne in Heaven. Life is not lived just day by day, but there are plans, goals, visions that are based upon God and His word. There is especially, that deep longing for Heaven. Faith gets us through the darkest days. Faith helps us to realize that all of our problems will remain here. Faith opens our eyes to see the Lord.

Keeping God's commandments are for our good. The best life is one that obeys God. He understands what makes a home a home. He understands how we can be healthy. He understands how prayer helps us.

God's way is always the best way. Don't you agree?

Roger Shouse