



# 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 # 1656

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***Luke 12:48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.***

Our verse today is interesting. It is found at the end of a parable that teaches the coming of the Lord. Jesus uses the illustration of two different servants. One thought that the master would not be coming for a long, long time. He used that as an opportunity to mistreat fellow servants. He felt that he could get away with it. He was surprised at the sudden appearance of the master and he got it. Our verse indicates a servant who did not know the master was coming. He still did things wrong, and he was punished, but not as severely as the one who knew and did nothing about it. With knowledge comes responsibility. It is in these principles that Jesus uses the word "required." To everyone who has been given much, much will be required.

This is the second time in this chapter that "required" is found. Earlier, in the story of the farmer who was tearing down his barns to build larger barns, that night his soul was "required" of him. He died and he wasn't ready to meet God.

Our thoughts are on this expression, "to everyone who has been given much, much will be required." We understand that with natural ability. The freshman may have more ability than the senior and he may find himself starting varsity. We understand this with maturity. In the home we expect more out of the teenager than we do the five year old. And we ought to see the same principle applying to us spiritually. To everyone who has been given much, much will be required.

**Think about this on the personal level:** some of us have been Christians for decades. Some of us have sat through tons of sermons, Bible classes and special meetings. We have read volumes of bulletin articles. We, ourselves, have read the Bible through dozens of times. We have put in enough hours for multiple PhD's. And yet, what do we do with this? All of this knowledge. All of this information. All of these hours devoted, have done what for us? To whom much is given, much is required. Don't you think God wants and even expects us to use this knowledge to help others? Yet, across this country, sits congregations that are barely alive. They teeter on the edge of dying, yet within the walls of those church buildings sits members who have been Christians for 40 years. Cannot any of them teach? Cannot any of them preach? Cannot any of them use their knowledge to shepherd God's people? Cannot any of them reach others? Cannot any of them turn the direction of that congregation from certain death? They wait for outsiders to come and preach and teach. They wait for someone to be hired to do what they ought to do. To whom much is given much is required.

**(OVER)**

**Think about this on the time level:** The American dream is not always the Biblical dream. What we have been taught is that a man pours himself into his job. Forty years of hard work. Then, he retires. Then, it is his time. He says, "I've earned it." "I have slaved away for decades. Now, I am going to enjoy my time." That is the American dream. Little time to do much for the kingdom while in your working years, because the job is so demanding. And then when retirement comes, "it's my time," and off I go, traveling and again, little time for the kingdom. Too much is given, much is required. Think about that principle when it comes to money and time. A young family is strapped financially. Kids cost a lot of money. College. Cars. Mortgage. Kids take time. School. Sports. Been there with four kids. It was enjoyable but demanding. Mom sometimes goes one direction with one and dad the other direction with the other. Games and practices at the same time in different places. Dentists and doctor visits. Running and running all the time. Young families get it done. It's often these young mothers that are the teachers of the babies at church. It's these young parents that put on the VBS at church. They do what they can, but they are stretched. Then, at the other end, is the couple who are now empty nesters, retired and not nearly as stretched as the young family. The empty nesters often do not have the financial burdens as others do. They often have more time. Have they understood, to whom much is given much is required? They don't have to get up Monday mornings, at a record breaking speed, to get the kids out of the house for school and to get to work on time. Years of knowledge, now more time, and often even more resources, are they seeing that in terms of helping the kingdom? Instead, we buy into this American dream concept, that I'm done with work, and now it's my time and I get to do what I want, sounds a bit selfish. That doesn't leave much room for the kingdom.

**Think about this on the generational level:** This generation is flying fast on the information highway. We have the Bible with us 24-7 because it's on our phones and we are never without our phones. Our phones, with our Bible apps, are with us at school. They are with us at work. They are with us when we go out to eat. They are with us on vacation. In the plane, in the meetings, on the golf course. We always have our phones with us and on those phones is our Bibles. A generation before didn't have that. Some took their Bibles in a brief case to work. But they didn't carry those Bibles into work meetings. Most, back then, didn't slide a Bible into their golf bags. But now, we are arms length from our Bibles at all times. To whom much is given, much is required. Think about the use of listening to sermons, or even watching videos of sermons anywhere you have your phone. Think about the ease of sending someone a Jump Start or a link to a lesson. You can teach, encourage and help someone faster and farther than ever before. With a push of a couple of buttons, this very Jump Start will be sent to nearly 3,000 people world wide. Do you realize how expensive and how long that would have taken generations ago. This is about 30 minutes of my morning. That's it. Congregations need to be using videos, youtube, Facebook, Twitter and every avenue available to them. They need websites. They need to be busting it to get the message out. Yet, some act as if we are in the B.C. (before computer) time period. Can't find those churches on websites, because they don't have one. Those that are in charge, "don't like all of this fancy technology stuff," so they remain in a dark cave as the world passes them by. They wonder why they can't reach anyone. They wonder why knocking on a stranger's door doesn't work. They wonder why just having two Gospel Meetings a year doesn't change anything. It's time to flip the calendar boys. It's time to find the best way to reach people. To whom much is given, much is required.

The one talent man was given much. He was given a talent of money, which is a great sum. He buried it. He did nothing with it. We must ask and we must wonder, if we are doing the same with our time, finances, ability and opportunities, both as individuals and as congregations.

This generation ought to be flying down the highway in doing things for the Lord. There are so many ways to get the message out and to encourage and strengthen brethren. Use them. Learn them. Share ideas. Help each other.

Some day, the Lord is going to require our souls. What have we done with what we were given?

Roger Shouse