



# 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***

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. ([prchurchofchrist.org](http://prchurchofchrist.org))

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***Job 1:5 "When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, 'Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' Thus Job did continually."***

Job is an amazing person. A spiritual giant and an enormous example for all of us. The very name Job brings to our minds suffering. Folks will say, "Well, at least what I'm going through is not as bad as what Job went through." We understand. No one wants to walk where Job did. His sufferings, his debates with his friends, the challenging questions from God-it's all a journey of faith and trust in God.

What we often do not think about with Job is his example of a spiritual father. Our verse today illustrates the great love Job had for his children and his God. Notice several things:

1. Job understood his children. He said, "perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God." He knew that this was a possibility. Maybe he knew from his own past. But what an honest evaluation. He didn't think, as too many parents do, "My kids would never do that." Yeah, they might have. It's possible. It's disturbing to watch on the news about some young person being arrested for murder. And there stands his mother, in tears, declaring, "He's a good boy." Really? Good people do not kill others. Maybe that parent is in denial. Maybe that parent doesn't really know their child.

2. Job understood the seriousness of what might have been done. He didn't excuse it by saying, "they were celebrating and kids will be kids." He recognized that they may have sinned. They may have even cursed God's name. All of that was wrong.

3. Job was concerned about the spiritual wellbeing of his children. Job says nothing about the fun times the celebrations brought. He didn't say that he was glad that his kids did things together. His concern was about their relationship with the Lord. Job offered burnt offerings for each of them. This was a form of a sin offering. If the sons sinned, Job wanted to make it right with the Lord. He wanted his sons to be right with God. What a thought for all of us dads today. We want our sons to go to college, throw ball, get a great job, marry well, have kids, get off our payroll. How about finding a good congregation in all of that? How about growing spiritually in all of that? How about being active with both a congregation and the Lord? Do we excuse things by saying, "Well, their in college now." SO? We say, "It's important that they get a good degree," so off we send them to a place where there is no congregation or one that is helpful and in four years their faith is dead and they no longer have time for God. Not Job. Not this dad.

(OVER)

He was concerned about his grown children. They all had houses of their own. They were on their own. Yet, the prayers, concerns and intervention by Job did not cease.

All of this makes us ask, "How are your kids doing spiritually?" With you out of the picture, would they want to continue worshipping God? Would they know how to make the right moral choices? Do you know?

4. Job went to great length and expense to help his children spiritually. The passage says that he offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. He had seven sons and three daughters. That's a lot of burnt offerings. That's a lot of slaughter, blood and sacrifices. That's a lot of trouble. Job didn't just drop the kids off at the local VBS and go on his way. Do you see the effort he put into his children's spiritual lives? Knowing Job, as we now know him, one would expect that Job said prayers, had devotions and praised God with his children as they were growing up. God was a regular part of their lives. This is expected of one who fears God, is upright and turns away from evil, as Job is described to us.

Dads, have you sat down with your child and showed him how the Bible all fits together as a unit of God's message? Have you explained, with their Bible in hand, what the books of the Bible are about? Have you practiced memorizing the names of the books of the Bible with your children? Have you invested your self helping your child spiritually?

5. Job did these things continually. This wasn't a one time thing. He didn't feel pressure from the preacher's sermon and for one week did things, but then stopped. Job did this continually. This was his practice. He was involved in the spiritual lives of his grown children. This is a thought for us. How is your grown child doing spiritually? Do they worship the Lord weekly? Do they remember the death of Jesus? Are they walking with the Lord? Do you know? Do you ask? Do you have spiritual conversations about the Bible, church and growth? Are your sons working on being deacons and future elders? Is that a conversation that you have had? Continually, Job was offering sacrifices for his sons. How did Job get anything else done, when he was continually offering sacrifices for his children. Maybe, his priorities were different than ours. Maybe he put God and his children before other things. Maybe he just made the time for these things by seeing the great value in this. Continually, are you offering prayers for your sons?

6. All of this helped Job stay with the Lord. It's hard to be busy doing spiritual things for others and it not help you as well. Job's sacrifices must have drawn him closer to the Lord. It would make him thankful for grace and forgiveness. It would make him look at his own heart. Job's love for the Lord and his love for his children intersected and at the center of these two loves was a man who cared deeply for what is right. The Lord was right. Job wanted his children to be right.

7. These burnt offerings and prayers that Job offered for his children did not spare their lives. A violent storm crushed all of them. They all died. Ten fresh graves on the hillside. No more burnt offerings for them. No more prayers for their well being. It's easy to think, 'what's the point?' Job did all these things, and God didn't protect those kids. Why worship, if your kids are not going to be safe in God's hands? Why all those burnt offerings if God wasn't there for them? Why? The answer is that it is appointed unto man once to die. The answer is that this is not Heaven. The answer is that Satan was testing Job. The answer is that God doesn't owe us a long life, a good life, nor an easy life. The answer is that what Job did was right. Were those ten grown children saved? Will they be in Heaven? That is known only to God. Doing what is right spiritually will not keep pain, trials nor trouble from your doorstep. We don't worship God so we can get what we want. That's the way Satan saw thing. From what he saw, the only reason Job had anything to do with God was because of the blessings God sent to Job. We worship God because He is God. We don't worship to get a better life. We don't follow the Lord so we will have a smile on our faces. With ten new graves, Job still worshipped God. That is a tribute to his character and his faith. Many would have walked away from God at that point. Not Job. Many would have shaken a fist at God in anger. Not Job. God had blessed him with that family. Now that they were gone, Job was still with God.

Job the father. I wonder if our families and our churches would be better if more dads were connected and engaged with their children spiritually as Job was. Something for all of us to think about and something for all of us to work on.

Roger Shouse (Used by permission)