



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)

September 2, 2018

Jump Start #2169

Acts 8:30-31 "And when Philip had run up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him."

Our verse today is the lead in to the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. He had been to Jerusalem to worship. On the way back home, he was reading from Isaiah. The very idea that he had his own personal copy of the Isaiah scrolls is impressive. I doubt that Philip had a copy. They were rare, expensive and not readily available. God sent Philip away from the incredible work he was doing in Samaria to go talk to this Ethiopian. It shows the value of one is as important as many.

As Philip approaches the chariot, he hears the Ethiopian reading Isaiah. Obviously, he must have been reading out loud. A simple question follows. Do you understand what you are reading? The answer, I need someone to help me. Philip is invited to sit and explain the passage. The Ethiopian must have concluded that Philip knew something about the passage.

It is in this that we want to spend some time thinking with you. How can I unless someone guides me, is a great statement. The question is, "who will that Someone be?" When it comes to our children, this responsibility falls to the parents. In order to guide someone, you must know where you are going. If not, we have the blind leading the blind.

In too many homes today, the thought is, "I don't want to cram religion down their throats." So, nothing is done. Instead secular media crams bad words, sorry attitudes and immoral impressions down their throats. Assuming that nothing is done, the child will be neutral and then grow up and make up his own mind is so shallow and wrong. They will learn, the question is from who? Who will guide them? They may learn from TV. They may learn from professors. They may learn from friends. They may learn from the effects of sin. They may learn from Satan. They will learn, but just who is it that will guide them?

Consider the topic of love, Biblical love. This love is a choice, not a feeling. It is one directional. It is not based upon how the other person acts. "For God so loved the world," isn't written about how loveable we are. We weren't. We were rebellious, sinful and disobedient. God chose to love us even though we weren't loving Him at that moment. Biblical love is demonstrated in actions.

(OVER)

We are to love God with all of our heart. We are to love our neighbor. We are to love brethren. Paul defined this kind of love in 1 Corinthians 13. It is unselfish. It thinks of the other. It wants the best for the other. This love is rare and is founded upon Biblical teaching.

Now, your child will learn about love. They may learn that you love only those who love you. This way, love is a reaction and not a choice. Enemies are despised and hated, not loved. Your child may learn that you love only if there is something for you in it. Therefore, to serve is of little value unless it helps you out. They may be taught that lust is the same as love. They may learn that love is the same as happiness and you do whatever you can to be happy. Do you want your child to learn love from you, the parent, who has sacrificed, devoted and shown this kind of love to them, or do you care that they learn love from the person that they are dating, or a movie, or a lustful book? Your child will learn about love. Either the right way from you or the wrong way from the world.

Consider the topic of the Bible. Your child will learn about the Bible. Either from you, the right way, or from the world. You can teach your child that God's word is inspired and that every word is of value. You can teach them to respect and honor and obey God's word. They can learn from you the importance of conforming their lives by God's word. It is God's word that will judge us.

Now, your child will learn about the Bible. They may learn from a denominational preacher that we do not have to do everything the Bible says. They may learn from a college professor that the Bible is a collection of ancient stories and fables and they were written by man, and that God does not exist. They may learn from a friend that being happy is what God wants, so it doesn't matter what your lifestyle, sexual orientation or gender feeling may be, as long as you are happy. Subjects of divorce, morality, life after death, are all addressed in the Bible. Without that knowledge, your child will do what every he feels like. Your child may have the Bible close to their heart all of their life, or they may stick the Bible in a box up on a shelf and rarely ever open it for the rest of their lives. Your child will learn about the Bible. The question is, "who will guide them?"

Other important life lessons, who is God, what about the church, how are we to worship-someone will teach your child. Even the basics such as salvation, your child will hear things. He may just assume that if a person is good, he will go to Heaven. Good people go to Heaven, even if they know nothing about the Lord. He's heard this.

Who will guide them? But before this question is answered, we must ask, "Who is guiding us?" Are we in the same boat as our children? Are we influenced heavily from friends, Google, Facebook, and family more so than by brethren and God's word? Who shapes our opinions? It's kind of hard to guide our children, if we are not being guided the right way. How important therefore, to be part of a congregation where trained, experienced men are in charge of feeding the flock God's word. They understand the value of our hearts being shaped by God's word. They are serious about teaching God's word and all of God's word. They want the Word to be taught accurately and honestly.

The Ethiopian ask, "How can I unless someone guides me?" Who that someone is, determines whether or not a person is guided in the right direction.

Roger Shouse