

MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

Shame On Mom...Or Me?

by Steve Higginbotham (June 20, 2016)

Last week, I was on a mission trip to the island of St. Croix. While on the island, several of us handed out flyers inviting people to hear some preaching that was taking place that week. As usual, I found the responses I received rather interesting. Some people refused to take a flyer from us. Some not only refused to take a flyer, but they felt compelled to lecture and insult us. Others were polite, and some even promised to attend. But of all the people I talked to, I remember a mother and her young son (who was approximately 5-years-old) the most. She was exceptionally polite and enthusiastic about what I handed her. Here's how our brief exchange went. Me: "Hello, ma'am. May I give you a flyer?"

Mother: "Sure! Thanks so much! I really appreciate what you're doing. It's so hot out here today. Thanks!"

Me: "You're welcome." (She was so polite, I turned my head to watch as she and her son walked away, talking about the flyer I gave them) Mother: "Look, son, that man gave us a flyer about the Bible."

Son: "Bible?"

Mother: "Yes, Bible."

Son: "What's a Bible?"

I was stunned when I heard her young son ask her, "What's a Bible?" This woman was the most polite woman I met all week, and yet her young son didn't even know what a Bible was. At this point, the mother in this story becomes an easy target. We could all "pile on" and shame her for her lack of instruction. But before we "jump," we might want to read and reflect upon Paul's statement to the entire church at Corinth. He said:

"Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame" (1 Corinthians 15:34).

Did you see that? Paul stated that Corinth's ignorance of God was, at least in part, the blame and shame of the church. They hadn't done enough. They knew the truth, but they had been too silent in broadcasting it to others. While I was appalled by the lack of spiritual instruction this mother had given to her son, I also felt convicted when I asked myself, "Have I done enough to dispel biblical ignorance?" "Have I remained silent and missed opportunities?" The easy "mark" in this story is the mother, but maybe the more poignant "mark" is you and me. Give it some thought!

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