

Sept 18, 2009

Alex Haley the famous author of the series *Roots* once said, "When an old person dies it's like a library burning [down]." In our modern age of rapidly advancing technology it's easy for some to count the older folks out, but knowledge is not the same as wisdom, which usually comes through experience. It seems in truth that in all the days of man on the earth, technology doesn't seem to increase wisdom all that much. Wisdom seems to come from time and patiently learning life's lessons. It can be passed down from someone else, however, and I believe that is what Mr. Haley was referring to.

I know of a case of a child who was born to an unwed mother and it seems neither she nor the birth father were able or willing to raise the child. Neglected, and it was said, abused, the infant contracted a number of life threatening illnesses and diseases. He was eventually dropped off with another couple to deal with. Because of the physical problems and neglect the child wasn't given much chance to survive, and in fact the doctors predicted that he would never live long enough to see his teens. This is just the child that some in High Places of power today suggest is a bad risk for society and would be a drain of precious resources and the time of professionals and perhaps society would be better off concentrating their time on other less unfortunate children. In fact the child struggled to live but was crippled by the diseases. He spent years in hospitals and convalescent homes. Some felt the couple who were left with the bills and the responsibility may have been better off putting their effort in other places more likely to have good results.

When the boy did get out of the hospitals he was so far behind in school he dropped out altogether. It was a poor economy and there wasn't much likelihood of success for this young man who was left to deal with crippling physical issues. He began to hang out with some rough characters, and even began to carry a gun. In fact I am told he carried it to church when he began going.

But he was able to continue on and actually made a success out of his life in spite of all that was stacked against him. He eventually got his GED and a decent job, got married and raised a family, all despite his challenges. Later, when he was much older, he had heart problems. There are those in power today who would say he'd already lived a long life and had defied the odds, so he should consider that he would be a burden on the next generation by accepting expensive operations and care which might not help a man lucky to have made his seventies. But he did well and never needed another operation and lived a happy and productive life for more than an additional ten years well into his mid-eighties.

The story I am relating for you is just a part of the life story of my dad, Charles W. Phillips. A remarkable man to say the least. He told me his favorite verse in the Bible was Psalm 119:71 "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes."

At one point in his life he was told by his doctor that they would have to amputate his leg. He told me later that he prayed to God that he could be healed of this and not have

to suffer any more difficulties than he already had. He was healed, praise God, and this while a member of a denomination that did not believe in healing.

Our children were able to know their granddad into their twenties and received the benefit of his wisdom, as I had been blessed growing up. That alone is priceless and an example of the blessings of scripture to honor those who have gone before us, our elders. I can think of few things more evil than the doctrines of demons echoing in the high places of our nation which lead to the death or suffering of our elderly fathers and mothers. The people who will not care for the innocent or the helpless will not receive much help from heaven. The youngest and the oldest among us may not serve society in ways that a narcissistic society can see as useful, but God has in his wisdom given them value that is far beyond technological advances.

"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." Eph 6:2, 3