



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)

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JUMP START #238

Psa. 104:1-4 *“Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a cloak, stretching out Heaven like a tent curtain. He lays the beams of his upper chambers in the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he walks upon the wings of the wind; he makes the winds his messengers, flaming fire his ministers.”*

Today, we are using a few more verses than we normally do. I wanted you to capture the adoration and praise towards God that is expressed in these powerful words. It is easy to make our relationship and our worship to God to be about us. We pray our needs. We sing the songs we like. And in all this God tends to be a secondary point to our Christian life and walk. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. God is our life, as Paul said in Col.2. We need to express it in words of praise to God. Praise is about pouring on the positives. It’s opening the door of your heart and letting your feelings out.

In our context, we don’t know the setting here. Was the writer in worship with others or is this a private meditation he had? Either way, it doesn’t change the expressions. Our praise of God should not be limited to Sunday’s in the church building.

Notice how vivid and alive and poetic his praise of God is. It’s not technical. It’s not clinical. It’s not like reading an encyclopedia. I like how so often in Psalms the writer talks to his own soul. He begins, “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” That’s incredible. You’ll find that sprinkled about the Psalms. Have you ever talked to your soul? He did.

God is very great—that is the opening theme. From that principle, the writer imagines God sitting right above him in the clouds. Light, water, clouds, wind and fire become part of the description of God right above him. He doesn’t see God as far away, in the faint stars. He’s walking on the clouds and wind.

(Over)

This chapter in Psalms is long. The majority of it is about the splendor of God. The creation and the world about the writer are reflections of God. It is his world. The grass, the trees, the wind, the sky—these are God's and God is very near. Be careful here, he does not say that God is the wind, nor God is a tree—he is not saying everything is God and God is everything. You won't find that here. God is supreme, distinct and holy. The created world is his world. He uses them and they are at his fingertips.

God is so good to us. First, he has given you today. Not everyone has that. For some, their lives ended this week. Others, last month. Others, years ago. But he has allowed us another day. God is good. God has given us abilities, families, opportunities and promises. No life has not been touched nor blessed by God. God is good.

We often in thinking like this will consider our jobs, this country, freedoms and such like. It's easy to think God is an American. He's not. There are many in this land and others who do not have jobs, freedoms and stuff like so many of us have. We need to see God beyond American eyes, and see how he has blessed all mankind and touch all lives.

Consider his book. Every morning I am finding a powerful passage from the Bible and writing a few thoughts about it. Today is number 238. We've hardly begun. I doubt that you would start your day with my quoting and writing about Mark Twain, the daily finance or a joke of the day. There is something about his book, His words, His ways that touches us and changes us.

Consider his son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. He is God sent. He is our way out of this crazy, sin sick world. He is our hope for seeing God. God so love, the passage says, that he sent.

Consider his work in our lives. God includes us and invites us to work with him in building His kingdom. I doubt the president would invite me to help him, I'd probably make things worse. I'm sure the Colts won't ask my advice about playing football. But the God of heaven includes you and I in the greatest work of all. God is good.

There are many brethren world-wide who do not have the American blessings that we have, but they have the same heavenly blessings from God. He loves all of us and wants all of us to spend forever with him.

Great is our God! If you really felt that way, how would you show it? You'd start by telling God that. Then, you'd get about living the righteous way he wants you to. That's how.

Roger Shouse

Some further thoughts on this:

Monday- Gen. 7:1

Tuesday - Prov. 11:30

Wednesday- Psa. 37:30

Thursday- Psa. 34:17

Friday- Heb. 11:4

Saturday- James 5:16

