



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 #508

Proverbs 25:25 “Like cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a distant land.”

The thought in our passage is easy to understand and the image is very vivid. The weary soul, the thirsty soul is revived by cold water. You see this during time outs of a ball game. The players gather around the coach and they each drink some liquids to keep them going. That is what good news does. It lifts the spirit, it encourages the heart and it builds confidence that there is yet hope. Good news has been received. I think of time many years ago, when young men went off to war. Communication was through letters and only letters. Folks back home would hear about intense battles. They huddled in their homes and church buildings to pray for their young men. Letters arrived. All was well. Rejoicing took place. Good news from a distant land.

Our news today travels rapidly. We get instant traffic updates on our cell phones. We have weather alerts that pop up on our computer screens. Email, facebook. Twitter all make the world a very small place. God has given us the opportunity that other generations would never dream of, to spread good news into distant lands, rapidly and without leaving our homes. What a blessing and opportunity that is. Much good can be done.

Many congregations are actively engaged in this. They put forth material, sermons and studies to remote places that were closed by ignorance. The sharing of good news is something that can even be done on the individual level. Many of you are doing that with these Jump Starts. You send them to people that you know and in many ways you are part of sending good news from a distant land.

Now, if good news from distant land is refreshing, what would bad news be? Defeating? Heartbreaking? Hurtful? This tells us of the importance and responsibility we have on things like facebook. It can be the avenue for good news or the sharing of bad news. It seems that some private things ought to remain private and not be aired for all to see and read. Also, gossip isn't

always verbal. It can be just as deadly and just as wrong in written form and in the form of social media.

The best news from distant land is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It came, He came, from Heaven. The word "Gospel" means "good news," and what good news it is. It shows that God hasn't given up on us even though we sinned and don't deserve another chance. It shows that God believes that we are worth saving. We're not junk as Satan wants us to believe. God knows that we can change, that's why He sent the Gospel. It's not a message of the impossible, but the probable. We can be His disciples. We can walk in righteousness. We can be holy as He is holy. We can go to Heaven. Now that's good news!

Remember the good news of God. Many families are struggling today. The economy is shaky. Many have issues in their hearts and homes that are not resolved. Strained marriages, prodigals that refuse to come home, dysfunctional congregations make our souls weary and beaten down. We often wonder if we can go on. The stress is hard. Those not walking in those shoes, have a hard time understanding all this. They add to the weariness. The new year is looked upon with hope and change, and I hope it does for you. The good news is simply that-it's good news. It reminds us that God is with us, even in the storms. The apostles learned that lesson. It reminds us that our problems stay in this life, they do not go with us to Heaven. It reminds us that God cares, He always has.

The hope for the new year is the Gospel. That is the best news we could ever receive. Maybe more time in prayer, more time in Bible would help all of us, but knowing God is ever for us and with us, is the best news ever. We want our problems to go away. God often uses them to mold us and teach us. There are things we see in night that we never see in the day. There are things we see in problems that we never see in the good times.

May each of our readers realize that we are blessed by the God of Heaven and earth. I pray that we all have a great coming year and that God's news, the good news, will bring us closer to Him, even in ways we can't dream or imagine.

Roger Shouse

