



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)

May 5, 2013

Jump Start # 506

Colossians 3:1 *“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”*

It doesn't take reading the New Testament very long until one sees that there are many passages about responsibility and taking ownership of our spiritual walk. The apostles didn't need a calendar to motivate brethren to be better, do more, dig deeper, walk closer with the Lord. The "resolution" that they used, was not a new year, but Jesus Christ. He alone was the reason to change and become motivated to be more spiritual.

That sense of ownership comes from reflecting and closeness to the Lord. The spiritual man is constantly looking inward, upward and outward. He has regular reminders and helps. Prayer will do that. Scriptures will do that. The Lord's Supper will do that. Those regular habits keep a person adjusting their attitudes, behavior and heart to become more pleasing to God.

Our passage is one example of that. Here Paul tells the Colossians to "keep seeking the things above..." The **KEEP** part is a continual practice. It's not something that can be done just once. Keep seeking the things above crosses our minds when we are talking to others. Is what I'm saying appropriate? Is it gossip? Is it helpful? Should I not say anything? These little inner thoughts a person has helps them to keep seeking the things above. Keep seeking crosses our minds when we make choices above movies, clothing, and even friends. Everything has an impact and an influence upon us as we do others. Keep seeking thinks about that. Keeping the soul strong, healthy and working for the Lord is a constant thought for those seeking things above.

I read the other day a collection of letters from soldiers during the Civil War. A young man from Alabama, homesick for his family, wrote, "I am here, but my mind is with you there." That's the essence of the spiritual man. He is here, but his mind is there with Christ. He lives with one foot in Heaven.

That thought keeps us from living a dual life. Some do this and it doesn't work well. On Sunday they are spiritual. Monday-Saturday they are secular. They don't have room nor much time for God at work. It's dog eat dog there and there's no room for "seeking things above" at the corporate level. Such a person is constantly being chased by guilt. He is not enough spiritual to really make a difference in his life and he has so much world in him that he knows that he has crossed the line more than once in morals, ethics and honesty. He justifies it by believing the lie that he has to if he wants to survive and succeed.

God wants us to live a singular life. To be a spiritual person everywhere, all the time. Yes, even in the dog eat dog world, a person can seek the things above. It's being done all the time by successful brethren who refuse to cut corners, fudge numbers, play people, drink socially, or become the corporate dog that everyone fears. They work in the cesspool of the gutter called corporate America. Their co-workers would do anything to get a step ahead, but not these brethren. They are seeking the things above. Through their influences, meetings have toned down and the language improved. Through their leadership, doing the right thing has become more important than the just showing a profit at the end of the month. They have lived "seeking things above." I know brethren like this. Some serve as shepherds of God's people. Many have influenced co-workers and customers to seek the Lord. Some of you are receiving these devotionals because these brethren thought of you. They never turn off that spiritual radar. They are always seeking the things above. Work is not their life, Christ is. The way they raise their families, the way they enjoy themselves, the way they look at life, is through spiritual lenses. They have come through tragedies and hardships and heartache still maintaining their faith and seeking the things above. Some day, they hope to be above where Christ is.

It can be done. You can do it. Even today, you can begin "seeking things above." You do this by asking, 'What would God want me to do?' Or, 'What's the best thing to help me spiritually?' Always thinking, always looking, always spiritual. Always. Perfect? No. Sinless? No. But spiritual? Absolutely. Spiritual and Biblical conversations come easily with spiritual people. They like reflecting and learning and sharing and growing. They are becoming better and better all the time. Their attitudes, their hope, their manner of life is spiritual.

Seek the things above...it starts today. It starts with you. It starts with a prayer asking God to help you.

Roger Shouse