



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 # 485

Matthew 16:21 "Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You!'"

Poor Peter. He meant well. He loved the Lord and was trying to be optimistic and encouraging but without realizing it, He was standing in the very way of what Jesus came to do.

Jesus had just told the disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things, be killed and then on the third day be raised up. This was too much for Peter. He didn't like hearing these things. Little did He realize that this was God's plan. God was not going to forbid it. Jesus Himself would pray in the garden to "let this cup pass from Me," but that was not the will of God. God so loved that He gave-that was the purpose and that was the plan.

It has always amazed me that Peter "rebuked" Jesus. The word "rebuke" is a strong word. It is a word of correction. You use that word not when someone is right, but when they are wrong. Paul included this word when he told Timothy to preach the word. He was to reprove, REBUKE and exhort brethren with God's word. The word of God will correct a person-IF THEY ARE IN THE WRONG. Jesus wasn't.

It's interesting that often those who are in the right receive rebukes and correction. A parent tries to discipline their child and the child lashes out at the parent. Who is in the wrong? A cop pulls over a speeding car and the driver, who is in the wrong, gives the police a stream of harsh and unkind words.

Sometimes a parent may be wrong. Sometimes the police fumble the ball. But not Jesus. Not once. He never had to apologize. He never misstated His words. He never had a mental lapse. He never lost His cool. He never went too far, over the edge, or was in the wrong. Never! Hebrews tells us that He was tempted as we are, YET without sin. (Heb. 4:15) He was always right. Even when He told Peter and the others that He was going to die and be raised.

I also find it interesting that some folks are more interested in correcting others than they are themselves. They always seem to know what the other person ought to do, and not only do they know, they have to tell. They often tell people not involved. They just love to "fix" the problems of others, run the lives of others, and generally, let everyone know that life would be much easier if everyone did things their way. Do you know anyone like that? I do. It's hard being around them. Sometimes parents of adult children act this way. We have a hard time cutting the strings and letting them live their own lives. The role of parents to grown children changes with age. You no longer control, nor tell them what to do. That worked well when they were five, but when they are thirty-five, it bombs. The role shifts from deciding their life to merely advising their life and they may not like your advice any longer.

Peter rebuke the perfect Jesus. He didn't like what he heard from Jesus, so he felt compelled to correct Jesus. Peter missed it. He was so far off, that the Lord would say, "Get behind me, Satan!" What Peter suggested is what Satan wanted. Satan did not want Jesus on the cross. The cross crushes Satan and it atones for sin, once for all. Satan tried to get Jesus to by-pass the cross at the temptations. He offered Him all the kingdoms of the world, just bow to Satan. Peter was acting more like Satan than he was a disciple. The one who rebuked got rebuked. Peter was wrong, Jesus was right.

We don't tell God what to do. We don't blame God. We don't try to stop what God wills. Peter would learn. It took a while. The same goes for us. Sometimes it takes us a while to grasp what God's will is and our role in those things. When we do, we learn that God thinks higher, better and sees farther out than we do. That's just the way God is.

God has a plan for you. Do you know that? Are you working with God on that or are you fighting God, trying to go your own way and do things your own way? God was patient with Peter. He's also patient with us. God knows what He is doing and He is NEVER wrong. Never.

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