



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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Psalms 14:1 *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good.”*

The words from this old, old Psalm seem alive and fresh today. The arrogant and offensively opinionated opposition to things decent and right seem to be on the rise. Stand up for God and one will be the target of tons of hate emails and posts on facebook. Our county is being pulled to polar opposites in politics, ideology and beliefs about morality and decency. A Baptist church in the Louisville area proudly announced that they will conduct same-sex marriages. The fact that a church from the Baptist background took that position is surprising. Grabbing headlines. Free PR. Edgy. Attracting people more interested in same sex marriage than God. Why stop there? Why not announce that they are going to support and condone marriages between 50 year old men and 14 year old girls? Why not support a man marrying 3 women at the same time? Why not marry a woman and her dog? Some will say, “that’s sick.” It’s not, once God is tossed out of the discussion, the Bible is closed and we do what ever we want. It will happen sooner or later.

A society without God becomes drunk on pushing the limits of wrong. Drugs are in. Abortion is in. But God is out. Our passage shows the natural bridge from corrupt and abominable deeds and a denial of God. Without God, every person becomes their own judge. Without God guilt is removed and wrong becomes right. Without God, our times do not become better but worse. More self centeredness. More apathy toward others. More misery. Less optimism and hope. More greed. More materialism. Shallow thinking. Superficial relationships. The worship of image and style.

I once thought that the extreme liberal theology and ideology was held by a few powerful movers in Washington and Hollywood. I don’t anymore. I believe the influence has affected many. Many have drunk from those poisoned waters and now fallen prey to the mindless arrogance of liberalism. It’s hard to imagine that people actually believe tossing God out of society is a good thing. It’s hard to imagine that they believe legalizing drugs will be good for a nation. That’s where we are at. The extreme liberal thinking is spreading into all areas of life. There will be more and more ads and commercials featuring homosexual couples, because that is being accepted as “normal.” More nudity is finding it’s way on TV. The censors are going to sleep and allowing more and more filthy words to be aired.

These folks are happy, happy, happy, that they don't have God in their life. Later this week, I go to bury a friend. He was not like this. Not at all. He believed with all his heart. His funeral will be filled with Scripture, hope and faith-the foundations of my friends life. Tears will be shed, but not in despair and anger. We miss but we know. We know, by faith that he lives. We know by faith that he dwells with God. We know by faith that he is doing well.

What do those who toss God out do at funerals? I can tell you. Years ago I bought a set of books that were stuffed full of articles and newspapers clippings. I bought the books just to get all the things stuffed in them. Among the items was a newspaper clipping, from 1899, reporting on the funeral of the great Robert Ingersoll. He was a famed politician and arrogantly ridiculed religion and belief in God. He willed that at his funeral, no Bible was to be read, no prayers said no hymns sung. And thus it happened just that way. The newspaper report of the funeral said it was most strange thing the writer ever witnessed. Purely secular, just as Ingersoll wanted. But the end of the article was most telling. The funeral was over and it was time to bury the body. Ingersoll's wife and two daughters clung to the body. They refused to release him to the grave. This continued through the night and into the next day. Having no hope of seeing him again. Having no hope of the eternal. Those that deny God come to the reality of their beliefs that death is the end. The cemetery is as far as the journey goes. In those dark moments, there is no one to appeal to. There is no compassion. There is no hope. Only the blackness of despair awaits those have lived without God. This is how their belief system ends. It's an ugly picture.

There must be a call to reason and hope. Evidence must be sounded forth that God is. The righteous of God must stand up, speak out and call forth the Gospel message. "Ring it out," is a hymn for God's people. The nation will continue to be more and more secular. Fewer and fewer people today crack open a Bible. A generation has come that never darkens a church building and never has a spiritual thought. It's all about today. Tomorrow never enters their mind. Consequences, decisions and hope are not thought of because they involve thinking beyond today. You will find more and more people whose only concept of Noah is from a movie that is fictional. We live with people who do not know God. These are teaching times for God's people. It's time to quit fussing about ourselves and get busy teaching the world. God needs you to be his voice, hands and feet this day.

The fool says there is no God. The righteous know differently. They know, believe and live with God every day. That difference, is all the difference in this world, and the next.

Roger Shouse

