



# THE EXHORTER

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***“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](http://prchurchofchrist.org))

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***Luke 7:12 "Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her."***

Intersections are important and interesting. As we drive down roads, we come across intersections all the time. Two roads intersect. Nothing really special about that. But there are other intersections that are. The intersecting of lives. People meet and good things happen.

Our passage today is about the intersection of two large crowds. The events take place in the city of Nain. Jesus was entering the city. The apostles and a large crowd was with Him. Jesus had just healed the servant of a Roman soldier. I expect there was a lot of noise, talking, energy in this crowd. Jesus was doing amazing things.

As they approached the city gate, they intersected another large crowd. Jesus was coming into the city, this crowd was leaving the city. It was a funeral procession. Luke details the sadness of the day. A mother was burying her son. It was her only son. Luke adds, she was a widow. She had no one. Alone now in life in a world where there was no life insurance, few women worked, and the concerns of such people were not considered. Her only real hope would be to marry again. Maybe she didn't want to marry again. Did she have brothers who might take her in? It was a sad, sad day.

Two crowds intersect. One coming and one leaving. One excited and one sad. I would hope that the crowd coming in would step aside and allow the funeral procession to pass on by. I would hope that the noisy crowd would quiet down when they realized it was a funeral. Those are decent things that decent people do. But something happened. Something always does when Jesus is around.

Luke tells us that Jesus saw her. He saw her tears, because He said, "Do not weep." I expect everyone in Jesus' crowd saw her, but no one really saw her like Jesus did. He felt for her. He was touched. Instead of just standing to the side and allowing the funeral to pass by, Jesus interrupted the funeral. He did that to every funeral He attended. Death is sad. Death is Satan's greatest weapon. Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan, and that meant, defeating death. This was not one victory that Satan was going to have. Not on this day.

(OVER)

Jesus touched the coffin and spoke to the dead man. He told the dead man to "arise." In a powerful but quiet thought, Luke states, "the dead man sat up and began to speak. Oh, wouldn't we all love to know what he said? Wouldn't we love to know what it was like on the other side? What he said is not recorded. What he saw was not left for us. Jesus could talk to the dead. The dead, being dead, obeyed Jesus. His voice crosses over into the next world. Jesus, right then and there, illustrated that He had all authority.

The crowd was gripped with fear and began glorifying God. Which crowd? The going crowd or the coming crowd? Yes. Both. All of them. No one had seen anything like this before.

This miracle wasn't planned. It just happened, as most miracles do. God doesn't have to rehearse. God doesn't need to make an appointment to do things. The power, love and authority of Christ are all shown in this great story.

Intersections. They still happen today. You meet someone at work, or school, or out and about. A conversation takes place. The conversation turns to spiritual things, because that is important to you. An invite to church services or a Bible class is extended. The person shows up. A bit scared. A bit unsure. You greet them, sit with them and introduce them to others. They have questions. Bible passages are shown to answer those questions. In a short while, they are coming all the time. They obey the Gospel and become Christians. The lost has been saved. The dead made alive. Your intersection with them was the key.

Without Jesus, those crowds in Luke would have passed without any notice, changes or hope. With Jesus, the dead are made alive. That same thing happens today spiritually.

Jesus noticed this poor mother. He saw her. Jesus didn't let the excitement of his crowd blind him to what was going on around him. Not everyone feels the same as you do. Not everyone may be excited when you are. The intersection brought two different crowds, going two different ways, with two different emotions together. Jesus noticed. Do you?

The key to compassion is being able to see others. Jesus always did that. He saw the bent over woman in the synagogue when most over looked her. He saw Zaccheus up in the tree. He saw the adulterous woman who was thrown before Him in the Temple. Jesus saw. Hurting people. Hopeless people. Desperate people. Messy people. Sinful people. People who needed Christ. People who needed a second chance.

Jesus saw intersections. We become the Lord's hands, feet and eyes, when we notice them as well.

Roger Shouse

