



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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Mark 10:22 *“But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.”*

Our verse today is found at the end of the encounter of a rich young ruler who chased Jesus down and asked Him what he had to do to inherit eternal life. There were many commendable things about this young man. His question was amazing. He was spiritual, concerned and took his question to the right source. He was obedient to God's law. What a great catch he would make for some young lady. However, Jesus saw something in him that was a problem. Within his heart there was a defect. It wasn't physical, it was spiritual. His stuff, his riches, came between him and God. Get rid of them. Simple solution. Follow Christ. He couldn't do it. Given the choice between what he owed and Jesus, he chose his stuff.

He walked away. He ran to Jesus, but now he walked away. He came excited, now he left disappointed. The passage states, "he was saddened and he went away grieving..." He was disappointed in what Jesus said. It wasn't the outcome that he expected. He surely thought Jesus would love to have a rising superstar on His team. Young. Talented. Wealthy. Move over, Peter. Get out of the way, John. We've added a new player to the team. But that's not what Jesus said. You can follow Me, but first, get rid of your stuff. Your stuff is choking you. Your stuff is killing you. Your stuff is too much. It's become you. It's become your god. He couldn't do it. He left. He was disappointed.

Disappointments are a part of life. They come in many fashions. You have a day off and plan to spend it outside but it rains that day. Disappointed. Tonight, I'm pulling for my Dodgers. If they lose, they are done for the year. If they lose, I will be disappointed. People can disappoint us. They can let us down. They can not live up to the promises that they made. There is a sadness, even a grieving when disappointments occur.

Our passage reveals two disappointments.

(OVER)

First, the young man was disappointed with God. Some still are. They want to tell God what to do. They expect God to find them a job while they spend the day playing video games. When Jesus told the disciples to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread..." inherit in that thought is the idea of a farmer who grows the grain and the disciple who goes to work, earns a living and then goes to the market and buys the bread. The bread doesn't fall from the sky like manna. Our cupboards do not magically get filled over night. Some are disappointed that God will not allow them to do what they want in worship. Some would rather howl at the moon than follow the Bible. They want change. They are always interested in changing things. Never content. Never settled with God, they want to introduce their wild ideas. God won't have it. They get disappointed. Some are disappointed that God expects things out of them. They want to be forgiven but they don't to have to go to church on Sundays. They'd rather spend the day doing what they want. Some are disappointed that God has allowed death in their families. A child dies. A parent dies. How disappointed they are in God. Like the man in our story, when disappointed with God, they walk away. They are done with God. If God won't do what I want, then I have no need for Him.

Second, there was another disappointment in this text that lies under the surface. Jesus was disappointed in Him. Jesus wasn't making demands so he would quit. When he walked away from Jesus, the Lord didn't say, "Good." No, He wanted him to follow. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. He was heading to Jerusalem for the last time. He had an appointment with the cross. He knew that. What a tragic turn of events. Jesus knowing that in a week or so, He would be crushed, tortured and executed on the cross for this very young man that He was talking to. Jesus was giving His life up for that young man. Yet, that young man couldn't give up his stuff for Jesus. Jesus was willing to give all, and he couldn't even give up stuff that doesn't matter. He walked away from Jesus. The text doesn't tell us, but knowing Jesus, I wouldn't be surprised to know that a tear was rolling down his cheek. He didn't want it to turn out this way.

We must realize that when we sin we disappoint God. The Lord wants us to do well. The Lord wants us to walk in righteousness. When we don't, we disappoint Him. We let Him down.

It is interesting also, that Jesus continued His journey to Jerusalem. He could have thought, if this young man represents how most are feeling, why even go through with this? Why die for them when they don't even care? Why do this? Yet, Jesus went on to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the cross. He was walking to obedience of His Father's will as the young man was walking away from God. What a contrast.

Here in lies the greater lesson. When we are disappointed, are we going to walk away and quit, or as Jesus did, continue to do what we know is right? A mate disappoints you, walk away from the marriage or continue to do what God expects you to do in that marriage? A friend in Christ disappoints you-quit, or continue to walk with God? This young man didn't hear what he wanted. So he went back home. He came asking about eternal life. He went back home empty. He didn't get what he wanted. Dejected, saddened, and unless he changed, he was heading to a death without Christ. He walked away from forgiveness. He walked away from truth. He walked away from Heaven. He walked away from eternal life. He walked away because he was disappointed.

What are you going to do when you are disappointed? What are you going to do when things do not turn out as you wanted them to? Are you going to stay on the path to Jerusalem or are you going back home, sad? Are you going to stay with God or are you going to quit?

The character of Jesus and this young man come to the forefront as we see how they handled the disappointment. It also shows in the way you and I handle our disappointments.

On to Jerusalem or go back home? What will it be for you?

