



# 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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**Romans 14:10-11** *"But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.'"*

This week we have been looking at the concept of God as a judge. He is called "the righteous judge." We will be judged according to His word. At the judgment the books will be opened, Revelation tells us. If our names are found in the book of life, we will enter into Heaven.

Our verse today, from Romans, identifies three things that will happen when we are judged by God.

First, we will all stand before the judgment seat. There is no exemptions here. No one gets a pass. The great down to the small shall stand before God. We are accountable to God.

Second, every knee shall bow. This is done in reverence. We bow our heads when we pray. This shows respect. This acknowledges one in authority. Every knee. That includes those who are defiant and will not submit to God today. That includes those who have spent a lifetime telling others that there is no God. That includes those who have loved God for a long, long time. Every knee. That includes my knees and your knees.

Third, every tongue shall give praise to God. Every. Tongues that lied, will give praise. Tongues that cursed, will give praise. Tongues that have never praised God, will give praise. Tongues that have preached, will give praise. Tongues that have defended God will give praise. Every tongue.

In Philippians we find a similar verse to what we read here in Romans. There it says, "so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (2:10-11). What the Philippian passage implies is that the bowing and the tongues confessing will take place at the same time. All creation will honor the Lord. That is special and unique for many reasons.

First, all creation has never been together. It's been impossible. Different generations make that impossible. Geography makes that impossible. Time zones make that impossible. This is like the Revelation passage that Jesus is coming and every eye will see Him. That seems impossible to us. One side of the globe sees the sun, but at the same time, the other side of the globe it's night. Obviously, God can take care of that little detail.

**(OVER)**

All creation together at one time. All creation gathered by God. Everyone who has ever lived. Everybody. The famous people that you studied in history. Family members that you discovered in your genealogy but lived long before you were born. Those names you read about in the Bible. Everyone. The good, the bad and everyone in between. People you have forgotten about. People that you worked with. Former neighbors. That's just hard for us to grasp. Everyone.

Second, all creation has never bowed and confessed Christ before. Some have. Many haven't. Many refuse to. Many don't believe. Many are blindly following other gods. But not at this event. Not at the judgment. Every knee...every tongue. The tongues of kings and presidents confessing Christ. The tongues of rock stars confessing Christ. The tongues of movie stars confessing Christ. The tongues of scientists confessing Christ. The tongues of bad men confessing Christ. The tongues of family members, who never confessed, now, confessing Christ. My tongue. Your tongue. What a sound that will be.

Are we to assume that some will be forced against their will to do this? Some would not go to worship without a fight. They'd kick and scream the whole way. They'd fuss and argue about what was said. They'd bolt out as fast as they could. Or, could it be, at the presence of Jesus, everyone will know for sure. Knees will bow out of fear and knowledge that Jesus is God. Denials and doubts will vanish away. He is the Lord. There is a God. They will do this because they now know.

What a marvelous sight that will be. Everyone bowing. Everyone. This won't be like the Babylonian scene where everyone bowed to the statue except the three Jewish boys. Not at God's judgment. All will bow.

This event settles everything. God wins. God is. The arguments will cease. The debate ends. Every person will finally know for sure. Jesus is the Christ and every soul will bow in reverence to Him.

Why does God tell us these things now? Why not just wait until it happens?

God doesn't keep secrets. He tells His people what happens. We know what happens at death. We know what happens after death. We know about resurrections. We know about Hades. We know about judgment. We know about Heaven and Hell. Knowledge and especially faith drives out fear and worry. Faith isn't blind. It is built upon and around the truth of God's word. God tells us and we believe.

God tells us these things because He wants us to be a people who are already bowing and praising Christ. Our lives are lived this way. Our choices and our faith leads us to worship. These things are good and right. We do these things because we believe and we love God. Our knees bow. Our tongues confess.

Have you ever literally bowed on your knees in prayer? This is not to be done as a show or a statement that "I'm better than you." Quietly. On your own. Bowed and prayed. It doesn't make your prayer fly faster to Heaven. It doesn't make your prayer better. It's an attitude, that's all. You can pray without bowing your head. If you're driving in your car, keeping your eyes open and not bowing your head is probably a safer way to pray. Our posture doesn't affect the prayer. But it can affect the praying heart. Humble, honor, reverent is what comes from such things. Ought we have the whole congregation bow? No. That misses the point. That forces the position. Some can't. Some would be so worked up about things that they wouldn't pray. If you want to do it, do it on your own. Do it quietly and reverently.

We can be bothered that not every tongue today will confess Christ as Lord. We can be bothered that not every knee will bow in honor of the Lord today. But what about your knee and your tongue? Don't let others bother you. See to it that you are bowing and you are praising God. Your choices reflect this. Your attitude demonstrates this. Your heart shows this.

Bowing and confessing-you can do it now or you will do it later. It's best to do it now.

