



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 # 1607

2 Corinthians 5:8 " We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."

The end of 2 Corinthians four and the first part of the fifth chapter define the proper attitude that a child of God should have toward our journey with the Lord. Given the choice, we would rather be out of here and be with the Lord. There is a running contrast through these verses about home, which means Heaven with God, or absent, which means here on earth. While on earth, we are in our earthy tent or body. To be with the Lord, means we part from this tent or body. Being at home in this body, the apostle reminds us, means being absent from God.

From this, we see a few lessons.

First, preferring to be with the Lord, means one must die. Tearing down this earthly tent, being absent from this body, are wonderful expressions that plainly point to the fact that to accomplish this we must die. Christians should not fear death. Those not in Christ had better, but not the child of God. It means we are out of here and we are with the Lord. Death is just a doorway that allows us to move into the next room where God is. We get fixated with that door. We worry about that door. We dread that door. Not Paul. "We prefer to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." This words mirror what he wrote to the Philippians when he said, "for me to die is gain." I prefer it. It's my wish. It's want I want. Being with the Lord is not only our goal, it's when life really begins.

Second, Paul felt trapped in this body. He said, "we groan, being burdened." We are limited in this body. I moved mulch yesterday. A mountain of mulch. Today, I am sore. We wake up some days and do not feel well. We wear out. At the end of the day, our batteries are shot. We have to go to bed. Some need medicines. We are limited, burdened and confined while in our bodies. We can only go so long without food and rest. Things afflict us from bugs, diseases and stress. Traffic annoys us. Noise gives us headaches. We get older and we move slower. We are trapped in this body. This body has served us well. It has housed our soul and enabled us to function and do what we can. Our bodies is how we recognize each other. But Paul was ready to part with that body of his. He was ready to free his soul. The soul, once home with God, would not tire, become sickly or be burdened because of the body it was housed in. Like a bird set free from a cage, the soul would not be afflicted with the worries, limitations and stresses that come from our bodies.

(OVER)

Paul seemed to be more soul-oriented than we are. We tend to put too much emphasis upon our bodies, the cages of our soul. Paul wanted to part with that cage. This desire to be free from the body was a spiritual decision. It was not wanting to be free from pain and disease. It was not that he was tired and just wanted to rest. He wanted to be with the Lord. That desire, that concept, ought to give some of us serious thought about medical treatment and the decisions that often have to be made. Folks are living longer and longer it seems. Some are alive today, who would not be that way a generation ago. Medicines, treatment and surgeries have kept us going and going. The world who lives by no faith, must grab every once of life that it can. This is why some approaching their nineties are still having surgeries, intense chemo, which is hard on them. Why are they doing this at that age? Some think this is all there is. They have no faith, belief or room for God in their hearts. They live for now. So, they must preserve life at all costs-and what a cost it is. It drains the finances and it sucks the energy out of a person. Paul was ready to go. Let's get out of here and let's get to Heaven. What a wonderful, spiritual outlook.

Paul felt he was trapped in his body.

That leads us to our third thought, "trapped in this body." That is the latest movement in the ungodly crowd. Transgender-a woman trapped in a man's body. It is screaming to get out. It seems just a moment ago, the anti-god movement was demanding same-sex marriage. They got it. Now they are moving on. Same bathrooms and locker rooms for everyone. A genderless society. They are forcing major corporations, school systems and later churches, to cater to their demands. This is nutsy. The transgender crowd numbers less than 0.003% of the population. It is a small, small fragment. Why are all these changes being forced upon places because of a few?

Understand transgender: first, a man can put on make up, wear women's clothing, have an operation and take hormone pills, but he is still a man. They chromosomes do not change. That is what determines our gender. That cannot be changed. Biology teaches us that. You may change the wrapper, but it is what it is on the inside.

Second, God doesn't make mistakes. Saying I was supposed to be a woman, but I look like man, speaks of a mistake. There was a mistake in the shipping department. The wrong order got placed. God doesn't do that. God doesn't make mistakes. The transgender movement doesn't believe in creation nor the God of the Bible.

Third, one is transgender, not by birth, but by dysfunctional upbringing, influences, choices and a life without God. Transgender is not a biological factor. It is a mental disorder. Someone is not normal. This is a psychological problem not a gender problem. This is a choice. Putting men in women's bathrooms and locker rooms is just the ticket for trouble. It will happen.

I read one article where a person said, "I feel like a woman today." That's dumb. What does that mean? Men don't know what it is like to feel like a woman. So, this guy may feel girly today, but not tomorrow? His brain must be misfiring. Simon and Garfunkel had a song, "I am a rock." So, can a person say, "Today, I feel like a rock?" How about, "Today, I feel like a porcupine?" "Today, I feel like a tree?"

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul stated that the effeminate would not inherit the kingdom of God. So, transgender is now the topic of the month. Once the anti-god gets the laws changed, they will march on to the next perversion. They will not be satisfied until the abnormal is normal and the normal is abnormal. What a mixed up, crazy and godless world we live in. And Paul wanted out. Get me home. I prefer to be with the Lord.

Don't you? This world is not my home. Prefer to be home with the Lord. That sounds better all the time.

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