



# 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*

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## Jump Start # 1677

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**Romans 1:16** *“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*

God's word is powerful. It is able to cut through false ideas, excuses, and doubts. It is powerful enough to change a person. The word for "power" is from the same root word for dynamite. Explosive. We know this, but then we don't. It seems that God's word is powerful when it comes to Romans, but not so powerful when it comes to Corinthians.

Here is what I mean. In 1 Cor. 6, Paul states that fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunks, revilers, swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. He then reveals, "such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." This list of sins involve serious problems. Yet it seems that the word of God was capable of changing the minds and hearts of those Corinthians. How did they overcome and break free from homosexuality without exit counseling? How did they handle the addiction to alcohol without a 12-step program?

It seems that today, we are quick to send someone to counseling to deal with these very things that the Corinthians dealt with. Sexual sins, addictions, twisted thinking—we race a person off to the counselor to get straightened out and turned around. I'm sure there is much that is productive and helpful from good counselors, but I also wonder if we have given up on the power of God's word and feel that these problems are too complex and too delicate for any of us to handle. How could Corinthians get turned around without trained help? It didn't exist back then. How did the common believer get help in the 13th century? He was poor, many couldn't read, and they lived in small villages that didn't have the resources that we do today. Was it possible for a person who grew up without God and accustomed to some of the very things that the Corinthians were engaged in, to flee those things and be pleasing to God? That villager didn't have experts in addictions to help him. How did he do it?

I wonder if in modern times, with all the rehabs, counseling, and "experts" that are available, if we have short changed the power of God's word. I wonder if we feel that God's word can't do the trick and that these trained professionals are needed. Or, in the worst situation possible, maybe we want the experts to deal with these messy situations because we don't want to get involved.

**(OVER)**

God's word is powerful enough to change a person. That's the beginning point. Believe this.

God's word is powerful enough to set before a person the life that God wants them to live. It is possible for a person to stop addictions. It is possible for a person to "become" what God wants them to be. Be holy, is more than a stop into a church service on Sunday morning. It is what a person is. They have become that. They have changed. They are now holy. How? Just how does that work? Hate sin. Turn to Christ. Learn. Grow. Fight. Desire to be what God wants you to be.

Is this to say that we should forget modern counseling? No. Is this to say that we should shun outside help? No. What it is saying is that do not view these external help as the savior nor the solution. The help is in God. These external counselors can reinforce and help what God's word is already doing. The hope is in the word of God. The power is in the word of God.

For centuries, God's people have been able to help one another by using the word of God. This will continue and always be the best available tool to fight the sin in our lives. Nothing beats the word of God. Maybe it's time we plugged the word of God back in. Maybe it's time we see how lives were changed through the preaching and dedication to the word of God. Maybe it's time we took a look at the power of God's word.

Are you currently going to counseling to get some help? Good. Keep going. But fill your heart with the word of God. See what God wants from you. Learn to become. Don't view counseling as an alternative to God's word. Don't see it as a choice between counseling or the Bible. Combine the two. Use them both. The power is in God's word. Commitment. Loyalty. Dedication. These virtues will help you. Some battles people face are lifelong. Some of these battles are very hard. We can sure get ourselves into all kinds of messes. In my area, heroin addiction is off the charts. Lives are being consumed by this dangerous drug. I don't get it. I don't understand why someone would even start. The death grip that this drug has on people is unbelievable. Simply sharing a verse doesn't fix the problem. As intense as therapy must be, so must the teaching of God's word must be. Accountability is a must. Change the person's environment. End some friendships. Start godly habits. Turn this thing around before it's too late.

Our hope in saving marriages, breaking free from addictions, conquering debt, overcome phobias, dealing with our past, must be in Christ. It is Jesus who is our Savior and our hope. Use tools to help but understand the power is in the word of God. Counseling without Christ, will leave a person empty. The demons may be drained out, but nothing will be there to replace them. The person is empty. The Gospel fills a person with purpose, reason, hope and power. I can do all things through Christ. (**Phil. 4:13**) Those were the words of Paul. Do you think, through Christ, he could have overcome addictions? Self-esteem issues? Fear? Worry? Homosexuality? Dependence upon alcohol?

There is power in the blood. Let's not short change what God's word can do. Let's transfer the power source back to the Bible. Let's put the hope in the word of God. Let's get the proper order about things.

The victory, even over death, is in Christ Jesus.

Roger Shouse

