



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

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John 17:4 *“I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”*

Accomplished. Finishing the job. Completing things. This year's Super Bowl game well illustrates this thought. A team with a large lead, that looked like they were going to win the game, lost in overtime. They didn't finish. Jesus completed what He set out to do.

Four times in John's Gospel, the word "accomplish" is found. Twice it is used to tell us that Jesus had a job to do. He was to accomplish what His Father sent Him to do. Twice this word is used in the past tense to show us that Jesus completed the task. He accomplished what He came to do. This is made stronger when we see one of the seven statements Jesus made on the cross was, "It is finished." He didn't say, "I'm finished," but, rather, "IT." The "IT" is what He came to do. "It" was His mission. He finished what He came to do. Task completed.

There are three thoughts for us here:

First, Jesus finished what He came to do. Dying on the cross was the purpose of His coming. God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten (**John 3:16**)...The "giving" of Jesus, was His purpose. In Luke, Jesus said, "I came to seek and save that which was lost."**(Luke 19:10)** That's why He came. He completed His task.

Some would have us to believe that Jesus didn't get everything done. There remains more that He intended to do, such as establishing the Kingdom. Yet, if He declared, "I accomplished the work You have given Me to do," and then He proclaims, "It is finished," it seems then that He must have established the kingdom. Passages found in **Mark 1, Colossians 1 and Revelation 1** all indicate the existence of God's kingdom before the pages of the N.T. were completed. Jesus finished. Nothing was left undone. Nothing was put on the back burner for another day.

Second, there was more that Jesus could have done, but he didn't. On the way to Jerusalem to be crucified, Jesus cured ten lepers. He welcomed Zacchaeus. Was there more that He could have done? Was there more diseased that He could have cured? Certainly. Was there more lepers that could have been cleansed? Sure. Was there more people that He could have taught and explained things to? Absolutely. But the big picture, the main reason why He came was for salvation of mankind.

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That one act on the cross, touched more lives, in more places and in more generations than had He stayed one more day and healed more. Sometimes we can get so bogged down with the little things that we forget the big reason and the big purpose of what we are to do. The expression, "majoring in minors" is used to show that. We can have clean church buildings, all our papers neatly stacked, stapled and the parking lot trash free and the grounds around the church weed free, and have everything on the inside dusted, polished and shinning, but forget that the big picture is saving souls and strengthening the faith of the disciples. Mud huts in Africa, that many of us here would view as disgusting, are used to teach and build faith and in many ways may be accomplishing more than what we are doing in our fancy buildings. The same thought extends to our homes. We can have nice large homes that are simply magazine beautiful. They can have amazing curb appeal, and be breath taking on the inside. They can be decorated and furnished so nice. Our homes can be showcases, but have we forgot the most important thing, our families? Neglect, divorce, and problems can fill the hearts of those that live in those beautiful homes. We can pour so much money and time into making things look perfect that we forget the most important thing, raising a godly family. Jesus finished what He came to do. There were more miracles He could have done. There were more questions He could have answered. But He never forgot why He was there. He finished the job.

Third, Paul picks up on this idea of "accomplishing" what one is sent to do, when he wrote, "I have finished the course." (**2 Tim. 4:7**) Those words are in the language of Jesus. The Lord finished. Paul finished. Again, notice, Paul did not say, "I'm finished." Rather, "I finished the course." We understand that language outside of the Bible. We finish a book. That means we read it. We finish college. That means we completed the classes necessary to get a degree. We finish a meal. That means we ate all that we wanted. We finished. Paul finished the course. Was there more people that he could have preached to? Yes. Was there more letters that he could have written? Probably. Was there more questions he could have answered? Yes. Was there more brethren that he could have encouraged? Yes. But, looking at why he came and what he was supposed to do, he had finished the task.

Now, all of this brings us to this thought. Why are we here and what are we supposed to be doing? Are we majoring in the minor things? Are we finishing what we are supposed to do? Certainly, there will always be more things that we can do, but the main reason, the big picture, are we getting that taken care of?

Here is a short list of some things I would think that we need to be finishing:

- Getting our hearts and lives ready for Heaven
- Showing our family the way to Heaven
- Leaving spiritual footprints for others to follow
- Leaving this place better than we found it
- Helping the next generation to carry on faithfully with the Lord

That's our task. That's why we are here. That's where our attention needs to be. This is what we need to be finishing. Are there other things that we can do? Yes. We can always preach another sermon, teach another class, invite another person to services, have another family over for dinner. Those things we can keep doing forever, but the main purpose, the course that we must finish, are these big picture things. On the other side, once we cross over into the next room, after we die, it really won't matter if we fertilized our yards regularly, rotated our tires on time, always changed the furnace filter when we were supposed to, kept the bird feeder filled, changed the water in the church baptistry every quarter, stocked the supply room and hundreds of little things that are simply little things. Jesus could still be on earth today healing people. That's not why He came. He completed what He was sent to do.

Once we understand what we are supposed to do, then we can get about the job of finishing that. I wonder if most have no idea what they are supposed to do. They find what they want to do, or what they like to do, but so few actually understand this is what I am supposed to do. This is why I am here. Knowing that, we can finish our task.

Jesus accomplished what He intended to do. He finished what He was sent for. Have you?

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