



# 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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***Proverbs 14:12 "There is a way which seems right to man, but its end is the way of death."***

Our verse today is one of those passages that many of us have heard over and over in sermons. It makes a great statement. There is a way which seems right to man. It makes sense to us. It seems good. It looks right. That's the beginning concept of this passage.

Something seems right, looks right, feels good-but it's not. The basis of "right" was the thoughts of man. His determination wasn't based upon Scripture, but his own thinking. What makes sense to us, may not to God. Let's just run down a quick aisle looking at what makes sense to man.

- It makes sense to do whatever makes you happy
- It makes sense to lie if it gets you out of trouble or gets you ahead of the game
- It makes sense to be with someone that makes you happy. If you are not with someone you are happy with, "sense" tells us to find a person that makes you happy
- It makes sense to keep as much money for yourself as possible. You work hard, why should you give your money away to others. Let the government help them. That makes sense.
- It makes sense that doing the best that you can is good enough to get to Heaven
- It makes sense that all the little details of the Bible are for preachers to fuss about, not everyone else
- It makes sense that Heaven ought to be filled with the things we like
- It makes sense that church ought to be fun and not so "preachy"
- It makes sense that I am the way that I am and God will accept me just the way I am. That means I may be homosexual, racist, selfish, unable to keep a promise-that's just the way I am.
- It makes sense that we each find God in our own way and we each do what we naturally feel to worship Him, please Him and honor Him. Diversity is wonderful-that all makes sense
- It makes sense that God may be different to each of us. He may be one way to the Christian, another way to the Hindu, another way to the Muslim, another way to Shinto. Same God, just different names and different ways to approach Him. That makes sense.
- It makes sense, as the bumper stickers say, that we ought to Co-exist with all beliefs and all faiths. We ought to all get along and save planet earth. That makes sense.
- It makes sense getting out of a bad marriage, no matter whose at fault or what the cause it. That makes sense.
- It makes sense that all the churches ought to help out in the community. They ought to be feeding hungry people, providing safe havens for kids to play and offering services that help the community. That makes sense.

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- It makes sense to operate the church like a democracy, giving the people a voice and a vote
- It makes sense that women ought to be able to preach and have leadership roles in the church. They have something worthy to listen to. That all makes sense.
- It makes sense that the rules of the Bible need to change with the times. Our laws do. Culture and times change, and so should the Bible. That makes sense.

There is a long list of things that make sense to man. This is where many stand. These things seem right. These things can't be argued against. Who would dare question these things. They seem so right. All of this is the front part of the passage. There is the back part as well.

But its end is the way of death-that's how the verse ends. What seems right isn't. What makes sense to us, doesn't to God. What everyone agrees with, doesn't fly with the way Heaven thinks. So, where does this leave us?

What makes sense to me, cannot be the standard of right and wrong. What makes sense to me, does not mean God approves of it. What makes sense to me, is based upon me, not Him. My happiness is not the most important thing in the world. The center of the universe is not me-Copernicus proved that. God's way, the prophet Isaiah wrote, are higher than our ways. God doesn't think the way we think. God not only thinks differently than we do, He thinks better than we do. His ways always trump our ways. When at a conflict arises between what the Bible says and what I think is best, follow the Bible. Following the Bible may not make sense to my senses. I may not fully understand why baptism is necessary for salvation. I may not fully understand why God allows only one reason for divorce, fornication. I may not understand why God wants me to walk daily with Him. I may not understand why God is so concerned about my character, my heart, my influence. I may not understand it, but God does. Not only may I not understand it, these things may not make sense to me. They do to God.

Follow Christ. Obey God. Do what the Bible says. Those consistent and common themes are found all over the Bible. Noah did all that God commanded. God told Abram to leave Ur and he obeyed. Peter commanded Cornelius to be baptized, and he was. God says, and we do. God knows what is best for us. God is the one to whom we follow.

With that being stated, all these other ways that seem to make sense are going to end in utter failure. The end, our passage states, is death. It's sin. It's separation from God. What we thought was right, wasn't. It not only wasn't right, it led us away from God. It disappointed God. We thought we were doing right and we weren't.

Jesus said, "Not everyone who says, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of Heaven' but he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven." Here are some who thought they were doing right. It made sense to them. Jesus in this Matthew passage, declared, "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness." There was a way that seemed right, but it wasn't. It ended in death.

So, we ought to quote the Bible more. We ought to stop saying, even in a Bible class, "Here's what I think..." That's the problem. There is a way that makes sense to us, but it may not to God. Speak as the Scriptures speak. Stand upon the word of God. Make God's ways, your ways.

Does this all make sense to you? It doesn't matter, if it does. Is all of this right with what God says in the Bible? That's the way we need to see things, state things and journey in. We walk by faith and not by sight.

Roger Shouse