



# 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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***Job 16:13 "His arrows surround me. Without mercy He splits my kidney open; He pours out my gall on the ground."***

Monday with Job. This is a little series that we are doing based upon my Sunday morning class on Job. One of the things we looked at yesterday was the up and down feelings of Job. He goes from highs to lows back to highs. He feels that God is against him and then he proclaims "My Redeemer lives." It is fascinating to look at this on a chart. It's not what we would expect. We tend to believe that Job started in the basement and gradually climbed to the top, feeling better and stronger each step of the way. But that's not the case. He goes from hope to despair to hope. He feels at times that he has no future, and that the grave is all that awaits him. Other times, he seems to be getting a confident grip on things. But, up and down Job rides through this book.

From this we saw that grief and trials are a journey and it's a journey of ups and downs. If we caught a Job in a chapter 19 period, we'd conclude that he's doing pretty good with all the things he's gone through. But finding Job during a chapter 21 period, and we'd think he needs a lot of help. We might conclude that he's going to lose it. This reminds us that someone may seem to be doing ok with things today. Tomorrow they may not. We need to keep in touch with people who are going through difficult trials and grief.

However, for you and I, the Jesus difference, makes all the difference. Because of the Jesus difference, you and I should not swing from such highs to such lows. Because of Jesus we should not sink as low as Job did. Faith, knowledge and trust in the Lord ought to allow us to level off faster than Job did. And, the reason for this is very simple. Job was on one side of the cross and you and I are on the other side of the cross. That's the difference. Job didn't have Jesus and we do. Job didn't have promises, hope and forgiveness as we do.

Job wanted an umpire to be between him and God (9:33). We have that in Jesus. He is the mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5). Job wished that God could feel what he did. He wished that God was flesh (10:4). Jesus became flesh and became like us (Heb 2:17). Job wondered if a person lives again after he dies (14:14). We know that there is life after death (1 Thes 4:14). Job felt like God was against him (16:11). We know that God is for us (Rom 8:31).

The difference Jesus makes is the promises and the example of Jesus. Christ was raised and we know that we will be raised. God has proven His love for us through the cross. God wants us to come to Him. God promises to take us home some day. All these promises and these hopes are on our side of the cross. Job did not have these. So, it is understandable why Job's feelings were up and down so much. He wasn't sure. He didn't have proof. He didn't have promises. We do. And, because we do, our faith ought to keep us from despair and bottoming out with our feelings and emotions. Our faith in what God says and promises is the rock that our foundation is built upon. Storms come. The winds blow. The rains fall. But our house stands. It stands not because we are so tough. It stands not because of some inner strength within us. It stands because of the rock. Without that rock, we collapse. We fall apart. We become a mess emotionally and doubtful spiritually. The difference is the rock, which is Jesus.

Tragedies strike. But when we fall into utter hopelessness, we shouldn't look to Job. He's not a reason for us to fall apart. He never had what you and I have. He held it together pretty good, all things considered. But for you and I to act that way, demonstrates a lack of faith and a foundation that is not built upon Christ. Paul showed this contrast in Thessalonians when he said that the Christians grieve not like those who have no hope. **1 Thess. 4:13** It's a shame when we act that way. Certainly suffering hurts. It can be the greatest trials of our life. However, when we act like the world, who has no hope and worse than Job, they do not even have a knowledge of God, we illustrate how little we actually believe. It's easy to sit in a church house on a Sunday morning when things are going well in your life. You have health, money and sunny days, all is fine. But what about those times when you don't have health and you don't have money and the skies are stormy? Where's your faith then? Job's response to his wife's call for him to curse God and die was that she spoke like a foolish one. We do the same when we act like Jesus never came. When we forget about all those promises and we cast aside all hope, and we feel that all is lost, we speak just like the foolish world.

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We have a high priest who sympathizes with what we go through. We have a God who provides doors of escape to every temptation. We have a greater understanding of suffering and the benefits of suffering than Job ever had. We have the total Scriptures to guide and remind us that this world is not my home. We see glimpses of Heaven, God's home, and His desire for us to spend forever with Him.

Powerful, powerful truths, promises, examples that provide us with understanding, assurance and hope. We know what happens when a person dies. We understand what will happen to this world one day. We know about judgment. We know about grace. We know about Satan. All this knowledge supports our faith and provides assurance for us. Job was without that. And, yet, there are days when we act worse than Job. Tragedy strikes. And, unlike Job, we do not worship. Unlike Job, we do blame God. Unlike Job, we sin. And, looking at this, we must wonder, why? Why is Job who had so little and we who have so much, a better example of belief in trials than we are? We have Jesus. We have these promises. We have the whole picture before us.

Maybe it's time for us to stop babying one another and tolerating faithless outbursts and start acting like people of faith. Maybe it's time we truly believed what the Scriptures teach. Maybe it's time that we become an example of people who have hope.

The Jesus difference makes all the difference. Hopefully, someday we'll get this!

Roger Shouse (Used by permission)