



# 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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## Jump Start # 3007

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*Mark 4:38 "And He Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?'"*

Storms, it seems that life is full of them. Storms happen when we are with Jesus. Storms definitely happen when we are without Jesus. Storms can last a long, long time. And, storms can make us really scared.

Here in our passage today, the disciples and Jesus were crossing the Sea of Galilee. A storm hit. Not, just any storm, but a very intense storm. The verse before tells us that the waves were above the boat. That's bad news. It also tells us that the boat was filling up with water, that's worse. Things were bleak. Hope was quickly vanishing away. I expect, though the text doesn't tell us this, but common sense does, that the disciples tried everything they could think of. I expect they tried to row, but to no avail. I see them bailing water, but that wasn't working. Finally, they awaken Jesus. We are going to die, is what they thought, expected and saw coming. The Lord rebukes the wind and then He rebukes the disciples. Where is your faith? Why do you doubt? Seeing the wind obey Jesus caused the disciples to be even more frightened. "Who is this," they wondered.

The disciples chose to wake Jesus up. That was the best choice they made. And, in any storm, you and I face many choices. Some, use the storm to drift from God. Some allow the storm to lead them to unhealthy, unwise and even ungodly choices.

The disciples chose to awaken Jesus. There are some lessons for us in the midst of our storms. The storms come in many forms. For Job, the storms ranged from the death of his family, the loss of his possessions and income, to the loss of his health. Financial storms. Health storms. Spiritual storms. Mental storms. Relational storms. All storms have the potential of crashing our homes. The only hope we have is to have a faith that rests securely upon The Rock, Jesus Christ.

When your storms come, you have choices. Remember:

**(OVER)**

First, to choose fellowship over isolation. Hiding in a cave, like Elijah did when Jezebel's men were out looking for him is what we often do. We hide. We isolate. We find our caves and we stay there. But when we are alone, the storm always seems worse than what it really is.

Dark skies and dark thoughts go together. We think the worst when we are alone. Get down to the church building. Get to worship. Get around God's people. You may not feel like it, but you need it. The prayers. The encouragement. The sermons. The classes. The hymns. They all have a way of calming our nerves and helping us to see sunlight even in the darkest days.

Second, choose prayer over worry. Prayer invites God into your life and into your storms. The disciples did just that. They woke Jesus up. You need to go to Jesus when things are bad. Worry kills us. It steals our sleep, our appetite and it makes the troubles larger than what they really are. Cast your burdens upon the Lord is what the Bible teaches. Do not be anxious is what Jesus said. Take it to the Lord in prayer will help you.

Third, choose faith over doubt. That was lacking in that water filled boat in Mark four. There was plenty of doubt but very little faith. You know what the Bible says. It doesn't change because the storm clouds have rolled in. You know that God has a history of victories. Stormy seas, fiery furnaces, lion's dens, giants, prison doors these things are nothing to God. Seek the Lord. Continue, even in the storm, to do what the Lord expects you to do. Your faith will cause you to see God. Your doubts will cause you to see the storm.

Fourth, choose hope over despair. Storms are tough. Statistics show that more people are injured and killed after the storm than during the storm. People come out and look over the destruction after a storm and step on nails, live wires and are injured and even killed by unsafe conditions. The storm passes, and our faith can still take a hit. We must be strong. Hope is the answer. Some day there will no longer be any storms. Some day we will be with the Lord eternally. The storm lasts for just a short while.

The disciples chose to wake Jesus up. Maybe it's time for us to do the same. He's never been asleep for us, but we may have set him aside so deep in our minds that He seems that way.

Choose Jesus—always the best choice.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)

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