



THE EXHORTER

“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)

July 10, 2022

Jump Start # 3111

Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you; with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

I've been preaching for a long time, more than four decades. I have no idea how many sermons I have written, thousands I suppose. A while back someone said to me that with all those years behind me I ought to be able to write a sermon in ten minutes. I guess he was indicating that I could spend the rest of my time doing something else. Write a sermon in ten minutes? I probably could and it probably would seem like I wrote it in ten minutes. The longer I have done this, the writing of sermons hasn't gotten any easier nor faster. I guess I'm too picky and I want every sermon to be the best that I can do.

All of this leads us to our verse today. You see, on a Sunday morning, there is more than one sermon that is preached. Oh, we recognize the sermon from the pulpit, with the powerpoint and fill in the note blanks that go along with that. But there are other sermons taking place all throughout that auditorium. Most times we don't recognize them and many of us would not even call them sermons, but they are. Our verse today reminds us that we are all teachers as we sing hymns together. We are reminding, praising, thanking and warning one another through those powerful, powerful songs. When we put faces and names behind the words we sing, there is more passion in our proclamation.

Here are a few other sermons that are preached throughout a worship period:

· You preach a message of cheer when you say, "Good morning" to those you meet. Often people drag in worn out and beat up from the world. Some come carrying troubles and trials in their hearts. Some gather with sorrow on their faces and tears in their eyes. Some are scared. Some are worried. Some need a friend. And the cheerfulness of a greeting can remind someone that this is the place to be. The Gospel is Good News and we need to be reminded of this. The world is full of bad news. Things are not right in this country. Some are new and not sure if they have a friend among us.

(OVER)

Some are feeling the burden of guilt and are not sure that they ought to be there. But your smile, the warmth of your joy will send the message that we are glad you are here, and you made the right choice. You preach that every time you smile and welcome someone.

· You preach a sermon of reverence every time you bow your head during a prayer. You are showing to God and to those around you, that God is greater than you are. We don't stand toe to toe and eye to eye with the Lord. Our heads are bowed, our hearts are humbled before our amazing God. Little ones watch you. I've had children tattle "My dad didn't have his eyes closed during the prayer." I asked them how they knew that. But they notice. Others hear you say, "Amen," as the prayer ends. Solemn. Sacred. Special. Our worship points upward to the Lord.

· You preach a message of hope when you open your Bible and follow along with the reading of God's word. It doesn't matter whether your Bible is on your phone, tablet or in print version, you are showing that you are interested and want to see for yourself what God says. We only remember so much of what we hear. We remember more when we hear and see. We remember even more when we hear, see and write. Taking notes is a great way to learn more about God's will. Brining a Bible and using it during worship is a sermon that you preach.

· You preach a message of hope when you leave worship rejoicing. The world is dark. God is not. The world is lost. God is not. The world doesn't know. God does. We leave with our heads held high. We leave with the reminder that our God is on the throne. Gloom and despair belong to the world, not the people of God. What wonderful expression of faith and hope we see when people in conversations, talking, sharing, hugging and thankful for one another.

· You preach a message of salvation when you encourage others to come back to services. You are saying, "We've found something that is good and I want you to be a part of it." You see the wonderful benefits of fellowship. You realize that no where else will you find the comforting hope, the assurance of faith, the joy of promises, and the trust that is only in Jesus. You will declare, "It is good for us to be here." And, that optimism and joy spreads to others.

You probably won't put the hours into writing a sermon like the preacher does, but in many ways your sermons can be more effective and more powerful than what comes from the pulpit. So many sermons on a given Sunday. We only hope that someone is listening.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)
