



# 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 # 3150

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***2 Corinthians 3:18*** *“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”*

Our verse today is loaded and packed with great blessings that the apostolic message was bringing to hearts that would receive. Throughout this letter, Paul is forced to defend himself from false charges that were intended to weaken his influence and destroy his credibility. Sounds much like American politics these days. There comes a time when a person has to step up and respond to things that are just not true. Cheap shots, stating things without proof, and character assassination are the weapons of cowards and those who do not have anything to stand on.

The message that Paul was preaching was filled with glory and hope. He makes a contrast to Moses, who coming down from the mountain and putting a veil over his face. Unlike Moses, we are seeing clearly, unveiled. And what they are seeing is the glory of the Lord. And, through those powerful gospel words, they were being changed, transformed into a radiant glory. Their lives were demonstrating Christ.

From this, let us consider a few thoughts:

First, God intends for us to see clearly. A cloudy, foggy message that is so generic and so vague that few understand is not helpful. Some in the audience love to play spiritual dodge ball. As a point is delivered, they'll jump to one side so it will miss them. Then they'll duck so the next point will miss them. Never changing, never improving, this weekly game of “you missed me,” continues on until their life unravels and explodes.

Unveiled, transformed, into the same image—do you see that language that the apostle is driving at. We need to be able to understand the will of God and be able to definitively say, “This is what God says.”

Second, this verse reminds us of the changing power of the Gospel and how we too can be like Jesus. Conformed to His image is what the Romans were told. Imitate Him is what Paul said in the first Corinthian letter. Forgive just as He forgives is what the Ephesians were told. Much too often we like to remain unmoved, unchanged and unaffected by the Gospel message. “Can't teach an old dog new tricks,” is a cute expression, but we aren't dogs, we are the creation of God. Transformed. Same image. Just as. Those are the words from this verse. **(OVER)**

Third, this transformation takes place as one continues to walk with the Lord and drink deeply into God's word. God's word is alive, active and will change us. The Bible is much more than a book that sets on the shelf. It is THE book that can change your thinking, your attitude, your moods, your behavior and your future. It is THE book that takes us to the Lord when even our past can be forgiven.

I sometimes wonder if there ought to be a warning label on the front of the Bible: "Warning, this book can change your life." I have two large butterfly bushes at my house. And, this time of year, they are filled with fluttering butterflies all day long. If time allowed, I could just sit there all day and watch them. Black butterflies. Yellow ones. Blue ones. Little ones. Big ones. Those butterflies transformed from being ugly caterpillars. They look, act and can do as butterflies what they could never do as a caterpillar. Caterpillars don't fly. They don't look pretty. They can't travel very far. And, that's us before Jesus. Stuck. Not going anywhere fast. Not even pretty looking. But, transformed, like those butterflies, what a difference in our lives.

And, the image we are becoming is not a better us, but the glory of the Lord. We are looking more and more like Jesus. That's the powerful and hopeful message that Paul was preaching. The old law couldn't do that. Transformation through the Gospel, that's the key.

You look different...what a compliment that is, if we are looking more like Jesus. A calmness to our hearts. A peace to our souls. A confidence in our step. A hope in our eyes. Just like Jesus, so we are becoming.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)

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