



# 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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***Genesis 3:24 "So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life."***

In a few weeks in a class that I am teaching, I intend to go through a series of questions that have been submitted. I like doing this every once in a while because it lets me know what is upon the heart of others and often their questions don't find a way into sermons or classes and this provides a platform for that.

One of the questions I've always wondered about is why God allows the things in life to annoy us and bother us. It's one thing to talk about the "big" issue of why does evil exist. But there are things that are not evil, but just troublesome. Why are some days so hot? Is that necessary? Why are there mosquitos? Do they really have a function? And, if God was going to put weeds in the garden, why so many weeds? And, why are weeds so aggressive? Why are people so different? We are all made in the image of God and we all have the same needs, yet, we can sure be a strange lot. With some, if you say, "Hello," to them, you just made their day. But with others, if you don't say, "hello," you just ruined their day. So odd and so hard to figure out.

Our verse today is the sad ending to what God had planned and designed. He made Paradise. One can only imagine how beautiful and perfect it was. No death. No trouble. No crime. And, man, unsatisfied, ruined it. Now, we can get mad at that first couple, but you and I likely would have ruined it as well. We are not without sin. And, sin ruined God's plan. Sin is choosing self over God. Sin is listening to the serpent over God. So, God drove man out. He kicked man out of Paradise. How hard and difficult that must have been for God. It seems that this wasn't the end of their relationship with God. As Cain and Abel grow, they offer sacrifices to God. I expect they learned that from Adam and Eve and understood that God is worthy and deserving of our affection and hearts.

So, why does God make cold winters and hot summers? Why all the inconveniences in life, like traffic, things breaking down, bugs and so forth.

(OVER)

First, these things help us to remember that we do not have all the answers nor do we run the universe. I suppose a bug guy could explain the value and purpose of a mosquito. Even though I can't and I don't see the need for them, God made them. So cold in the winter and so hot in the summer? Why? We can discuss climate and weather patterns and growth cycles of crops, but most of us do not care about those things. We can't control the weather. Not only can God control it, but He can change it, as demonstrated in the calming of the storms.

Second, even if we had all the answers, and we knew "why" we are not in the position to change the creation of God. We are subject to the weather. We can't wave a wand and make rain stop. We can't bring in sunny days just because we want it. And, maybe, just maybe, this is a reminder that we are subject to God. The weather and the created world are greater than we are, and God is the greatest of all. Death comes and we cannot stop it. We cannot prevent earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, and other violent storms. We are along for the ride and are at the mercy of God. Sometimes we need to be reminded that we do not sit upon the throne of life. We do not get to be "God" for a day. We are subject to the Lord. There are things out of our reach and out of our power. We are limited.

Third, these things in life that we wonder about can also cause us to see ourselves as we really are. We complain about the bugs when we sit out on a porch on a summer evening. We get upset when we have planned to go to a ballgame or a park and it's raining. We don't like it when it is so hot or so cold. And, as I think about these things, maybe we complain more than we are thankful. Maybe we've taken for granted the many nice days. Maybe we've failed to appreciate all that God does for us every single day. Each day is a gift. Each moment is a blessing. People in your life, food on the table, health in your body, money in your account, a home, a job, a fellowship, a hope, a promise, a future—sure makes one hang their head in sorrow for not being thankful to God.

Bugs, weather and things like that...hard to understand. Hard to figure. But part of God's plans and much for us to learn from those things.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)

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