



# 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 # 2237

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***Proverbs 11:29 "He who troubles his own house will inherit wind, and the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted."***

Sometimes in Scriptures, as in life, we run across things that's hard to understand. It's not the words that are hard to grasp, but the concepts and why people do what they do. Our verse today is one example of this.

It begins with the idea of one who troubles his own house. I read that and wonder why? Why would someone trouble his own house? Maybe it's easier to understand if someone who would trouble a neighbor's house, or better still, someone who trouble's an enemies house. Now, that makes more sense. Why would anyone mess with their own family? Why would they upset and hurt those in their own family?

That doesn't make sense to sensible people. But we don't need the Scriptures to show us this. We see this on the nightly news. Domestic violence-takes place among one's family. It's domestic. It also doesn't make sense.

In describing the Gentiles in Romans one, Paul characterized them as being "unloving." Some turn on their own families and are against their own families. Throughout the Bible we find multiple examples of troubling one's own household.

- The list begins early with Cain and Able
- Joseph's family are textbook examples of troubling your own household
- David's sons well illustrate the point of troubling their own household
- Throughout the period of the kings, jealous rulers killed their own family members to eliminate possible threats to the throne
- The prodigal son caused a lot of heartache and trouble at home

Why would someone trouble their own household? Here's a few thoughts:

First, they don't love their family. That must be the baseline. If you truly love your family you will defend, support, sacrifice and do all you can for them. Love runs deep in healthy families. When it's missing, trouble comes. Jealousy, favoritism, hatred will drive wedges within the family and keep people apart. Words are said. Feelings are hurt. People are tired of being bossed around. The family splinters. Too often, they come together at a funeral, often of a parent. But even at the funeral, it's tense. Little jabs are exchanged. And, as soon as the parent is buried there is a mad dash to get to the house to take whatever is valuable.

(OVER)

Second, they cannot forgive. Families represent relationships. We can bump and bruise each other. We can say things that we shouldn't. Some will never let those hurts heal. They will never forgive. And, as long as they keep picking those scabs, trouble remains in the household. Forgiveness is a quality that takes Christ to show us how to do it properly. We can forgive, because we have been forgiven. But sometimes, we expect and even demand perfection from family members. We will give others a pass now and then, and we will especially give ourselves some slack, but when it comes to family, no way, no how. When there is no grace and forgiveness, trouble follows.

Third, some take advantage of family situations, knowing that they can get away with things in the family that they couldn't anywhere else. Borrowing money but never repaying it back, breaking promises, taking things that do not belong to them, pushing the limits of what is acceptable-these all strain and trouble families. Some just feel that it is owed to them. Some feel as if the trouble that they have caused is justified and even right. In extreme situations, some realize that their own family is not likely to call the police on them. The number one source for addicts to find money to supply their habits is by stealing from family members. Identity theft is highest among family members. Where many addicts find prescription drugs to abuse is right there at home, among family members. Trouble at home.

Having run through this list, it makes sense why "home for the holidays" is not such a warm and welcoming thought for some. Being around family is trouble. Tension, suspicion, and ill feelings fill the air. The outlook doesn't look good because those causing trouble do not want to stop. They continue to abuse, neglect and destroy the family that tries to love them. When the parents are Christians, and the grown children are causing trouble in the home, it makes things very difficult. Sometimes those godly parents must draw the line and declare that certain ones are no longer welcome in their home. It breaks their hearts to do that. It ages them and pushes them to an early grave, but it's the last and only thing that these godly people can do. The troublemakers don't care. They don't realize the tears and prayers that have been offered for years for the ones who are indifferent to everything and everyone except themselves.

Our passage continues. It says those who trouble his own house will inherit the wind. Inheriting the wind is not a welcome thought. It's not a blessing from above. It's not a calm breeze that brings relief. It's the whirlwind of punishment. It's a house coming apart and coming down. It's God's wrath being flexed upon those who cause trouble. Inheriting the wind means doom for those who cause trouble. It's not going to end well for those who hurt their own family.

What a blessing family can be. When love, grace and trust flow through hearts, there is nothing like it. The little ones and the big ones enjoy each others company. It's more than family, it's friendship. That's how God intended things to be. Be careful with your tongue and think before you speak. Be patient with each other. Let love abound. Don't be so critical and judgmental. Guide with love. Leave the preaching to Sunday. Have conversations that are helpful and constructive. Listen. Be kind. Practice the golden rule. These simple principles are understood when we talk about dealing with the world. Sometimes, when we get home we forget these things. We can be kinder to a stranger at a store than we can be to our own family.

The opposite of troubling your own household, is helping your household. That's what we need to do. We need to be helping and not hurting.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)

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