



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)

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Jump Start # 3197

Matthew 11:29 *“Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.”*

Our verse today is often called the Lord’s great invitation. It begins, in the preceding verse, by asking, or inviting ALL who are weary and heavy laden to come to Him. Jesus has something that the weary need. Jesus can provide what the weary are looking for.

We often look at this passage for what we receive from the Lord. We look at it from the upside of following Jesus. But in here, the Lord paints a picture of Himself. He is gentle. He is humble. This is how He describes Himself.

I was dabbling into some old histories the other day and in the late 1800’s a controversy arose when preachers started referring to themselves as Reverends. This became a very touchy point, some in favor of it, and many who were not. And, as the lines of division took place between conservative thinking and progressive thinking, the use of Reverend became common among the progressives. And, one of the arguments used to stop that tide of progressiveness, was our verse today. Our Lord was humble. He claimed it. He showed it. He was an example of it.

Some thoughts for us:

First, human nature wants to be recognized and appreciated. Little kids will show off to get attention. Big kids, us, will brag to get that attention. And, this comes in many forms. Sometimes, it’s name dropping. Sometimes it showing off what we have. Sometimes it’s tooting our own horn. All of this comes down to “notice me” and “compliment me.”

This is something that we have to fight against. The corporate world and our culture is all about self. Years ago there was a newsstand magazine called, “Me.” And, that rather tells you where our culture has turned. Being humble is not just something that happens in the church building.

(OVER)

It is to be a manner of life for us. The humble heart understands that God knows. He doesn't have to tell others. He doesn't have to strive to be the best. He only has to be his best.

We preachers can have ego issues. It can get to us. When a visiting preacher comes, people think he's the best. That can hurt the feelings of the local preacher. But, when we preachers get to go to other places, we can sure get our egos inflated. The reason why most church buildings have double doors is not for the crowd. It's to get the preacher's head through it. After a Sunday sermon, and he hears all the wonderful comments, he begins to believe he can walk on water. Be careful. That head, like an overfilled balloon, will pop if not careful. Just do your job the best you can.

The Corinthians were sure beating up on Paul. They didn't think much of his appearance, his preaching or much about him. I think if I heard that, I'd go home and put the covers over my head. Not Paul. He kept going doing the best that he could. Paul didn't need the praise of others to know that he was doing right.

Second, humbleness is a chosen attitude that is based upon confidently knowing that you are walking with the Lord. It doesn't matter what others think. What matters is what Jesus thinks. The humble person realizes that there are always others that can do things better than he can, but he'll jump in and do what he can. The humble person understands his limitations. He doesn't try to be everything. He knows he can't. He realizes there are things that he simply does not know how to do. He's not afraid to ask for help. He knows that he needs others.

In my life, I have known several very wealthy and successful businessmen. I've known many who had PhDs. Some of them told you about it. Some liked to brag. Others, were so humble you would never know. It took getting to know them to know their story. And, the reason is, most humble people don't talk about themselves. They'd rather hear your story. They'd rather listen than talk. A person can be successful and humble. A person can have multiple college degrees and be humble. It's a choice. It's an attitude.

Third, we learn how to be humble when we look to Jesus. Come learn from Me, is what He invites us to. Jesus was God on earth. Immanuel, God among us, is what He was called. Yet, He didn't use that position to cater to His needs. He served. He helped. He pointed people to His Father. You don't find Peter running to get some ice tea for Jesus. But you do read of Jesus feeding the multitudes. You don't find Jesus telling the disciples to get Him a blanket so He would be comfortable. But you do find Jesus calming the storm and then calming scared hearts of the disciples. When hungry, Jesus didn't use a miracle to feed Himself. When hurting, He didn't stop the pain. When bleeding, He didn't close up the wounds. He didn't make the nails painless. He didn't make His death quick. The humble Jesus was about others.

And, when we learn this, we start dropping expressions like, "I don't feel like...," or, "I want...". Those words didn't come from the lips of humble Jesus. But how often do they fall from our lips? I want a church that offers what I want. I want something for my kids. I want services to last only so long. I want to sing songs that I like. I want. I want. I want. And, much too often, when that person doesn't get what they want, off they go, looking for another place that will serve them.

I was watching on TV these firemen that had gone into a very unsafe structure. They were wearing special protective gear. When they came out, they were hosed down to get all the bad stuff off of them. That's what we must do mentally, spiritually and emotionally. Our culture is

demanding. Our culture is stuck on self. So, we must spray ourselves and get all that bad stuff out of us. Unless we do that, it will hurt our marriages and families. It will ruin congregations. And, in the end, we become like the world around us.

This world is not my home...let's not forget that. The humble Jesus asks, "come, learn from Me." Oh, there is so much that we can learn from Jesus. He will help you, change you, and open your eyes to a wonderful world of being a humble servant.

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