



# 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 # 3186

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***Matthew 24:38 "For in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark"***

I have to confess, I have a really cool office. It's so me. I spend a ton of hours in that place so I have made it comfortable in a setting that invites me to get busy about the work that I need to do. I have lots of pictures on my shelves. Pictures of family. Pictures of preachers that mean so much to me. Books line my shelves with special things I've collected from all over the world. I have a rock taken from the brook where David got his rock before he ran to face Goliath. I have a rock taken from a catacomb in Rome. I have a replica of a Viking boat. I have a wooden cutout of a church building that my grandparents once worshipped in. I have some really old restoration items on the walls. On the back of my door, is an art gallery from my grandchildren. Sitting at my desk I can see on the walls pictures I have taken from six different vacations. I have a statue of Martin Luther on one side of my desk and a statue of Walt Disney on the other side. I have a picture of Babe Ruth hugging Lou Gherig. A picture of my dad sits on my desk. I have a very old pulpit that stands in my office. It's a reminder of where we came from as a congregation. My desk is beautiful. There is a picture of a tree high above the shelves. When you look at it, the tree is full of green leaves. But if you move a bit, the light hits that picture in a different way and the tree is full of orange leaves. Move a bit more and it's a winter scene. There is a giraffe that sits on the floor. My dad's old putter leans in a corner. It's a great office. I love my office. It's filled with books and stuff, and it's functional and completely me.

But one of the best things about my office is the window that sits opposite my desk. It's high on the wall, horizontal, but through it today, the sky is a rich, deep blue. I see the tops of trees and they are beginning to turn the powerful fall colors that God richly blesses us with. As I was looking at that scene, our verse came to my mind. I wonder what the day started like when God sent the flood. Did people wake up thinking it was just another day? But before long, the storm clouds thickened, lightning flashed and then the skies opened up.

Our passage tells us of the days leading up to the flood. There are some thoughts for us:

**(OVER)**

First, most of the world thought that life was going to continue on. They were marrying and giving in marriage. One gets married with the idea of spending a future with another. Why go through the process of a wedding if your life was going to end in a few hours by being carried away by the waters of a flood? What an assumption to conclude that tomorrow will be just like today? What a mistake to think that there will be another month?

Second, most of the world had ignored Noah. As the ark was being built, Noah was preaching. It seems that no one was listening. How much information about the coming flood he knew or he preached, we do not know. But the gospel of repentance would have been at the heart of his words. His generation was stuck on wrong. Every thought was evil. As the planks of the ark were going up, Noah's words must have sounded louder and louder. Time is running out. Yet, no one heeded except his family.

Third, I wonder if Noah felt like a failure. He tried, but no one listened. He preached but nothing happened. We preachers often wonder if anyone listens to us. Week after week, we preach our hearts out but nothing happens. Is it us? Are we not doing something right? Are we missing something in our delivery? I wonder if Noah felt that way. God never holds Noah responsible. It wasn't Noah. It wasn't his sermons. It wasn't his approach. It was the evil hearts that wanted nothing to do with God. That was the problem.

Fourth, I wonder what the day will be like when Jesus comes? I wonder, like the days of Noah, if it will start out like a regular, ordinary day. People will have errands to run. Some will be hurrying off to work. Some will have a long list of things to do that day. Just another day. But then, somewhere in that day, everything changes. The sky fills with angels. So many angels. A loud sound like a trumpet is heard. Everything stops. Nothing else matters. Skyward we see Jesus. There He is. What is so important to us, suddenly is not important. What matters at that moment is "do you know my Savior?" Some will be crying, because they are scared and they are not ready. Others will be crying because they have awaited this moment all of their lives. He is finally here. Today is the day.

And, when that moment happens, somewhere in the world, a baby will be born and that child will be the last person ever born on the earth. Somewhere, someone has been baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins. And, that person will be the last person to obey the Gospel of Christ. That person will be the last person to become a Christian. Somewhere on the planet, a preacher will be preaching the last sermon ever preached on the earth.

Much more important than knowing who those "lasts" will be, is the thought will you and I be ready for Jesus to come. Don't kick the can down the road of what you need to do. Got some apologizes that you need to offer, then get to it. Got some things that need to be said, then say them.

Blue skies out of an office window—Noah and Jesus. Important stuff to think about!

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)

