



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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1 Samuel 20:3 "Yet David vowed again, saying, 'Your father knows well that I have found favor in your sight, and has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But truly as the Lord lives and as you soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death."

It was just a typical Sunday morning. I was driving to the church house bright and early like I do each week. My mind was thinking about sermons, people and the Lord. And, suddenly two cars going exceedingly fast, likely more than 100 MPH, racing each other, rocketed past me. The cars were so close to each other, one nearly touching the car in the front. To get around a car in the left lane, they served rapidly into the right lane. That's where I was. I swerved into the emergency lane, while going about 70 MPH. One of the cars swerved into an on ramp, but there was a car coming down that ramp. He swerved to the right and violently took out a highway sign, spun and crashed. Debris, flying pieces, smoke, grass filled the air as I was right behind all of this. The crashing car was filled with smoke and air bags. I pulled over and called 911.

At first I was angry. Life is not a video game. You crash and you don't just hit a button and get another life. Had those speeding cars hit me, I would have flipped multiple times through a ditch. That could have been it for me.

As I worshipped that morning, that thought ran through my mind. How terribly worship would have been ruined for so many people had the announcement been made that I died in a car wreck on the way to services. I had many thankful prayers going Heavenward since that moment.

And, moments like this put our verse right before our eyes. David was been chased by the jealous King Saul. To complicate matters, David and Saul's son, Jonathan were deep friends. Saul seems to ignore what was going on in the kingdom. He was centrally focused upon killing David. And, here in our verse is that profound statement, "there is hardly a step between me and death."

Now, consider some thoughts:

First, just a step between me and death is how we all live. A life can end so quickly. Just like that, a life can end. And, most of us can put names to this principle. Car wrecks. Boating accidents. Murder. Plane crashes. Falling down. Sudden catastrophic storm. Fatal heart attacks. All of this reminds us how special today is. Life is fragile. All we are given is today.

(OVER)

Second, most never realize when that divine appointment with death will be. We live, work and play expecting to be around tomorrow. It won't be that way for everyone. It is easy to kick down the road the things we don't want to do. We live thinking that we'll get to them eventually. But for many, eventually never comes. Their last day is today.

Third, living each day with the Lord gives you a peace and a comfort. I was really more concerned about having multiple broken bones and being in a hospital for months recovering had I been pushed off the road. That bothered me more than dying.

God had anointed David as the next king of Israel. Yet, having spears thrown at him and being chased throughout the nation must have made David wonder how God was going to bring all these things about. David was innocent and it's often the innocent that suffer from wicked and evil hearts.

We realize how precious and special life is. We busy ourselves doing today what we can for the Lord and His kingdom. Someday that appointment with death will come. We know that. We don't fear that, because we know the Lord. We know what the Lord promised. We know what's on the other side.

We may not leave this place surrounded by dear family as we take our last breath. We may be flipping end over end in a car as that happens. But we know that the Lord will be there. For His precious believers, the angels will come and usher us into the eternal.

Never alone...even at that last moment. That's a hope and a promise that keeps us going. Just a step between me and death is how David described things. It wasn't a leap. It wasn't out of sight. No, just a step. Just one step between me and death. Sure is something to think about.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)
