



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)

November 9, 2025

Jump Start # 3843

James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

I was listening to Neil Diamond's song, "The story of my life," the other day. The story of my life. How often do we teach in our Bible classes the story of Jesus or the life of Abraham or the life of David. There are sections in the bookstores called "biographies." They are the story of the lives of people that we have heard about.

The story of my life. That could be a thread that runs through the Bible. The story of Jairus and the death of his young daughter. The story of a servant girl who had faith that a prophet in Israel could cure the leprous commander that she served. The story of a frightened but courageous disciple who went to Pilate and asked to bury the body of Jesus.

We read sentences about their lives but that's all eternity has given us. Like us, there was a story of their lives. People that helped them. Choices that they made. Challenges that they faced. Scary moments. Happy times. People that bothered them. Trying to navigate through the days and looking ahead to the future. Raising families. Burying their loved ones. Sad goodbyes and happy hellos.

Every person that Jesus met had a story. Every person that Jesus met had issues and problems. Every person that Jesus met needed Him.

The story of my life:

First, although each of our stories are unique, there are some very common threads that tie all of our stories together. My story is not the same as your story. Yet, we'd find some very similar things in our stories. A childhood. School. Challenges of growing up. Falling in love. Choosing a path to follow. I'm a Hoosier at heart. Hoosiers are not the same as Texans, but there are some very common things between us.

(OVER)

Second, there are some very special things in each of our stories. It's easy to conclude that my story is boring. There is nothing special about my story. But that's not true. You've been places and you've done things and you've been intertwined in the lives of others. There are those who believe that you are among the most important persons on this planet. One does not have to do amazing things to be special to others. More than anything else, you are a disciple of Jesus. You are a son or daughter of the God of Heaven. It is God who hears your prayers. It is God who blesses you. It is God who has forgiven you. Think you are nothing? Best rethink that.

Third, it is good to share your spiritual journey with the rest of your family. Often they see where we are today and conclude that we've never had any battles to fight and there never was any trials that we encountered. Such is not the case. Coming to the Lord was hard for some. For some, that journey included periods of time when we were in the wilderness. Today, we stand faithful, strong and serving the Lord. There was a journey getting there. There was a process that led to where we are now. There were people helping and praying for us.

For some, this spiritual journey involved coming to the conclusion that the way we once worshipped was not Biblical. We were taught things that were not accurate. Dear family and friends believed they were doing right, but now we realize they weren't. As Paul had to turn from persecutor to proclaimer of Jesus Christ, that turn comes with many long nights of prayer and thinking. And, that choice came with some consequences. Families disagreed. Some shunned and rejected because of your decision to follow the Lord as you saw the Bible taught.

Our verse today, worded from the King James Version, asks the question, "For what is your life?" Some, see their life as hard and miserable. Some are bitter. Some see life as one adventure after another. Action packed and fun seeking, that's life for them. Some see life as serving and helping others. What a delight they are to those around them. A few realize that without Jesus, there really isn't any life.

The story of my life. Parts were easy and smooth, like a gentle river. Other parts were white water and rapids. But here we are. And, all through that story of our lives is the Lord. We couldn't have made it without the Lord. And, what makes this story beautiful, is that it never ends. When walking with the Lord, it only gets richer and better as we grow closer to Him.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)
