FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL,

THE CHRISTIAN COURIER

AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD...

January 1976

This issue of the Christian Courier is the first of a series published by the congregation at Yakima, Washington. All members of the staff are happy that they can take part in this part of the vineyard of the Lord. The result of our labor is for the purpose of glorify God and helping His children.

The publishing address has changed, but the goal of the Courier remains the same. It will continue to be a source of information for the brotherhood in the Church. It will continue to be a place where letters written by the brethren are printed and shared with others. It will continue to be an uplifting experience for the reader as it has been in the past.

Since it is the purpose of the Courier to be informative and uplifting, there must be certain guidlines by which we must abide. All material which is scriptural, instructive, corrective (but not malicous), and uplifting is suitable for print in the Courier. When writing letters to our brethren let us remember Paul's words to the Ephesians, recorded in Chapter 4:29, 31-32: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Letters sent for publication, which in the opinion of the Elders of the Church (Yakima congregation), tend to be contrary to the Scriptures, maliciously attack a brother or congregation, or are written without apparent forethought of the consequences, will be returned to the author with the sincere hopes that the author will take a second look at his letter and reconsider or rewrite what he has written.

We realize that many of those who have been added to Christ's body would like to take part in this work of the Courier by writing articles and letters. They have not done so, however, because of what they feel as "lack of writing ability". If this has been your concern, please read the following carefully! Everyone has something to say that could help a brother or sister. If you have a message for the readers of the Courier, please write it down to the best of your ability. Then attach a note to the letter and tell us the part which might

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need some attention by us (it may be spelling, punctuation, word usage, or whatever). Then mail it to the address on the front page of this edition. It will appear in the Courier as all other letters do. (It may take courage to ask for help, but think of the people you may help by doing so.)

Age is no excuse for not writing. The young are mislead by thinking that what they have to say is not important. The old are mislead by thinking that what they have to say has been said before and will be ignored again. The reality is that the old need to know what the young are thinking so that they can help them. The young need to know about the pitfalls of life that the old have experienced. And we meet somewhere in the middle together. So there is a need for letters from all the brethren, regardless of age.

We of the Courier will work to the best of our ability to ensure the success of this publication to the good of the brotherhood. Keep in remembrance, however, that it will reach its greatest peak when everyone supports it as well as reads it.

The Courier Staff

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

In the world today, we find hundreds of religious beliefs. The great majority of these beliefs claim to come from God. Because of this, people become confused. Where do we get our religious authority?

Simply put, all truth comes from God. So isn't this where we should search for our authority? First, we must recognize the need for authority in religion. Without authority (or standards) all would be mass confusion. For example, one of the low points in Jewish history is recorded in Judges 21:25: "The people had turned away from God and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes". We as Christians realize that all our religious authority comes from the Bible which is the word of God. The N.T. scriptures are the only place we can go to find how we can be righteous in God's eyes and have a chance at eternal life. So let us look at the chain of authority set up in the scriptures.

I. God Read the 45th chapter of Isaiah to find the great power of God. Isaiah 45:18--19: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else....I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Verse 22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: For I am God, and there is none else." Eccl. 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. How does God show us his commandments? Heb. 1:1,2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son....

II. Christ Matt. 28:18 Christ said, ...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." But Christ said that his words were

Not his own. John 8:28 "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." Eph. 1:20-23 "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church. We realize that salvation is found in the Church. Since Christ is the head of that Church, then it is logical that he would have the authority over the Church.

How did Christ pass his will on to us? Christ told his apostles that they would be led by the Holy Spirit. John 16:13,14 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come, He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Christ gave the gospel to his apostles and told them to give it to the world. The apostles were Christ's ambassadors. Acts 2:42...those people that become Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine." We realize that ambassadors can only carry out the orders of their superiors. Paul made it very clear that the gospel was from Christ and that man had better not change it. Read carefully the first chapter of Galatians: v.8,9 If angel or man bring any other gospel let him be accursed. v. 11,12 Not received of men but by revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit led the writers of the N.T. in what they should say unto us. But are these words enough for our salvation? Yes! II Tim. 3:16,17 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." So we need nothing but God's word to teach us what we must know for salvation.

If we study God's word we will be able to find answers for every question we have. Any doctrine that cannot be found in the Bible is foreign to God and not righteous in His sight. We are influenced by many things in this world. But we must always be able to trace these influences back to God. Let us check some of these influences which can be sometimes good, sometimes bad, or always bad:

1. Human creeds---Many religious beliefs are based on manuals, disciplines, catechisms which supposedly explain what the N.T. teaches. But Paul told Timothy to study on his own. The Bible is written in simple language. If a creed says more than the N.T. it says too much. If it says less than the N.T. it doesn't say enough; and if it says the same thing it isn't necessary Rev. 22:18-19.

2. Feelings---"I feel it is so, so it must be." The wise man said in Prov. 28:26 "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool:but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." Even Paul said that he felt he should persecute the Church, but he found out that feelings were not good enough.

3. Parents----Growing up under Christian parents can be one of the greatest blessings of this life. They are a great source of advice on religious as well as other questions. But we must realize that just because our parents believe something, doesn't necessarily make it so. We should never believe anything that cannot be supported by the Bible. Matt. 10:37 "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

4. Conscience----"Let your conscience by your guide." Acts 23:1 Paul said that he had lived with a clear conscience his whole life; even when he was persecuting the Church. As Christians, our conscience should keep us out of all kinds of trouble. But our consciences must be taught by the scriptures. Conscience is that faculty of mind that tells us whether we are doing right or wrong according to the way we have been taught. But like a clock that is set wrong, will always be wrong, no matter how well it operates.

5. Preachers----The faith of many is built upon the 'clergy' or 'Heirarchy': for example, "I don't know, but my preacher does." Preachers are men; men are fallible. Except when reading directly from the Bible, every man is giving what he thinks. Now hopefully we all try to speak the truth and nothing else. We who preach God's word must be careful that all we teach is the truth. But when we listen to anyone that is speaking from God's word we must be as the Bereans were in Acts 17:11 "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Hopefully, we see that all authority in religion must come from God through the scriptures, and if we look anywhere else, we will be lost.

Yours in Christ, Richard Johnston

CHURCH NEWS

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Prov. 25:25

Dear Brethren:

We want to thank everyone for the overwhelming support of the Thanksgiving meeting at Chico this year. Throughout the meeting we were blessed with good weather. It got a little cold at times, but it did not rain.

During the four days there were about 125 people (not at one time) representing nine different congregations. The meeting house was full every meeting, which was a pleasure to see. It sure filled the building with our singing. The Lord said, "To sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord.", and we sure had a lot of very good singing. There is no finer music than the kind we heard during the meeting. As time went on some of us seemed to become a little hoarse though.

We heard ten good lessons from different guest speakers. Regrettable, even with three lessons a day, we were still not able to hear all the visiting speakers.

We feel the fellowship with the different brethren, the singing, and hearing different brethren speak, strengthened and encouraged all of us. We hope it did the same for everyone that attended.

Sincerely, Chico Congregation
Clif Brockman

Greetings to all brothers and sisters in Christ:

A lot of things have happened here at Glenwood since the last Courier. Most of it has turned out to be good news. Most of the congregation here went to the meeting at Chico over the Thanksgiving holiday. We can all say the meeting there was quite benificial for each one of us, and join all other congregations there in heartfully thanking the people at Chico for their wonderful hospitality and preparation.

Noma Memeely, from Buckley, Wa., and her two grandchildren have been worshipping here since late November. She came to Washington from Indiana; we enjoy her company.

Bob and Wilma Farley from Yakima visited us the weekend of Dec. 6-7. Bob presented a fine lesson for all.

About 20 people from the Church of Christ at Tacoma have been attending Sunday evening services and occasionally morning services for the last two months. They have requested that we all would join them in prayer concerning the unity of their congregation. We are all greatly moved that they care enough to share their burdens with us.

Brother Robert McCay left for Texas in early December and his wife Ellen flew down to join him Dec. 20. They are expecting to return in early January.

Brother Wesley Orendorff, wife Robbye, and son Karl came up from Encinitas, Calif. over Christmas and New Years holidays. We are always glad to see them up here at their former home. These have been the main events for awhile here.

The Glenwood Church of Christ sincerely hope that the 200th anniversary of this country will be a most pleasant, memorable, and meaningful year for each family; because the living God in heaven has made it for us.

Written in Christian Love from the
Church of Christ at Glenwood, Wa.

Brethren,

We were priveledged along with about 100 others to enjoy the camp meeting at Chico over Thanksgiving. It was very enjoyable to see brethren we had not seen in a long time and meet some we had never met before.

With three meetings a day and much talking and singing in between, most of us came away happy but hoarse. Many heard lessons by brethren whom they had never heard before and possibly never would have heard except for this type of meeting.

There were brethren from ten different congregations present. Those who have never attended a meeting like this cannot realize what they have missed.

The Lord blessed us with the time and money to travel extensively this past summer. Nell and I were able to attend seven gospel meetings. Some I spoke at and some I did not. I feel that I benefited from each of them greatly and those who have not taken the opportunity to go to gospel meetings at other congregations cannot realize the fellowship, singing, gospel sermons, and Christian love that they are missing out on.

Yet, we hear of congregations where the members not only do not avail themselves of this blessing of helping out other congregations in their meetings, but do not make their own meetings known in time for brethren to go and help and be benefited.

Brethren, we would urge you to not be slothful in the Lord's business. If you do not wish to support the paper financially or with gospel articles, at least let us know the dates of your meetings and the speakers so the news can be sent throughout the brotherhood, so the brethren can come and support your meetings. It is hard to support that which you don't know of or learn about too late to make arrangements to attend. Most of us need time to make such arrangements. Lots of vacations are set in January and February and are hard to change. Our meeting at Yakima, Lord willing, will be April 4--11, with brother Sonny Boen of the Stillwell, Oklahoma congregation doing the speaking. Any who can, please come and help in this endeavor.

Your Brother in Christ,
Howard McCay

Brethren,

We here at Yakima are in very good health considering the season we are in. There are a few who have been away because of the flu or colds, but nothing very serious.

Brother and sister Dan Ross have an addition to their family. Tara Lynn was born November 20, 1975. She weighed 5 lbs. 14 oz. Congratulations to them and praise be to God for a healthy new member.

Several have been gone from our congregation during the past month, visiting with brethren from the other congregations. The majority are back with us again.

Those who attended the short meeting at Chico told of good fellowship and a lot of Christian love overflowing.

Brother Bill McCay Sr. held a short meeting in Peoria, Arizona during the week of Dec. 11-14. My mother and grandmother, Sister

Nora Loveland were also in attendance.

We have had a few visitors and welcome any who can, to come and meet with us and share our homes.

We are in the process of planning our Spring meeting and further details will follow in the next few issues of the Courier. Also, once again I will say for the congregation here that we have several fine speakers to hold meetings if you are in need of someone to assist you in holding a meeting.

Hope this finds all in good spirits and in good health. Our prayers are with you always.

In Christian Love for the Yakima Congregation, Mike McCay

I've got the Lord as a personal friend, I talk to him each day.
And when I lay down at night, it is to Him I pray.

I've walked many a mile with Him, over the countryside.
And if I stumble on my way, He's always by my side.

At times I have doubted if he was really there,
But He has always given me a sign to carry me through my despair.

There was a little problem, A few days ago.
So I prayed to my Lord in earnest, On which way I should go.

He came to me in my darkened hour, With his outstretched hand
To guide me on my way towards His promised land.

Bro. Bob Farley, Yakima Congregation

Says I to myself as I grumbled and growled,
"I'm sick of my church," and then, how I scowled!
"The members unfriendly; the sermons too long;
In fact, it seems that everything's wrong.
I don't like the singing; the church is a disgrace,
For signs of neglect are all over the place
I'll quit going there, I won't give a dime;
I can make better use of my money and time."
Then says my conscience to me, says he,
The trouble with you is, you're too blind to see
That your church reflects you, whatever it be.
Now come, pray and pay and serve cheerfully;
Stop all your fault finding and boost it up strong,
You'll find you'll be happy and proud to 'belong';
Be friendly and willing and sing as you work,
For churches aren't built by Christians who shirk.

How many of the following can you answer? Circle the answer and then check the scripture.

1. When Joseph learned that his espoused, Mary, was with child, his first inclination (before an angel of the Lord visited him in a dream) was to (Matt. 1:18-20)
   a. act as if he were the father-to-be
   b. denounce her to the priests
   c. put her away without public exposure
   d. send her abroad

2. The wise men, seeing the star in the east, came to (Matt. 2:1-2)
   a. Jerusalem
   b. Bethlehem
   c. Nazareth
   d. Capernaum

3. The source of Herod's information as to the town where the Christ was to be born was (Matt. 2:1-8 Micah 5:2)
   a. the wise men
   b. his police
   c. Micah
   d. Joseph

4. In Matthew, the number of wise men is (Matt. 2:1-12)
   a. two
   b. three
   c. four
   d. unspecified

5. John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, wore a garment of (Matt. 3:1,4)
   a. goatskin
   b. camel's hair
   c. papyrus
   d. wool

6. After Jesus was baptized by John, he was led up into the wilderness by (Matt. 4:1)
   a. the Spirit of God
   b. the devil
   c. John the Baptist
   d. no one

7. Jesus left Nazareth and went to dwell in Capernaum, when He (Matt. 4:12-13)
   a. was reminded of the prophecy by Esaias
   b. was dared by the devil to do so
   c. thought He should be on the shores of Galilee
   d. heard that John had been cast into prison

8. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that (Matt.5:1-11)
   a. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall see God"
   b. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be called the children of God"
   c. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall inherit the earth"
   d. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"