FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL,

AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD...

THE CHRISTIAN COURIER

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The Divine Partner

Recently, I saw a bumper sticker which said, "Don't be caught without God". I am sure we realize that God is the most important partner we have in this life; but, exactly, whose partner is he?

In Hebrews 11:6 we find he is a partner to the believer. *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believer that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*

We find a good example of this in Gen. 6:9-13 *"These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japeth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."* But in the eighth verse, it says, *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."*

Due to the fact that Noah was a faithful believer in God, God provided a way of escape for him just as he provided a means for us to escape eternal punishment if we will just be faithful as Noah and his generations were.

We also find that through confessing Christ and taking the other steps necessary to become a child of God, we have God as a partner. In I John 4:15 we read, *"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."* I John 4:12, *"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected within us."* Verse 16: *"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."*

Heb. 13:5 tells us also that if we are faithfully "content", God will be with us. *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*

To those who are true believers, the knowledge that he will NEVER leave us is a very reassuring thought. No matter what befalls us, we can conquer as a true soldier for Christ, for he will never leave us nor forsake us.

Why should we desire this partnership? One reason we should desire God as a partner is because it will assure us success. In Romans 8:31, we read, *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

I once heard it said that "One plus God makes a majority." I believe it is true. If God is on our side, we will overcome any trials or tribulations that may come our way. Heb. 13:6 states, *"So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."*

We also realize that with this partnership, we have security. Acts 18:9-10, *"Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace. For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city."*

Finally, we see that through this partnership we can secure rest both now and throughout eternity. Matt. 11:28-29, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your soul."*

Once we take those steps that start us on our partnership with God and Christ, our responsibility does not stop, however. We can destroy this partnership through neglect and letting outside and inside influences interfere with our responsibility. In Isaiah 59:2 we find our biggest enemy, sin, can destroy our partnership: *"But your iniquities hav separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."* When God's face is hid from us and he hears us no longer, then, my friends, we are in deep trouble. We are nothing of ourselves, with-

out God. It is going to be a tragic time if we come to the realization too late, that God is not with us.

We can also find, if we don't abide in hes doctrine, we can destroy this partnership. II John 9, *"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."*

Finally, brethren, let us read from James 1:17, *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

The most perfect gift God sent was his Son, Jesus Christ, who came to set up the plan whereby we might be partners with God and reap the dividends that this partnership will provide.

In Christian Love,
Mike McCay
Yakima Congregation

Dear Brethren,

Is singing important? Are we commanded to sing? Col. 3:16 says,*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace inyour hearts to the Lord."* It doesn't sound like something we have a choice in does it? It says teach and admonish one another. This is a direct command.

In I Cor. 14:15 we find, *"I will sing with the spirit and with the understanding also."* We should be selective in the songs we sing. They should be directed to the Lord and be praise to Him. Eph. 5:19 says, *"Sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord."* Not for pleasing our ears or for our pleasure, but the Lord's. The Bible doesn't say you must know music or that you must have a good singing voice, otherwise many of us could not qualify. We know we must use our best talent. Whatever we have is our best. I Pet.4:11 states, *"If any man minister let him do it as of the ability which God giveth."* We are not all talented in many ways but we are required to do our best when we have the opportunity. God doesn't credit us only if we are skilled artists, by how pretty we sing, but our willingness to obey His commands.

James 5:13 says, *"Is any merry? Let him sing psalms."* Does this mean we don't have to sing if we are not in the mood? I'm afraid not.How often should we sing? The Bible is not really specific on this. We know it pleases our Lord to sing praises to Him, then it is up to us. We should try to please our Lord in every way we can and as often as we can, whenever

the opportunity presents itself. Our Lord doesn't require 20%, 50% or 75%. He requires 100%. Ananias found this out to his sorrow in Acts chapter 5.

The Church at Waterford wishes to welcome anyone passing through to stop and worship with us. We would be most welcome for some new residents.

In Christian love,
L.E. Arnett
Waterford congregation

Dear Brethren,

Jesus said in John 14:23, "*If a man love me, he will keep my words.*" Can we keep what we don't know? We often speak of Heaven and all its glories, the flowers that never fade, the lion and the lamb that feed together, no more crying, the street of pure gold, and the mansions with their jeweled foundations. It is good to dwell on these realities so that they become a part of our plans. The redeemed will pour out their songs of gratitude and praise to Him who they loved and worshipped while here upon the earth. Those of us who are excitedly making plans for the trip to heavenwill already be talking with God while here upon earth. In all our plans we will inquire, what will the Lord have me to do? How can I best show him how much he means to me? We will ask Christ to live within us and be the center of our affections. We will abhor our sins and want to live a life of happiness for others and not just for our own selfish desires. If we really love the Lord, let us keep His word and walk with Him daily, as did Enoch of old.

James 1:16 says, "*Do not err, my beloved brethren.*" James 1:22 says, "*Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" James 1:27, "*Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*" James 2:15-16, "*If a brother or sister be naked, or destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto him, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* Js. 4:17 says, "*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*" I Pet. 2:1-2, "*Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocricies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*" We know that nobody ever outgrows the scriptures, the book widens and deepens with our years.

People can be divided into three groups. Those who make things

happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. Which one are we?

In Christian love,
Farrell Wilson
Antlers, Oklahoma

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

Dear Brethren,

We here at the Lorenzo congregation send greetings to all everywhere who call on the name of the Lord. Our prayers are that we all may increase in knowledge of our Lord and in wisdom which is in Christ. May you prosper as your soul prospers.

We here at present are blessed beyond our deserts. We have been enjoying the delightful company of Bro. Bill Jared for the past week. He brought us much happiness and welcom news of the Chesterton congregation. We always joy in hearing about our brethren wherever and whoever they are.

Since Bro. Bill McCay Jr. and Bro. Greg Staley held our meeting here, things have been happening to our small congregation that we have all longed for and rejoice to see. Love is on the increase and although some suffering is inescapable, no faint hearts are evident.

Some sad news, Sis. Clement's sister, Nannie e. Sumner, died this past month. Also Bro. Jack White of the Seymour, Texas underwent surgery. Please remember him in your prayers.

We have begun again our custom of holding first of the month meetins in this area. Last month we were at Lugert, Oklahoma with the congregation there. It was a very good meeting with six or seven congregations represented. There were 63 visitors. Our dearest hope and earnest prayer is "May Christ be found in you."

Submitted with love and
in hope,
The Lorenzo congregation

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I will write once again to let you know we are doing well. We enjoy the paper, for through reading it we are informed of different activities and also how others are doing across the country.

The first of November we had the first Sunday meeting at the Lugert congregation. All were overjoyed at the turnout. A lot of good was accomplished through close fellowship, also in teaching and listening to the

word of God. I would like to thank all those that attended and invite them and others to come and visit at some time in the future, the Lord willing.

In Christian love,
Don Taylor

To the Brethren at Yakima,

This letter is in reply to your article in last month's issue of The Courier.

First of all, I would like to tell you Brethren (and I believe I speak for all at Bellflower congregation) how much we enjoy receiving The Courier and appreciate the fine job the congregation at Yakima is doing with it.

Those of us who have had a hand in the publication of a newsletter of any type appreciate the effort involved to edit, type, pring and circulate such a project. Certainly, we should not expect you to have to write up all the news in addition. That would, in fact, be a monumental task, since there is no way you could be cognizant of the activities of each congregation without spending considerable time, in addition to expense, each month to contact someone from each area. But it seems a lot of us have been lax in taking the time to write something for the paper. Speaking for us here at Bellflower, we do not have a lot of news each month, and in some cases could go two or three months in order to fill a few short paragraphs, but if all the congregations write even one paragraph a month, it should add up to a varied and interesting newsletter of considerable content. I think we would all be interested to hear some news, however short, of each congregation's activities each month.

In regards to this, I heard several comments last month, wondering what happened to the paper for that month. But how many had actually taken the time to write something for publication? I have certainly been as lax in this respect as anyone else, perhaps more so. I do feel there are others who are more talented in writing articles and have more time to do so than I, but this does not excuse me from making the effort.

I recently read the following article published in our local newspaper and I think it is a good example of how completely self-indulgent we can become:

COMFORTS OF HOME OFFERED AT CHURCH

"To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday:
COTS will be placed in the back for those who say Sunday is the only day they can sleep.
BLANKETS will be provided for those who say the church is too cold.
FANS will be provided for those who say the church is too hot.
We will have HEARING AIDS for those who say the preacher talks too soft and COTTON for those who say he talks too loud, and
ALARM CLOCKS for those who say he talks too long...!"

The Register

It seems that with the current pace of living, most of us are willing to give of our means but not of our time, which has become more valuable to us. I think a lot of us are remiss in this area of our Christian living. We tend to want to let someone else do it, or put things off for some distant day when we will have time to do a better job.

Speaking for myself, I hope to do better in the future than I have in the past.

Jerry Perigen
Bellflower congregation

Dear Brethren,

Our meeting closed June 12, 1977 with Bro. Earl Atchley as our speaker. We had ten very good lessons. I feel sure that those who attended were edified. We had some visitors from as far away as Carlsbad, N.M. There was no response to the Gospel call. It would be good if all in Gardendale, Texas would come and hear our speakers. I am sure there would be fewer empty seats. At our first Sunday meeting in October we had speakers from Lorenzo talk for us. This was Bro. Tom Clements and Bro. Earl Howe. I gave the reading lesson from the 13 th. chapter of I Corinthians.

As far as I know all are well at this time. If any come by this way, we would be happy to have you in our services. We're about 12 miles north of Odessa on 385 to 158, turn right about 2 miles to blue front store. We are at Zinnia and Lily one block south.

In Christian love,
N.E. and Alice Bergstrom

Brethren,

I am happy to report that Veda, Kelly and I were able to attend the Port Orchard meeting at Thanksgiving time. We heard some very good sermons

by Bro. Jerry McCay and Bro. Bob Farley and really enjoyed the Christian fellowship and love shown by the congregation there. Bro. and Sis Robert McCay were gone at the time on a trip to the East coast but they left the key to their house with the instructions that any who came that way were to make themselves at home. There were several families from Yakima and we really appreciated Their hospitality.

We are truly uplifted when we experience the love and unity of our brethren as we visit the different congregations around the country. It saddens me to think of all the brethren who cannot seem to find the time or find "more important things to do with their time than to spend just a little of that time visiting with brothers and sisters in Christ. I suppose we think that we will have plenty of time in Heaven to visit with them, so why bother down here on earth. As far as we are concerned, our brothers and sisters are the most important people on this earth. It is with these people that we wish to spend our time.

We have not been able to get away from home as much as we would like to have this past year but hope to be able to visit a few of the congregations in California and possibly Arizona after New Years.

After living in the same house for 25 years, we have moved into a mobile home on the church property here in Yakima. Our new address is 4309 Ahtanum, Yakima, Wa., 98903; phone number is 966-9697.

We enjoy having visitors, so all who can come and meet with us here in Yakima.

In Christian Love
Bill G. McCay
Yakima, Wa. Congregation

BIRTHS

Tressa Ross- Nov. 27 - 7 lbs. - Dan and Alyce Ross - Yakima

Kevin Lamb - Nov. 30 - 6 lbs. 10 oz. - Jim and Cathy Lamb - Yakima

MEETINGS

Port Orchard, Washington - Aug 20-27 - J.D. Logan

Yakima, Washington - March 12-19 - Speaker to be announced