FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL,

AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD...

# THE CHRISTIAN COURIER

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## MARRYING A CHRISTIAN

The Apostle Paul told Timothy (II Tim. 4:2) "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." This commandment has been passed on to any brother that has taken on the responsibility of preaching the word of God. We have to preach the whole word of God, and not just that part which we believe our listeners will agree with. It is because of this responsibility that I am writing to all young Christians on the subject that is very important to your Christian lives: Why you should marry a Christian.

It is my belief that the Bible teaches us that the very first qualification for a desirable mate is that he or she must be a Christian. Paul tells us in II Cor. 6:14-18 *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"* While I will admit that marriage is not mentioned specifically, can anyone honestly say that there is a closer yoke (bond or union) than the one between husband and wife? Study these verses in other translations and maybe you can get a clearer idea of what Paul was saying. What do these verses mean to you?

A) Living Bible: *"Don't be teamed with those who do not love the Lord, for what do the people of God have in common with the people of sin?"*

B) Revised Standard: *"Do not be mismated with unbelievers."*

C) New English Bible: *"Do not unite yourselves with unbelievers; they are not fit mates for you."*
D) Phillips: *"Don't link up with unbelievers and try to work with them. What common interest can there be between goodness and evil."*
E) Jerusalem Bible: *"Do not harness yourselves in an uneven team with unbelievers."*

I know very little about teams of horses, but I do know that if you have two horses pulling in different directions, they won't accomplish the job they have set out to do. As a Christian, your number one goal in this life is to gain heaven. Everything else must be secondary. A non-Christian has no hope of eternal life. He or she has only what they can obtain in this life. This conflict can affect every aspect of your Christian life: A. Church: As a Christian, you are commanded in Heb. 10:25 *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."* Will your non_Christian mate be willing to make sure that you will always be at services on Sunday to partake of the Lord's Supper? How about vacation? Will your mate make sure that while on vacation there will be a place for you to attend services? If you have a Christian mate, this will never present a problem.
B. Children: In Eph. 6:4 Christian fathers are commanded: *"And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Non- Christians are not under this commandment. If your mate isn't a Christian, then the whole responsibility of raising your children in the Church falls on your shoulders. Whose values will the children follow, yours or mates? And what if something should happen to you; who will teach your children the way of the Lord? If you have a Christian mate, they will be trying to raise your children to be Christians also.
C. Religious instruction: Wives have the right (ICor. 14:35) to ask their husbands questions on the scriptures; and they have the right to expect a scriptural answer. How can a non-Christian mate give you the religious leadership, guidance, and companionship to which you have a right?
D. The physical part of a Christian marriage is fantastic. It is one of the strongest bonds between a husband and wife. Study I Cor. 7:1-5 and you will find that husband and wife are equal in this relationship, each one doing what they can to please the other. The physical relationship is clean and honorable, but it should also be private. We live in a very 'accepting' society. The idea is that "...it isn't wrong as long as it is between consenting adults." The Bible teaches that we must be faithful to our mates. It leaves no room for worldly ideas. Wife-swapping, cheating

on ones mate, homosexuality, group sex, etc. are not condoned by the scriptures, but non-Christians are not governed by the law of the Lord

E. Example and environment: What kind of an example is your future mate going to be to you? What is his or her language like? Are you going to be embarrassed by the words he uses in front of you? Will you want your children to use that type of language? Will the example and environment that your non-Christian mate provide for you help you in your Christian life, or hinder you? Be honest!

F. Submission: As a Christian wife you must submit to your husband. This applies even if your husband is not a Christian (I Peter 3:1-6).

I realize that this letter is harsh. I am in no way trying to say that any of you would intentionally marry an immoral or worldly person. What I am trying to show you is that non-Christians are not under the same rules and regulations that you and I are. We must lead whole lives for Christ. They can do anything they wish. Marriage is forever. The Bible gives only two reasons that a marriage can be scripturally dissolved. These are death (Romans 7:1-4) or adultery (Matt. 19:3-9). A non-Christian can get rid of his mate for any reason.

In I Cor. 7:39 we are told: *"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."* Living Bible: *"...but only if she marries a Christian."* Does it seem logical to you that the Lord would command a Christian widow to marry a Christian, while he allowed all other Christians to marry anyone they wanted?

I have heard the argument that it is impossible for all of us to find Christian mates. I don't believe it! The Lord never asks us to do the impossible. In Rom. 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God..."* Convert your friends before you get serious. If you can't convert them, don't get serious. Visit other congregations. Somewhere there will be a Christian for you to marry. Please accept this in the spirit of love that it is written. Study the scriptures to make sure that I have taught you the truth. Don't hesitate to write me and ask any questions you might have on this subject.

I hope that the Lord will be with you in your every effort to do good. I know that it isn't always easy to be young. But remember Paul's words in Romans 8:31 *"...If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

In Christian Love,

Richard Johnston
606 W. Orchard
Selah, Wa., 98942

# HOW TO FIGHT A LION

Wait a minute! You can put down your whip and chair. The lion here isn't the kind that you see in a zoo or circus. The Lion referred to is mentioned in I Peter 5:8 *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."*

Satan has a lot of power and we should be aware of the powers that he has. One of these powers is that of temptation. He is the great tempter. Paul wrote in I Thes. 3:5 *"...when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain."* Paul knew that Satan had the power to tempt people, and he also knew that we must be aware of it, and be ready for it. Satan not only has the power to tempt us, but he knows the areas in which we are the weakest. All of us have weaknesses, and he attacks us in those areas. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he worked on the areas where Jesus might have fallen. In the first instance, Matt. 4:2-4, Jesus hadn't eaten for forty days and nights. He was hungry. So Satan tempted Him with food. This is the same way Satan works today. He concentrates on our weak points: we either sin or we win. The choice is up to us.

IICor. 11:13-15 tells us of another power of Satan. *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if hes ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works."* Satan doesn't appear to us as a little red devil with horns and a pitchfork. He appears to us in the way that works the best for him. He may appear as a co-worker who wants us to go to a ballgame on Sunday morning, or he may not appear in any form at all. He could just plant a thought in our mind, and the more we think about it the more we think, "Well maybe just this once." Satan will try <u>anything</u> if he thinks it might work. He is very creative.

Satan isn't the only one who has power in this world. Hebrews 4:15 *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*

Jesus, because he was tempted just like we are, knows what we are going through. He knows that it is hard to fight Satan. But He also knows that it is possible to be tempted and yet not sin. Because He has fought Satan successfully, He is able to make it easier for us. *"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."* (Hebrews 2:18). I Cor. 10:13: *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer*

*you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* That is an exciting promise. Every time Satan throws a temptation at us, God will supply us with a way to escape from it. We no longer can use the excuse: "Well, it was a situation I just couldn't get away from." We can get away from EVERY temptation!

We are told that Jesus is more powerful than Satan. I John 4:4, *"...greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."* Jesus, who is in us, is greater than Satan , who is in the world. *"...In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) We can also overcome Satan the same way Jesus did.

The first step in fighting Satan is to be aware that he is after you. Matt. 26:41 *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* Then we must realize that we can escape from every temptaion. Remember also that it is easier to fight Satan before he has you by the throat. Each time we give in to Satan, it makes it harder to fight him the next time. So don't let him win that first victory over you! James 4:7 *"...Resist the Devil and he will flee from you."*

We have a very strong defense with which to fight Satan. Eph. 6:11 *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* In Eph. 6:14-18 it explains each part of the armour of God. An entire lesson could be built on each part of this armour, but we will only briefly discuss each part for now.

A. Loins girt about with truth: We should be truthful in all things.

B. Breastplate of righteousness: We should prove ourselves righteous in God's eyes, righteous in man's eyes, and righteous in our own eyes.

C. Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace: We should be prepared at any time to tell someone about the gospel, whenever the situation arises.

D. Shield of faith: It indicates here that the shield is the most important part of our armour. If we have enough faith in the power of God, and enough faith that we have access to that power, then Satan can throw temptation at us as much as he likes, but they will not get past our shield.

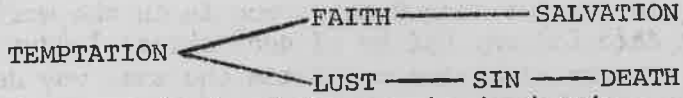
E. Helmet of salvation: I am sure we all know the requirements for salvation. This is a must if we are to be victorious in our fight against Satan.

F. Sword of the Spirit: The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. We can use it to fight Satan and cause him to flee. We can use the same techniques that Jesus used to fight Satan. Each time Jesus was tempted, he came back with these words, "It is written..." Use scriptures against

Satan. Even quote it out loud to him.

G. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit: This does not mean we should always be on our knees praying, but we should always be in a prayerful state of mind. Remember this: no matter where we are or what we do, we are in the presence of God. If we keep this thought always in our mind, it makes it hard to sin.

Everyone is tempted. What we do with the temptation is what counts. We have two choices:




James 1:14-15 *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawing away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."* This is our choice. The end result is not very desireable. The other choice is this: When we are tempted, instead of thinking about it and doing it, fight it as hard as you can by using the armour and weapons provided by God. Every time you overcome a temptation, you become stronger in that area. Each victory strengthens our faith and many small victories added together will strengthen our shield so that Satan will no longer be able to get at us! (Read I Peter 1:6-9)

*"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."* Phil. 4:8 This is a very good verse to remember. If we keep our mind on good things, Satan cannot win. It is when we let Satan change our thoughts to lustful thoughts that we run into trouble.

We close here with a promise from God. James 1:12 *"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*

In Christian Love,
Jon Powless, Port Orchard Congregation

## MEETING NEWS

The four of us would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregaion of Lorenzo and Lugert for the nice camp meeting. The camp site was beautiful, the food very good and well planned, the accomodations were adequate. If the weatherman would have co-operated and brought a cooling trend, it would have been perfect. We met many new Christians and many we have met before and love.

We can truly appreciate the effort put forth by all, as we have helped plan and work on this type of meeting. It is very physically and emotionally draining, but work for the Lord is never in vain. We heard some good lessons from speakers we had never been priveledged to hear and had some really good singings. We met old friends from Colorado, Arizona, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, California, Indiana, and Washington. After a nice picnic lunch in the park Sunday afternoon, we drove to Lorenzo, Texas for Sunday evening services. We went home with Jimmy and Joetta Loftis for a delicious steak dinner. We had a nice visit with some of their children and Sister Reba White and her daughter Ellen. Thanks for the memorable evening!

We stopped by Elk City before camp and visited with Bro. and Sister Earl Atchley, and had a refreshing bowl of homemade ice cream they had prepared.

We returned home by way of Yuma and arrived there Wednesday morning at Rabbit and Joyce Morris's, had lunch with them, and did some sightseeing. That evening, Rabbit, Joyce, Willie, and Buddy Davis took us out for a Mexican dinner before Church services. After services we had a nice visit with those at services, then with the Morris family until bedtime.

The first weekend of our trip we spent with the Bellflower Congregation for the last Sunday of Howard Mc Cay's meeting. We always enjoy being in Bellflower; the love and hospitality are great.

Except for a blow-out of the left front tire, we had a wonderful two weeks. The Lord has surely blessed us as he has promised, with a safe trip and Christian friends to associate with. Thanks to all in all the congregations!

In Christian Love,
Al and Char Burtis
Bill and Veda Mc Cay

**NOTE**

It is rumored that a few congregations are already planning their meetings for next year. When you decide upon a time, please do not hesitate to write to the COURIER, so all in every congregation may begin planning for their vacation time, and to arrange their own meetings.

The congregation at Yakima, Wa. is tentatively planning for another camp meeting sometime during the summer of 1980, if the Lord wills. It is never too soon to plan.

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

To the brethren in Christ Jesus, greetings,

We in San Pablo are enjoying the early summer and looking forward to our meeting Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2nd and 3rd. Brother Gerry Brockman has consented to bring us a series of lessons and we know he will do an excellent job. We will begin Saturday at 2:30 p.m. with a lesson, dinner at 5:00p.m., and another lesson at 7:00.

Sunday morning Lord's Day worship will start at 10:30, lunch at approximately 1:00, singing at 2:30 and the evening service at 5:00, with a snack afterwards. Come and worship with us Labor Day weekend.

We in San Pablo hav had our share of colds and illnesses this past spring. Sister Marietta Bryant has been quite ill during the winter and spring. Medical examination revealed she had cancer in her chest. She tires very easily but her spirits remain very high (higher than some of ours) knowing she is going to a better place. God bless and comfort her. We would like the prayers of the Church for Sister Bryant. Our prayers are for Brother Brockman from the Chico congregation who recently underwent surgery and had to return to the hospital with complications. God bless him and we pray for his speedy recovery. Our prayers are also for all those in Christ who are sick and need His blessings and comforting.

We would like to thank the Yakima congregation for their efforts and time placed in printing the paper. We really appreciate it.

In Christian Love,
The San Pablo Congregation

Brother and Sister Richard Jones of the Loco, Oklahoma Congregation lost all their belongings in a fire. Any help which the brethren can afford will be much appreciated. They are a young Christian couple with two small children and are worthy of our help. Please send communications C/O Howard Taylor, Rt. 2, Comanche, Oklahoma, 73529.

MEETINGS

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| Port Orchard, Washington | August 20-27 | Bro. J.D. Logan |
| San Pablo, California | September 2-3 | Bro. Gerry Brockman |
| Yakima, Washington | November 19-26 | Bro. Al Way |
| Yakima, Washington | 1980 | Camp |