FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL,
AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD...

THE CHRISTIAN COURIER

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OLD AGE

The poet Robert Browning wrote:

"Grow old along with me,
The best is yet to be.
The last of life, for which the first
was made.
Our times are in his hand.

But too often not even the finest of poets can offer the much needed sense of peace and acceptance when we face the very real facts of aging and old age, whether for ourselves, or for those we love.

But if we turn to the Holy Scriptures, we begin to understand that our fears have been groundless. There are compensations for growing older. The Word of God tells us that it also means growing wiser, becoming more knowledgeable, acquiring understanding of ourselves and of those we love.

Growing older is obviously part of God's Master Plan for us, and we know that in His wisdom, He has reason for all He does. The Bible tells us: *"With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days understanding."* Job 12:12. *"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generation: ask thy father, and he will show thee, they elders, and they will tell thee."* Deuteronomy 32:7.

Old age is meant to be respected. It is the time when knowledge, often gleaned with pain and garnished through suffering, can be passed on to those younger. Wouldn't it be wonderful if some of what we know could save those younger than us from tribulation?

Little by little, the order of God's world becomes more evident. We are His "conduits", meant to pass on to those who follow us all that we can: *"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.*

Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come". Psalms 71:17-18 *"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years; yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom."* Psalms 90:10-12

Too often, age is associated with increasing weakness and debility. But this is not often the case. Many go on with great fortitude. Let us pray to the Lord that He keep us and those we love hale, even as we grow older: *"And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."* Deut. 34:10-12

Aging, then does not necessarily have to mean a time of LESS but may even be a time of MORE, a time of greater spiritual strength.

As we grow older, we also grow more thoughtful. We have thought about God's only Son; we have thought about His sacrifice, we have thought about Him as our blessed Redeemer. And yet, others may marvel at our strength, our ability to do many physical things, but we know where that strength comes from: *"I am as a wonder to many; but thou art my strong refuge. Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honor all the day. Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strenght faileth."* Psalms 71:7-9

Old age should not be looked upon as a time of sadness or unhappiness. It is a time of opportunity, a time to give more thought to the meaning of our lives, a time to think constructively of the years we have ahead of us.

We have so much to do - - - to be worthy of our blessed Saviour. The Word of God tells us that God granted long years to many of His children. I will not quote these, but here are some references as to where to find and read some of them: Gen. 23:1, Gen. 24:1 Gen. 25:7-8 Gen. 25:17.

Now we know that God does not behave casually or carelessly. Long years are given for a reason, there is a purpose to all our lives. The blessing of a long life can be used fruitfully. After years of rushing about, of never having enough time to do all the things we have always wanted to do. God has given us the gift of "more time" and we can use those wonderful years by accepting God's will in our lives

everyday. The older we grow, the more we realize that He knows what is best for us. As we grow older, our Saviour helps us to understand that He and His Father really do know what is best for us. With this understanding, we become aware of more spiritual needs: *"Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment: Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"* Matthew 6:25-26

It is not for us to decide the length of our years. Have you ever heard anyone say, "Well, I've lived too long." But when we read of the many years given to Adam and Enoch and Methuselah, we begin to understand how foolish those words sound. The purpose of longevity may not be so clear to you, but you can be sure there is a purpose. Use God's blessing of a long life to be a source of loving kindness and spiritual aid to those around you, and to those who meet you by the way, and to those whom you dearly love. *"And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness after his image; and called his name Seth; And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters ; and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died."* Genesis 5:3-5

The Bible is filled with passages indicating concern for all of us as we grow older. And as the years pass, we, in turn, grow more concerned for our own spiritual welfare. Few of us can find the words to express these feelings properly, but if we turn to the Book of Psalms we gain solace, as we read, *"Remember, O Lord thy tender mercies and thy loving kindness; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness sake, O Lord."* Psalms 25:6-7 *"For a thousand years in thy sight are but yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."* Psalms 90-4.

Sometimes we are puzzled. It seems as though one minute we are young and active, and the very next we are old and our youth is gone. *"Thou carriest them away as with a flood they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up in the evening it is cut down and withereth."* Psalms 90:5-6

But even as the years pass, our spiritual sight grows sharper. As we love our Lord our Saviour, we begin to understand that THEY offer us our long life as a preface to our eternal salvation. *"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."* Psalms 91:14-16

Remember that the quality of our lives is truly more important than the quanity. Long years are a great gift given to us by our Father God, so we are not to waste it. We are not to waste his blessings. *"If a man beget a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years may be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known anything; this hath more rest than the other. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good; do not all go to one place?"* Ecclesiastes 6:3-6 *"Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him."* Eccleiastes 3:22

With everyday that passed, we are that much older, we hope for long life, and we will enjoy our own old age a great deal more if we know that in the past we always treated older people with respect.

What a rare privilege we have when we can enjoy the companionship of our elder brothers and sisters in Christ. I have had a wonderful and rewarding experience in having my mother living with us for a while before she passed on. In those last days we grew closer and closer together, not just because she was my mother, but because she was so exciting to talk to, and because she had experienced a full, wonderful, faithful Christian life. This is what we shared. Her life as a Christian and how this one life affected so many, many other people down through the wonderful years. *"Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."* Exodus 20:12

I wish to express my love and my many thanks to all the wonderful elderly brothers and sisters I have known in my life, for bringing wonderous gospel of Jesus Christ to me.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

In love of the truth,
Homer Bryant
San Pablo Congregation

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In our everyday lives we tend to be like those out in the world. We think that Christ delays his coming and we have time enough to serve the Lord. Thus we let our lives slip into a false sense

of security concerning our spiritual lives. Remember "Be a doer of his word and not a hearer only." I do not believe that any of us can say, "I have done enough for the Lord, therefore I can take my ease." So here are some scriptures for us to consider when we feel this way, remember we are to stir up our pure minds by remembrance. After reading these verses we will remember what and why we became Christians.

Remember the Reward and Fight On.
In Christian Love,
Bro. Gene McKinney

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

What is the punishment for sins? *"For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Rom 6:23

What kind of wages are we working for today? Gal. 6:8 , *"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."*

How many deaths are there for the wicked? Rev 21:8, *"But the fearful and unbelieving and abominable, and murderers and whoremongers and socerers and idolators and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death."* Also in Rev. 20:14,15, *"And death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."*

In this fire will there be torment and if so how long will it last? Rev. 14:10, *"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out with out mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presences of the lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."*

What is the nature of the fire into which the wicked will finally be cast? *"Then shall he say, also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angel."* Matt. 25:41. Also in Matt 13:40, *"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire. so shall it be in the end of this world."*

What shall be the final effect of this fire on the wicked." *"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."* II Thes. 1:9 Again in IIThes2:8, *"And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with*

the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

"AS Cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."
(Prov. 25:25)

Aside from the usual aches, pains, flu and colds, we at Yakima are doing fairly well.

We were very sad to receive word of the passing from this life of Sis Eleanor Guyer but also felt very honored to be asked to officiate at her funeral. We have known Bro. and Sis. Guyer and their daughter, Sheila Arnold for about fifteen years and look upon them as true friends.

We were also saddened to hear of the passing of Bro. Elmer Hunt last Sunday. The friendship between the Hunts and McCays goes back well over fifty years and Bro. Hunt will surely be missed. He was a faithful soldier of the Lord and a preacher of the Gospel for many, many years.

When those of our number pass from this life we grieve over the void left in our lives but we should remember that *"it is appointed unto man once to die and if we will but live our lives for the Lord Jesus, we will all meet again in that better world prepared for the redeemed."*

Submitted in Christian Love,
Bill McCay
Yakima, WA.

To All Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Our love goes out to all of you. We apologize for not writing more often. We rejoice in hearing the good news about more new members being added to the Church, and our hearts are gladdened with the news of the marriage of Bro. and Sis. Keith Boen of Ft. Smith Ark. Let us always pray for these newly weds and all the brethren.

Everyone here in San Pablo California is doing well. We have Br. and Sis. Eric and Lillian Smith worshiping with us, but we have to share them with Chico and Waterford congregations. Bro. Eric has brought us some very wonderful sermons, and we thank the Good Lord for them both.

We wish to thank everyone again for attending our meeting on Labor Day last September. We plan, Lord willing, to have a meeting every Labor Day, each and every year. Our meeting will be on Sept. 5 & 6 this year. We cordially invite each and everyone who possible can to come and meet with us. We have someone in mind, but will announce the speaker at a

later date.

Our immediate family has recently become smaller due to our son and daughter-in-law, Richard and DeAnna Bryant, moving to Springfield, Org. They were married by Bro. J.D. Logan last September at our home in Concord, Ca. They decided to move to Springfield near to DeAnna's parents, Bro, and Sis. Ball. They are meeting with the Springfield congregation. We miss them dearly, but they like Springfield and are doing well there. We ask for the prayers of the church for these two and for all those new families starting out, especially those Christian families.

Lord willing, we will be at the Baron Oak meeting. We plan to go with Bro. J.D. Logan and Bro. McCay in a sort of caravan. I am looking forward to meeting with them there. In the last Christian Courier, Bro. Howard McCay is right when he said that these meetings were very profitable, especially to those who attend. He is so right. Please try to attend all the meetings we possibly can. I found that they are very good for the young people, too.

Our prayers and love go out for each and every one of the brethren.
Homer Bryant
San Pablo

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are happy to announce that the Courier is on the road again. It is moving to Bellflower as of March. Please send all correspondence to : 9914 Arkansas Ave., Bellflower, Calif. 90706. They would appreciate notification of any meeting dates as soon as possible.

BIRTHS

To Wayne and Amy Orendorff, a daughter, Shaya Vanette, 7Lb. 13 Oz., born Dec. 31, 1980.

To Ken and Sis Connie Williams, a daughter, Jessica, Tues., Feb. 16. Grandparents are Br. and Sis. Burtis, Modesto.

OBITUARIES

Sister Eleanor Guyer of Hughson, Calif. passed away December 3, 1980. She was born August 12, 1920.

Br. Elmer Hunt, La Habra, Calif. passed away Feb. 1, 1981.

1981 MEETINGS

March 15-21	Aztec N.M.	Harry Dye
(Further info. call Myra Dabbs 334-6657 Roger Bixler 334-2421 Frank Redlon 334-6791)		
April 12-19	Waterford, Calif.	Howard McCay
June 7-14	Baron, Okla.	J.D. Logan
June 14-21	Yakima, WA.	Camp
June 27-July 5	Cederedge, Colo.	Camp
None set	Bellflower	Howard Taylor

It has been brought to our attention that in the Feb. Courier we put the wrong dates for the Big Spruce Camp meeting. Please note the correct dates., June 27 - July 5. We apologize for this mistake.

BAPTISMS

Fred Jones	Yakima, WA.	Feb. 16,1981
Jamina Jones	Yakima, WA	Feb. 18, 1981
Robin Roby	Yakima, WA.	Feb. 15, 1981