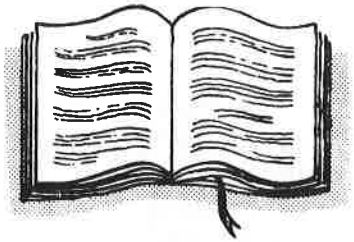
The Christian Courier



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MARCH 1985

"PLAY"

A few lines on the word 'play' as found in 1 Cor. 10: 7. The Greek word there, according to the Analytical Greek Lexicon says; "To play in the manner of childen, to sport, to practice the festive gestures of idolatrous worship" Where it is used in the Old Testament in Ex. 32: 6, which Paul was speaking of in 1 Cor. 10:7, "Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, says a prime root, to laugh, mock, play, make sport.

Vine's on the word play, says; "Properly, to play as a child. (Pais) hence denotes to play as in dancing and making merry. 1 Cor. 10: 7. CP...EMPAIZO..to mock.

Am going to quote now from, "Annul Lesson Commentary on Bible-School Lessons, 1963, Uniform Bible Lessons for the Churches of Christ; "The fall of the Israelites in the wilderness was due to the very temptations which surrounded the Corinthians at the time Paul wrote the letter from which our text for today is taken. These temptations included the allurments of idolotry and its attendent impurieties. Under the general heading of lusting after evil things Paul mentions four specific sins which the Israelites committed namely, (1) The idolotry surrounding the golden calf, during which time the people ate and drank to the idol, and then rose up to celebrate the occasion by means of songs and dances which accompanied such worship, (see Ex, 32: 1-6) these Idolotrous dances were usually characterized by licentiousness, and were generally indesent; and as such, they were wholly unbecoming to God's people." Please read Ex. 32: 1-6, then either on through the chapter or at least Ex. 32; 25.

We are told to <u>reason</u>. Let us do so and not twist the teachings of the Bible to our own opinions.

Yours in Christ. Robert E. McCay Written in love of the truth.

Thoughts For The New Year

In Prov 14:12, we find that Solomon, in his wisdom, gave us some good advise if we will just think. He said; "there is a way that seemeth right to man but the end thereof are the ways of death." We are not just talking about death in this life; We are talking about eternal distruction. Compl seperation from God. For we are warned by God in 1 Cor. 10:12; that if we think we stand, we need to take heed lest we fall. Prov 14;16 said again: "A wise man feareth and departeth from evil but the fool rageth and is confident." We hear many say; I know I am saved. I don't do anything wrong. Well, a lot of people in the past have taught the same thing. Let us look to Jer. 17;1. The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond. It is graven upon the table of their heart. What was their sin? Jer 18: 12; Part of their sin, they said there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart. The people hath forgotten me and have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, in the way not cast up. God said to Jer. 2:1; Go cry in the ears of Jerusalem thus saith the Lord. And here is what they said about him. Jer 18:18. Come, let us devise devices against him . For the law shall not perish from the priest nor council from the wise nor the Word form the prophet, come let us smite him with the tongue and let us not give heed to any of his words. Yet they taught that they were right, but the Lord said to them (Jer 44:46) therefore hear ye the word of the Lord all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of egypt saying the Lord liveth. The Word of the Lord is always right, and he destroyed his people for their sin. Are we any better than they when we want to walk as we want to. Rom 3:9. Paul said no in no wise for we have proved both Jew and Gentile all under sin. In other words, we all want to do the thing we like to do whether or not we can read it in the Word of God. Look at Ezek 13:1-10: Here we see that the Lord told him to prophesy against the Prophets, (teachers) and say unto them (v 7) have ye not seen the vain vision; have ye not spoken lying divination when ye say the Lord sayeth, when I have not said it: We hear of so much teaching going on today in the name of the Lord, that he didn't say, and if it is not written, then he did not say it and it is sin. Rom 14:23. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." Jer 10;23. I hear some in the church today tht don want articles put in the paper, that are scriptural. Shame on those of us that don't want the Gospel tautht in ANY way it can be taught. For it is the power of God to save anyone that will Believe Rom 1:16. We cannot follow Paul and have such an attitude.

1 Cor 11;1, He said to follow him as he followed Chirst. I Phil 1:15 18, Paul said: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife: and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to by bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel. What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached and I therin rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Shame on anyone that will muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. I Tim 5:18. That will put us in the same class the rebellious children of Israel. Isaiah 30:10-11, says to the seerers (teachers) See or teach not and to the Prophets, prophesey not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits, Get out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the holy one of Israel to cease from us. This would seem to be the same attitude that people of this nature have today when they don't want articles put out for the people to read. Just like they did to Christ in Matt 21:38. This is the heir, come let us kill him then the inheritance shall be ours. Or, in other words, we can do what we want. Shame on anyone that has this attitude towards God's Word. We should be like Paul, as long as the Gospel is being preached, we should rejoice, for it is the power of God to save those that believe. For the Lord is exalted Isaiah 33:5-8, for He dwelleth on high, He hath filled Zion with judgement and righteousness and wisdom and knowledge shall the stability of times and strength of salvation the fear of the Lord is his treasure. (continue to read to the 10th verse). Are we going to be like Israel; Luke 21:43; have the kingdom of God taken from us and we be cast into the lake of fire. Rev. 20: 11-15. Let us examine ourselves (11Cor 13:5) and see if we are in the faith or not. For we will be judged by the things written according to what we do. Rom 14:10.

So, for the New Year, let us all take heed lest we fall, and let the Word of God slip from us. (1 Cor 15:1-5) Let us be steadfast, unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord. (1 Cor 15;58) in as much as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord,.

Written with Love of
the truth, and to all
in my heart.

Sincerly yours in Christ

Lloyd Treat

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Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.
II Chronicles 15:7

JUDGING

Much has been written lately concerning the scriptural subject of judgeing; specifically of judging one's brother. While I would not call the scriptures in question for one moment, I do not believe it is error to call in question a peculiar interpretation of the scriptures We can all be wrong; you, I, and everyone else.

It is commonly written, indeed, almost always written that ;it a sin (wrong) to "judge" our brother, etc. Do the scriptures really teach this, or are we missinterppreting this or using it for our own purposes and not the purposes of the writer? It is altogether proper to define one's subject before writing. Permit me to define "to judge".

JUDGE...from the GREEK, "KRINO". "prop. to distinguish, (ie) decide (mentally or judicially) by imp. to try, condemn, punish; ...avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, deterimne, estime, judge, go to (see at) the law, ordain, call in question, sentance, to think." Strong's concordance, page 43. This definition is agreed to by Thayer, and authority of high credentials, but explained in further detail which shall not go into at this time.

Suffice to say, this word is very conplex and is used in many manners in the New Testament. What we should seed to avoid is oversimplification in our usage, and the urge to generalize. What one writer was try;ing to say by "judge" is not necessarily what another or the same writer meant in another passage. We must determine by the context what is meant in each case.

STANDARD OF JUDGEMENT

Jno 7: 24, "judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgement." If it is wrong for a Christian to judge, why were we given a standard of judgement? The question is not, "is it wrong to judge?" but, "what, how, and who we are to judge?"

JUDGE THEM THAT ARE WITHIN

1 Cor. 5: 12, "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do ye not judge them that are within?" If we are not to judge our brothers and sisters, what did Paul mean hear? Some would say, "Well, he was referring to judgement on minor matters, and affairs of this life, not on spiritual matters". Lets see. Paul wrote, beginning with verse 9, of "fornicators, coveteous, idolator, railer, drunkard, extortioner,....." This does not appear to be a "minor" situation under consideration, but of major proportions. Yet it was just of such serious actions that Paul said; "...do not ye judge them that are within?" There can be no doubt that Christians are to judge among themselves. The true question is, what kind of judgement are we to use?

HOW WE ARE NOT TO JUDGE

Matt. 7:1, "Judge not, that you may not be judged." Jesus was warning his followers not to judge unfairly or harshly. The context clearly shows him to be explaining the hypocrisy of judgeing by standards by which would not be judged ourselves. But surely we cannot understand this to mean we cannot judge with righteous judgement. In so doing, we would be able to see the speck (mote) in our brother's eye, while at the same tim detect whatever is in our own, whether mote or beam (log). We cannot understand this to mean, we cannot judge another, only the type of judgement used.

NOT HYPOCRITICALLY

Rom. 2: 1-3, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest DOEST THE SAME THINGS"...."And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and DOEST THE SAME, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God?"

No question what the writer was talking about here. Read it all, brothers, and you will see he is refering to one who judges a brother's sins, and then does the same things himself. Paul is teaching agains hypocrisy.

NOT TO JUDGE UNIMPORTANT MATTERS

Rom. 14;4, "Who are you that judges another man's servant? To his own master he stan or falls." Verse 10: "But why do you judge your brother? OR why do you belittle your brother"?

We must consult the context for the meaning and intent of the Apostle. Note verse 2: "For one believes that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eats vegetables. Do not let him who eats despise him who does not eat; and do not let him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has recieved him." What is under consideration here is the eating of everyday food, specifically, meat. It is not proper for us to judge one another on the basis of meat-eating or vegetarianism. The only judgement open to us on this matter is to be found in Vs. 13, "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." If eating meat causes our brother to stumble, we would be putting a stumbling-block in his way and creating an occasion to fall, if we eat.

Nothing here to persuade us we cannot judge RIGHTEOUS JUDGEMENT!

WE ARE TO JUDGE PREACHERS

1 John 4: 1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, by try (test-judge) the spirits whether they are of God:" These "spirits" are identified by Paul as "false prophets" (teachers).

Here we are positively commanded to test, prove, and judge the teachers that come before us. I realize that in the past we have had preachers who have advocated doctrines either from the pulpit or by letter which were questionable to say the least . and at times downright unscriptural. When reproved for their teachings, they try to find refuge in the dictum, you "can't judge me". Well, it is a fact that preachers cannot claim such refuge; they are to be tried and tested. We live in a fish-bowl for everyone to see and try. If this is uncomfortable, perhaps it would be better to remove ourselves from view of the brother hood. If we remain in the brethrens' view, we must expect to be tried critically. WE WHO DECLARES THE WORD OF GOD PUBLICALLY HAVE NO RIGHT TO EXPECT ANYTHING OTHERWISE.

Criticism, done in a loving, christian manner has a purging effect, much the same as refining gold in the fire. If we are not in error, we have nothing to fear. On the other hand, if we cling to that which is in error, or of which we are doubtful, we have much to fear from this "trying".

When we try (judge-test) the teachers among us, let us use "righteous judgement". That is, of course, the Word of God.

WHAT OF THOSE WHO DON"T

1 Thes 5: 12, "And, my brothers, we beseech you to know those who labor among you,.." The word here used, "know" is defined as, "eido"... "be aware, consider, have knowledge, perceive, be sure, understand".

Brethren, we are to be fully aware of those whom we put foreward to the pulpit to teach the congregation. If one comes into our midst who is unknown to us, should we put him into the pulpit without question I have known of brethren putting someone into the pulpit whom they had never heard of, when in fact, if they had, they probably would not have used the man. This is simply dereliction of duty. There is a simple method of properly obeying the scriptures in cases like this. ASK!! Sometimes it will surprise us what we can discover if we ask!

In simple summary, we can say that we are forbidden to judge harshly or unfairly; we are not to judge hypocritically; we are not to judge trivial matters; we are not to speak evil; but we are to judge "them that are within", "try the spirits," Judge "righteous judgement".

I commend to all the brotherhood the followig injunction by the Apostle Paul: "I speak to your shame. IT is so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" 1 Cor. 6:5. Judge my words brethren!

(3708 Mission St. Stockton, Ca. 95204 - 209 464-4961) J D Logan

MAKING GOD IN MAN'S IMAGE

No, the article heading is correct. The editor did not make a mistake. I know Gen. 1:27 says: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him." This article is not about man made in the image of God, but how man views God.

Throughout the ages man has created "gods" from the elements of the earth in the shapes of man, animals, birds, or combinations thereof. Some societies viewed God as being the sun, moon, or even volcanos and worshipped and made sacrifices to same. For this we know how the true, uncorruptible God feels (Rom. 1;18-25)

There are others that reconize and worship the only true and living God, but still don't understand his nature. God is viewed as having some of the weakness of man. "..thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." Psalms 50:21.

We laugh when we think of the gods of the Germanic races, such as Woden, Thor, and others who were gods of "blood and iron"..glorified, maginified pictures of German warriors, or gods created in their own image. We can read of all the gods created in the myths of Rome and Greece who had weaknesses just as mortal man has. There was great jealousy between these gods which supposedly played a great part in the ups and downs of mortal here below.

Men are guilty of lying, jealousy, envy, adultry, greed, and the like. So they have imagined that their gods were the same. Even today there are those who claim to believe in the one true and living God that are prone to make God in thier own image.

We are slack concerning our promises. We do not always mean what we say. We make threats and promises which we soon forget and fail to carry out. Our word is lightly given. So we imagine that God is like that too. We mistake his forebarence and long suffering for indifference and carelessness. Peter mentions some people who think like this: "Knowing this, first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things con tinue as they were from the beginning fo the creation....The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness: but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:3-4, 9).

We can be bribed into a good humor, so we think God is like that, and we can bribe Him to overlook our faults. Some of the Israelites seemed to think that if their offerings were large enough and expensive enough, their lives could go on in sin without rebuke from God. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs or

of goats." Isa. 1: 11. Some think they can bribe God to let them do as they please by going to Church, giving money the poor, and doing many christian works. These things are very fine, but God will not accept them as bribes if they continue in sin.

We live so much in sin, or so close to it that we feel very little horror of it. Sin does not appear exceedingly loathesome and repulsive to us. In our first contract with it, it does, but then we become used to it. So since sin does not look so terrible to us, we create God like that in our minds, and we are rebellious when we think of God's allowing sinners to be punished in hell. People say; "Why, I wouldn't punish anyone forever, no matter what he had done. No sin could desirve eternal punishment, and I just know God will not".

Why do men make such statments? They are trying to lower God down to man's level. So sin is not ugly to us. And we judge God by our own inferior taste. Since sin is not horrible ;to us who live in a sinful world, we have a difficult time in realizing just how black sin is in the eyes of God. The more Godly we become the more shocking sin is. We need to try to form our character after God's instead of trying to comform his character to our own imperfect selves.

In Christian Love
Ellis P. Forsman
Seattle, Washington

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THE WORTH OF THE SOUL

I am afraid that we too often do not stop and concider the soul of mankind and what it is worth. Matt. 16:26 says, "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul". So we see that anything we have in this life, wealth, fame, position,. etc.. all are nothing compared where we will spend eternity. John and the other Apostles were thrown in prison (Acts 4:18) and falsely accused and beaten (Acts 5:18-40). Stephen was the first many who were killed, tortured, and every physical humiliation possible, was heaped upon the early christians and they all thought the soul of men and women; that is what it was worth to him. What about us? I am afraid that too often we care more for an individual's feelings than we do his soul. James 5;19 tells us, "Brethren, if any of you (members of the Church) do err from the truth and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a sinner (member of the Church) from the error or his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." Do we think enough of a brother or sister to try to help them save their soul or do we think 'thats their problem', not realizing that it is our problem? For we are, indeed, our brother's keeper. If their soul is lost becsuse of our our not wishing to offend them or hurt their

feelings, our souls will be lost too. Brethren, it is a serious matter.. the saving or the loosing of a soul. Ezekiel 33:7-8, "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniwquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." Not only is the man's soul lost, but our soul also. Again, back to James 5:19

It has been said of the Church of Christ that we are only interested in baptising individuals, then turning them loose. If true, then we are wrong. Most of the New Testament is made up of letters instructing us in helping one another, on the journey of life, that we might all save our souls.

Written in love,
Howard McCay
Rt. 3 Box 657 #A-19
Yakima, Wa. 98901

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"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY"

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Ceres, Ca.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Sure foggy whether here, and cold too. The sun shone so warm and pretty last Saturday, but I don't believe it has shown since. But we always have bad weather each winter.

I enjoy the Christian Courier each month and read it as soon as I can on Sunday afternoon. So keep the Courier just like it is, articles and all, because the next person who publishes it may not print letters and articles. I like both, and learn from the Biblical articles. I think it does good to have articles in it.

In Christian love
Mary Mckizie

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Goshen, Arkansas

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Everyone at Goshen is about the same as usual. There is still quite a lot of sickness here. Some have had to miss a few services, but nothing serious enough to be in the hospital. Maybe when spring comes everyone will feel better. We still have a few visitors along, which we appreciate very much. Also Bro. Terry Warford rom the Baron Congregation came and gave us another ood lesson.

We always look forward to his coming, I hope he keeps coming back.

I would like to make one minor correction in the Jan. issue. It states that the discussion on the breaking of the bread was held at Goshen. The discussion was held at the Baron building. I know it is easy to make mistakes, & possibly I didn't make myself clear.

While we are on the subject, I understand that the Non-breadbreaking brethren are wanting to talk again. As far as I know, no details have been worked out.

I want to applaud Bro. McCay for what he said in the Jan. issue about preaching against worldliness. I have never met Bro. McCay, but I certainly agree with him on this. It is the tendency to candy coat sin, but we are to preach it if they like it or if they don't like it.

Again we would like to invite any or all visitors. It makes us much stronger to be with Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

In Christian Love
Paul Andrews

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BARON, OK

Dear Brethren:

Here's all the news from the congregation at Baron. As reported by Bro. Paul Andrews of Goshen, we had a discussion at Baron concering the breaking of the bread. Bro. Paul reported it very well, so I won't go into detail.

We've had several visitors since I wrote last. Bro. Walter Ferguson was here from Goshen to speak for us one Sunday morning. He brought several members of the Goshen congregation with him, and brought forth a great lesson. Bro. Melvin Daniels, also from Goshen, has been here several times. Bro. Jim Brown wrote last month that he was retireing and wanted to do meetings. I can't recommend him highly enough. He is an excellent speaker and covers a wide variety of subjects and does them all very well.

We are excited about our meeting, June 2-9 with J. W. Bedingfield. All are invited.

In Christian Love
Terry Warford, for the
Church of Christ at Baron.

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According to Mal. 3:16, from an old Prophet, God's children have three marks, or distinguishing characteristics, namely: (1) They fear the Lord. (2) They speak to one another. (3) They think on his name. (Psa 111:9 - Heb. 10:24-25 - 11 Cor 6:1 - Phil 4:3 - Psa 1:1,2 - Psa 27-14; -46:10 - 11 Tim 2:15 - Phil 5:3 - Heb 6:10).....

YAKIMA, WA.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

It has been quite a while since I wrote to you. Everyone in my family has had the flu and I still don't feel to good yet, but Lord willing, I will be up to par before too long.

I will make this short. There are quite a few that has the flu. I would like to hold a Gospel meeting in any congregation of the Lord' Chruch if possible, in the near furture. Please let me know. As you know the Lord's work is the most important work in my life.

Jesus said: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel' (Mark 16:15-16. God bless all of you. We love you.

Your brother and sister in Christ.
Wilbur and Lola Reading.

(Write to us at this address: 2802 Beaudry Rd. Box 860-C
Yakima, Wa. 98902

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CANUTE, OK.

Dear Brethren:

We are sending some money to help with the paper. We are small in number but we do appreciate all the work you are doing for the paper, which we recieve every month.

Colter Church of Christ
A.J. Rennels
Canute, Ok. Rt. 2

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GOD VALUES IDEAS HIGHLY

The Bible shows that God is deeply concerned with right thinking, & with true ideas. God isn't impressed with the exterior of a man, but looks rather into his heart (1 Sam 16:7). Solomon said a man becomes, on the ourside, what he thinks on the inside (Prov 23:7). God told Ezekiel he didn't like the idea concealed in the proverb, "The Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The Almighty contadicted this false notion of determinism with a true idea: "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:1-4).

Selected

Gospel Meetings

Roll, Arizona	April 7 - 14	J.W.Bedingfield
Yakima, Wa.	May 12 - 19	R. Walkingstick
Baron, Ok.	June 2 - 9	J.W.Bedingfield
Waterford, Ca.	June 16 - 23	J.W.Bedingfield
Bellflower, Ca.	June 30 - July 7	Cliff Brockman
Delta, Colorado	July 7 - 15	Camp
Port Orchard, Wa.	July 28 - Aug 4	Sammy Boen
Yakima, Wa.	Aug 4 - 11	J.W.Bedingfield
San Pablo, Ca.	Aug 31 - Sept 2	Camp

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No news on Baptisms, Births, Marrigaes, deaths.

There have been reports of many, many members and loved ones with the flu, and colds. I would like to remind everyone every where to remember these loved ones when we kneel down to God in prayer. We all have been there, and we know that it is very miserable when you just don't like doing anything but stay in bed.

We pray for your speedy recovery.

The Body of Christ as a whole.

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San Pablo, Ca.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Greetings to all the brethren every where. We pray that you are healthy and are kept in the loving care of our Lord.

There wasn't very many at the services this last Lord's Day. Bro. & Sister Logan went to Grass valley, as did Bro. Eric and Bret Harper went home also. Bro. and Sister Bryant, and Bro. and Sister McKinney went up to meet with the brethren at Rogue River, Oregon. So this left just a few for services. We would like to thank those Bro. and Sis. for their faithfulness in the services when so many was gone. We are so thankful for all the love and fellowship that was shown us at Rogue River congregation. We enjoyed the worship, and the fine dinner afterward, the singing at Bro. & Sister Tom and Charleen Brodway's house. We were spiritually blessed with the Bible discussions, which lasted way into the early morning hours too. We hope that Bro. and Sis. Broadway didn't get to tired.

We would like to thank all the congregation for their hospitality and thier love that was shown us.

In Christian love to all
San Pablo Church of Christ