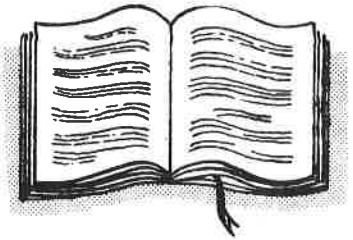
The Christian Courier



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September 1985

THE HEARER

Sometime back I wrote concerning the type of preachers should be. Now I think we should concider the qualities of the hearer. From time I was a child listening to my father preach, I have heard people say; 'That lesson was pointed right at me.' Now I am older and I still hear the same things and I wonder if people stop and think about what they are saying. Who is 'pointing' the lesson at an individual? 11 Tim. 3:16; "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness....." And John 14:23; "Jesus answered and said unto him; If a man love me he will keep my words." Why? verse 24: "The words which ye hear are not mine but him that sent me." (God) 1 Cor. 14:37; "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spititual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Now brethren, let us concider who is aiming the lesson at us. Is it the preacher, the apostles, Christ? Or God? THINK....

Acts 23:9; "Let us not fight against God." If we murmer against a lesson direrected by God, are we not guilty of murmuring against him? 1 Peter 3:21 tells us that baptism saves us. If the preacher tells me I am not saved unless baptized, do I blame the preacher for aiming the lesson at me? Or do I blame Peter or the real culprit, God? Now if I were baptized I would not feel the lesson was aimed at me. So we conclude; if I feel any lesson is pointed at me, I must be in the wrong and must change. Acts 17:30; "At the times of this ignorance God winked at, but commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (change)

Brethren, if we feel God's Word is pointed at us lets be thankful that our conscience is not so hardend but that we can realize the need

to change. Lets thank the minister instead of murmuring against him lest we be found to be fighting against God.

Written with Christian love
Howard McCay
Rt.3 Box 657 - A19
Yakima, Wa. 98901

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BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

"And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18.

This is an exortation to Christians. The contrast presented is a forcable one: "Be not filled with wine," "be filled with the Spirit". The first forbids the gratification of a fleshly appetite; the second commands a christian duty. One leads to distruction, the other to eternal life. One shows the christian is "walking after the flesh:" "Sowing to the flesh:" The other, that he is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. "Sowing to the Spirit." Galations 6:8.

"Be filled with the Spirit." If all these christians were already full of the Spirit the exortation would be useless. Some of them must have lacked this fullness then; and it is reasonable to suppose that some now are not filled with the Spirit. To them this exhortation comes with force. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." Romans 8:9. The Son of God said: "Out of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt 12:34)..."Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adultries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, laciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these things come from within and defile the man." (Mark 7:21-23) If the heart, then, be filled with the Spirit, the words and actions will be the "fruits of the Spirit," which are, "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal 5: 22-23) How can a christian obey this command to "be filled with the Spirit?" It is easy enough to see how a man fills himself with wine---he drinks it. Paul uses the figure to illustrate filling one's self with the Spirti in 1 Cor. 12:13: "For buy one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to <u>drink</u> into one Spirit." So, we drink or imbibe the Spirit. And we must do this. God will not force the Spirit into us any more than men force wine down our throats. It must be our act. Our willing act, to fill up our hearts with the Spirit. God has furnished all the means by which we may be filled, just as men furnish wine that appeals to their appetite. Paul said to the Colossian Brethren; "For this cause we also, since the day we

heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." (Col 1:9-11) Here we have the fruits of the Spirit springing from "The knowledge of his will." God has given us "All things that pertain unto life and Godliness through the knowledge of Him who hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (11 Peter 1:3-4). The knowledge of His will is the means by which we may fill up with the Spirit, just as Paul says; "Be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph 5: 17-18).

Many Christians prefer filling themselves with the knowledge of this world. All kings of political news papers, magazines, and novels are found in their homes; and when you seek to talk with them upon those topics that pertain to "life and Godliness," they are as dumb oysters. Their hearts are filled with the spirit of the world and fruits of it are seen in theri silly chatting and conformity to the customs of the world, and their indifference to Christian duties. Why they can sit two or three hours in front of a T.V. drinking in worldly intertainment; but more than a thirty minute sermon at Church just wears them out.

Paul also says to Christians: "That he would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," (Eph 3: 16-17). "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10). If Christ be in you the Spirit is in you, if you have not Christ dwelling in your heart, you have not the Spirit of Christ. Christ dwells in the Christian by faith. We study his life, words, actions, promises, and commamnds; and we believe the ricord God gave us of His Son. Believing this, and being obiedent, we bear the fruits of the Spirit. Thus "We all with open face beholding as in a glass, the Glory fo the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18).

We recieve Christ by faith (John 1: 11-12) but faith without works is dead, being alone, (James 2:17). No man recieves Christ then until his faith is made alive by obiedence, and as we have shown, faith grows exceedingly by the study of God's Word or will of God, and retains

the 'image' of Christ in the heart. As we recieve Christ we recieve the Spirit. "Recieved ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith." (Gal 3:1) As long as the Law stood its works were mandatory, a man must do them or die. But the works of the Law gendered the spirit of bondage so that those under the Law did not recieve the Spirit nor could they fill up with the Spirit by doing the works of the Law. But since "the faith came", since Jesus Christ and him crucified has been preached, the Spirit is recieved through "the hearing of faith". "The hearing of faith" being placed in contrast to the "works of the Law" is the same as the "obiedience of faith." "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word fo God." (Romans 10:17). And, as we have shown, f;aith is prerfected by obedience. Hence when "the faith" is recieved and obeyed Christians recieve Christ; Recieve the Spirit. And that Christ and the Spirit may "dwell" in the hearts of christians, faith must be aways active.

ONe other thought presents itself. Does the Holh Spirit, in person dwell in the christian? I ask, 'does Christ, in person, dwell in the christian?' Christ is a person, and Christ is a Spirit: "Now the Lord is that Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." (2 Cor. 3:17) Paul said to the Corinthians: "Ye are in our hearts" (2 Cor 7:3) and to the Philippians, "I have you in my heart" (Phil 1:7). Here were persons, a great many of them, who were in Paul's heart, yet not "in person." But in affection, just so God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, dwell in our hearts, "by faith". Our understanding is enlightened by the Word, our affections twine around the promises, our wills are brought in humble obiedence to the Will of Christ, and thus we have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

Written with love for the brethren.
Kenneth Harper
18038 Penn Valley Dr.
Penn Valley, Ca. 95946

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Servants of God

Dear Brethren:

Lets stop and think for a moment. Are we a servant who puts God first in all things? Matt 6; 31-33 tells us; "Therefore take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But see ye <u>first</u> the

kingdom of God, and all his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Starting with the Church, being as where our search for God usually starts. Do we forsake the assembling of ourselves together? Heb 10:25. Are we there each and every time the body of Christ comes together? Is our health the reason we can't attend? Or is it something else in this sinfull world we have to do or seek after? We must be aware ;that if we are seeking after something other than the kingdom of God mentioned in Matt 6:33, these things will all perish.

In James 4:14; "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Life here is so short. Labour for the Lord while we still have today, for we may not have tomorrow.

Written in love for Christ and his chruch.

Bro. Doug Ferguson
P.O. Box 612
Wright City, Ok. 74766

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

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Selah, Wa.

Dear Brethren:

I found upon reading the last Courier that I was guilty of neglect, as charged by Brother Homer. It has been quite a while since I have sent news in to the Courier. The Selah congregation is stlll plugging away working for the Lord. Many of our members have been traveling this summer. In fact, many of you have probably seen Brother Howard and Sister Nell McCay more than we have. It will sure be good to have them home again. Since our last news we have had many exciting things going on in our congregation. Brother and Sister Ron and Gail Tibbs and their two boys, Steve and James moved down from Alaska. They had many problems along the way, but all arrived safely. They are a welcome addition to our congregation. Brother Ron has brought us several good lessons and we are looking forward to hearing him many more times.

We are blessed with many brethren who will participate in the services. Brother Don Hammet, even though young in Christ, is a very fine speaker and is another welcome addition to our speaking brethren. Bro. Paul Hellums helps out whenever he can with prayer and helping with the table. His health is quite poor and he could use all our prayers. His son, Paul Jr., is a great help to our congregation, as is young John McKinney. They pull their fair share of the work in the reading, leading singing, and helping with the Lord's supper. They have a great

future ahead of them if they continue at the rate they are going, and they will be wonderful workers for the Lord.

We are still looking for a building to buy, but they are quite hard to come by in Selah. The City codes are quite strict and finding a lot big enough to meet their specifications close to town is quite hard. We should not complain though, as the Lord has provided us with a very sutable place to worship at a price that is very reasonable.

We would welcome anyone that is in the area to spend the time with us and worship with us any time.

May God bless and keep you all in your works of love.

Robert Farley - Rt 2 Box 2549 - Selah Wa. 98942

P.S. We have heard that many people did not have the opportunity to see the letter that Bro. Homer sent out several months ago with the Couriers dealing with the pamphlet Bro. Dan Ross and I published entitled: CHRIST'S PLAN OF SALVATION. IF you have not recieved one and would like to have one, just send a legal sizeed envelope, self-addressed, to me and I would be more than happy to send you a copy.

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I would like to add a testamomnial to the comments Bro. Farley had about the pamphlet. I ordered a few of them, hopeing to use the pamphlet as a "door opener", trying to get some of the people I know and work with, to seriously concider their Spiritual life. I can say that it has been accepted as one that they will keep and read, and not throw away or just leave on a book shelf somewhere. So I too would like to remind those who havent aquired some of these pamphlets, to do so. They are of great value in teaching those who really want to learn about the plan of salvation.

Editor

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Broken Bow, Oklahoma

We had a good meeting with Brother Tony Brister and we enjoyed hearing him preach, and to visit with us. Part of us went to Stilwell and heard him there two nights. We also had part of the Tiner Church here with us in our meeting, for which we are thankful. We hope to see them some more as time goes by. They helped us out a lot for which we give them thanks. We appreciate all of you being there. Also some from the Duncanville, Tezas congregation were here. Some from Randolet, Oklahoma were here, some from Stilwell were here.

To all, we say we appreciate you and your help. Come again all of you.

Yours in Christ, for the church at Baron, Oklahoma. Lloyd Treat

Salem, Oregon

Dear Brother and Sisters:

We are happy to announce a recent baptism. Our grandaughter, Lana Slease, was baptized July 23 rd.

We have had a number of visiting members recently. Gerald Brockman and Mark Perigen were here one Sunday. We sure enjoyed the wonderful singing. Gene and Pat McKinney, David and Carol Houchin and Doris Jared were both here August 11th. Brother Gene brought us a very fine lesson which we all injoyed. Sister Lulu Way has been unable to attend service part of the time this summer due to illness. She has been able to attend the past three Sundays. Please pray for her continued recovery.

With Christian love. J.L. Jared

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Stilwell, Oklahoma

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Chrsit:

Our meeting with Bro. Tony Brister as speaker is history now. Tony gave some very good and inspiriang lessons every night. We had visitors from several different places all during the meeting, will not try to name each one. Visitors were from Bohannon Mtn., Goshen, Arkansas; Randellet Oklahoma; Baron and Loco, Oklahoma and Happy Hollow, Colorado. Also Broken Bow, Oklahoma. We enjoyed all the visitors and fellowship and invite each and every one of them back any time they can be with us.

On July 6th, Tina Rhodes and Kenneth Harbery were baptized in to the Lord. Bro. Sammy Boen baptized them at the City Lake. Sister Donna Taylor has recently moved to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and is attending services at Pleasantview. We are very glad to have her worshiping with us. Bro Kieth Boen is now out of the service and back home again, and we welcome him back. Also Sister Zella Brown is off the sick list and attending service again.

Our Sunday morning services has changed from the time of 10:30 to begin at 10:00. This is a permanant change. Sunday evening services are the same at 6:00 P.M.

In Christian love
Bro. Gerald Buckner
For the Pleasantview Church of Christ
Stilwell, Oklahoma

Gospel Meetings

San Pablo, Ca.	Aug 31 - Sept 2	Tom Broadway
Yuma, Az.	Nov 24 - Dec 1	Camp

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BAPTISMS

Sister Lana Slease, Grandaughter of the J.L. Jared family. Baptized July 23, 1985 at the Church of Christ Salem, Oregon.

Sister Tina Rhodes and Brother Kenneth Harbery, baptized at City Lake, Stilwell, Oklahoma.

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Apologies due.

First I would like to apologise to Bro. Howard McCay for failing to list his meetings in the Gospel Meeting Calander. It was an oversite on my part and was no way intentential. May God forgive me also is my prayer. Second: I beg frogiveness for a typing error in the letter from Brother Billy Richardson, July 1st, 1985. Please take out the last issue and turn to page 4. I will type the correct letter as Bro. Billy wrote it. (hopefully without error):

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

I thought I had written since the meeting that was held May 19-26, but apparently not. We enjoyed the week of lessons brought by Bro. Claud Perigen and also meeting Sister Burdette Perigen.

We met Bro. J.L. and Sister Eunice Jared from Salem Oregon for the first time Sunday, June 16th. Bro Jared gave us a good lesson on 1 Cor 5th Chapter. It is good to have a directory to the different churches.

It has been very dry here this summer. The church at Furnish Canyon and the church at Kenton, Ok. is the same church building.

In Christian Love
Billy L. Richardson for the Church at
Furnish Canyon, Kenton, Oklahoma. 73946

(If correctly presented, this is the whole of the letter as it should have been typed in the July issue of the Courier.)

I seek your forgiveness, Bro Richardson, and Bro. Jared, and especially yours Bro. Claud Perigen, because your labor of love in holding meetings, and all those who labor for the Word of God, is very important and should be reported correctly. However, my only reason is that I was typing way up into the late hours of the night and apparently just "fell asleep" when I came to Bro. Billy's letter. My promise is to be more aware and to also proof read every line of type and compare it with the material.

Editor