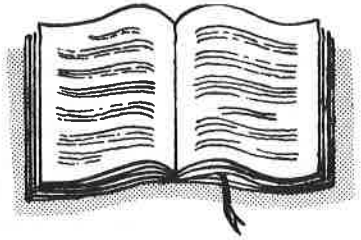
The Christian Courier



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JULY 1987

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

[Duet 6:4;5; Lev 19:18; Matt 19:16-22; 22:35-40; Luke 10:25-37]

Man's first duty is to Love God and to love his neighbor. While Jesus quoted the two commandments from the Mosiac law, he gave new content to the meaning of love both toward God and toward one's fellow man. We should test the reality of our Christian faith and the quality of our Christian character by obedience to God and by likeness to the example of Jesus.

The Bible Lesson

LEVITICUS 19:

18° "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; I am the Lord."

MATTHEW 19:

16° "And, behold, one came and said unto him. Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17° And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. 18° He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness. 19° Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 20° The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21° Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me. 22° But when the young man heard that

saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

MATTHEW 22:

35° "Then one of them, which was a lawyer asked him a question, tempting him, and saying. 36° Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37° Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38° This is the first and great commandment. 39° And the sec ond is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40° On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The Christian religion is a matter of both law and grace. Law involves obligation, but grace provides forgiveness. The highest level of obligation is love, and the strongest motivation for obedience is love. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law, and love is the response to grace.

LOVE IN HUMAN RELATIONS (Lev 19:18)

The verse chosen for the study is from a chapter setting forth some of the loftiest ethical teaching in the Old Testament. The summary of this teaching is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." God commanded the Israelites to practice love in human relations. This meant --on the basis of the preceding verses---that there was to be a consideration for the poor and strangers (foreigners) by leaving grain and fruit which they could gather; there was to be no stealing, false dealings, or lying to one another; there was to be honest payment of wages and consideration for the handicapped; there was to be fairness in executing justice and impartiallity toward the poor and the well-to-do; there was to be no slander or testimony endangering the life of a neighbor; and there was to be no hate or vengeance or grudge against other persons. The inclusive standard for all human relations was the commandment of love: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

THE CONCEPT OF GOODNESS (Matt 19:16-22)

The young man called Jesus "Good Master" and asked about doing some "good thing". Jesus' question "Why callest thou me good?" was designed to lead the young man to consider what real goodness is. Actually, goodness is GODLIKENESS. But then Jesus went on to deal with him on the level of his idea about goodness in terms of observing the Old Testament Commandments. Only five of the ten Commandments were mentioned, and Jesus added, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The young man claimed that he had observed all of them from his youth. He was moral and upright. But he had never understood the essence of goodness as LOVE. While he professed love for his neighbour, he really felt no genuine compassion for those in need. It was for this reason that Jesus tested him with respect to his possessions. He charged the young man to sell all he had and give to the poor. On this basis of self-renuniciation, he would be prepared to follow

Jesus. But the young man was still self-centered. He was unwilling to pay the price of renouncing his money. His concept of goodness came far short of what Christ demanded.

THE SUM OF CHRISTIAN DUTY (Matt 22:35-40)

The lawyer reflected the legalistic concept of Judaism. The teaching of the rabbis included and endless number of laws and precepts which they tried to grade in importance, some of which could be broken with impunity but some of which involved serious consequences for violation. The lawyer was trying to reduce religion to the lowest requirement possible. He had no concern for the ethical principles and ideals. Jesus answered his question by quoting two passages from the Old Testament, both of them the law of love. Man's first duty is to love God supremely; his second duty is to love his neighbour as he loves himself. The law of Love is the sum of Christian duty.

Love for God is to express all the capacities of the heart and soul and mind and strength. We MUST love God without reservation and with complete dedication of self. He will have no competitor for the total allegiance of one's being. Such love will lead to reverence and trust and obedience and fidelity. (a word we don't see much anymore) The second part of the commandment to love, relates to one's neighbour. Love for God will express itself in love toward one's fellow man. On another occasion Jesus defined a neighbour as the person in need, whoever and wherever he may be. To love a person is to respect him, to appreciate his worth, and to desire to help him. Love like this will show itself in compassion and concern, in sacrifical sharing, and in a willingness to forgive.

TRUTHS TO LIVE BY

Love fulfils the law: No one with love in his heart for his fellow man could be guilty of adultry or murder or stealing or lying or coveting. Love for other people involves respect for them and for their rights, concern for their welfare, and active efforts to help them. No one can love God genuinely and not do his utmost to fulfil every obligation of obedience and gratitude and service. Christian love will meet every requirement. It will call forth the best that one can give to God and man, to family and to the cause of Christ (the church), and to the cause of world redemption. (even if it is in your own neighbourhood). What is the quality and the measure of our love?

REAL LOVE IS A COSTLY THING: Love was costly for the Heavenly Father: "God so loved the world that He <u>GAVE</u> His only begotten Son....." Love was costly for the Son of God. it meant giving up his life for the redemption of men. It is costly for christians. Jesus said: "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Love is always costly It calls for sharing and suffering. It calls for self-denial and HARD WORK. It calls for patience and FORGIVENESS. It calls for such concern for other persons that weariness and pain

and hardship are forgotten in efforts to help them. And it calls for such devotion to Christ that one is willing to hazard ANYTHING and give EVERYTHING to do the will of Christ.

A VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." [Luke 10:27]

Love for God and man is more than one's supreme duty. It is the highest privilege, because it is the mightiest force and the richest blessing. It would help to read; [1 Cor. 13]

Written with love in my heart for all the brethren;

Homer Bryant
Editor

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CONTENTMENT

Do we know and understand what the word 'contentment' means? [1 Tim 6:6] "But godliness with contentment is great gain." [1 Tim 6:8] "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."

Now, does this mean to move from house to house every two or three months because you don't like the way they are made? Does it mean to stop and thank the Lord for what we have and not want anything greater? [Luke 3:14] "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."

Are we truly content on this earth? Do we go around saying 'I'm going to buy that and I don't care what it costs.' Or do we say 'Lord willing I may have that in the future?' I ask you brothers and sisters are we truly satisfied with what we have or do we always want something else?

[Phil 4:11] "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." [Heb 13:5] "......be content with such things as ye have." [Psa 37:16] "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." Read also Gen 28:20 and Proverbs 15:16.

Study yourselves as you are commanded the next time you think you need something. Please, stop and look! Are we contented with such things as we have?

With Christian Love
Bro. Dan Treat
Broken Bow, Oklahoma

[Note: This article was taken from the August, 1976 issue of the Courier. It was printed at that time in Yakima, Wa.]

50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The children of Brother and Sister Robert Roberson, of the Tiner congregation, wish to extend an invitation to Brothers and Sisters in Christ to join their parents in the joyous occasion of their 50th Anniversary reception. It will be held August 1, 1987 at Eastside Community Building, 716 E. 3rd. Street, Broken Bow, Oklahoma, at 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. Cards may be sent to:

Mr. & Mrs. R. J. Roberson
RT. 4 BOX 116
Broken Bow, Oklahoma 74728

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BARON, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brethren:

We have some sad news to report from Baron this time. Bro. Bobby Gardenhire has passed away. Please pray for the comfort of his family and friends. We are thankful that not all our news is bad.

We really enjoyed the recent visit of Bro. Paul Andrews and his parents, Bro. Buren and Sis. Marge. Brother Paul gave us an excelent lesson on "THE FULFILLMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES", dealing spicifically with ones about Christ's kingdom.

The singing at Stilwell in April was lots of fun. The congregations of Baron, Stilwell, Goshen, and Aztec, N.M. were represented. I only wish my voice had lasted longer.

Let me apologize for not sending any news for so long.

We send all our love to you from the congregation at Baron.

Bro. Terry Warford

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YUMA, ARIZONA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

A memorial sercvices was held for Brother Ben Gazzaway at the Yuma Church of Christ, May 30, 1987. He died in an auto accident in California, April 20, 1987. His dear wife was in the hospital and not able to attend the funeral. When she was able to travel, her children brought her home for the memorial. Brother Horace Orendorff conducted the service. Then one of her grandsons, Byron Smith spoke. He spoke on "What Pappa was to his family". It was very touching. After the services, the ladies served a pot luck dinner to the family and

their friends, in the church dining room. They were very appreciative of the love and concern showed by the congregation.

I have just heard that Brother Ken Baldwin has been in the hospital the last part of May. Also Brother Earl Broadway is having a slow recovery from His bout with a kidney infection and his stay in the hospital. Our prayers go out to these two fine christian men. I also heard that Brother Adam Shepherd's wife, Jessica was baptized May 31, 1987. The Payson church of Christ has two new babes in Christ. Our love and prayers to the congregation in Payson, Arizona. Especially to Matthew and Jessica. I might add, that Jessica has been in the hospital a couple of times with a blood clot.

In Christian love, Verda Nelson.

P.S. The Yuma congregation is proud to announce another new babe in Christ. Jerry Wilcher, son of Sister Baling. (Who was baptized)

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LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It's been a while since I have written to you from all of us at the La Habra Church of Christ.

Brother and Sister Nunnally are not feeling well enough to come to church on a regular basis. The rest of us are doing ok. Because of my slothfulness, I didn't write to you early enough to let you know that the Lord has added (2) two new members to His Body. They are as follows: KAREN AUSLAM, the daughter of Charles (Gabe) and Dorothy Auslam. MIKE BURKHART, who is ingaged to be married to our daughter Christine. God has blessed us with two fine Christians, to work in His vinyard. More good news. Mary, my wife and I went to Arkansas for almost two weeks and stayed with our daughter Vickie, and our son-in-law Walt Ferguson, and grandaughter, Ericka. We had a super time. We visited with the brethren at the Goshen Church of Christ, and were happy with the reception we received while there. I hope the new members will be able to contribute to the growth of the Church. The women and men are equally important in Christ, in order for His Body to function properly.

Thats all for now. I hope I haven't overlooked anything. We love all of you.

Marion Serrano, Church of Christ, La Habra, Ca.

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Editor's Note:

I would like to use this space to let you know that I have not recieved (1) one article this month, so I had none to print. I hope that this is not catching. It seems to me that there are many out there that have articles to send in. Do you? Why not share them with the brethren. They also will be valuable to the unbelieving. Editor

SELAH, WASHINGTON

We have just received word that Sister Sage, of the Selah, Wa. congregation has had a 3-by-pass surgery last Monday. (June 15, 1987). She is still in the hospital as of today, Friday the 19th. It is reported that she is resting well and we know that all the Brothers and Sisters everywhere are praying for her speedy recovery.

Sister Dorothy Sage is the Mother of Sister Betty McKinney. We all send our love and prayers, Sister Sage. GET WELL SOON.

The congregation at San Pablo, Ca.

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SAN PABLO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sistes in Christ:

We send greetings in the name or our Lord Jesus Chrsit. Our prayer is that all is well, and that you are happy in the Lord.

We had the pleasure of having visitors in the past month. We had Sister Barbara Carter worshiping with us while her husband, Rick Carter was at sea. Sister Barbara came to spend some time with her parents, Bro. & Sis. Gene and Pat McKinney. We also had Bro. and Sis. Cliff and Joan Boling from Las Cruces, New Mexico. We sure enjoyed having them here. Brother and Sister Mike and Charlotte Brockman from the Chico congregation visited with their lovely family. We certainly enjoyed having these visitors come and worship with us.

We have done some more work on the inside of our building. We have almost finished the paneling, except for some trim. We are pleased with the outcome. Our roof comes next, before the winter sets in. Lord Willing, some of us from San Pablo will be at the Cedaredge Church of Christ gospel meeting beginning July 4th. We are looking forward to meeting there with the brethren, and meeting all those whom we have not met before. We will have several cars, and campers 'caravaning across the country. Come go along with us.

In Christian Love, San Pablo Congregation.

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BAPTISMS

JESSICA SHEPHERD	PAYSON, ARIZONA	May 31, 1987
JERRY WELCHER	YUMA, ARIZONA	May, 1987
KAREN AUSLAM	LA HABRA, CA.	May, 1987
MIKE BURKHART	LA HABRA, CA.	May, 1987

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DEATHS

Our Brother in Christ, BOBBY GARDENHIRE

Our love and prayers of comfort go out to Brother Bobby's loved ones. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. ...But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble." [Psa 37:39 & 39]

Gospel Meetings

LORENZO, TEXAS	June 21 - 28	Ken Harper
BARON-STILWELL	June 14 - 21	Richard Johnston
[at Baron June 14-17 & at Stilwell June 18-21]		
CEDAREDGE, COLORADO	July 4 - 13	CAMP
PORT ORCHARD, WA.	June 28 - July 5	Harry Dye
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON	July 12 - 19	Harry Dye
LOCO, OKLAHOMA	July 26 - Aug 2	Tom Broadway
BELLFLOWER, CA.	June 28 - July 5	Howard Taylor

(Note: Brother Howard Taylor will split the one week meeting with Brother Audley Barnes.)

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WHICH ARMY ARE YOU IN?

A man enlisted in the army during a time of war. After a short time in the heat of battle, he came to realize that he did not like the enemy firing at him. A great idea formed in his mind. He reasoned that if he were to wear his uniform on the top and the enemy's uniform on the bottom, then he would be safe anywhere he went. So he changed his uniform and proceeded into the battle. Within a few seconds he was shot at from both sides.

How often do we put ourselves in this situation? We "enlisted" in the army of the Lord and were comissioned to fight a battle. Do we at times become weary of fighting and reason just as the soldier did? Paul tells us in 11 Tim 2:3-4; "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wareth intangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Do we ever put on part of the enemy's uniform in hopes of being safe? We are told that we cannot serve two masters. Paul also tells us in Eph 6:11; "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

These scriptures show us that we cannot serve partially in both armies. We must serve in one or the other. There is only one side that is right. As Joshua states; "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

In Christian Love
Bro. Dan Ross

[Note: This article was taken from the June issue of the Christian Courier, 1977. Ten years have passed since this was written, and it still applies doesn't it?

ARE YOU A SOLDIER OF THE LORD?