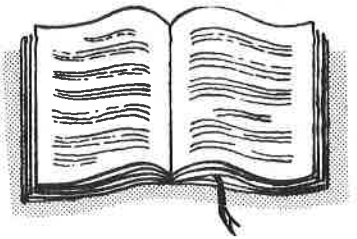
The Christian Courier



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ARTICLES:

ARE YOU IN THE FAITH?

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, had this to say; "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." [11 Cor 13:5] In trying my own self, I think of some others. A certain priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. They were both righteous before God. Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." [Luke 1:6] When the angel told Zacharias that Elizabeth would bear him a son, when they were both old and had no children; Zacharias said unto him "How will I know this? The angel said, This is the word of God, and thou shalt be dumb not able to speak, till these things be performed; because thou belivest not my words." [Luke 1:12 -20] I gather from this when God speaks I must believe. And also I must not call in question the Word of God. Again [Numbers 20:10-12]; Moses and Aaron, God's spokemen to the people, took honors upon themselves for fetching the water from the rock. The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron and said, "Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel; therefore, ye shall not bring the congregation of the Lord into the land which I have given them." So with these scriptures for us to think over and consider, the question comes straight to us, ARE WE IN THE FAITH? Do we take God's Word and give God the glory? OR do we take some of God's Word and assume some of our own ways? God help us to examine ourselves and stand in the faith, and get away from presumptions.

God said; "But the soul that doeth ought (anything) presumptously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger; the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among His people. Because he hath despised the Word of the Lord and hath broken his commandments. That soul shall be utterly cut off. His iniquity shall be upon him. [Numbers 15:30-31] No wonder David said that presumptions were the great transgression. [Psalms 19:13]. If we accept the perfect law and continue therin, we will be IN THE FAITH, and will be blessed in our works and deeds. [James 1:25]

Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith. Think it over.

The faith has been revealed; [Gal 3:23-26] "But before faith came, we were under the law, shut up unto the faith which should be afterwards be revealed wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under the school-master. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "Faith comes by hearing the Word of God." [Romans 10:17]

READ! THINK! PRAY!

In Christian love and the love of the truth:

Bro. Ken Harper

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OPINIONS????

Well brethren, we have been finally told how we all can do our own thing and still be acceptable to God. In the comment on Romans, chapter 14, it seems like this comment is telling us that we can have our own opinion and live by them, and God will accept them. If this be true then we don't need the Bible to guide us, but we are told in this comment that the opinions should be lawful: Well, what is the law that governs our opinions? WHAT IS OPINIONS?

First [Jer 10:23] "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." IF a man cannot direct his steps, then where does this put 'opinion'? Webster gives 'opinion' as to think to suspect. The judgement which the mind forms of any profession, theory, or event, true or false, which is supported by a degree of evidence that renders it profitable. But does not produce absolute knowledge of certainty.

Now this is the law on which opinions are formed and this puts our faith on profitable grounds. Is this what Paul is teaching? I think not since he wrote in [Rom 10:17] that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. [Matt 4:4] "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." So Paul, the writer of Romans 14th Chapter, also wrote [1 Cor 1:10] "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judement." NO OPINION HERE! [Phil 3:16] Paul wrote; "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." NO OPINION HERE!

Our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. [1 Cor 2:5] Now, since we see that opinions are based on profitable evidence according to Webster; then the defination #2 that Webster gives for probable is presumption. And to presume anything in the name

of the Lord, is DEATH. [Duet 18:20] "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die." And David said: [Psalms 19:13] "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." So to walk and teach opinions in the name of the Lord is a great transgression. Would Paul, in one place tell us to judge, and then in another place tell us not to judge? I hardly think so. [1 Cor 11:13] "Judge in yourselves..." [1 Cor 5:12] "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?" Do you not know that the saints will judge the world and if the world shall be judged by you are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters; [1 Cor 6:3] Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" So we see that we are told to judge the things that pertain to this life. Now; [2 Cor 13:5] "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" [verse 11] Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

So we see no <u>different</u> opinions here. We are to be of one mind. As stated before we are to judge those within. [1 Cor 5:12] For Paul said in [1 Cor 5:3] judged this man, also in other places he judged people and even delivered some to Satan. Again [Phil 4:2] "I beseech Euodias and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." Again no room for OPINIONS. [Gal 1:10] "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Here again Paul left us an example. [1 Cor 11:1] "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." So we see he left NO room for even his own OPINIONS.....

Love to all the brethren.
Lloyd Treat Broken Bow, Ok.

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g.i.g.o or G.I.G.O

What we get out of everthing in this life, (and the life to come) depends largely on what we put into it. If we work hard, we may get a promotion. If we spend time diligently studying the Bible, then we will reap the benifits of being able to "RIGHTLY DIVIDE" God's Word. An eternal life with Christ will be the final product of a life that was totally devoted to His service.

The same pricipal is also true in another aspect of our lives. Solomon, in sharing his great wisdom, told us that we are what we think

in our hearts. [Prov 23:7] What we allow to enter our hearts is what will come out in our lives. We, as christians, must be very careful to monitor what goes into our minds, because everything we watch, hear read, or pick up from those around us becomes a permanent part of us. Each of us needs to be very aware of this, as I am sure that Satan is aware of it! Remember a lion (the devil) is quiet when stalking its prey. But roars for the kill.....WHEN IT IS TO LATE! Lets look at what we're taking into our minds now before it is to late.

WHAT WE SEE: David said he would set no wicked thing before his eyes. [Psalms 101:3] Television and movies are not "bad" in and of themselves. However, we must follow David, and not let wicked programming sit in front of our eyes. It has been estimated that the averaage student will view more than 22,000 hours of TV before he graduates. That is around $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day. He will witness some 13,000 TV murders, not to mention the illicit sex, drugs, low morals, profanity, etc....It is not simply a matter of "whats wrong with it?" Rather, to a christian it should be "WHAT IS RIGHT WITH IT?" Some programming is all right. However, we must all admit that most of it is not Christian. If we want to "look like Christ in our everyday walk, then we must always remember to watch like Christ would.

WHAT WE HEAR: What we hear also plays a key role in what we think, and what we become. A christian will always do his best to make sure that only pure things are entering his ears. We have many things in this life we can listen to. What our heart is filled with will depend on what we have chosen to fill our ears with. David showed us one good thing to listen to when he said a man would be blessed if he delighted in the law of the Lord and meditated in it day and night. [Psalms 1:1] Be it lessons, discussions, or cassettes of scripture, this is a wise and benificial choice. Unfortunately this is not all we listen to. As chirstians we should always listen to good things, and steer totally clear of evil things. We all know this, and yet we will sit through hours of "worldly" television and radio filling our hearts/ears with profanity, catchy beer commercials, warped values, and even the Lord's name (or an enphanism thereof) used in vain. Yes, these do matter. We retain everything we hear. Most of us spend several hours a day listening to music. This has a very powerful effect on our minds. Think about how many songs you know from the radio. Hundreds.....maybe thousands. Many we haven't even heard in years, and yet we can recall every thing. NOW think about your ability to quote scripture. How well are you prepared in the "GOSPEL OF PEACE?" [Eph 6:15]

If only we would spend as much, or more, time filling God's desire as we do our own. Remember, if we want to "look" like Christ, then we must listen to only what Christ would listen to.

WHAT WE READ: Many of us spend much time in reading. This can be very good, for without it we would not be able to know God's Will for us. It can also be very dangerous if we choose to "soak in" the things of this world rather than things above. The Bible is definately the best choice for reading material. Think about it: ...mystery, war, history, love, humor, and best of all SALVATION; All in one cover. However, there are countless other things we also read. We read with our children. We can read letters from the christians we correspond with. We can read the Courier. But we can also read things of this world. Novels can be wholesome entertainment if chosen wisly. But., most books today are filled with profanity, drugs, violence, sexual immorality...and the list goes on. Do we honestly think we can read these pages of filth, and it will not effect our minds? I hope not. Permanent damage to our minds will be the only result of such a poor choice of reading material. If we want to be a true follower of Christ, then we must read only what our Lord and Saviour would be found reading.

WHO ARE WE INFLUENCED BY: As christians, our light should effect all those around us. Unfortunately, those around us can also effect our light. We have a large amount of control over whom we spend our time with. At work or school we may have to be there, but we can choose those people who will be the best influence on us. We are to choose God's people whenever we have a choice. [Rom 12:10] But often we will not do what God wants. Our best friends become those at work, school, next door, or whereever.....instead of in the body of Christ. They drink, smoke, swear, and would like us to do the same, but they are still out best friends. If our relationships with these people have come between us and God and his people, if they influence us more than God and his followers, then it is harmful....it is sin. We have become the Lord's ENEMY. [James 4:4] When you choose christian friends you will seldom go wrong. Don't fool yourselves. Even God said we would be greatly affected by the men we choose to be around whether they are good or bad. [1 Cor 15:33] If we want to turn out "Christ-like" thoughts and actions, then we must put in only Chrisitan influences.

g.i.g.o. OR G.I.G.O.????? Garbage in garbage out. Or God in God out!

The choices are ours. Soaps and football games or time with family and christian friends? Rock concerts and the latest worldly radio hit, or praise to the Lord? Scripture and wholesome books, or racy romances and westerns? Friendship with the world, or with God? IT is really very simple. If we want to have the goodness of Christ be the result of our lives, then we must examine everything that we take in to make sure it will only help us grow closer to God.

REMEMBER....G.I.G.O. [Phil 4:8]

Your brother in Christ, David McCay, P.O. Box 584, Ralls, Tx. 79357
(806) 253-2020

PRAYER - TWO OF MANY REASONS

Like most of you, I'm sure, many of my favorite songs are about prayer. Among them are "The Garden of Prayer", "I Need the Prayers of Those I Love", and one that should make us all think, entitled, "Did You Think To Pray?" Prayer is one of the greatest gifts bestowed upon a christian. [1 Peter 3:12] "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." There are many reasons that we need to pray; so many things to pray for. [Phil 4:6] "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and suplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." We can't possibly cover every thing we can and should pray for in one lesson, much less in one article. We will look at two specific things here.

We find these two specific things. [Heb 4:14-16] "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need." These two things we find in the scripture. 1. MERCY. We, as christians, can have our sins forgiven through prayer. We also, as we shall see, should pray for others. 2. GRACE: To help in time of need. Specifically, we'll look at the help we need and can obtain in time of temptation.

Let's look at the mercy that we can have through prayer. Let's read first; [1 John 2:1] "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But we find that with the blessing of having our sins forgiven comes the responsibility to forgive those that trespass against us. [Matt 6:12] "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Jesus goes on and says very plainly in verses 14 & 15; "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." The words of Jesus were very clear and strong in; [Matt 5:44] "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." In the 17th chapter of Matthew, verses 22-35, Jesus tells the parable of a certain king, who forgave one of his servants a debt of ten thousand talents. This same servant refused to forgive a fellowservant a debt of one hundred pence. We need to examine ourselves and see if we are like this servant. How much did Christ forgive us? But do we hold a grudge against those that do evil to us?

But in comparison, how does that evil compare with what Christ forgave us? Isn't it like an hundred pence compared to ten thousand talants? So let's let go of that grudge we're holding, and forgive others, like Christ forgave us. Understand and take heed to verses 34 & 35. "And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormenters, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Sometime we need brethren to pray for us for forgiveness. This we can have also. In the 8th chapter of Acts, the apostle Paul rebuked Simon the converted scorceror for a certain sin. "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." [verse 24] "Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." Notice though, that repentance had to preceed the prayer in order to have forgiveness. Notice also that Simon was already a christian when this occured. [verse13] IF he had not yet become a christian, he could not have "prayed through" for forgiveness, as denominations teach. He would have had to do just like Paul. [Acts 22:16] "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." THis he did, or course. [Acts 8:13] Making him eligible for prayer for forgiveness. Just as others can pray for us, we need to pray for others for their forgiveness. [1 John 5:16] "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

The second thing we want to study is grace to help in time of need. What greater need is there than help in overcoming the temptations Satan places before us? Think about it. What good does it do to ask God for forgiveness, and then fall victum to the same temptation again? So we need, not only mercy, but also help resisting the devil. And Jesus, when teaching his deciples how to pray, told us we can pray for this help. [Matt 6:13] "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kindom and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." When we do face temptation, God will help us. [1 Cor 13:13] "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 of escape that ye may be able to bear it." [1 Peter5:7] "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

If Satan has snared us time and time again until we have a fault, we can have that healed through prayer. And we need to pray for each

other in this area just like in the area of forgiveness. These two points are borne out in [James 5:16] "Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

There are many more specific things we could write about on the subject of prayer. But these two are offered in love for your study. When you needed forgiveness, or to forgive someone else, or when you are met with great temp tations, did you think to pray.?

In christian love, Bro. Terry Warford

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PROVERBS 25:25

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

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CORRECTION OF AN ERROR:

Please get out the letter from Brother Audley Barnes, that was in the Oct. 87 issue. In typing his letter, I skipped a line and left out some of the visitors that were at Bro. Tom Broadway's meeting.

Begin where the visitors were being named; .....Besides the Broadways from Oregon, we had visitors from the congregations at Lorenzo, Tx.....Left out was the whole next line, which included; Selah, Wa. Goshen, Ark. Baron, Ok. Oklahoma City, Ok., then it went on naming Ringgold, Tx. Newcastle, Tx. Randlett, Ok. ect..... Please forgive me for leaving you brethren out. It was a typing error. I appoligize to Brother Barnes and the Loco Congregation. Editor.

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SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Time has gone by so fast, I can hardly believe it. On the 5th of July, Bro. Duane and Sister Sue Bixler from the Aztec Church of Christ in Aztec, New Mexico, visited with us and Bro. Duane gave us a very good lesson. We really enjoyed them visiting with us.

The same morning, early, our son, Bro. Raymond and his family came in from Okinawa, Japan for a visit. Bro. Raymond is in the Air Force. Last Sunday, Sept. 27th, Sister Cooper from San Pablo was here for Church. She was visiting her grandaughter and family here in Sacramento. We sure did enjoy having her here to visit and have church services with us. We sure do appreciate having visitors since we are such a small group. Bro. J.D. Logan and Sister Fern Logan of Stockton, Ca. try to meet with us at least once a month. Bro. J.D. brings mighty

fine lesson with him everytime they can make it to meet with us.

Every one here is doing find, and is as well as can be expected. If any of the Brothers and Sisters are in this area Sunday morning, we sure would enjoy having them stop by for Sunday Morning Services and fellowship.

Yours in Christ
Bro. & Sister Usrey
of the Sacramento Church of Christ

Phone (916) 929-6938

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SELAH, WASHINGTON

Dear Bro. and Sisters in Christ:

Nell and I had a wonderful summer starting with a trip to Lorenzo Texas where we enjoyed their good fellowship. While there, we were able to hear all of Bro. Ken Harper's meeting which was very rewarding, as good gospel lessons always are. From there we went to the Delta camp meeting, which can certainly be described as great. There was a lot of good singing, Bible discussions and plain Gospel preaching. None of the speakers tried to soft-soap the listeners but spoke out boldly for the truth. We were especially proud of the interest and inthusiasum shown by the great number of younger members who were there. Whatever needing doing, whether Bible discussions, singing, cooking or cleaning up, they did it with a will and great cooperation. There were also many recreational events for young and old alike. Bro. Eddi Wilkerson and all the Cedaredge congregation deserve a special thanks for a wonderful meeting. Also the many from other congregations who did their part. Although there was a large turnout for the meeting, it was sad that some were unable to come because of conflicting scheduling of meetings at home congregations. As the schedule for the Delta meeting is set a year in advance, I would hope this conflict of dates will not happen next year. In spite of the fact that I was ill part of the time, we enjoyed the meeting very much and hope to see more of you there next year.

Written in Love.
Howard McCay
3904 Knobel Ave.
Yakima, Wa. 98902

Phone 965-3721

(please note new address and phone)

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BROKEN BOW, OKLAHOMA

The church here is about the same, although the wife, after we came back from Baron, Ok., had to go back into the hospital for 3 days for more tests and xrays. She is not able to do hardly anything since her operation. We thank all for their prayers and want you to continue to pray for us. Stop by when you can. Love; Lloyd Treat, Broken Bow,

GRANTS PASS, OREGON

Dear ones in Christ:

Just a short letter to say we enjoy reading the church paper, and especially the news from other congregations. We are still holding on at our Lord's biding, at the corner of Howard and Bennett streets in Medford, Oregon. Though there are only six of us meeting regularly, we are thankful that God has blessed us with each other and a place to worship Him. We are reasonably well, but our dear Sister Mabel Bumgardner is failing. She has reached the age of 97 years, and each of us here have been blessed to have her with us. What a marvelous Lady she is. We ask the prayers of our brothers and sisters in Christ as times seems trying. We pray for our brethren everywhere, that God may give us all the strength and courage to carry on. We all need to pull together more than ever and not let Satan get his evil working in among us. Let's not forget when sending our prayers to send our chirstian love, that we might all grow stronger, together.

If you are in our area we welcome you to come and worship with us. Call; Harry Wegley at 862-2421 in Grants Pass, or Marie Henney; 779-8913 in Medford. We are sending a little help for the paper. Keep up the good work.

In Christian Love, the Medford congregation.

Notice: Since this writing, Dear Sister Bumgardner has passed from this life. Our prayers are with her loved ones and with the congregation there in Medford, Oregon. Editor

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brethren:

Hello to all our frinds. The Lord's church here at Bellflower seems to be getting along fine. Sister Myrtle Lee Clouse is still very sick and not able to attend worship services. We hope and pray the Lord sees fit to bring her back to us soon. Bro. and Sis. Gerald & Natalie Brockman were blessed with a little girl. Her name is MONICA JOY BROCKMAN. She was born on Aug. 31st. 1987. We also want to congratulate Mike and Christine of the La Habra congragation. Most of us were able to help them celebrate their joyous occasion. We had quite a bit of action in these parts with the earthquakes. Fortunately, none of us were hurt and we didn't have too much damage to our properties. We have much to be thankful for.

If anyone happens to be in this area, please feel free to stop by and worship with us or just stop by and say hello. We would like to see anyone coming through these parts of the country.

We love each and every one of you. We wish everyone the joy in Jesus.

Mark Perigen Bellflower, Ca.

MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

Greetings from the Modesto congregation. We here were saddened by the passing of our beloved Nana and Sister Jewel Cadwel. Her courage and faith were evident to many of us here, for her life had brought many trials and tribulations to her. But never did she lose focus of Christ, and for this we can comfort ourselves, knowing she is with him. Bro. Bill McCay Sr. flew down from Yakimaa, Wa. and brought a beautiful graveside service. Sister Jewel leaves behind a daughter Charlotte Burtis, two grandaughters, Kay Bentz and Connie Williams, and grandson Randy Burtis. Also six great-grandchildren. We, as her family wish to thank all of you for such thoughtfulness and especially for your prayers.

Also Kay Guyer had suffered a mild heart attack but is doing fine now and didn't even miss any services. While Bill McCay was with us for that weekend, he brought us a fine lesson from God's Word, as he always does. Winter seems to be slowly trying to come in and the holidays will soon be upon us. It seems that the years pass so fast especially when I watch the growth of my two girls. I am thankful for all the blessings that Christ has bestowed upon my life, and consider my family my greatest treasure. Hope all is well with Brothers and Sisters everywhere.

In Christian Love
Ken Williams

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SAN PABLO, CALIFORNIA

We send our love to all the brethren, and report that we are all doing fine. We had several visitors recently. Brother and Sister Merle and Olla McKinney from Yakima, Wa.; Sister Annis Brown and family from Waterford, Ca.; Brother Rick Brown and his friend. Sister Charlotte Brockman and her daughter Angela from Chico, Ca.; We also had some new visitors, Elizabeth (Liz) Leakey and her fiance, Mark Wiegand, who were attending the services for the first time. We pray that they will return and be with us again real soon. We also would like to report that Bro. Bret Harper will be holding a thanksgiving week end meeting in Lorenzo, Texas. We would liked to have gone with him but we are there in spirit. We pray that God will recieve many there during Lorenzo's many weekend meetings. Give them all the support that you can, for it is a good work.

Remember us in your prayers, and remember the many who are ill and need the prayers of the church.

Thank you for the many articles and letters that are coming in. Keep them coming. I'll try to get them in the Courier as they come in. If yours is not in this month, it will be in the next issue as I have room for them.

Homer Bryant
For the San Pablo congregation