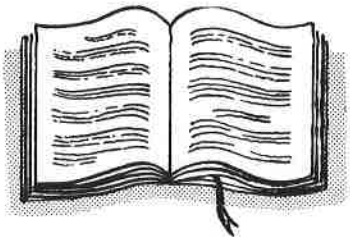
The Christian Courier



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HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE LIBERTY THAT IS IN CHRIST

[Rom 8:1-2] "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."
[Gal 5:1] "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled with the yoke of bondage."
[James 1:25] "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deeds."
[John 8:31 - 36] "Then Jesus said unto those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my deciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: now sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus anwered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."
[Rom 8:21] "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."
[Rom 3:22-25] "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."
[1 Peter 2:6] "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (verses 7-16) "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner. And a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto they were

appointed. But ye are a chosen generation a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, obstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having you conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, where as they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, Glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to the every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme: or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."
[1 Cor 1: 18-24]...."For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the widsom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jew and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God"

Editor

"PREVENTIVE MEDICINE"

Questions have been raised concerning marriage (and divorce) in the Church since its beginning. Much time has been spent discussing these questions.....after they have become problems. As with any disease, "preventive medicine" is <u>always</u> the best treatment. This is certainly true in this case. In an effort to save a lot of conflict and heartache for all the brotherhood (married and unmarried alike) we would like you to look with us at some <u>essentials</u> that need to be considered <u>before</u> marriage.

First of all, we need to realize that God has always intended

that his people marry according to his will. Abraham realized that it was important to choose a wife for Isaac that was pleasing to the Lord. [Gen 24: 1-4, 12-14] ..v 4...."But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Realizing the wisdom of asking God's help in choosing a partner for his son Jacob, Isaac also sent his son to seek a wife from his own people. [Gen 28:1-7] ...v6..."Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Cannan." On the other hand Esau did not listen to his father, and married a woman that was neither pleasing to his father, or the Lord. [Gen 28:6-9] Samson also chose a wife that pleased him, and did not regard the wishes of his father or the Lord. [Judges 14-1,4] God commanded the Israelites to choose a mate from among His people. [Duet 7:1-4]....v 3..."Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: So will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." [Ezra 9:2] [Neh 10:30] [Neh 13:25] [Malach 2:11] God still requires that we choose our partners from among His people (Christians) [11 Cor 6:14] .."Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" [Rev 18:4] [11 Cor 6:17]

[1 Cor 7:39] Tells us that widows (and all christians) are at liberty to marry whomever they want, but only in the Lord. So we see that we are free to marry any member of the church. However, if our first desire is to serve the Lord, and please Him, then we want to choose a partner from among God's people, who desire the same things. [Gen 24:10-14] Just as Abraham's servant prayed to the Lord for guidance in choosing a wife for Isaac, we also should ask for God's help when we are ready to begin looking for a partner. [James 5:16] ..."The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We need to ask the most important person in our lives to help find the second most important person in our lives. After talking to the Lord, we should listen for His answer, and search through His Word. [Jer 29:13] ..."And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all you heart." We need to examine this person in the light of God's Word. Will this person help or hinder me in my christian walk? Is this person confortable with takling to God on a regular basis? [1 Thess 5:17-18]..."Pray without ceasing", [Phil 4:6] ..."In everything by prayer.....let your requests be made known unto God." Does this person search the scriptures daily? Will they study with you? [11 Tim 2:15] ..."Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." [Acts 17:11] .....

"Search the scriptures daily.." Does this person serve the Lord fervently? Will this person's candle merge with yours to form a brighter light? [Matt 5:16]....."Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Will they encourage you daily in your work for the Lord? [Heb 1:25-27] We need to choose someone who is not just a forgetful hearer...but a DOER of the word. Is this person going to help you bring up your children? "....in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"? [Eph 6:4] [Prov 22:6] Will this person teach the Words of the Lord?..."Diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sitest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up?" Children learn by example. Does the person you are considering posses the kind of habits you want your children to pick up? Is the person you are considering content to remain a babe in Christ, or do they desire the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby? [1 Peter 2:2] [11 Peter 1:5-8] You need to choose someone with whom you can; ...."Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." [11 Peter 3:18]

Friends, marriage is the 2nd most important decision we will ever make. Just as we can not expect to marry someone from the world, and make them a church member, we can not expect to marry someone who is merely a church member and make them a christian. We want to make them certain of heaven. The mate we choose will either help or hinder us in achieving this goal. Brothers and Sisters, when we are ready to choose a partner for the rest of our earthly lives, we need to very carefully, with the Lord's help, select the one person best able to help us gain eternal life.

Written in love;
With the desire that we might all attain eternal life.

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"LIBERTY"

[Gal 5:1] ..... "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." This is a subject that is misunderstood by most, that I talk with, of which I would like to draw attention. As to what it pertains to, as christians. First look at where Christ freed those Galatian people from bondage. (What bondage?) (Verse 2-3-4) We see they were bound to keep circumcision and by doing so were bound also to keep the whole law. Now this bondage was passed down from Abraham. So when Christ came and died, he took away this bondage

of the flesh and brought to light the true circumcision. The circumcision of the mind. [Rom 2:29]..."But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Therefore we conclude that a man is justifed (made right with God) by faith without the deeds (circumcision) of the law. [Rom 3:28] But being made free from the deeds of the law by Jesus Christ, brought him under the law of the Spirit of life. [Rom 8:2] So we see that we are not at liberty to do as we want. [Gal 5:17].."For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." We are under the command not to add to or to take away from the things written in this book. [Rev 22:18-19] "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophesy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." [Note: verse 19 states "book of life" not "tree of life" as some translations state.) So we see that liberty as is taught of God, does not give us a right to do as we want. For we are under the PERFECT law of liberty. [James 1:25] So our liberty is not a freedom from the law, but freedom from sin. [Rom 6:17-18] See [Rom 8:21] because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Which is the law of faith) [James 2:8] ..."If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." Where was this royal law first given? Back in 20th chapter of Exodus. So we see that this law was not done away with, or James would not have used it. [1 Cor 8:13] "Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." We see some of our liberty being discussed about eating. It also shows us that if we, by where and what we eat, caused our brother to offend (ie perish, verse 11) then we sin agianst Christ (by offending a weak brother, verse 12) Therefore liberty does not set us free, to do as we want to. [Gal 5:17] But all the law is fulfilled in this one word or statement; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Again we see a law regulating our activities. [Gal 5:14] And as long as we are under the law of liberty, we are not free to follow our own opinions. (we are free, only from sin) [Rom 6: 17-18] By obedience

to God. [Matt 4:4] [Rom 8:2] [Heb 12:9] Etc.....So we see liberty does not give us the right to do as we want.

Love to all the brethren
Lloyd Treat

OVERCOMING FEAR

Fear can be one of the most dangerous things to our soul. It can cost us our home in heaven. In the parable of the talents [Matt 25:14-30] fear was the ground, spiritually speaking, where the unprofitable servant buried his talant. He was punished for it. Let's understand the subject before we move on.

We must fear God. [Eccl 12:13] ..."Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." So the fear that can destroy our soul is fear of man, not fear of God. [Matt 10:28] "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." We read of the danger of fear to the soul in [Rev 21:8]..."But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Does this mean that if we're ever afraid that we are going to hell? Of course not! The point where fear will cost us our soul is when we let it stop us from doing what needs to be done. For example, if we let a fear of people keep us from trying to convert the lost, then we're lost. Or if fear of persecution keeps us from standing against worldliness. Or if a fear of looking "chicken" keeps us from forgiving one another. If we're afraid, but go ahead and do what the Bible tells us to do, that is true courage. It's when fear stops us that we're in trouble. I don't want to define this difference for you without scripture to show that it is true. That would be an injustice to you. So let us look at the example that Jesus recorded. [Heb 5:7] "Who in the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." Yes, even Jesus was afraid. But we know through the scriptures that he went on through with the crucifixion anyway, saving your soul and mine. He did not let fear stop him.

Well, it is one thing to know that fear can cost us our soul if we let it. But if that is something that plagues our life, how do we get rid of it? We have to know, not only the danger of fear,

but also how to overcome it. Let us look at five things from the Bible that will help. The first of three are found in [1 Cor 13:13] faith, hope and charity.

1. FAITH: David gives us some beautiful words that we can learn from and apply. [Psa 56:3-4]...."What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his Word, in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." [Mark 5:35-36] Comes reassurance. "While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." Yes, Christ is there for us, to help us in the time of need. If overcoming fear is our need, Christ can help us. "Be not afraid, only believe."

2. HOPE: Again we can go through the scriptures to the example of Jesus. [Heb 12;2]...."Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." By hope he overcame fear. So can we. Look at whatever it is that we're afraid of. Isn't that home in Heaven worth facing that fear? [11 Cor 4:18]....."While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

3.CHARITY: How does charity or love, help to overcome fear? We find the answer to that question in [1 John 4:18]...."There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." So let us allow love for the lost to cast out fear of people. Love and concern for each other's soul will cast out our fear of persecution. Then we will stand against worldliness, to help save each other. Love for each other can likewise help overcome any fear of looking "chicken", so we will forgive one another.

4. STUDY: [Prov 24:5]...."A wise man is strong; yea a man of knowledge increaseth strength." Study of the scriptures is a very practical aid for us in many ways, including overcoming fear.

5. ACTION: Eventually, the moment will come when either fear will stop us, or we will overcome fear. Jesus did what he was afraid to do. The unprofitable servant buried his talent in the ground of fear. Which example will you and I follow?

I hope this study has been helpful. If you need further help, talk to someone stronger. Christians should always be available to help each other. Also God is always available if we go to Him in prayer. Courage is not the absence of fear. courage is overcoming

fear.

In Christian Love.
Bro. Terry Warford
8229-A Yorktown Ave.
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74137

PROVERBS 25:25
"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY"

BARON, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brethren:

We have more exciting news from Baron, Sunday night, Dec. 6th, two more were baptized into the church of Christ. Bro. William and Sister Violet Barrett were buried with Chirst by baptism into His death, and raised up a new creature, in newness of life. [Rom 6:3-4] [11 Cor 5:17] Please pray that they, and all christians will receive the strength to be faithful unto death, to receive a crown of life.

Our meeting for next summer is set. We will again be splitting a weeks meeting with Stilwell congregation. Since our meeting last year began at Baron and ended at Stilwell, I believe the plans are to reverse that this year. Sunday, June 26th through Wednesday night will be at Stilwell. And thursday through Sunday night, July 3rd will be at Baron. Brother Bill McCay Jr. will be our speaker. We are excited about meeting and hearing him. We are really hoping more of us from Oklahoma can be at the camp meeting at Delta next year. We are very much looking forward to it. Visitors are welcome anytine. We meet at 10:30 Sunday morning and 6:30 Sunday night.

In Christian Love
for the congregation at Baron, Ok. - Terry Warford.

LORENZO, TEXAS (Jan 10, 1988)

Dear Brethren:

We at the Lorenzo congregation have had a pretty busy winter so far. Brother Bret Harper flew out from Northern, Ca. to hold a weekend meeting for us at the end of November. It is inspiring to see young brothers getting out and preaching the Gospel. He did a fine job for us, and his efforts are greatly appreciated.

We also appreciate the effort of those who came to support our meeting. Jimmy and Jaetta Loftis came up from the New Castle Texas congregation, Cliff and Leesa Boling and Daughter Sarah came over from New Mexico, and Oletta Spurlin and kids come down from

Oklahoma for a while. December brought us some more visitors. Steve and Oletta Spurlin, Willie and Mary Howe, and Jim and Jaetta Loftis all came home for the holidays. Brother and Sister Scott from Duncanville also stopped by one Lord's Day. Thanks again to all of our visitors. Hope I didn't overlook anyone. Many of our number were also blessed with the opportunity to travel. Eric and Becky Forsman and family went to Loco, Ok. over New Years. Jerry McCay and boys spent the New Years weekend with the Brethren at Fora Vista, N.M. My wife, Sheila, our Daughter Britni and I along with Errol and Earlene Forsman and family were able to go to Northern California over the holidays. We stopped to worship with the group at Payson, Az. Sunday morning and then got back on the road. We spent a very uplifting week with Brother Ken Harper and his family. One night we went south to J.D. and Fern Logan's house and met with many of the brothers and sisters who had gathered there. Their house was packed, and we sang for nearly three hours. We had a great time the whole week. Lord willing we can all get together and do it again this summer in Colorado. Audley Barnes will hold a weekend meeting for us Feb. 19-21. Ellis Forsman will hold a week meeting for us over the holidays next year Dec. 25, 1988 to Jan 1, We would love to have any of you who can make it for these meetings. You can stay in our homes. Please come anytime you can stop by.

In Christian Love

David McCay, for the Lorenzo, Texas congregation.

BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dearest Brethren:

We hope that all are in reasonable good health at this writing. The congregation here has had both joy and sorrow over the past several weeks. It's not for us to complain to God though. We are thankful to be alive. We are very sorrowful at the passing of Sister Alice Weakley. She had been in poor health, as most of you know, for many years. Our prayers go out to the children left behind.

Sister Clouse has been in ill health for many months now. She has, however, been attending services when she can. Sister Kate Lewis is still in very poor health at the rest home in Paramount, Ca. The church tries to see her and give encouragement when possible. We are anxiously awaiting the birth of Marty and Tayna Brockman's baby in mid February. Our toddler group is growing in number, as we are presently enjoying their first Jeffery and Gerald & Natalie Brockman's Monica Joy.

Many of the church members have recently taken a vacation together and went to Lake Tahoe for a week. Some of the younger ones went

skiing and had a great time. From time to time, some of the speakers have been helping out the La Habra congregation on Sunday mornings. They also have attended at Bellflower when then can. Our attendance at home has been the same. Some have visited the Chico, Ca. congregation occasionally. We are still meeting on thrusday nights at Mark and Tammy Perigen's house for Bible study. It is good to have informal discussions about various subjects. Sometimes when we feel like it, just singing becomes the agenda. If any of you out there are passing through Los Angeles, please plan your trip so we can see you. Sunday morning worship; 10:30 A.M. and evenings at 6:00 P.M. The church building is located at 9914 Arkansas ST. Bellflower, Ca. Phone is (714) 842-1251.

Christian love and best wishes to all.
From the brethren at Bellflower

CEDAREDGE, COLORADO

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Chist:

The time is approaching again for our annual church camp meeting to be held at the Big Spruce Camp Grounds at Cedaredge, Co.. This years meeting date will be July 3 through July 10th.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend the meeting. We are looking forward to a wonderful week of christian fellowship, Bible discussions, Gospel singing and hearing the Word of God. Please mark your calanders and make your plans to attend. Any questions or correspondence regarding the meeting please feel free to contact Eddie Wilkerson, P.O. Box 702, Cedaredge, Co. 81413. Phone (303) 856-3875.

For the Happy Hallow Church of Christ
Eddie Wilkerson

SPECIALTY SUBJECTS

HALLOWEEN: Re: [Col 2:8]

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosphy and vain deceit after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

"A time of mystery and merrymaking, come on the eve of the christian feast of all saints. It began with the autumn festivals of the ancient pagans. Pagans and heathens are idolators and don't believe in God. The English called Halloween "NUT CRACKER NIGHT" and introduced the custom of dunking for apples and the superstition that if a young girl eats an apple, while combing her hair before

a mirror at midnight, her future husband will appear.

Sounds far fetched, and maybe pretty wild doesn't it? Well, have you been believing it? If you have, THERE IS NOT A WORD OF THIS IN THE BIBLE."

Submitted by Brother Lawrence Arnett
[And there is more to come]

BAPTISMS

Brother William Barrett	12/6/87	Baron, Oklahoma
Sister Violet Barrett	12/6/87	Baron, Oklahoma

GOSPEL MEETINGS

LORENXO, OK.	Feb. 19 - 21 - 1988	AUDLEY BARNES
BARON, OK. } (combined)	June 26 - 29 - 1988	BILL MCCAY JR.
STILWELL, OK } (combined)	June 30 - July 3	BILL MCCAY JR.
CEDAREDGE, CO.	July 3 - 10 - 1988	CAMP
YUMA, AZ.	Oct. 23 - 30 - 1988	TERRY WARFORD
LORENZO, TX.	Dec 25 - Jan 1, 1989	ELLIS FORSMAN

PSALMS 139:9 - 12, 23,24.

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cove me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

"Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense: and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Psalm 141: 1-3.

REMEMBER: For articles and letters, send all correspondence to 1273 Plumleigh Lane, Concord, Ca. 94521. (415) 682-2600.