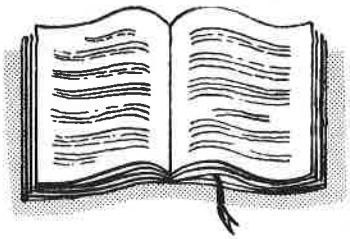
The Christian Courier



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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In response to the question, "Are christians supposed to celebrate 'Easter'?

'EASTER'

The question was asked about 'Easter'. It is a good question. The celebration of Easter seems innocent until we see where it comes from. You take a mis-translation of the word 'Easter', a little from the resurection of Jesus, a little from the Old Testament Passover and some paganism practices and mix them all together and you get 'EASTER".

We only read the word 'Easter' in our Bibles one time. [Acts 12:4] W.E.Vine, Thayer, and as far as I know, all Greek Lexicons says this is a mis-translation. The same Greek Word that is here translated 'Eater' in all other places is translated 'passover'. WE can read the context and see the passover is what is meant here. [Acts 12:3]...says this was the days of the unleavened bread. THey were to bake no leaven in their bread during the passover.[Due 16:1,6] The word 'Easter' is another form of Astirti, one of the titles of the Childeon Goddess, the goddess of heathen. So then it is an idol. [Rev 21:8] [Gal 5:19-21] Warning us about idolatry. [Acts 12:4] refers to the passover. The passover was instituted by God to commerate the diliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Deu16;1,6 We were never in Egyptian bondage, so we would have no reason to keep it. We always celebrate Easter on Sunday. This is borrowed from the resurection of Christ. He was raised on Sunday. [Mark 16:2] ... [Luke 24:1] [John 20:1] Under the Old Law, where the passover was to be observed, they were to remember the Sabbath Day which is saturday. [Eph 20:8]

The time of year that we celebrate Easter is borrowed from the Old Testament passover. They kept the passover in the month which corresponds to our months of March and April. [Eph 13:4, 23:15, 34:18] [Deu 16:1] Many people think that we used to go to chruch and take communion on Easter Sunday to remember Jesus' resurrection. But the Bible teaches us to attend any time there is an assembly and to eat the Lord's Supper every 1st day of the week in memory of Christ's death. [Heb 10:25] [Acts 20:7] [1 Cor 11:26]

Did you ever wonder why they have sunrise services on Easter Sunday? They begin way before the resurrection of Christ. Read Ezek; 8: 15,17. It was an ancient custom, worshiping the rising sun.

Paul Andrews, Rt. 2, Hindsville, Ark. 72738 (501) 789-5878

OUR LIVING SACRIFICE

One of the most quoted and read scriptures in the Bible is Romans 12:1...."I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." With a verse used as often as this one is, it is very important to understand exactly what it means.

We all know what living means. It is the state of being alive. Very simple. A sacrifice is the death of something for a purpose, usually a religious purpose. So, at first glance, using the two words together, seems almost a contradiction. Let's look deeper than one quick glance, however, and see how this contradiction resolves itself by the scriptures, and becomes an important, practical teaching to apply to our lives.

One way of something being a living sacrifice is when one thing is sacrificed, (put to death), that another thing might live. A good example of this is the passover lamb. The story of the passover is found in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. The plague which finally convinced Egypt to let Israel go was the plague of death upon all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. But the Israelites were given a means of protection from the plague. A male lamb for each house was sacrificed. The lamb had to be without blemish, and of the first year. Once it was killed, they took the blood, (verse 7) and struck it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses. Then they roasted the lamb and ate it. Anything left in the morning was burned. Verses 11 through 13...."And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt". The passover lamb was sacrificed that the children of Israel might live. Thus it was a living sacrifice.

In like manner Christ was sacrificed so that we might live. [1 Cor 5:7]..."For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." [1 Peter 3:8]....."For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just (Jesus) for the unjust (us), that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." [Isa 53:5-6]...."But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone

astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." [Rev 1:5]..."Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

The wages of sin is death. [Rom 6:23]. But Christ died that death for us, [Rom 5:8], and washed us from our sins in his own blood, as we saw in Rev. 1:5. Thus the statement from Ex. 12:13 applies to us today. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." So the question to you is, are you washed in the blood of the lamb?

How? He shed that blood in his death, of course. [John 19:34] [Rom 3:4]..."Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Christ's sacrifice was a living sacrifice. He died so that you and I could live. Please accept that invitation and become a Christian today.

Jesus Christ was a living sacrifice in another way also. He died, (sacrificed), was buried, and rose again the third day, (living) [1 Cor 15:4] This way relates ver y directly through the scriptures to our living sacrifice that we must make every day. As we have seen, Christ was our substitute in death. He died so that, come judgement day, we don't have to die that second death in hell.

But on the other hand, we do have to sacrifice, (kill, crucify with Christ) that old man of sin that we used to be. [Rom 6:6]..... "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." When we come up out of the watery grave of baptism, we are <u>not</u> the same person. The person we used to be, a sinner, is dead, crucified with Christ there in baptism. In other words, we can no longer do the sinful things we used to do. So the question to us who are already christians is: 'Does he still see the blood?"

[Gal 2:20]...."I (self, the old man of sin) am crucified with Christ (sacrifice); nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ which liveth in me, (living); and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." So, is the sinner that we used to be, dead? That is the sacrifice that we must make. To ask the question more plainly: have we put off the sins that we used to commit? [Rom 6:1-2]...."What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are <u>dead to sin</u>, live any longer therein? (verses 11-13, read) "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members

as instruments of unrightousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God". Thus the sacrifice part of our living sacrifice is to sacrifice, or put to death the sinful things we used to do. We don't do them anymore.

The living part of our living sacrifice is that we live for Christ. [11 Cor 5:15]....."And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, rose again." There are many things that we can do for Christ. We do the things for Christ by doing things for each other, [Matt 25:31-46] [1 Cor 16;15] Paul praised the family of Stephanas, because they had "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." You and I can do the same thing. We can spend our lives living for Christ, by helping others. We need to help others both with physical needs, [1 John 3:17-18] and with their spiritual needs. [11 Tim 2:24-26]. [Gal 6:10]...."As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Let us close with 2 scriptures that show this thought of changing sinful works to good works, thus presenting our bodies a living sacrifice. The first one: [Heb 9:14] shows us that it is Christ's sacrifice that accomplishes that change. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." The second; we find in the verse following the one we began our study with. We find recorded in [Rom 12;2]...."And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

I hope this study has been clear and helpful to you.

In Christian love:

Terry Warford

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Of all God's creation, man is the most contrary. Jesus tells us, [John 5;39]..."Search the scriptures." Paul says: [2 Tim 2:15] "Study to show thyself approved unto God (not man) rightly dividing the word of truth." Solomon says: [Prov 4:7] for us to get understanding." So we are to search and study for our understanding, but man searches and studies for what man wants, instead of what God wants. Instead of rightly dividing (putting it in its proper place) we start

subtracting. Instead of precept upon precept, line upon line (laying a firm foundation) we take here a little and there a little. [Isa 28:10] By subtracting part they change the meaning and "wrest the scriptures to their own destructrion." [2 Peter 3:16] [Isa 34:16] "Seek ye out the Book of the Lord and read." So man forgets searching, studying, and understanding, and just reads to find a verse that will justify what he wants, not God, and subtracts everything else.

We read, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." [Acts 16:31]....subtracting all the rest of the form of doctrine scriptures which free us from sin.

We read, "Judge not that ye be not judged," [Matt 7:1], then we subtract all verses commanding us to judge (righteously).

We read, "Whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty." [James 1:25], then we subtract the "doer of the work."

We read "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth." [1 Cor 7:39], and then we subtract all the scriptures pertaining to covenant breakers and broken marriages.

We read "A bishop must not be given to wine." [2 Tim 3:3] and "Deacons not given to much wine." (verse 8) and then use man's reasoning in saying that some drinking of alcohol is acceptable, while subtracting verses that tell us to, "be blameless and to abstain from alcohol. I have heard preachers teach against drugs, then condone alcoholic beverages even though most authorities on the subject agree that alcohol is the worst drug problem in the world today. Brethren, this is hypocrisy.

We read that God is a merciful God and that Christ has gone to prepare us a beautiful home, but we subtract all the scriptures telling us of another prepared place, the lake of fire. We reason, "Would a merciful God do such a horible thing as to condemn us to Hell?" God is not willing that any should perish. He wants all to come to repentance (change), but warns us; [Lev 26:23,24]...."If ye will not be reformed (changed) by these things but will walk contrary unto me, then I will walk contrary unto you, and will punish you." The conclusion to this is that God does not punish discriminately. We have to disobey first; we cannot say God is unmerciful. If we are lost, it is our fault and not God's. So let us search and study so as not to fall short of the Glory of God. Brethren, let us search diligently for the WHOLE TRUTH.

Written in love, Brother Howard McCay
3904 Knobel Ave. - Yakima, Wa. 98902

[James 5:20]

"Let him know, that he which converteth a siner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

An Appreciation

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I would like to express my appreciation to brother Howard McCay for his article in the January issue on "IS MARRIAGE STILL A SACRED COVENANT?" His statement about "silence gives consent" certainly hit home. It seems we would rather keep quiet than say something and be accused of causing trouble.

As stated, "Now people no longer consider marriage a sacred institution and they divorce for every cause." Its shocking to see the high divorce rate in the world today. But what about in the church? Is Christ's church being filled with Christians who are disregarding God's commandment: "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder?" Brother Howard's article was very timely and pointed out what the Lord says about those committing adultry. The Lord has never looked favorably on adulterers. The Apostle Paul explains quite clearly what constitutes an adulterer. [Rom 7:3]..."So then if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteres: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

When the deciples asked Jesus about a man divorcing his wife he responded; [Mark 10:11]...."And he saith unto them, whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultry against her and if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultry." The Bible has clearly expressed the Lord's view on covenant breakers in many different passages. [Rom 1: 29 & 32] [1 Cor 5] [1 Cor 6;13-15] It also explains what will be the end for those who commit such things. [Gal 5:19-21] [Rev 21:8] I suggest we all go back and reread the article again. It brings out some very good thoughts on the subject. It ends up with the thought: "Do we add to the sin by condoning it?" Let us all remember as christins we should only have one thought in mind; doing what ever out Lord wants us to do. That means we must put Him first, and our wants, desires, and thoughts second.

The Apostle Paul explains: [Eph 5:3]...."But fornication, and all uncleaness, or covetousness let it not be once named among you as becometh saints."

Written in Christian love and hope that we all may be one in Christ Jesus.

Gerald Brockman - 21334 Cold Springs Ln. - Diamond Bar, Ca. 91765

[1 Cor 7:2]

"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."....

AVOID SIN!

DO YOU SMOKE?

[1 Cor 3:16]....."Know ye not that ye are the temple of God. And that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"
[1 Cor 3:17]....."If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Therefore we should not bring any harm to our body. [2 Cor 5:17] "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

"Thou shalt not kill." This is what slowly happens when you smoke. Cigarette smoking is the #1 killer in America. It's side effects are very harmful to the body. It causes various cancers, heart disease, lung disease,....etc..It slowly kills you. God said; "Thou shalt not kill". Well, when you smoke, this is what you are doing to your body. (commiting 'self-murder')

I know that there are a lot of christians that still smoke. We are to be followers of Christ, to put away all of the old sinful ways. (including cigarette smoking) And put on the NEW. We should be examples for our children and for others.

[P.S.] Being a cigarette smoker myself, I feel greatly ashamed of what I am doing, and I feel ashamed in writing this article, but I am trying to be a TRUE follower of my Saviour, Jesus Christ and to stop doing this awful sin. I sure could use all the prayers of all the brothers and sisters in Christ. Please help me be, and remain a TRUE BELIEVER in Christ.

Sister Melody A. Glynell
San Pablo, Ca., congregation.

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

BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brethren:

We pray that all congregations everywhere are doing fine, both spiritually and physically. Our members here are doing as well as can be expected. Our hearts have been saddened by the passing of beloved brothers and sisters in other congregations. Our prayers are with the grieving families. These loved ones will be surely missed.

We are happy to announce the newest addition to the family of Martin and Tanya Brockman. KINDRA LYNN. At this writing, both mother and baby are doing fine. We are also happy to announce that Mark and Tammy Perigen are expecting thier first child in early October.

Over the past several weeks we have had visitors. Sister Wanda Brockman from the Chico congregation and Brother J.L. and Sister Eunice Jared from Salem, Oregon. Brother J.L. talked for us both Sunday mornings the week they were here. We appreciate their visits and invite them back anytime.

Our meeting this summer has been scheduled for August 14 - 21. Brother Oliver from New Mexico, has concented to speak for us and we are all looking forward to hearing some good lessons. We invite all of you to come and be with us for out meeting, or at anytime. There is room in our homes as well as R.V. hookups at the Church parking lot. Telephone numbers are: (714) 842-1251) Jerry Perigen, and (714) 842-1633 for Al Way.

In Christian Love:
The Bellflower congregation.

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Thank you for all of your cards, letters, phone calls, and prayer while I was in the hospital at Phoenix, Az.. My surgury was successful and I am slowly improving.

Verlie and I are attending church here in Phoenix each Lord's Day. Thanks to the Lord I have been able to take part in the services and to bring lessons again after many months not being able to. It is very rewarding to me. Sunday, April 10, Gail Lobota came forward and asked to become a child of God. Abe Lobota also came forward and asked for the prayers of the church, and returned to the fold of God, to do His Will. It was a great day of rejoicing for all of us. As soon as the doctor releases me we will be going back to Delta, Co. to help with the Camp Meeting. Please plan to attend the meeting if you can. We have heard from many of you and your plans to be there this year. It sounds like we will have another great meeting. We will still need the help of all that can come. Those of you that have been to this meeting, know how much we need each one of you and your support to make it a great success it always is. The spiritual uplift we all get from being with christians and friends each week and hearing God's Word preached, the singing, the visiting, the games, the singing school, and the young preachers learning how to put a lesson together. Come see for yourself how rewarding it is. We appreciate all contributions you have sent, even though we haven't reached our goal yet. Please send what you can to help out.

For directions, to the church house and for the Camp Grounds, it will be anounced in the courier. If anyone wishes to come here to Phoenix to worship, Just call Bro. Abe Lobota, (602) 935-6437.

Again, thanks to all of our dear friends and loved ones in Christ for their cards, letters, prayers and of course the flowers. God bless all of you and remember us in your prayers every day.

Bro. & Sister Ken Baldwin
(Delta Camp Meeting dates: July 3 - 10 - 1988)

FORT BRAGG, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is with mixed emotions that I write this letter. We moved to Fort Bragg with ten children and grandchildren, and had hopes of starting a congregation, at least of family and friends. Now, some twelve (12) years later, out health is failing, and all the family and friends have moved away, except two, who plan to move with us. Our place is sold, and if the Lord wills, we will move to Modesto, Ca. by the first of July, or before. We will miss this beautiful place, but we need to get back to a congregation like Waterford while we are able to make the move, especially since we plan on our daughter, Jeanine and our grandson David and his family to move with us. We thank you all for your support in the past and hope we will meet you at some of the meetings.

Your brother in Christ
Elmo Brown

GOSHEN, ARKANSAS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

There is not much news from here, but will catch up on what there is. Everyone here is well except for minor colds and flu. Bro. Walter Ferguson was in the hospital almost a week but is home and back to work and as ornery as ever now. Last Sunday Bro. Gerald Buckner from Stilwell, and Bro. Terry Warford from Baron, were here. Sister Wilma wasn't feeling to well and didn't get to come. We missed her. Maybe she can come next time. Brother Terry gave a good lesson.

I hope everyone is making plans to come and be with us June 12 - 19 for our meeting with Brother Mark Perigen. I hope we can fill he building every night. I am sure the lessons will be worth it. Our turn to have the singing that we have been having here and at Baron & Stilwell will be June 26th. Since the Baron-Stilwell meetin will be starting that weekend, we have decided to have it one week earlier (June 19) This will be the last sunday of our meeting and I think we plan to have lunch at the building. Everyone make plans to be with us. We have had some good singing in the past. Everyone come to see us and worship with us.

In Christian love.
Paul Andrews
Rt. 2 Hindsville, Ark. 72738 (501) 789-5875

SAN PABLO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We send greetings to all our brethren. We pray that you are all well. Everyone here is doing fine. We all seem to be doing fine. I would like to report that we had one baptism last Lord's Day. The one who was baptized, also has an article in this months issue of the Courier. We want to commend her for her continuing efforts in trying to live a christian life the way our Lord wants us all to live. Sister Melody Glynell, was baptized some time ago, and in studying the Bible with her husband's help, and with the help of others, came to realize that she was not baptized scripturaly. She was baptized by a Baptist Church, and when she realized they do not baptize "for the remission of sins", she made her wishes known, and was baptized by Brother Louis Glynel, her husband. We are proud to see someone who has learned the truth to change and become obedient unto the Lord. We all need to take a good look at ourselves and do as Sister Melody did. Forget self, and follow after God's teachings, with conviction.

We are saddened to hear of the passing of Sister Loveland in Yakima, Wa. We send our love and prayers to her family, especially to Sister Veda McCay, who is Sister Loveland's daughter, and to her family and loved ones. We pray that our Lord will comfort you with the knowledge that the Lord will let us all enjoy the JOYS of heaven if we follow after Him with strong devotion, as did Sister Loveland.

We are also thankful to the Heavenly Father for Brother Ken Baldwin, who has come through his surgery just fine. We are glad to hear that he will be going back to Cedaredge, Co. and that he will be there at the Camp Meeting again this year.

Our prayers are with all those who need the healing hand of our Gracious God. We pray that He will heal you and protect you always and allow you to once again attend worship services. We also pray for Brother Elmo Brown and family, that they may have a safe move to Modesto, and we invite them to come to visit us often, now that they will be close enough. We are thankful also for Bro. Ferguson, who was in the hospital at Goshen, Ark, in that he is able to be home and back to work.

Congratulations, Brother Marty and Sister Tanya, for your new baby, KINDRA LYNN BROCKMAN. We are glad that all is doing fine. We congratulate Brother Mark and Tamy Perigen for the good news the they are expecting an addition to their family.

Remember us in your prayers, always. We need them. We also need more news letters and articles for the paper. So, please keep it going, so others can learn about the truth, as did Sister Melody.

In christian love, The San Pablo Congregation

GOSPEL MEETINGS

GOSHEN, ARK	June 12 - 19	Mark Perigen
BARON/STILWELL	June 26 - July 3	BILL McCAY JR.
WATERFORD, CA.	June 19 -26	Roger Walkingstick
CEDAREDGE, CO.	July 3 - 10	CAMP
GLENWOOD	July 24 - 31	J.D.Johnson
LOCO, OK	July 24 - 31	Al Way
YAKIMA, WA.	July 31 - Aug 7	Jim BROWN/SAMMY BOWEN
BELLFLOWER, CA	Aug 14 - 21	Brother Oliver
YUMA, AZ	Oct 23 - 30	Terry Warford
LORENZO, TX	Dec 25/88 - Jan 1/89	Ellis Forsman

BAPTISMS

SISTER GAIL LOBOTA	April 10, 1988	PHOENIX, AZ.
SISTER MELODY GLYNELL	APRIL 24, 1988	SAN PABLO, CA.

ASKING FOR PRAYERS

BROTHER ABE LOBOTA	APRIL 10, 1988	PHOENIX, AZ

DEATHS

Sister LOVELAND	April 2, 1988	YAKIMA, WA.

BIRTHS

KINDRA LYNN BROCKMAN	April ?	BELLFLOWER, CA.

Proud parents: Marty and Tanya Brockman. Congratulations to you three.

[Matt 3: 13-17]

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordon unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousnes. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lightning upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(ARE WE WELL PLEASING UNTO GOD?)