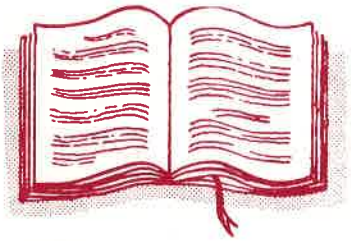
The Christian Courier



MARCH 1990

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"O SEND OUT THY LIGHT AND THY TRUTH: LET THEM LEAD ME; LET THEM BRING ME UNTO THY HOLY HILL, AND TO THY TABERNACLES."

Psalm 43:3

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"SELF DENIAL"

Definition of "deny" according to Strong's Greek Concordance #533: Deny utterly, Disown, Abstain.

Matt. 16:24 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Question: Deny himself of what? Titus 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and wordly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Some teach and would have us believe that self-denial should be used, up to a point. This phrase is concocted by man. I find it nowhere in God's word.

Paul says denying worldly lust, not putting a degree of denial such as "moderation" another man's teaching. We cannot use our conscience in how much we deny or don't deny as Paul plainly shows in Acts 23:1, Paul lived in all good conscience while persecuting the Church. In Titus 2:14 Paul says the Lord has purified unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

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If we deny worldliness up to a point, do we just have to be zealous of good works up to a point? In Matt. 12:30 Jesus says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." No degrees mentioned, no middle ground for doing what we want. In Rev. 3:15-16 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." No degree of hot or cold mentioned. Brethren, we cannot straddle the fence and claim this as our "liberty" and still be pleasing to the Lord. I Thess. 5:12 - "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you." Do we really know our preaching brethren and what they stand for? Are they liberal in their stand on worldliness? Do they believe we have to stand firm for the truth and not just up to a point. In John 14:15 Jesus tells us "If ye love me, keep my commandments." All of them, Lord, or just up to a point? Brethren it is past time to "awake unto righteousness and sin not". Worldliness is sin.

In love of the truth,
God's righteousness,
all of it,
Howard McCay
3904 Knobel Ave. #8
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"IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE?"

Rom 3:9 - "What then? Are we better than they? no, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;" for (verses 11-12) "there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." So, in Jer. 18:12 "they said there is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart." So, here we have the comparison of them and us, as written by Paul in Rom. 3:9. But, I have been told not to compare me with those old Jews back there. That is just what the Pharisees said in Matt. 23:30, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the pro-

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phets." But, Paul has declared in Rom. 3:9 that we are no better than they. They walked (Jer. 18:12) after their own devices and so do we, but one says, not me! I follow Christ!

Let us look at our hearts. Jer. 17:9 says "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" So, we say we can't deceive ourselves, and walk after our own thoughts. James 1:26 says we can; it says, "if any men among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is vein." So, we see we are no better than they.

In Gal. 3:1 we see the Galatian people had been bewitched or deceived - are we different than they? In Rev. 3:14-18, this church was deceived and thought they had need of nothing, but Jer. 17:5 says, "cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (or is fooled by man's thoughts). Isaiah 55:8-9 states that his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor ours his, for his thoughts are higher than ours, as in the Heavens above the earth. Jer. 10:23 says, "it is not in man to direct his steps," (but we will try anyway).

In Rom. 12:1-3 we are told to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service and be not conformed to this world" - which is to follow the customs and patterns of this world. (Webster - which is to do and look like the other people). "But be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Ask yourself, when I meet you anywhere - except at Church, or special occasions, can I tell there is a difference between you and the people around you?

Isaiah 5:18 says, "woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity and sin as it were with a cart rope." Verse 20-21 - "woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness. Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes." Verse 23 - "Which justify the wicked for reward" (which is to tell them they are okay doing what they are doing). Does not Rom. 1:32 say "Who knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." 1 Cor. 1:20 - "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?" (our thoughts). Verse 21 - "for after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God." But we think we know what is okay for us to do; but the Lord

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said in Jer. 15:6 "Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee and destroy thee." (Look to Rev. 20:11-15).

Jer. 16:12 "and ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk everyone after the imagination of his evil heart." Which is doing the things you want to do. How can we walk by faith without first reading it in the book? 2 Cor. 5:7 "For we walk by faith not by sight" (or the way we think is right). Prov. 14:12 "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." James 1:14-15 says, "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Separation between you and your God). Isaiah 59:1-2 - he will not hear your prayer. We cannot be faithful and do what we want. Do you sacrifice for God? Do you give up being and looking like other people? Matt. 16:24 said we must deny ourselves in order to follow Christ. Do you follow Christ?

Yours for the truth
of the gospel,
Lloyd Treat
13 N. Bock
Broken Bow, OK 74728

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"BOILING"

When we heat water, it usually must reach the boiling point to do us any good. At 211 degrees, it is sort of hot, but turned up one more degree it will prower trains, boats, and do all kinds of useful work for us.

We are encouraged throughout the scriptures to examine ourselves. I Cor. 10:12, I Cor. 11:28, II Cor. 13:5. One thing we must examine is our zeal. Are we doing all that we can for Jesus? Or do we need to turn up that zeal one more degree? Do we need to do more, study more, pray more, and work harder to accomplish useful service for the Savior?

The church at Laodicea was told by Jesus that they were lukewarm, Rev. 3:14-22. In verse 15 He said, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." He would rather a sinner be working 100% against Him, than a Christian be lukewarm.

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This we see in Saul, Acts 8:3, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison." Christ was so impressed with Saul's zeal that He went to great lengths to convert him, Acts 9:1-19. Then Saul applied that same zeal, working zeal, to the Lord. Acts 9:20 "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." Verse 22, "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." Of course, then he went on to be the Apostle, Paul. Brothers and sisters, are we more like the church of the Laodiceans, or more like the Apostle Paul?

Paul writes to us in I Thess. 4:1 "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." Turn up our zeal and our work one more degree!

We've been taught all our Christian lives that we must add virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity to our faith, II Pet. 1:5-7. But how much of these do we need? Verse 8 tells us, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Would Paul tell us what he told the church of the Thessalonians in II Thes. 1:3? "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you toward each other aboundeth."

If not, all we have to do is change, and start working harder, more zealously. Turn up one more degree, as Jesus tells us in Rev. 3:19. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

In Christian love,
Brother Terry Warford
1722-B E. 22nd Place
Tulsa, OK 74114

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"Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows."
Job 39:1-3

"THE GRACE OF GOD"

Some people seem to be confused on what the grace of God is, confusing it with the mercy of God. Titus 1:4 "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." We see there are two different words, grace and peace, are used many places in the Bible as a salutation and also in other ways.

Titus 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." If the grace of God teaches us how to live, what is it? Paul tells us in Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." If the grace of God brings Salvation and teaches us how to live and the gospel of Christ brings salvation to all that believe and obey it, then the conclusion is that the gospel, the word of God, brought by Christ to mankind is the grace of God.

Mercy - Strong's #1656 comparison:

It was only through God's mercy or compassion for mankind that caused him to send Christ Jesus to the world with His word of grace. John 14:24 "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Written in love of
the truth,
Howard McCay
3904 Knobel Ave. #8
Yakima, WA 98902

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"Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are? Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding to the heart? Who can number the clouds in wisdom? Or who can stay the bottles of heaven, when the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?"

Job 38:34-38

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

Prov. 25:25

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SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We submit this letter to help any and all that are interested, locate the mobile (not lost) Sacramento congregation of the Church of Christ. Many may not know that our group has met in four (yes, 4) different locations in the past two months. If anyone has tried to find us, we apologize for the inconvenience our movement may have caused you. Finally, we have settled in one place. I will refrain from using the word permanent, since all earthly matters are temporal. We are presently meeting in the Taylor Street Elementary School in North Sacramento off I80, on Bell Avenue between Norwood Avenue and Rio Linda Blvd.

Our congregation has enjoyed fairly good health this winter, thank you Lord. Colds and the flu have taken their toll, however, we are all surviving these infirmities.

I pray that any that are in our area will join us for our Sunday services. May God watch over the flock.

Please call if you need directions - 916/922-5729.

In Christian love and
fellowship,
Bro. Lloyd & Sis. Debbie Usrey

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Since last writing, we here at Bellflower have enjoyed relatively good health. We are currently having unusually cold weather, but thus far it has not resulted in more colds or flu.

Sister Lula Way, of Salem, Oregon congregation, suffered a stroke and her son and daughter-in-law, Al and Okja Way drove up to be by her side during her ordeal. Granddaughters

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Tammy Perigen and Tayna Brockman flew up also, together with great-granddaughter Kindra Brockman and great-grandson Stephen Perigen. We are happy to report she is greatly improved and will be going home soon. It seems the Lord answered our prayers and let her stay with us for a while longer, for which we are all very thankful.

Last Sunday and during our weekly Bible studies, we enjoyed have J.L. and Eunice Jared of Salem, Oregon; Chuck Jared of Valpariso, Indiana; and Jerry Jared of Cincinnatti, Ohio. They were in this area for a family reunion. Brother Jerry talked for us Sunday morning and Brother Chuck spoke Sunday night - both bringing very fine lessons from the scriptures. We were very happy to see them all again and hope they will come back soon.

Our love to all the
brethren everywhere,
Jerry Perigen for the
congregation at Bellflower

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

CEDAREDGE, CO	June 30 - July 8	Camp
WATERFORD, CA	July 1 - 8	Bobby Lamb Bill McCay Sr.
BELLFLOWER, CA	July 8 - 15	Howard McCay
GLENWOOD, WA	July 29 - Aug. 5	Dan Teague
YAKIMA, WA	August 5 - 12	Camp

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ:

We hope all is well with everyone in our Lord's church. We would encourage all of the congregations to write to the Courier to let the brotherhood know how each body of believers are getting along. Sometimes there is nothing going on, but it is such a joy to see many people just to see the names of those people they love. When we go several years without seeing each other, it such makes those newsletters all the more welcome. Keep writing!!

-The Editors