The Christian Courier



Send all correspondence to 17103 Bixby Avenue, Bellflower, CA 90706

MARCH 1991

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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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SEE THAT YE BE NOT TROUBLED

There are many religious misconceptions about the end of the world being tied to physical wars. Many claim that this present war in the Persian Gulf with Iraq is putting us in the last days. But every (physical) generation has its wars that have people predicting the end of the world. Then when it doesn't come right then, scoffers claim, "see, there is no God; he didn't come." Both the scoffers and the religious people thus show an ignorance of God's word.

We will show from the scriptures these three things: 1) The definition of the "last days"; 2) war does not signal the end of the world; and 3) what we need to be concerned about are things spiritual, not physical. Because we don't know when He's coming, we just know He's coming.

We find from the Bible that the definition of the last days is not the time from 1990 on because of current events. The Bible defines the last days as the period of time from Christ

on. Look with me to Heb. 1:1-2 "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;". I Peter 1:20 speaks this of Jesus - "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

Jesus told us in His word that wars do not signal the end of the world. Let's read Matt. 24:6-8 "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." Not the end, but the beginning. In verse 44 Jesus said, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Thinking of that verse, and comparing with people's expectations that judgment will come with a war, look to I Thes. 5:1-3 "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Mark 13:32 shows the impossibility of predicting Christ's return. "But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither of the Son, but the Father."

Thus, my beloved brothers and sisters, what we need to be concerned with are the spiritual things, not the physical. Jesus taught in 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." Luke 21 is comparable to Matt. 24 and Mark 13. In luke 21:26 Christ warned of fearing the physical things. "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. In verses 34-36 we read "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these

things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." I Tim. 4:16 "Take heed to thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Brethren, of course we are concerned about the safety of the men and women engaged in this war. And it is fine to pray for peace and for the evil to be stopped, if such is God's will. But do not let the religious world deceive you. Christ says that war does not signal the end. And, we should not dread Christ's return, Matt. 24:30, but look forward to it with joy, II Tim. 4:8. What we need to do is focus on spiritual things. We don't know when he will appear, so we should strive to always be ready.

Mark 13:37 "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

Yours in His service,
Brother Terry Warford

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For this article I have chosen the 14th chapter of Zechariah and the 24th chapter of Matthew. Read both of these chapters. I would also like to give notice to Luke 21:20 which reads, "and when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

Do the last few weeks with what is going on in the Middle East bear some revelation to what the scriptures are trying to tell us? Sadly because of the acceptance of sin that blinds so many comes with it the move toward war and destruction. Our President has called for a one world order. This sounds like this might be the answer. As a Christian, I do not believe this to be so. I see the planning of the world's future with not much hope in this regard. The great fatal flaws are the world's continuing move toward materialistic and humanistic values. This modern world it seems is learning to control everything but man himself. I have yet to see it solve hate, lust, greed and prejudice which produce social injustice, racial strife and unfortunately war. Everyone seems to see this big cloud over our head called nuclear destruction. However, do not be misled or lose focus the danger greatest to us as Christians comes within the structure of our lives and how we live them for Jesus Christ our Lord. Will this new world order accept as you and I have the proclamation of the gospel of Christ as the answer and

only answer to man's deepest need that can only come through salvation in Christ. If not, then it is still our responsibility to apply with the guidance of the Holy Spirit this principle to the social conditions that surround us in whatever place or situation.

Are not some of the physical signs the gospel talks about before the return of Jesus evident in the world today including moral breakdown, or have we become accustomed and conformed to it? Luke 21:28 "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh."

If you have been living a life dedicated to God, laying treasures in heaven and thinking on those rewards at the end of the world's trial, then there should be no cause for despair and discouragement. Enjoy the rich life God has given to you. We need to strengthen and help each other. I believe the greatest power for us comes through prayer, certainly there is no greater blessing in this life than those that are answered, and continued faith for those that are not. For who knows best but the Lord. So I leave you with one final question: Is your heart open to the prophecy of God or is it as dead as that of the Jewish religion and its leaders of Christ's first coming?

Love and peace to all,
Ken Williams
Waterford, California

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RECONCILIATION

I was recently treated to a fine lesson by a young brother at the Sacramento, California congregation.

During the lesson, it came to my mind how that many of the faithful congregations of the Lord have been forced to endure hardships for the past several years for a variety of reasons. There have been harsh things said, grossly exaggerated accounts have been written, and, sorry to say, representations made about different occurrences and brethren that just simply are not true. In the words of James, "Brethren, these things aught not so to be." James 3:10.

The purpose of this article is not to rehash these dreary happenings, but rather to suggest a means whereby these things may be brought to an end.

As I write these words, I am fully aware of the words of our Saviour in Matt. 5:23-24, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the alter, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; Leave there thy gift before the alter, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Our Lord evidently felt it to be very important that brethren reconcile when something comes between them. Unfortunately, this is not how it works today.

It seems that brother holds a grudge against brother without any possibility of reconciliation. This seems to me to border dangerously on hatred and we know what the apostle said about this. I John 3:15 At the very least we know that if we do not love our brother we "abide in death". I John 3:14 Brethren, my entreaty is that we all stop doing these things!

I propose that each of us personally search our own heart. If we know that any brother (or sister) holds anything against us, our duty is clear: attempt reconciliation!

We must all remember that our Lord did not say if we have something against our brother, but rather if we remember that "thy brother hath aught <u>against thee</u>" we are to go and be reconciled with this brother. This is exactly what I intend to do and I urge all of my brethren to do likewise.

Some might say to this, "--but there has been so much said and done to me that I just can't overlook it." This, of course, runs counter to everything the Lord taught concerning relationships between his followers including the law of forgiveness.

I recommend that we each look to Mark 11:25-26, "--when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any--". My hope is that we have not grown so hardened toward each other that we cannot obey this very essential command. We are advised that if we "do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

How often should we forgive? As many times as we can conceive in our mind. "Until seventy times seven" in the words of Jesus. Matt. 18:21-22.

I fear that in the past we have not paid proper observance to the advice of Paul in Eph. 4:31. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you." Also, "--lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and many thereby be defiled." Heb. 12:15.

Few can say that they have not eaten of the "root of bitterness" at one time or another in the past. "Brethren, these things aught not so to be." James 3:10.

There are so many issues amongst the church today that cry out for resolution. Brother needs to come together with brother in the Spirit of Christ and strive, not to defeat the other or to satisfy some personal ego-need, but rather to come closer to the other on the basis of the scriptures. Luke 22:25-27 and 3 John 9-10.

Perhaps it may be that brethren may need help to settle differences that may come up from time to time. Note 1 Cor. 6:1. Paul suggests here the means to settle differences. "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints." He further states, "I speak to your shame. Is it so that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

Have we become so polarized, each in his own little circle, teaching his own peculiar "version" of the gospel, that we close ourselves off from the majority of the brotherhood, draw the circle of our "fellowship" even tighter, until we stand virtually alone? If this is what the Lord intended for his followers, why did he even bother teaching his followers about forgiveness? Mark 11:25-26; Matt. 18:21-22, and reconciliation? Matt. 5:23-24.

All this is made worse by talebearing and gossiping. "The words of a tale bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." Prov. 18:8. "Where no wood is there the fire goeth out: so when there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." Prov. 26:20.

Brethren, let us not practice talebearing. Let us likewise refuse to listen to talebearing. Maybe the strife will cease!

In all things, let us follow after the "things that make for peace." Rom. 14:9.

I humbly ask all of my brethren to think on these things, for they are important.

Yours in Christ,
J.D. Logan
Stockton, California

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I have had a really hard time trying to write this letter. I hope that now that I am writing, everyone will bear with me.

I hope that people don't stop reading this letter because I am Terry Warford's wife or Richard Johnston's daughter. Please read this because I am a sister in Christ with a big concern and also because God is concerned.

I have had a lot of trouble putting my concerns into words, but then I found a song that expresses my thoughts so clearly.

LET'S GET TOGETHER

There are too many Christians
Who don't talk to each other.
They're not acting like Brothers,
They're not loving at all.

They use confrontation,
They choose gossip and slander.
The solutions meander,
They're in for a fall.

We can't keep going on like this everyday.
Hear what I say.

Let's get together.
Let's stop the fighting.
Let's start uniting.

There are too many Christians
Who don't know the Savior.
When they see our behavior,
It's not what it should be.

So let's stick together,
No more fussing and fighting.
We need love and uniting,
To be one family.

We can't keep going on like this everyday.
Hear what I say.

Let's get together.
Let's stop the fighting.
Let's start uniting.

It's time to stop the fighting
And start giving our love to each other.

Oh don't you know
That they're never going to see
How we're loving our Lord,
Unless we're giving our love to each other.

So let's get together.
Let's stop the fighting.
Let's start uniting.

Ever since I was young, I can remember reading or hearing verses about God's feelings on division. A few that have stuck in my memory are I Cor. 1:10 "Now I beseech you, brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement." Also I Cor. 3:3 "For ye are carnal: for whereas there is among you, envying, strife, and division, are ye not carnal, and walk as men."

I am not writing this letter to point fingers at anyone. This is to help me and hopefully others. I hope that I have helped in some way. Let's just remember that we are on the same team and without each other the road to Heaven is going to be a long road.

If I have said anything wrong, please write me.

In Christian love,
Suzie Warford
1034 S. 140th
Seattle, WA 98168
(206) 241-749

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

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SAN PABLO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Our prayer is that all is well and in good health. We of the San Pablo congregation are doing well, and we thank God for answered prayers. We continue our prayers for the men and women that are in the Iraq war. We pray that it will end real soon, and all can come home safe. We also pray for the people of Iraq, whom I am sure did not want to be in a war and who are suffering the most.

We have been blessed with several visitors. Brother Harry Dye, and Brother and Sister Ken Williams and their daughter, Melissa. Brother Ken brought us a very good lesson about being diligent in the work of the Lord, whether we be young or old.

Sister Melody and Brother Louis Glynell has had an addition to their family: Jacob Louis Glynell, born December 9, 1990. Their other son, James and family are all doing just fine.

We do have a sad note, Sister Bonnie Bryant's mother, Ruby Robinson, passed away December 30, 1990. She lived in Atwater, California - about 112 miles from the Bryant's home. Please remember the loved ones she left behind in your prayers.

We also had the opportunity to attend part of the Yuma, Arizona meeting. We had to leave and return to work on Wednesday, the 26th. We were blessed very much by being there with other brethren and look forward to attending again, Lord willing. We want to thank the brethren there for their "warm" hospitality, even though the weather was on the chili side. We want to thank all the sisters for the wonderful food and for the accommodations.

May God bless and keep each and every one of you in his care.

In Christian love,
The San Pablo congregation

GOSHEN, ARKANSAS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Again, it has been a long time since I have written. I had good intentions, but kept putting it off. I am glad everyone else isn't like me or we wouldn't have a paper.

Many of us have had the usual winter ailments - colds, flu and such. I guess it goes with the season. Brother Isaac Ferguson and Brother Ernest Buchannan both had surgery. Bro. Isaac had prostrate surgery and Bro. Ernest had to have a vein in his neck cleaned out. Both are home and seem to be on the mend now.

Slick roads hindered many of us from getting to services two Sundays. One Sunday it was almost impossible to travel. The slick roads did bring us a guest speaker. Bro. Paul Warford wasn't able to get back to Stilwell so he and his family met with us and gave a very good lesson.

All visitors are welcome anytime.

In Christian love,
Paul Andrews
Rt. 2 Box 27
Hindsville, AR 72738

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DUNCAN, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brethren:

The Lord willing, we will have a week-end meeting April 12, 13, and 14. Brother Howard McCay will do our speaking. Services will be at 7:30 p.m. both Friday and Saturday night and at 10:30 Sunday morning. After service Sunday morning, we will have lunch at the Church house and have singing afterward. We plan to have services at 2:30 Sunday afternoon. Everyone is welcome to attend all or part of our meeting.

The Church is located out in the country, but if you can find Duncan, Oklahoma on the map, you shouldn't have any trouble finding it. Take Highway 7 east out of Duncan. Ten miles east you will come to a gas station/convenience store called Robinson's corner. Turn north at the station and go one mile. Then 1 1/2 miles east. The church is on the north side of the road.

Everyone is invited to stop and meet with us anytime you are in the area; or make a special trip to meet with us. Services are at 10:30 every Sunday morning. If anyone should have any questions or problems finding us, call Don Lewis (405) 255-7278 or Jo Williams (405) 252-5850.

Don Lewis for the
Valley View Church of Christ

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YUMA, ARIZONA

Enclosed is a check from the Church in Yuma. We will send again a bit later. We enjoy the paper and look forward each month to see the news from the different congregations as well as the articles. I try to encourage everyone to send newsletters often. It may not seem important to some, but is very important to me as I look at the newsletters first each time. When Valerie was so ill, it gave us so much comfort to know there were prayers from all over the country. Even though she passed away, we feel our prayers were heard and answered in God's way.

Hope you are all doing well, we still have a lot of colds. Bro. Ken Baldwin hasn't been doing well at all. Hope he begins to improve soon. Sister Mary Long isn't able to attend services at all; please remember them in your prayers often.

This isn't our newsletter for March, just a note to say thanks for the paper.

In Christian love
from us in Yuma,
by Harry Davis and family

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CEDAREDGE, COLORADO

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends:

First we would like to thank all of congregations that we visited last summer. We appreciate the wonderful hospitality and love that was shown to us.

We also want to remind each and every one of you about the Colorado Camp Meeting coming up July 29th to July 7th. Make

your plans now to attend. Great gospel things are in store for everyone. It is always a great spiritual uplifting meeting. There are lots of young boys and girls and young men and women. It is a great spiritual feeling seeing everyone each year and your help is always appreciated.

For you that haven't heard - Bro. Ken Baldwin has just found out that he has lung cancer; your prayers will be appreciated and we need your prayers very much. Ken just got out of the hospital with pneumonia in Phoenix, Arizona. We are at Yuma, Arizona while seeing the doctors and for treatment.

God bless you all,
Ken and Verlie Baldwin
325 May Ave., Yuma, AZ 85364
(602) 344-8691

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

There is not a whole lot of news from here. We all have had our share of colds and flu, which is not uncommon this time of year. Sister Myrtle Lee Clouse had to miss one Sunday, but we now have her back with us and pray she continues to do well.

We would like to remind everyone that our meeting is coming up from June 29th to July 7th and we would like to invite anyone who can come to join us. We are looking forward to hearing Bro. Jim Brown and to having his family with us. Please plan to come support him and us. Please remember us in your prayers, as we remember you.

In Christian love,
The Bellflower congregation

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

Duncan, Oklahoma	April 12, 13 & 14	Howard McCay
Cedaredge, Colorado	June 29 - July 7	Camp
Bellflower, California	June 30 - July 7	Jim Brown
Selah, Washington	July 28 - August 4	To be announced