The Christian Courier



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

JUNE - JULY 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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DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR?

The life of a christian is a difficult one. As I live and become more learned, the more I find the truth in this statement. I am reminded of the words from Wendell Phillips, that tells the true story, "Christianity is a battle, not a dream." There is, however, one thing that can help the life of a christian run more smoothly, and this is security in faith.

What is faith? It is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Hebrews 11:1). We can take that as prima facia evidence and "read on" but it merits much more than that. A firm foundation is essential for steady growth, and faith is the foundation of a christian life. "For by faith ye stand." (II Cor. 1:24).

Where does faith come from? We read in Romans 10:17 that "faith cometh by hearing". To perpetuate one's faith, one has to feed that faith, and as pointed out, it comes from hearing. It was once stated that "the world is dying for want, not of good preaching, but of good hearing." That is what we need to focus on. James 1:22 states, "...be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." I ask you brethren, how can we be "doers" if we don't know what to do!

It should be pointed out that hearing, or listening doesn't necessarily have to be with the ears. That may go against everything you have ever learned about human physiology, but it can take on different meanings. Hearing means "to be aware or attentive; listening." We can listen with our hearts, our eyes, and our minds. How can we become good hearers? First, we must be cautious about what we hear, Proverbs 14:15 "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh to his going." Second, we must get all the scriptural facts before we come to a conclusion. (Proverbs 18:13) "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is a folly and a shame unto him."

Hearing involves: 1) Being attentive; 2) Having understanding; and 3) Prayer. It is sad to say, but many people hear only what they want to hear. If we want to feed our faith, it is imperative that we hear the Word, and not the "words" of man. And, as the song goes, "faith is the victory that overcomes the world."

Submitted for the consideration
of my brothers and sisters,
Brian J. Ross,
Baron Church of Christ

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LIBERTIES

We hear a lot of people talking and writing about liberties. So much time is spent on "my liberties that I can enjoy as a christian." Usually when it comes up it is referring to certain "worldly things" that christians want to do. Since you can't find an absolute "thus saith the Lord" forbidding a certain act, some say that this allows them the opportunity to go ahead and do the act under the guise of "liberties". They are willing to "gamble" their soul salvation on the hope the Lord will ignore gray areas in the scriptures and overlook them if he thinks they are wrong.

My point to this letter is, what if you are wrong? What if all those items we advocate as "liberties" are wrong in the eyes of the Lord? What if those liberties you insist on enjoying are things God will not tolerate in a christian? Will these "liberties" be worth it if it cost us eternal life?

Gal. 5:19-21 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these..., and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Isa. 9:16 "For the leaders of this people cause them to err and they that are led of them are destroyed." Isaiah, the old prophet, painted a very sad picture of what would happen. He said the leaders would be the cause of the people going astray. We must be very careful of who we are following and letting influence our life. Jesus is the only true shepherd and leader. His teachings and thoughts should be the blueprint of our life not man's desires and wishes.

Paul told Timothy to preach the word and to reprove and rebuke because there would be those who will not remain in the faith but will go after their own lusts and turn to fables. II Tim. 4:2-4 "Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." The New International version renders these same passages this way (II Tim. 3-4) "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

Brethren, is this what we're doing? Are we going after things we want to do in the world and trying to justify them as liberties? Are we really contending for the faith or trying to change God's ways to satisfy our worldly desires?

Paul told the Corinthians in I Cor. 15:58 "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Paul says to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. He doesn't want us intertwined in the ways of the world. Yes, as a christian we have liberty, yes we're free, but not free to continue in the things of the world.

Paul stated in I Tim. 5:22 "...Keep thyself pure."

Written in love of the truth,
Gerald Brockman

GENERIC

While this word is not found in the Bible, still I have often used it in teaching. Not long ago a brother asked me what it meant, so I will explain. It means a whole group. Now a generic word is often used in the Bible (the meaning). I will try to explain. Rom. 6:23 "The wages of sin is death." Sin is a generic term which means a lot, but unless it is explained it means nothing. So each person (seemingly) puts their own interpretation on it. According to the Bible all adultery is sin, but all sin is not adultery. Gal. 5:19-20 tells us the works of the flesh is sin and those who do them will not inherit the kingdom of God and list adultery, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. The such like includes all works of the flesh. Mark 7:21-23 and Eph. 5:3-4 gives more of these. All of these are sin, but sin is not just any one of these. So we see we must study to rightly know the Lord's will. Again, apparel is a generic term, simple means clothing, any clothing. Shoes, socks, slacks, skirts, blouses, shirts, bras, panties, hats, all are apparel, yet the word apparel does not mean just one of these. Modest apparel means decent apparel. What is decent? Let us reason on the matter. Isaiah 1:18 "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord. Now God's reasoning is in the Bible from Gen. 1 to the last of Revelations. II Tim. 3:16 All scripture is given by the inspiration of God. So if we reason with God, we reason on His word. Now when Adam and Eve made aprons to cover their nakedness this did not please God. Strong's concordance gives apron as a girdle on every side so those who translated it skirt instead of apron are closer to our language today. God made them coats, the idea of man that how christians dress, how much nakedness is covered or not covered does not matter to God is completely erroneous, and is not in harmony with God's reasoning. My brother Robert, in a recent article, mentioned drink, another generic term. Does it mean water, milk, gatorade, pop, wine, beer or what? We see each of these have to be identified to know what you are drinking. Again the word wine is generic and simply means the product or fruit of the vine. In the Bible it is referred to as fresh grape juice, fermented grape juice, vinegar, grapes and raisins. So what

does the word mean? How is it used? Is it any wonder that Paul admonished Timothy. II Tim. 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that need not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth. Reasoning with God on his word and not man's is the only safe way. The list of generic terms in the Bible goes on and on. The point my beloved brethren (another generic term meaning both brothers and sisters) let us not jump to conclusions on what something means without studying and reasoning on it. Some have argued that since joy is one of the fruits of the spirit, Gal. 5:22 and since alcoholic beverages makes them joyous, it must be alright. Is this not wresting the scriptures? Is not drinking alcohol a lust of the flesh? Truly we all must give account of ourselves unto God, so let us follow God's way and not man's. Let us strive against sin, and not give in to fleshly desires which will destroy our souls.

Written in love of correctly
understanding the word of God,
Howard McCay
3904 Knobel Ave.
Yakima, WA 98902

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IS SADDAM HUSSEIN THE ANTI-CHRIST

With the religious confusion about the end of the world tied to the recent war with Iraq has come this question. It is another religious misunderstanding concerning the second coming of Jesus Christ. In my short lifetime I have heard this term Anti-Christ applied to at least four different men at different times; Hitler, Manson, Khomeini, and now Saddam Hussein. One TV preacher who was asked this question concerning Hussein answered no; that the anti-Christ would be a ruler of a united Europe. Since uniting Europe seems a possibility this gives people unscriptural fear.

This doctrine of one anti-Christ more evil and more powerful than any other man stems probably from good, but misguided, intentions. The intent is probably to scare people into becoming christians. But error and misunderstanding do not convert people to truth. So let us see what the Bible really says about the word anti-christ.

In II John 7 we read, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." I John 4:3 echoes this definition. "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." John wrote that it was there already about 1900 years ago. I John 2:18 echoes the point of many antichrists. "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Reading on to verse 19 we find that they opposed the apostles' doctrine. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continue with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Reading on, verse 22 is the last verse with the word antichrist in it. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

Thus, the Bible truth concerning antichrist reveals: 1) There are many antichrists, not one antichrist; 2) Those who oppose the apostles' doctrine are antichrist; and 3) Anyone who does not confess Jesus or who denies Jesus and God is an antichrist.

Brethren, that definition forces us to self-examination. We have confessed Jesus, but let us remember that we can deny him in works as well as words. Titus 1:16 reads, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

We read a similar judgement to antichrist in I Cor. 16:22 "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." This means "against our Lord's return" if Strong's Exhaustive Concordance is correct. This judgement was placed on them that do not love Jesus. How do we love Jesus? In John 14:15 Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

How do we show that we are Christ's disciples and not antichrist? Jesus answered that question in John 13:35. "By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." In I John 3:18 we read that brotherly love, just like love for Christ, is in our works, not just our words. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

These deeds for Christ and for our brethren we find in God's word. John 8:31 "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;"

In Matt. 12:30 Jesus speaks to each one of us and says. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

So, is Saddam Hussein the Anti-Christ? No. The word is just not used this way in the Bible. Is he an anti-christ? His works and words indicate that he is but we will leave that determination to God in the day of judgement.

A far better direction for this question of antichrist is self-examination. Are we with or against Christ? Are we gathering with Christ or scattering abroad? Are we loving Christ and our brethren by our works as well as by our words? Are we confessing or denying Christ? Are we an antichrist?

In Christian love,
Bro. Terry Warford
1034 South 140th
Seattle, WA 98168
(206) 241-7493

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These articles were received some time ago and we apologize it has taken us so long to print them. We have had an abundance of articles and are trying to get as many of them printed as possible. Please be patient with us.

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

(Prov. 25:25)

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YUMA, ARIZONA

Greetings and best wishes to all in the brotherhood. Our news this month is mostly good news, most are well, the weather has been great.

Sunday, May 5, Joe Wardle returned to the Lord and his service. His wife, Shana, also asked prayers of the Church that they two might remain together in the Lord the remainder of their life. We are all happy to have Joe with us,a nd we know there is much rejoicing in Heaven.

This past Sunday, Brother Howard and Sister Nell McCay and Sister Jo Williams were with us for the weekend. We had a good time at our Saturday evening singing and first Sunday of the month dinner. Brother Howard had a lesson both Sunday morning and evening. We all enjoy his lessons. We look forward to the McCays being back with us this fall and welcome Sister Williams back with us anytime.

This about concludes our news for now, remember us in your prayers, especially Sister Mary Long who still isn't well enough to attend services. Please mention Francis Van Meer in your prayers, she is very ill with a heart condition. She wishes to attend services but hasn't been physically able. Keep the faith, be of one mind in the Lord and our prayers are with you all.

For the Church of Christ in Yuma,
By the Harry Davis Family

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RANDLETT, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Hello all! We hope that everyone is doing well and over their winter colds, etc. We at the Randlett, Oklahoma congregation are getting ready for our weekend meeting and are very excited about it. We have been doing a little work on our church building and we hope that there will be a good turnout.

We would like your help. Brother Roy and Sister Kim Mullens are planning to travel to the norther part of West Virginia this summer and would like to know of any loyal churches in the Northeastern part of the United States. We do not mind having to drive a bit, but would like to find one within a few hours drive. We would appreciate any response addressed to 511 E. Third, Burkburnett, TX 76354.

We appreciate the Christian Courier allowing us to write to all the churches. We enjoy receiving and reading the Courier each month. Being able to hear the news from the other churches is refreshing.

We hope to see a good attendance at our weekend meeting and will write soon with more news.

In Christian love,
Church of Christ
Randlett, Oklahoma

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SELAH, WASHINGTON

The congregation at Selah, Washington would like to invite everyone to attend their gospel meeting July 28 - Aug. 4th. We have rented the Broadway Grange for this purpose. The Grange is located at 909 W. Washington in Yakima. There are spaces available to park campers and their is lots of floor space for sleeping bags in the building. Our homes are also open to any of our guests who would like to come. We are looking forward to hearing brothers Jim Brown and Brian Ross present daily lessons from the gospel of God. Each week day we are planning to hold seminars on different subjects to further enlighten those that are attending. For more information please feel free to call; Robert Farley (509) 697-4273; John McKinney (509) 457-8453; Dan Ross (509) 966-5616.

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DUNCAN, OKLAHOMA

We of the Duncan congregation have good news to share. My son-in-law, Sam Vanderburg, was baptized June 9 1991. We are all very happy for Sam. We read that there will be more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety nine just persons, which need no repentance. Let's always try to support and strengthen our new members as they grow in the faith and grow in knowledge, we might be able to draw strength from them some day. We read that we are to edify one another.

We are glad to have Sister Jo Williams back meeting with us. She has been gone about two months visiting with other

congregations on the west coast. We have a small number in the congregation, and when even one is absent, he is missed. Let's always remember that we are all important to God and to the church - all the way from those who have been members for seventy years right down to the smallest child in its mother's arms.

Don Lewis for the
Valley View Church of Christ

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STILWELL, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Hello from Pleasantview Church of Christ at Stilwell, Oklahoma. It has been quite a while since anyone from here has wrote to the Courier so I will try to do so now. We have had quite a lot of sickness during the winter but everyone is doing fine now. Brother Darrell Chastine recently had by-pass surgery. Darrell is planning on being at church on June 23rd for the first time since his surgery.

Brother Robert and Sis. Christina Fuson would like to announce the birth of their first child born on January 29, 1991; a little boy weighed in at 7 lbs. 8 oz. His name is Robert Dewayne Fuson, Jr. Little Robert was born with Spinal Bifida, and was in ICU for the first three and a half weeks of his life. Little Robert is doing real well now, the doctors predicted that he would not be able to use his legs, but Robert does have a little movement in his legs. Lord willing he will walk. Please continue prayer for him. Little Robert is the grandson of Bro. Gerald and Sis. Wilma Buckner and great-grandson of Sis. Lectie (Ross) Denny, all of Stilwell, OK.

We meet here at 10:00 each Lord's day and at 5:00 each Sunday afternoon, except the first Sunday of each month we have dinner after the morning worship, then visiting and singing about 2:00 followed by our evening service with the young men taking care of the service. Our meeting for this year is scheduled to begin October 6, 1991 with Bro. Kelly McCay. We would like to invite anyone and everyone that can to drop by anytime and worship and visit.

In Christian love,
Bro. Gerald Buckner

BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We have all been doing very well for the most part. Sister Myrtle Lee Clouse has not been feeling well and had to go to the hospital for tests. Please pray for her.

We have had a few visitors the past couple of months. Brother Kevin Harper worshipped with us one Sunday. Brother and Sister Tom and Charlene Broadway worshipped with us another Sunday. Brother Tom gave us a very good lesson. We really enjoyed our visitors and invite everyone who can to stop and visit and worship with us anytime.

We are all rushing around getting our building ready for our meeting. We are looking forward to a good turnout this year. We hope all is well with everyone. If anyone needs any directions or further information, feel free to contact any of us. Al Way (714) 842-1633; Jerry Perigen (213) 866-0656; Mark Perigen (213) 925-0786; Marty Brockman (714) 598-2109; or Gerald Brockman (714) 595-1801.

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BOHANNA MOUNTAIN, ARKANSAS

Greetings:

Our meeting of the 1st weekend of June has just gone, but 4 wonderful sermons from Bro. Howard Taylor will linger long with us. They were very much needed and helped renew our minds to our jobs here on earth, not only to our self but our children and friends as well.

We had good attendance from our own congregation and the Goshen congregation. Thanks to each and every one for your support.

We had a wonderful day on Sunday with morning services, lunch, and an excellent sermon at 2:00 p.m. I, for one, and I think I can speak for the others, have good and wonderful memories brought to of good times spent on the meeting at the congregation here with loved ones now passed beyond our sight but never far from our hearts.

Again much love and thanks to Bro. Howard and Sis. Leola for coming to our meeting. It was great and we love you.

Bro. & Sis. Melvin Daniels

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FURNISH CANYON, OKLAHOMA

Since we last wrote, Ty Justin Mull was baptized into Christ. He is the son of Fred and Nan (Wiggins) Mull of Nebraska. Nan is the daughter of Jack & Betty Wiggins.

Tom Broadway has agreed to hold us a meeting June 25th - 30th after he finishes the meeting at Loco, OK. It will be nice to see Tom & Charlene again.

We've had some fine rains for which we are thankful. Enclosed please find a check to help with the Courier.

In Christian love,
Billy Richardson

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

Goshen, Arkansas	July 21 - 28	Jerry Perigen Mark Perigen
Broken Bow, Oklahoma	~~July 25 - 28~~ Aug 1-4	Jerry McCay
Selah, Washington	July 28 - Aug. 4	Jim Brown Brian Ross
Baron, Oklahoma	August 30 - Sept. 2	To be Announced

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We had to combine two issues this time as we are short of funds. Postage has gone up and is becoming more and more prohibitive.

Please, if your congregation receives more copies than you need, let us know. Or, if families are taking more than one copy home, think about just taking one per family. Every little bit help. We all need to help reduce of the cost of printing and postage.

Thank you