The Christian Courier



Send all correspondence to 9914 Arkansas St. Bellflower, CA 90706

APRIL 1993

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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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"UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK"

The religious world is celebrating their annual observance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every year at this time Churches prepare for large crowds of worshipers to come to services and offer their observance of the event that changed the world. It is a time for those in the world to at least acknowledge the sacrifice that Jesus Christ did for mankind. It is also a time when the world pays homage to the Son of God and acknowledges the power of God.

We also reflect back to that great event that happened almost 2000 years ago. That single event could change the destiny of mankind. It's incredible that just one single event and person could have such a great impact on the whole world. It is no wonder that the christian world as a whole stops or pauses for one day to reflect back. When we as christians look back to that day when our Saviour willingly went to the cross, we are saddened at the great sacrifice Jesus went through for us. But we can see the love that this man, the Son of God, had for mankind when he said as he was hanging there (Luke 23:34) "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do..." This man died for the sins of the world that through his loving deed the world can have eternal rest. Without the shedding of blood, we could never hope to enter the gates of Heaven (Matt. 26:28). With the greatness of his deed and incredible nature of his position, the Son of God, Saviour of the world, the propitiation for our sins - is once a year enough to reflect back on what he did for us? Does setting only one day aside per year give Jesus Christ the glory and honor he is deserving of?

We as christians know we owe everything to him and his Father. We praise the name of Jesus Christ and know the Father the Lord Jehovah. We give praise, honor and glory to them, hopefully, every day of our life. We reflect back on that great sacrifice made for the whole world not just once a year but each and every first day of the week. (Acts 20:7) "And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread..." I Cor. 11:26 "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come again."

Every Sunday as we partake of the communion we let our minds go back to Calvary and reflect on the death of our Saviour, then partake in remembrance of him. What a small thing we do for such a great sacrifice. But if we will only do it in remembrance of him, he is well pleased.

Wouldn't it be nice if the world woudl not only remember the death of the Saviour just once a year but each and every first day of the week. Let none of us forget what was done for us. To him we owe it all.

In Christian love,
Gerald Brockman

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"DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE"

Men Today and Back Then

Today's modern day religions and the religion practiced in Jesus' day had the same ideas about divorce and remarriage. They wanted to permit it then, just as they do now. Divorce and remarriage have never been something that God condoned or was pleased with. Jesus states in Matthew 19:8 "From the beginning it was not so..." God intended the promises made in the marriage ceremony "until death we part" to be honored by the man and woman reciting them. Man has the obligation to keep his word not only to his wife, but also to God. It is only in the past few decades that the religious community has taken the general fact the scriptures allow for divorce and remarriage. Both current leaders in the church and Pharisees in times of old take one verse "out of context" and make the Bible contradictory. First we will examine what the conditions of Matt. 19:9 were. Who was the audience? Why did Christ answer the way he did, and what true meaning Christ left for us to follow?

Christ was being questioned by the Pharisees so that they could find fault with him and arrest him for blasphemy. He answered them as to their own law (the law of Moses). In Matt. 19-4 "Have you not read..." meaning have you not read the very Law you profess to know so well. In this passage the Pharisees are referring to Deut. 24:1 in which Moses speaks of "the unseemingly thing." The real meaning of the scriptures given by Moses was to adjust the multitude of divorces occurring in that day among the children of Israel. Men would get tired of a wife and give her a bill of divorcement for any cause. Moses did not institute divorce, but merely wanted to regulate it since it was already occurring. God found it an abomination for a woman to return to her husband after being divorced from him and becoming the wife of another man. In no way did Moses give an endorsement for divorce. The Pharisees, however, interpreted this to give permission to divorce. Men of that day changed this to mean "any cause" spoken of in Matt.19:3. Jesus then answered them using the law when he said in Matt. 19:9 "except for the cause of fornication."

This exception clause has been warped by men of today, just as the Pharisees perverted the meaning of Deut.24:1-4. Men today use Matt. 19:9 to tell how Christ gave permission to remarry "for the cause of fornication". These teachings are false. In Matt. 5:31-32 Christ confronts the Pharisees in their unscrupulous deceit for distorting the meaning of their Law. "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery". The Pharisees understood Christ's teaching very well when He said it. Christ delivered to them the meaning that marriage is a permanent union. Christ anchored this meaning when he gave the clause, "except for the cause of fornication." We find this to be true because under the Mosaic Law, unfaithfulness warranted "death by stoning" (Deut.22:13-21).

Men who teach Christ gives permission to remarry after divorce teach that fornication dissolves a marriage. This is even incorrect under the Mosaic Law. Fornication never dissolved the marriage. The penalty for fornication was death by stoning. Death dissolved the marriage "for the cause of fornication". Leaders today, however, ignore this principle thereby ignoring and changing the very meaning Christ delivered. We find leaders today presenting Christ as teaching under the grace of the New Testament. The New covenant was not in effect until after Christ's death. If these "modern leaders" instruction were true, then Christ would have been teaching against the Law. But didn't Christ say He wasn't changing the Law? (Matt 5:17-18). Christ denies the Pharisees and men like the Pharisees today who try to change His meaning when He states in Luke 16:17-18 "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail, Whosoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery, and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery." Notice He was speaking again to the Pharisees, resolving His meaning in Matthew 19:9 to the exception clause.

Leaders in the Church say Christ gives permission for the innocent party to break their marital vows since their unfaithful spouse abandoned their vows through adulterous

behavior. Isn't this an eye for an eye? Christ never gave permission to remarry "for the cause of fornication". Directly, Christ taught it was wrong for the Jews to put their wives away for just any frivolous reason. But leaders of the Church infer remarriage, and they call it a "necessary inference": They go on to tell that since God knew man could not live up to His "IDEAL" marriage institution, then God gives grace through this exception clause in Matt. 19:9. This is a complete falsehood. God corrects, And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth ALL men to repent." (Acts 17:30) Christ clarified His teaching to His disciples. The apostles were shocked at His teaching (Matt. 19:9) and questioned Him again in private (Mk. 10:10). Christ made clear, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, commiteth adultery against her, And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another , she committeth adultery". Jesus Christ held up God's ideal for marriage and told His followers to live by that ideal. But we find leaders of the church today who delude and distort the teachings of Christ, just as the Pharisees would try to mar and misrepresent their law. The Pharisees testified their leader gave them permission just as men today tell how their leader, Christ Jesus, gives them permission to remarry. To place the blame on God seems convenient. During the fall of Man, didn't Adam try to blame God also for the woman God gave him? Guided by the Holy spirit, the Apostle Paul show these men false as he disciplines them "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." (1 Cor. 7:10-11) "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: 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." (Rom. 7:2-3).

When we carefully examine the scriptures and do not make them say what we want to hear, the meanings presented are crystal clear. As Christians we can not make allowances for those we love in this life. We are taught to love Christ

more than anyone (Matt. 10:37). If we conveniently bend the scriptures to include persons living in sin, we are untrue not only to ourselves, but also to God.

In Christian Faith
Steve Coody
Valley View Congregation

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"BIBLE STUDENTS AT BEREA"

Acts 17:11 "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

I don't suppose there has ever been a time when there hasn't been differences of interpretation of scriptures. It has been so in the past and will be so in the future: multiple cups, loaves, instrumental music, Sunday school, and now we see the battle over divorce and remarriage. Several years ago I wrote an article called "Where have all the Christians gone", today I ask the same questions - where are they? Why is it when the hard subjects confront us, most hide their head in the sand and hope that it will get better. Why is it when we see the enemy coming we pull our helmets down over our eyes and pretend it is not really happening? And, yes, I am including myself in this category.

The enemy is the same old foe, dressed differently, different approach, but still the same old foe. Wake up, dear friends, wake up! When you hear a lesson, do you bother to search the scriptures to see if it's truth? When you read an article in the Church papers, do you search the scriptures to see if it's the truth? Or do you just sit on the ol' backside and say "Sounds good to me - old Bro. Al has been around a long time, it must be true." Dear friends, snap out of your sleep - old Bro. Al and others may be leading you astray, and how will you know if you don't study?

The Bereans received the word with all readiness of mind. Christians today receive words with all readiness of mind, but is it <u>the</u> word? I exhort you to pray, to study and search the scriptures daily to see whether the things you are

being taught are so. We're not all teaching the same thing, therefore, we can't all be right and may all be wrong.

Written in love of the truth,
Bro. Al Way

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

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Everyone here are doing pretty good. Gregory Brockman had tubes put in his ears and is doing very well. He came out of his surgery with flying colors. Most everyone else is well and healthy.

We had visitors one Sunday. Brother Steve Martin, his wife, Jill, and two sons were here to worship with us from Texas. They were out on a family vacation and surprised us at Church one Sunday. Also, Brother Brian Ross has been bringing his friend, Glen, with him to church. It is very nice to have visitors and each one adds to our number.

Remember our meeting coming up in July. Make plans now to attend our meeting, or any other meeting around the country. I'm sure everyone would appreciate the visitors.

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

June 13-20	Baron, Oklahoma	Dan Ross
June 26 - July 4	Cedaredge, Colorado	Camp
July 4-11	Bellflower, CA	Eric Smith
July 24 - Aug. 1	Yakima, WA	Mick Boen
		Eric Harper

YESTERDAY, TODAY and TOMORROW!

Yesterday's dead,
Tomorrow's unborn,
So there's nothing to fear
And nothing to mourn
For all that is past
And all that has been
Can never return
To be lived once again -
And what lies ahead
Or the things that will be
Are still in God's Hands
So it is not up to me
To live in the future
That is God's great unknown,
For the past and the present
God claims for His own,
So all I need do
Is to live for Today
And trust God to show me
The truth and the Way -
For it's only the memory
Of things that have been
And expecting Tomorrow
To bring trouble again
That fills my Today,
Which God wants to bless,
With uncertain fears
And borrowed distress -
For all I need live for
Is this one little minute,
For life's Here and Now
And Eternity's in it.

Helen Steiner Rice