The Christian Courier



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

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"EDIFY ONE ANOTHER"
(I THESS. 5:11)

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, how truly wonderful for us all to be members of the body of our Lord and Saviour and to comfort and edify one another with the scriptures. We are given this life to spend in preparation for the day of judgment. So, let us use the time we have wisely to strengthen and encourage one another in the ways of righteousness.

We are told in Eph. 4:3 "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." and Rom. 15:5 "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." Brethren, how is it possible for us to have unity if we are not likeminded and where can there be edifying if there is no peace among us? Have we ever heard someone say "I can't go to church at such and such place because I don't like someone there"? It is very important to be considerate of each other's feelings. Let us read 1 Pet. 3:8-9 "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

We cannot feel hatred and anger toward one another and still follow God's will. We need to consider the other person's point of view. If we feel someone is responding to a situation in a wrongful manner, we need to ask ourselves what would we do in the same situation. We read in Luke 6:37 "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." Brethren, let us be careful of our opinions of others.

We read in I John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." One such sin is to sow discord among the brethren (Prov. 6:19). Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us not sow discord but kindness and love and let us feel the joy spoken of Col. 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." This is the joy Jesus was talking about in John 15:11 "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." How terrible and shameful it is for church members to cast stones of anger and hate at one another. Such things are not to the glory of God. Even more so of family members in the flesh.

How is it possible for me to feel anger and hatred for my fleshly or spiritual brothers and sisters and have the joy remain in me? Let us turn and read I John 2:11 "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Let us now read Rom. 2:23 "Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" Brethren, let us never make our boast of the law with anger and hatred in our hearts for our brothers and sisters in spirit and the flesh.

However, I am not saying we should teach only the commandments that do not offend others. But at the same time, let us not browbeat one another. Let us read I Tim. 4:6 "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." Let us not wound one another's conscience, but instead let us "comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:18). Let us preach the word in truth and in spirit and not use it to hurt others.

Let us remember that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). Let us also remember judgement belongs to Jesus as we read in John 5:22 "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Separating the just and the unjust will be done on the day of judgment. So, let us leave the weeding out to the one who has the authority.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us not refuse to assemble ourselves because of bitterness in our hearts for others. Let us remember Rom. 14:13 "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Let us not cause these precious words of eternal life to slip through our fingers. I want to close this article with Phil. 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

In Christian love,
Larry Pollan
Ringgold, Texas

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"THE DIVORCE EVIL"

I realize that I am not on the popular side in this world when I speak as I do on the divorce evil. It cost John the Baptist's life to condemn the divorce evil. Christ's enemies tried to trap him with the same issue, and his enemies are still doing him an injustice by misapplying his teaching on divorce. Therefore, I feel that in obedience to the Lord's will which says to "prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21), and to "abhor that which is evil" (Rom. 12:9), I am obligated to write this. An investigation of the truth from an unbiased standpoint will show us that God is not pl ed with such a degrading problem as divorce. God sai He hates divorce (Mal. 2:16).

God gave one man one wife in the beginning and said that

we no more two, but one flesh. To make one out of two is to join, unite, weld or make cohesive, and that man and woman shall leave father and mother and cleave to each other so long as they live.

This was God's divine way of marriage and His way of making the home so as to replenish the earth with human life. Seven generations passed before any man had more than one wife. Then man took (he took, God did not give) another wife. Jesus endorsed God's plan in the beginning by saying, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:5-6, Mark 10:9).

The enemies of Jesus, a brigade of officers and mob-spirited critics, came to him trying to trap him, hoping they might get him to say something against, or break the law of Moses, so they could have a charge against him. This being a special case under the old law, Jesus gave them a special answer, and referred them to the law as if to tell them the law would answer their question. Jesus was not talking to his disciples then about something that was to be applied in general. When they told him "Moses granted divorce", he told them that Moses did so because of the hardness of their hearts, as if to disapprove of it himself and then climaxed the conclusion by saying, "In the beginning, it was not so, for God made one out of two, and what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Does that sound like a permit for divorce, when divorce means the annulment, dissolving of marriage, or putting asunder? When Jesus said there was an exception of fornication, he did not approve or permit divorce to be applied in the Christian age because that would be contradictory to what he just said. Since Jesus condemns the idea of putting asunder and marrying again (which divorce permits), it is a conclusive evidence that Christ did not permit a divorce. The only place the exception could have been used was in a case such as Joseph when he thought he had found some uncleanness in Mary. And this was yet under the law. Now, after Christ and his disciples went into the house out of the presence of his enemies, his disciples asked him again concerning divorce, and he never used the exception. He just told them that "whosoever putteth away his wife and marries another commits adultery", which is God's real plan from the beginning. What Jesus told his disciples (Mark

10:10-12) was a lesson to be applied in general because it was brought over and taught in the Christian age (Rom. 7:1-3, I Cor. 7:39). No exception or permit was there, but rather a condemnation of the divorce evil.

Now, the truth of the matter is that Jesus was asked a special question in Matt. 19:1-9, (in a special case while the old law was still in force) by his enemies, hoping he would say something against the law. Therefore, he gave them a special answer by reminding them of God's divine plan of marriage in the beginning, and that no man put asunder what God hath joined together. The answer Jesus gave was designed to restore the sanctity of marriage and the home to its original status. The idea is that man and woman shall be mated together by voluntary selection of each other and this relation should be maintained during the lifetime of both parties, because the two are made one in marriage. To be willing to permit a thing is to encourage it. Now, since God did not institute divorce and said he hates it (Mal. 2:16), and since Christ discourages it and condemns it by his teaching to his disciples and has given no exception or permit in the new law, it is not permitted by Christ. Anyone who teaches that Christ permits divorce in the christian age because he used the expression of the exception for fornication in that special case under the law, is putting his own interpretation on the subject, thus making a misapplication of God's word. They are making the Bible inconsistent and making the teaching of Christ contradictory by trying to fit the truth of God's word to the wisdom of this world.

By the grace of God, the scripture has been translated into our own tongue and is so plain that the common person can understand for themselves. The modernistic wisdom of this world has fit their own interpretation into the scriptures by misapplying them, and it just helps to keep the unsettled mind bewildered on this subject. Therefore, agreeing with some scholar, PhD or LLD who has his own conglomerated theory while he misapplies the truth is dangerous.

Error is more dangerous, does more damage when allied with truth, there is one thing that God has never permitted. That is for man to tell Him (God) what is right. Anyone who presumes to know the mind of the Lord, where He has not

spoken, or to change the Lord's will, will ultimately come to the same end as Nadab and Abihu when they offered strange fire. Making a law and claiming it to be God's law when He did not inaugurate it is a very dangerous thing. This is exactly what some have done with God's law on marriage and divorce.

Submitted by Howard Taylor
Countryside Church of Christ

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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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COMANCHE, OKLAHOMA

Dear Christian Friends:

Just a few lines to update you on the activities of the Countryside Church of Christ. May 21st through the 23rd, Brother Paul Andrews brought us four very good sermons. We appreciate Brother Paul's efforts and enjoyed him and his mother in our home. We also thank the other visitors from Goshen, Bohannon Mountain and New Castle, Texas.

Lord willing, Paul Auslem, Jr. will hold a meeting for us August 22 thru the 29th. We will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Come be with us.

In Christian love,
Howard Taylor

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YUMA, ARIZONA

Dear Brethren:

Ruth Duncan fell and broke her hip and was in the hospital and then moved into a nursing home.

The flood at Roll is still running. Highway 95 bridge was washed out and closed Highway 95. That split Yuma County in half. Some of the members were on one side of the river and others on the other side, so they have services on both sides of the river.

Yours in Christ,
Horace Orendorff

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BOHANNON MOUNTAIN, ARKANSAS

Greetings from the Bohannon Mountain congregation. We are all doing pretty good here and hoping every one elsewhere is in good health.

We enjoyed a three night meeting the last weekend in April with Bro. Paul Auslam, Jr. doing the speaking. We love to hear Paul speak; he is going to be a power to the Church. Keep up the good work Paul. Paul is from the Goshen, Arkansas congregation. We had good attendance each service in spite of a rain storm that turned a freshly graded dirt road into a huge, long muddy mess on Saturday night, but God gave us a wonderful sunny Sunday for our 2 services with lunch and games in between. Thanks to each person that made the effort to come.

The Bohannon Mountain congregation,
Melvin Daniels 643-3615
James Vanderpool 442-4834

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are all doing fairly well at our congregation. Sister Earlene Chessman has had surgery but seems to be on the road to recovery. Our prayers are with her always.

Sister Verlie Baldwin from the Cedaredge, Colorado congregation was here visiting for a week and we enjoyed having her at church and at Bible Study.

Brother Brian Ross was gone to Oklahoma one Sunday but made the trip back fine. We are glad to have him back with us again.

We are preparing for our meeting which is coming up July 4-11th. Please plan to attend our meeting. If anyone needs directions or a place to stay please contact Gerald Brockman at (909) 595-1801, Martin Brockman at (909) 598-2109, Al Way at (714) 842-1633, Jerry Perigen at (310) 866-0656 or Mark Perigen at (909) 396-0236.

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

June 18, 19, & 20	Duncan, Oklahoma	Jerry McCay
June 26 - July 4	Cedaredge, Colorado	Camp
July 4 - 11	Bellflower, California	Eric Smith
July 24 - August 1	Yakima, Washington	Mick Boen Eric Harper

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Please make note that the Baron, Oklahoma meeting, previously planned for, has been cancelled.

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The Furnish Canyon congregation has contacted us and would like us to let everyone know that they have had two deaths. Sister Millye Francis passed away on February 5, 1993. She was 100 years old and lived to celebrate her 100th birthday. Brother Billy Richardson also passed away on March 23, 1993. He was a wonderful man and will be missed dearly. Both of these people will be missed greatly by their family and those who knew them.