The Christian Courier

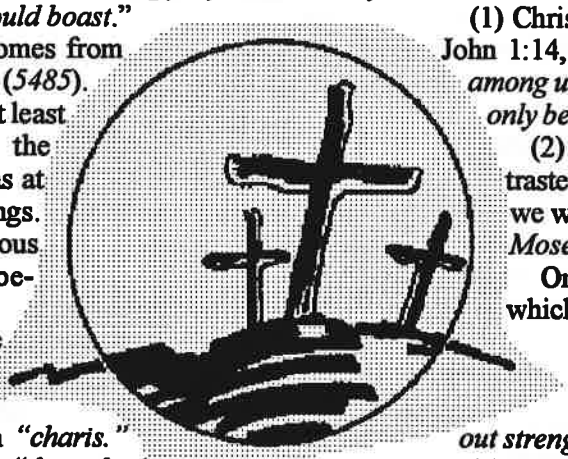
January, 1996

Send correspondence to: 1034 S. 140th St., Seattle, WA 98168
Writers are responsible for their own articles.

Grace

Ephesians 2:8-9

(Eph. 2:8-9), *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*



The word "grace" comes from the Greek *"Charis"* (*5485*). The word is translated at least ten different ways in the New Testament, and has at least that many meanings. (Maybe more with various shades of meaning between them.)

Our text, in the case of the above scripture, deals with a meaning that cannot derive from *"charis."* Paul describes grace as *"the gift of God"* (vs. 8).

It would seem that such plain language as our text would be difficult to be misunderstood, but somehow it has occurred, and has created much confusion in the religious world.

One of the great reformers, John Calvin, introduced the thought that mankind is saved by the "grace" of God without any "works" on the part of man, and based his conclusion on Eph. 2:5-9. Some bodies of believers to this day cling to this theory, some basing their entire "plan of salvation" on it.

What does this passage teach and what does it not teach?

Let us note with reason that if God's grace alone, apart from works on the part of the penitent, is God's plan to save man, it follows that if man is lost it is God's fault. I, for one, do not wish to make such a charge against God. Obviously, man's salvation depends upon God's grace, and also on man's obedience (works).

What of Grace?

(1) Christ came into the world to bring grace to men. John 1:14, *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

(2) We notice that the "law" (Moses') is contrasted with "grace and truth." This is important as we will see. John 1:17, *"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."*

One can (and should) read Romans, chapter 3-6, which all speak of God's gift to man as his "grace."

Grace as Gift?

(1) Rom. 5:6, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."*

(2) Rom. 5:8, *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

I use these two passages to demonstrate the unworthiness of all men. Nothing that mankind has ever done merits this gift. Truly, if mankind had ever done anything worthy of this grace, we would have somewhat of which to boast. This grace was, and is, truly unmerited favor.

However, this does not say, or infer, that obedience to God's plan of salvation is excluded. Indeed, it rather teaches us that obedient works are necessary for salvation.

Gospel as Grace

(1) Gal. 1:16, *"To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:"*

(2) Eph. 3:2-9, *"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How*

that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:" It is necessary to use this passage in its entirety to demonstrate the many descriptions used by Paul to describe the "grace" of God.

Various Descriptions

(1) "*Mystery,*" revealed by God.

(2) We can "read" this mystery, though the apostles' words.

(3) Formerly hidden to man, but revealed by the apostles and prophets.

(4) Promise by the gospel.

(5) Paul made a minister by grace, according to his power (gospel).

(6) Grace given Paul that he should preach among the Gentiles.

(7) Unsearchable riches of Christ.

(8) Fellowship of the mystery.

(9) Manifold wisdom of God (vs. 10).

(10) Eternal purpose (vs. 11).

(11) The powers that worketh in us (vs. 20).

(12) The gospel (good news).

Gospel is Grace

Little wonder, then, that Paul would "marvel" (be astounded) that, so soon, the Galatians would be removed from Jesus (who called them into God's grace) unto another gospel!

It is impossible to be "removed" to "another" gospel if one had not been a partaker of the true gospel. This "gospel" is called "God's grace."

"Wherein we Stand"

To further demonstrate the description of grace and gospel, I offer the following from Paul's letters to the Romans and Corinthians:

(1) Rom. 5:2, "*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*"

(2) 1 Cor. 15:1-11, "*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.*"

The force of the conclusion is irresistible; we stand in the "grace" of God; we stand in the gospel; they are the same!

Grace Teaches

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;*"

We should all ask ourselves, how grace teaches, and how all this was made known to mankind. Was it now revealed to us through the gospel? Grace, then, is gospel!

Thus, we have seen how God's unmerited favor to man is embodied in Christ' gospel, that it brings salvation, and that it teaches us to live godly and righteous lives in the present world.

Next: *Does "Grace" Exclude Works?*

Yours for the truth of the gospel,
J. D. Logan
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The Bible never suffers from neglect. It is only those who neglect it who suffer.

Apostasy

Can't — Cannot — Not — Will Not

We must always keep in mind that it is not "Will" but "Can."

It is not what a child of God "will do" but now in this grace dispensation, God has given us all power to "can do" (Translated "must do").

Of course we have our own will, and we may feel that being a Christian is being restricted, but in reality it allows us to be free — loosed from bondage of sin. John 8:36 (Free indeed).

Rather, I should say, God has provided a way for us to choose to be free from sin. However, God does not, nor should we expect Him to single anyone out and to say that no matter what we do, we can't be lost.

Witness of the Scriptures

Acts 10:34, *"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"*

The writer here perceived, or recognized *that "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respector of persons."* **PROOF**: Ezek. 18:20, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* **PERIOD**: This was under the old law, and there was no way of escape from the penalty of it.

However, God says if we desire to be free, He will make us free indeed. (John 3:16).

But man says "I can't be lost if I have accepted Jesus as my personal savior." This is where they use "another gospel," which is not another gospel.

I'm glad they said "personal savior", because that proves that their statement is a lie. (i.e.) Acts 10:35 (above).

Who are we to believe? A false teacher, or one who was inspired to write down God's commandments? What will happen if we believe a lie? 2 Peter 2:4, *"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;"* If he spared not the angels, will he spare me if I sin? It is up to me to see to my own salvation and election. Yes we are elected to be heirs with Christ, into the kingdom of Jesus Christ by obedience to God and His Son, Jesus Christ. F R C B (2 Peter 1:10).

Never Fall?

Yes, but predicated on ***"IF YOU DO THESE THINGS."*** **LET US NOT BE FOOLED.**

I Cor. 10:12, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* Man's ideas and false prophets can make us think we are safe (if we heed them). But, I am responsible, especially to keep my body and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27).

Another thing... must do... can do; etc.

That is keep his sayings. Sayings are commands, which come from the mouth of God... We can't live by bread alone but every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

John 8:51: *"IF"* is a big word.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." **NEVER SEE DEATH!** This death is eternal — Everlasting lake of fire, **RESERVED** for the devil and his angels.

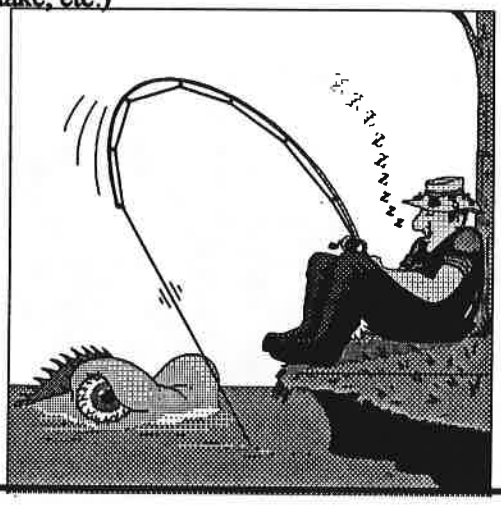
This is a startling statement, but if we do not the things to make our election sure, we become the devils angels — and this may come about by just not repenting of our sins. When we sin we disobey God's Word. We **DE-THRONE** God; and **ENTHRONE** ourselves. Does this sound familiar? Lucifer wanted to dethrone God and take his place. For that act, he was cast out of heaven. (Rom. 8:13; 1 John 2:24).

Willful Sin

2 Peter 2:20, *"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."*

What is willful sinning? Examples:

- Using the contribution for things God does not intend for us to use.
- Missing, or "forsaking: the assembly, for no just reason. (i.e.) Like if I wanted to go somewhere, fishing, visiting, etc.; (instead of attending the worship) that is willful sin.
- Partaking of the communion without examining myself. (Without praying for forgiveness before I partake, etc.)

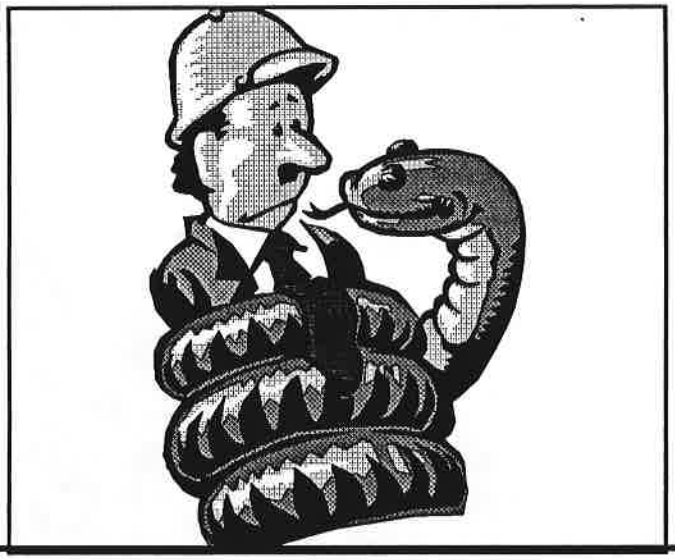


Heb. 10:26, "*For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*" What more could God do for us? He gave His only begotten Son as a sacrifice upon the cross for the sins of the world, so the decisions are up to us as to whether or not we want to attain heaven or not. Heb. 10:29, "*Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace*?" How could I have trodden under foot the Son of God? I love him and I wouldn't do that. What about that little sin, that little "white lie" (no such things). All lies are black. (darkness — Satanic)

I'll have to confess of lie I told. Last Thursday, my brother and I were reminiscing, and after later thought about what I had said about a certain subject, I realized that it was not true. What should I do about that? Confess to God and repent for that lie and pray that I will think about what I am saying before I let it go off the end of my tongue. We all know what the tongue can do. Brother Jack said it best. It's like a tiny spark that can start a fire so fierce that it can burn a whole field or forest. That is what our tongue is capable of. It is not what we put into our bodies that will condemn us, it is what comes out, because that is what is in our hearts.

The tongue does this: 2 Peter 2:20 (see above). I refer again to this scripture because I think it is so important.

1. After escaped pollution's of the world. (Not the air around us)
2. Entangled **AGAIN** therein.
3. Overcome: (house fire, smoke takes 4-10 seconds to overcome a person and kill)
4. Latter end worse that beginning. (ADAM's)
5. Better to not have known the way of righteousness. (i.e. Natives of jungle)
6. After they have known it, turn away from the holy commandments.



What Will Happen To Them?

Matt. 13:41, "*The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;*"

Gathered out. No second chance. No 1000 year reign of our Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. No excuses. No returning. No chance of us warning those who are living in sin, etc.

No Entrance Into Heaven

UTTERLY FORGOTTEN. Jer. 23:39-40, "*Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.*"



"*... I, even I...*" Maybe your family will not forget you. Maybe your friends will not forget you. Maybe the brethren will not forget you, but the Lord, "*... I, even I, will utterly forget you...*" This he told the Jews, and God goes a little farther with unfaithful Christians. "*Depart from me ye that work iniquity, I never knew you.*" God won't forget you? He can't forget what he never knew. "*Everlasting reproach, everlasting shame which shall not be forgotten.*"

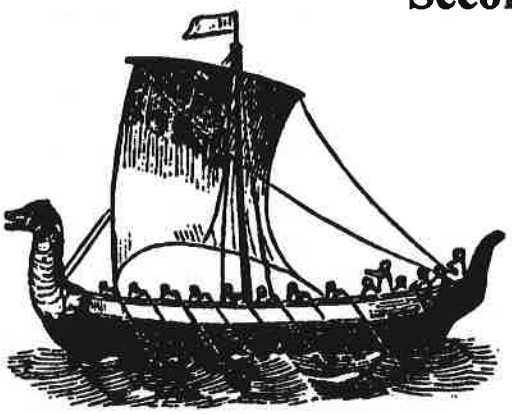
Numbers 14:12

"*I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.*" We have mentioned being heirs to the kingdom and being heirs with Christ, will God will do the same with us as with those in Numbers, "***AND DISINHERIT THEM.***" The unrepentant sinner's name will be taken out of the book of life. He will not clear the guilty. (Num. 14:18; 1 Tim. 5:12; 1 Tim. 1:19; Luke 8:13; Ezek 33:17-19; Jude :21) Keep yourselves in the love of God.

In search of the truth,
Homer Bryant
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The Travels of Paul

Second Journey — Corinth





Paul's departure from Athens to Corinth (Acts 18:1) was uneventful compared to some of the other cities at which he preached (jailed, beaten, stoned, etc.). There was no organized opposition to his preaching there because they listened to any new; whether it was believed, or not, by the philosophers was something else.

It is not known whether Paul's journey to Corinth was by land or by sea. If he went by land, it was a forty mile, two day journey; if he went by sea, it was a one-day's sail.

Corinth was the scandal of the world during this time (and much of its history), absorbed in all sorts of whoredoms and drunkenness (*"Cities of the New Testament", p. 58*). An heathen temple, dedicated to Aphrodite, sat prominently on top of a flat, 2000 foot high, mountain, beckoning others to come to its "one thousand religious prostitutes." This was frequented often by her citizenry.

Paul found Aquila and his wife Priscilla there, and abode with them, for they shared the same trade of tentmaking (vs. 2-3). They were among many Jews who were expelled from Italy by Claudius in 52 A.D. Paul probably met them while looking for work to support himself.

As was his custom, Paul taught in the Jewish synagogue every Sabbath day (vs. 4), until about the time when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia (vs. 5). Upon their arrival with the good tidings of the faith of the brethren in Thessalonica, Paul wrote his first Thessalonian epistle of encouragement to his beloved converts (1 Thess. 3:6). Meanwhile, his preaching locally was falling upon disbelieving ears of the Jews, *who "opposed themselves and blasphemed"* (vs. 6). Paul "*shook out his raiment*" (rejected them), and turned to the Gentiles.

Paul took his teaching to a house adjoining the synagogue, belonging to Titus Justus, one who worshipped God (vs. 7). His listeners there were more accepting of the word spoken (vs. 8). Crispus, who was the ruler of the synagogue, was not like the rest of his Jewish partners, for he was one who believed, and was converted, along with his entire household. This could not have set well with the rest of the Jewish leaders.

Paul probably was thinking his life was in danger again, but was strengthened when he received a vision in the night from the Lord, saying, *"... Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*" (vs. 9-10). With the promise of the Lord protecting him, Paul stayed and preached the gospel for a year and a half (vs. 11).

The Jews, with Sosthenes now as ruler of the synagogue (Crispus, having departed from it for Christ), rose up against Paul, and brought him before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, charging that Paul "*persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.*" (vs. 12-13).

Before Paul could speak in his own defense, Gallio told the Jews he was not going to be a judge over their Jewish laws, and then drove them out of the judgment seat without a trial (vs. 14-16). True to the Lord's promise, Paul was protected.

Sosthenes, after this denial of a trial against Paul, was beaten outside the judgment seat (vs. 17). Who did the beating? Was it Greeks who hated the Jews, and looked for any reason to vent their hatred; or was it Jews, unhappy with the performance of their leader, Sosthenes? It is certain it was not done by the Christians.

One wonders if Sosthenes was the same individual of which Paul mentions as being *"our brother"* in his first epistle to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:1). Mistreatment by the hands of his own people (if that was what happened) could certainly have been impetus enough for him to look elsewhere for spiritual support.

Paul sailed with Syria as his final destination, taking with him Priscilla and Aquila (vs. 18-19), who went as far as Ephesus. While there, Paul reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue. When they wanted to hear more, Paul said he had to return right away to Jerusalem, and that he

would "... *return again unto you, if God will ...*" (vs. 20-21).

He sailed to Caesarea, went up and greeted the church, then went on down to Antioch, completing his second missionary journey.

Next article: Paul's Third Missionary Journey

Written in love of the truth,

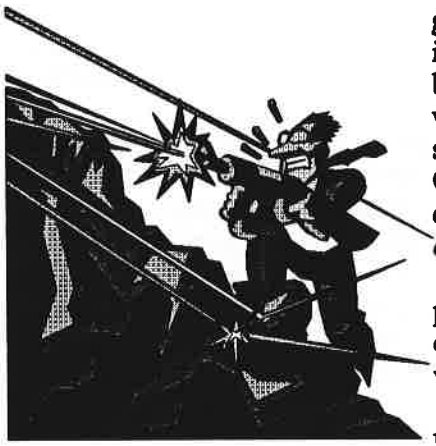
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On Earth Peace

At this time of the year men celebrate the birth of Jesus. This article is not a "Christmas" article, as we realize that we don't know when Christ was born, neither are we commanded to celebrate it as we are to remember his death the first day of each week. The reason for this article is to address a misunderstanding of scripture that is brought up at this time of every year.

This misunderstanding has to do with the promise of the angels to the shepherds when Jesus was born. Look to Luke 2:13-14. *"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."*

Men apparently misunderstand this to mean "no more wars". While this is a grand wish, and a nice thought, it is not what the angels were promising. There have been multitudes of wars upon this earth since the birth of Christ, yet we understand that *"God cannot lie"*, Titus 1:2. So, most emphatically, absence of wars is not what was promised.



No Peace?

The promise that the angels made is much better, and much more personal than mere absence of war. If you'll notice, the phrasing is not (at least in the King James translation) "peace on earth". It reads "*on earth peace*". This phrasing puts a much more personal touch to the promise. Because on earth there can be, and is, peace; in the hearts and in the lives of Christians.

Gal. 5:22-23. "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **PEACE**, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*" And in John 15:5 Jesus points out that if we are abiding in him we will bear this fruit. *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same **BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT**: for without me ye can do nothing."*

It is important to note at this point with whom we have peace.

We will not have peace with the world. In John 15:18-19 Jesus tells us. *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."* If we have peace with the world we need to question our priorities. James 4:4. *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."*

On the other hand, we must have peace among ourselves. Psalms 133:1. *"Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* Hebrews 12:14. *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:"*. (This begs the point to be made that even in the case of the world, **THE WORLD** will choose to be our enemy. We don't do this choosing. We are to forgive and do good to those who choose to be our enemies. See Matt. 5:43-48 and Rom. 12:19-21.)

And here on earth, we are also promised inner peace. Look to I John 3:18-19, *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and **shall ASSURE OUR HEARTS BEFORE HIM**."* Also Phil. 4:6-7, *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

So what if we are not experiencing peace within or with our brethren in Christ? What is it that is preventing peace?



Know Peace!

First of all, our lusts, James 4:1, "*From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they*

not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"

Second, our pride, Prov. 13:10, *"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."* (So even in the case of our lusts referenced above, pride is there as well, interfering with peace.)

What are the things that will promote peace? Let's go back and re-read the promise of the angels to answer this question. Luke 2:14, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* If we will do our part to give and bring glory to God, and show good will ourselves toward men, especially our Brethren, we will have more peace; both within ourselves and within our brotherhood.

Matt. 5:16, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

James 3:17-18, *"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."*

Finally, if you are not yet a Christian, there is no peace without Jesus. Consider the wonder of the blessing that God gave His only Son to be born as a man. He who was above angels became lower than the angels for the suffering of death. Jesus came to this earth to die for you, to forgive you your sins. He is now crowned with glory and honour because of this wonderful mercy, for defeating sin, for destroying Satan, and for overcoming death. Glory to God in the Highest, for He showed peace and good will to you. Will you not partake of His offer of peace with God today?

Matt. 5:9, *"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."*

With love,
Bro. Terry Warford
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Des Moines, WA 98198

Prayer of Believers

Father:

We know from the Holy Spirit of Your word, that the victims of lies are liars, the victims of adultery are adulterers, the victims of abortions are abortionists, the victims of sin are sinners; for they separate themselves from You, who is love, and fill their lives and the world with pain and suffering.

We know, Father, that for these Your Son came and died. We know by Your Light that when we fall short, or fail in Your will, that it is all the more grief to You. For we "by Your love, grace, and power" are not under the deception of the world. We are not dazzled by the twinkle and the sparkle of the one who hovers at the edge of Your Light. We know him for who he is, the "father of lies."

To be outside of Your will, Father, for even a moment, fills us with fear and pain; for You have entered our hearts through Your Son, Jesus Christ; and to be without You in our hearts is to be without our hearts.

So, we ask, Father, that all we do, all we say, all we think, and all we are, be in accordance with Your will; not that we may have glory or the honor of men, but that we may better hold up Your Son, that He will draw all unto Him; and by this glorify You, for you are love, and You are light, and You are truth, and You are justice.

All glory and honor are Yours, forever and ever.

We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

In love of Jesus Christ and the truth,
Brother Kevin C. McDermott
% Lloyd Usrey
4131 Rio Linda Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95838

Cards and Letters



Aloha, OR

Greetings to all the Brotherhood with like precious faith:

It has been some time since we have written. We all look forward to hearing how the other congregations are doing, so we apologize for not keeping up on our condition here in Aloha. All here seem to be doing pretty well concerning our health; spiritually, we are all doing well, also. We still meet for our mid-week Bible Study, and most of us desire to gather as often as we can. We finished our week-long meeting at the end of August. We had a wonderful turnout. Many from the brotherhood came many hundreds of miles to support our meeting. We are all very grateful for all of your support. It was very uplifting to see all the faithful go to such great expense and trouble to support us here. The spiritual and strengthening that was done may only be able to be measured when the Lord calls this world into eternity. I speak for all of us; we thank all the congregations for strengthening us. It was very appropriate timing for all of us.

The congregations that were present were from Bellflower, CA; Chico, CA; Rogue River, OR; Selah, WA; Seattle, WA; and Yakima, WA. Our guest speaker was Mark Perigen, and he truly did a fabulous job of proclaiming God's word. Indeed a true servant of the Most High, Brother Mark is one of the most gifted preachers the church has to offer today. I would encourage all congregations to call on him. Brother Mark is neither ashamed nor afraid to preach the full council of God, and sometimes it is not what we all want to hear. He was used time and time again to convict all of us here of our short-comings, or complicity, or disobedience toward the Good News of Jesus Christ. Thank you, Mark and Tammy, for all you did for us, giving your time and energy to come and proclaim God's word.

We all suffered a terrible loss of the death of Lana Slease. As has been reported, she died in an auto accident. Human language cannot describe the terrible gut-wrenching, soul-vexing, hallowing of a person's spirit when someone we love has left this world. Only if we could put confidence and trust in our Heavenly Father and the "*peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*," and keep focus on the Lord Jesus so that no human loss, or any other kind of loss, will be in vain, but to bring about the purpose that God intended. "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are called according to his purpose*." May the Lord be merciful to her soul. We, here, will never forget her.

We would like to report some good news that we have added to our numbers with the baptism of Jessica Silva, the daughter of Steve and Nancy Silva, November 29th. Like the miracle of birth, it's always amazing to us to see how the Lord adds to his churches. It is indeed a joyous event. We are praising God and praying that she will always remain faithful to God.

Will close for now. Please keep us in your prayers, as you are in ours, that we might all remain faithful to the Lord Jesus.

May the peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all,
For the congregation at Aloha, Oregon.

Baron, OK

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

A few lines to let everyone know how we are doing. We have several sick in our midst, and pray they will soon be better if it be the Lord's will.

We had good attendance this morning with almost a house full. After noon we had services at 2 p.m. Also we had dinner in the kitchen. Brother Paul Andrews and his mother came, and he gave us two very good lessons. We are always happy to have them, and anyone else who can get down our way. We are having some very cold weather; it dropped to zero degrees this morning. A lot of water lines froze up for awhile.

Brother Hugo Denny is having some serious heart problems. We would like to request special prayers from all for him. Also, Brother Doyle Littlejohn of Pleasant View church is having health problems. We would also ask the brethren to pray for him.

We expect Brett, our youngest, home for the holidays. It's been awhile since we have seen him, and he is getting homesick, and we will be glad to have him home for awhile. We've missed him for the past three years, too.

Not much news right now, so I'll sign off for this time with love and prayers to all of the faithful everywhere.

The Baron congregation

Even though the tongue weighs practically nothing, it's surprising how few persons are able to hold it.

Sacramento, CA

My beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

Peace and love be in all of your hearts, and the comfort of the Spirit of God be in your soul. I have been negligent in letting our extended Christian family know how their kinfolk in Sacramento are doing. All are well here, at this time; the flu season seemed to come early this year, and seemed to afflict all of us in various degrees, and lasting between 3 and 4 weeks. Our weather has been unseasonably mild, with temperatures still reaching into the lower 70's, a record low precipitation. We pray that all families were not harmed by the flooding in Washington. [No flooding damage, and only minor damage due to the high wind storm. — Editors]

We have been blessed to have two members added to the body of Christ in the past several months. In November, Roy Bush accepted Jesus Christ and committed his life to following our Lord. Roy and Lisa, and their son Jeremy, have attended Bible study for the past several months, and have started attending Sunday services; a very welcome addition of another young family into His body. Last June (I told you that I was behind in my letter writing), a long-time dear friend, Brother Dave Fredrickson accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour, and took the plunge into a new life. On the 19th of November, Brother Dave gave his second (yes, I said second) lesson, and it seemed that his butterflies were only the size of eagles this time. It is so good to see the body of Christ grow and prosper.

We are blessed to have 6 brothers bringing sermons/lessons/talks; it's getting so a fellow has to travel to get any preaching time in. I love it!!!! We welcome Brother J. D. and Sister Fern Logan back from their visit to the Great Northwest. I miss them when they go — but you have to go where you are called.

Blessings are flowing all around us. Brother Donnie and Sister Kathy Carpenter (baptized in July, 1993, in our swimming pool, then renewed their vows without getting out of the pool — one of those 100° + days) have recently moved back to Sacramento, and have been attending services with their three wonderful children: Jake, Luke, and Jessica. Luke and Jessica have Cystic Fibrosis; please keep these wonderful little children in your prayers. Thank you. Also, my brothers and sisters, please keep these new Christians in your prayers. We know that being a new Christian can be hard.

Prayer is an integral part of our lives as followers of Jesus Christ. Our Brother Kevin McDermott was praying and sent something called the "Prayer of Believers." Please pray, then read and be blessed.

My wife, Sister Debbie, our son Joey, and all the congregation in Sacramento send our love and prayers that blessings from the Father, His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost fill you all in 1996, and on into eternity.

In love of Jesus Christ,
Your brother,
Lloyd S. Usrey

San Diego, CA

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Just a short note to let everyone know that we are doing fine here in San Diego. We are meeting in our home for now, for a lack of a congregation close by. We sure do miss the fellowship of the Port Orchard brothers and sisters. It is hard to go from a congregation that you have been with for years, to just one family. Please keep us in your prayers. We recently had a visit from Barbara's parents, Brother Gene and Sister Pat McKinney. They were here for the Thanksgiving holiday; and we also celebrated a couple of birthdays. We are thankful for their safe return home to Yakima. That's about all the news from our part of the country. We invite any that may be down our way to come and worship with us.

In Christian love,
Brother Rick Carter
3529 Lofberg St.
San Diego, CA 92124
(619) 565-4840

San Pablo, CA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our prayers go out to all the brethren. We are getting our first real rain today. The highways are flooded, and traffic is beyond reason. People sure have short fuses in weather like this; but we do need the rain.

Everyone here is doing fine. We have had visitors off and on: Brother J. D. Logan and Sister Fern Logan; Brother Gerald Brockman and Sister Natalie, and daughters from Oakdale, California, visit us often. I have received a letter from my cousin in Monet, Montana. They were at a meeting in Illinois and found a preacher from Tecumsey, Oklahoma, who worships as we do, and has requested that he receive the ***Christian Courier***. His address is: Jim Prichard, Rt. 4, Box 162, Tecumsey, Oklahoma 74873.

I'm sure that there are other congregations that we don't know of. If there is anyone that any of us knows of that would like to receive the Christian Courier, please let the editors know.

We were blessed when Brother Larry Bever was with us for two or three Lord's Days. We look for his return whenever he can. Also, Sister Pat Freeman has missed some of the services due to illness; however, this Lord's

Day she was in attendance, and we thank the Lord for her, too. Sister Freeman is Brother Louis Glyness' mother. We are thankful for the few that do attend.

Remember us as we do you in our prayers.

In Christian love,

Homer Bryant and family,

San Pablo, California

Yuma, AZ

We are having very mild weather into December, yet many are sick with cold or flu-like illnesses. There has been quite a lot of illness of late. Sister Willie Davis has had quadruple bypass surgery. She is recovering well with some minor complications.

The Thanksgiving meeting at Citrus City was a very enjoyable meeting. Brother Bill McCay did a good job with his lessons, and the attendance was just great. Bill and Veda spent a few days before and after the meeting with us in Yuma. We sure enjoyed their time with us.

Jessica and Sean are the proud parents of a little girl, Alyssa Valrie, born September 24th, weighing in at 5.6 lbs. at birth. Jessica is the eldest daughter to Robert and Valrie Davis. Alyssa is growing and doing well, now weighing 10 lbs.

Joe Davis, our youngest son, called from Show Low, Arizona, and asked to report that Sunday, December 5th, three were baptized: Bonny Lou Hagerty and two daughters, Theresa Rose and Rae Lynn. Please remember all new Christians in your prayers.

Frank and Doris Ridlon, from Aztec, New Mexico, are spending the winter with us; also, Dorothy Calhoun from Aloha, Oregon, is spending some time with us. Bonny Schmitt, from Ohio, is back with us again; and we hope some others may be here yet this winter. It is very enjoyable to have brothers and sisters spend some time with us. The "Bulletin Board" is good in that it gives all the opportunity to personally mention the ones that are ill in their prayers. Ruth Duncan, Willie Davis, and Horace Orendorff from Yuma, and Cliff Schrader from Citrus City, who is very ill.

May God bless and watch over us.

Church of Christ, Avenue B, Yuma, Arizona

Modesto, CA

Just received by phone: Kurt and Jeanine Harper of Modesto, CA, had a baby girl, Emily Augustine Harper, weighing 7.5 lbs. Emily was born at noon on New Year's Eve.

Good Memory Rules

Forget each kindness that you do
as soon as you have done it;

Forget the praise that falls to you
the moment you have won it;

Forget the slander that you hear
before you can repeat it;

Forget each slight, each spite, each sneer,
wherever you may meet it.

Remember every kindness done to you
what'er its measure;

Remember praise by others won
and pass it on with pleasure;

Remember every promise made
and keep it to the letter;

Remember those who lend you aid
and be a grateful debtor;

Remember all the happiness
that comes your way in living;

Forget each worry and distress,
be hopeful and forgiving;

Remember good, remember truth,
remember heaven's above you,

And you will find, thru age and youth,
that many hearts will love you.

— Author unknown

(Reprinted from ***The Christian Courier***, December, 1973, by request)

Precious Memories

***It Is Written*, January, 1956.** Report from Bellflower, CA: Brother Maurice (Bud) Link "boldly renounced digression in a stirring confession ... before the Lord's day morning assembly." Brother L. M. Starnes, Springfield, OR, reported that one person obeyed the gospel during their meeting held by Brother Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, in December, and that young man was now his son-in-law. Brother W. H. Francis, Mangum, OK, wrote that he was called to Texas for the funeral of an elderly Christian, Sister White. Sister Howard Studer, Lorenzo, TX, wrote of the passing of Sister White, a member of the church for 60 years.

***The Christian Courier*, January, 1966.** Brother Don Taylor, Loco, OK, reported that Brother Ken Baldwin held a short meeting at Ringgold, TX, and at Loco, OK; and that Brother Ken wasn't feeling well. Editor's note: Brother Ken was placed in the hospital in Seymour, TX, with another heart attack. He also reported that Sister Studer was just out of the hospital, and was not well. Sister Louisa Parks, Broken Bow, OK, said that she enjoyed the paper very much. Sister Laura Willis, Carlsbad, NM, reported that Brother McCluskey was able to get out and preach again. Brother Willie Doan, Broken Bow, OK, invited others to come and worship with them. Brother J. D. Johnson, Lakeside, CA, reported that Brother George Morris and Brother Ralph Roads bought an acre in Kingman, AZ, and were fixing up a building there to meet in. He also reported that he had a wonderful time at the Delta Camp Meeting. When they got home his son, Louis, was baptized by Brother Dan Greenway. Brother Earl Atchley, Westville, OK, wrote that Brother Baldwin held a combined meeting with Pleasant View and Baron congregations in November, with 6 baptisms: Sharon Clinton, Trudy Brown, Jessie Walkingstick, Gerald Chastine, Denat Spence, and Glenda Cantrell. Brother W. E. Daniels, Stilwell, OK, reported 6 baptisms and one restored; also that Sister Queen was in bed with a heart ailment. Sister John Usrey, Sacramento, CA, wanted to know if there was a loyal church near Santa Barbara, CA. Brother Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, reported that Delma Loveland had surgery on her wrist; Sister Veda McCay was recovering from an operation; Brother and Sister Edge returned to the church after being out of duty for some time; Jim Colvin was baptized in January; and a meeting was planned for mid-June. Brother Ira Brown, Escalon, CA, announced their meeting at Waterford would be in June with Brother Jerry McCay and Brother Richard Johnston. Brother Clyde Couchman, Carlsbad, NM, reported that Sister Willis had been sick, and that Brother and Sister Ken Baldwin had visited them. Report from Bellflower, CA: Olan Taylor's son, Dick, finished serving his time in the military, but their other son, Bill, just started serving in the Air Force at Sheppard Air Base in Texas. Also reported: Dallas Mickey of Cave Junction (baptized January 23rd) was stationed with the Navy at San Diego, CA; Brother Elmer Forsman was stationed with the Navy at Point Mugu, CA; Brother George Meadows was home from the hospital.

***The Christian Courier*, January, 1976.** Brother Clif Brockman, Chico, CA, said they all felt strengthened and encouraged after their meeting with visiting preachers. Report from Glenwood, WA: Most of that congregation attended the Chico, CA, meeting; about 20 people from the Church of Christ in Tacoma had been attending Sunday evening services and occasionally morning services for the past two months, seeking unity between the two congregations; and Brother Robert and Sister Ellen McCay were visiting in Texas. Brother Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, reported on the Delta Camp Meeting; and encouraged others to help support the church paper in submitting articles, letters, and financially. Brother Mike McCay, Yakima, WA, reported on the birth of Tara Lynn, November 20th, to Brother Dan and Sister Alyce Ross; and Brother Bill McCay held a meeting in Peoria, AZ, in December.

***The Christian Courier*, January, 1986.** Brother Billy Richardson, Furnish Canyon, OK, announced the birth of Jessica Dawn Wiggins to Brother Matt and Sister Tonnie Wiggins, November 8th; also, Sister Francis had been unable to attend services. Brother Gerald Buckner, Stilwell, OK, reported that Brother Hays Morris had gotten out of the hospital, and had passed away November 19th, at 84 years of age. Brother Dan Teague, Duncanville, TX, wrote that he enjoyed the church paper. Brother Bill McCay, Yakima, WA, reported on the meeting in Yuma, AZ; Brother Richard and Sister Monica Johnston's daughter, Jessica, received bumps, bruises, and a concussion when she was struck by a car; and David McCay was baptized in Lorenzo, TX.

The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that our aim is too low and we reach it.

BULLETIN BOARD

Meetings

June 16-23, 1996	Lorenzo, TX	Mike Geho
June 29-July 8, 1996	Cedaredge, CO	Camp Meeting

Births

Alyssa Valrie	Yuma, AZ	Sept. 24, 1995; 5.6 lbs.
Emily Augustine Harper	Modesto, CA	Dec. 31, 1995; 7.5 lbs.

Baptisms

Dave Fredrickson	Sacramento, CA	June, 1995
Roy Bush	Sacramento, CA	Nov., 1995
Jessica Silva	Aloha, OR	Nov. 29, 1995
Bonny Lou Hagerty	Yuma, AZ	Dec. 5. 1995
Theresa Rose Hagerty	Yuma, AZ	Dec. 5, 1995
Rae Lynn Haggerty	Yuma, AZ	Dec. 5, 1995

Prayer of Faith for those in need

Hugo Denny	Baron, OK	Serious heart problems
Sloan Vanderpool	Bohannan Mt., AR	Broken back
Erelene Chessman	Bellflower, CA	Fighting cancer
Vincent Johnson	Bellflower, CA	Confined to wheelchair
Larissa Smith	Comanche, OK	Heart problems & age
Oren Johnston	Mt. Vernon, WA	Needing heart surgery
Doyle Littlejohn	Pleasant View, OK	Health problems
Luke Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Jessica Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Kathern Ann	San Pablo, CA	Diabetes
Jerry Barker	Stilwell, OK	Leukemia
Cliff Schrader	Yuma, AZ	Very ill
Horace Orendorff	Yuma, AZ	Very ill
Ruth Duncan	Yuma, AZ	Back pain
Willie Davis	Yuma, AZ	Quadruple bypass surgery

Our ongoing and continual prayers are also for those of you who we are not aware of by name, but have needs of various kinds. We would entreat the Lord's blessings on each of you as well.