The Christian Courier

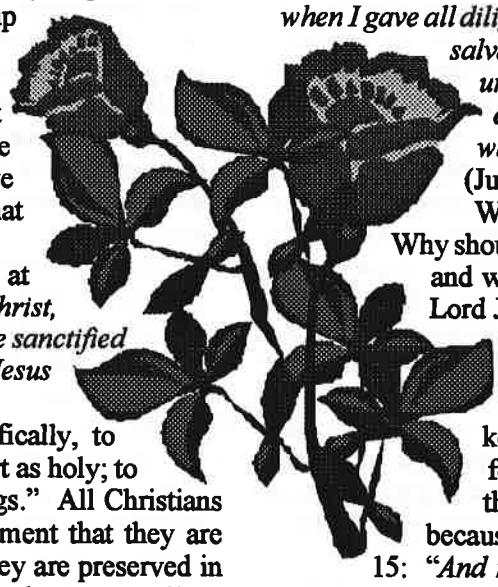
February, 1997

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Writers are responsible for their own articles.

Ring Around the Roses, Pocket Full of Posies, Ashes, Ashes, All Fall Down...

There is a question I would like to ask, and that is, Do you want God on your side? Do you want Jesus on your side? We may think that this is a silly question. Sure, I want God and our Saviour on my side.

Webster says, ABIDE means "to stand fast, remain, to go on being. To stay, to reside with, to put up with ..." I like that last meaning, "To put up with." Yes, even if we disagree with God's Word, we must always put up with what He teaches. That may not sound correct, but if we do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, then we have neither the Father or the Son. Al that remains is death.



In the study of Jude, let us begin at verse 1: *"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:"*

Sanctified: "Made holy; specifically, to make free from sin; purified, set apart as holy; to make productive of spiritual blessings." All Christians are sanctified by God, the very moment that they are baptized into the body of Christ. They are preserved in Jesus Christ. Preserved: "kept from harm, or evil, to keep up, maintained, to protect ..." (Read John 17:11-15). As long as we abide in the Gospel of Christ, we are sanctified, preserved, protected, kept from harm, kept from evil, or the effects of evil. We are given a way of escape from temptations. We are called. God has called upon us through Jesus Christ to come and be a part of His kingdom, part of His work force; whatever the word means to you, called for, called out, called upon, "... *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* (Matt. 11:28-30).

When we are called, we have mercy and peace multiplied. Not just in small amounts, but multiplied. Therefore, we must continue to contend for the faith. *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."* (Jude 1:3; read also Phil. 1:27).

Why? Why does God do all this for us? Why should we be sanctified, preserved, called, and warned to abide in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Before we get into the why of it all, beginning in verse 4 of Jude, how are we kept? Does God just zap us, and keep us regardless of how we live before Him? No, we know that this is not the way God keeps us. He keeps us because of what Jesus said in John 17:11, 12, 15: *"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. ... I pray not that thou shouldest take them our of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."*

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is

he which received seed by the way side." (Matt. 13:19). Is the evil one going to jump out and grab us? No. The seed by the wayside was caught up by Satan because the Word of God was not understood. Note verse 20 says, *"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;"* There is a fine line drawn here between hearing and receiving the Word. Many hear the Word without hearing it, that is receiving it. There has to be the acceptance of the power of God in order to be able to accept His Word. (Read I Pet. 1:5).

Acceptance is our part of God keeping us from evil.

Now to the WHY of it all. Why does God want to preserve, sanctify, keep and call us to salvation? Why does He warn us to abide in the doctrine of Christ? *"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Jude 1:4). Read also II Pet. 2:1-9. Can God take care of unbelievers as well as believers? Jude 1:5, *"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."* How many died in the wilderness? 600,000 not including children (Exo. 12:37).

By way of illustration, in 1664 England lost 31,000 people in one day to what was known as the Bubonic Plague, brought on by a disease called Bubo which causes the swelling of the lymph gland. Bubonic: "A fatal disease of chills and fever, prostration and delirium, caused by fleas from infected rats."

This is an illustration of sin brought on by the smallest infraction against God's Word. The problem was the disease was curable, but they didn't know how to cure it. The doctors would take groups of people out to a rose garden and they would join hands and walk around the rose bushes. Thinking that it was something in the air that caused the disease, they breathed in the fragrance of the roses. For those who were too ill to do that, the doctor would fill his pockets full of the petals and spread them around the sickroom. He would also burn the petals, and let the patient breath the ash dust, thinking that would cure them; but nothing worked. 31,000 people died in one day. Today, people are dying spiritually because the so-called preachers are spreading rose petals of false doctrine, which have no cure at all. Their pockets are full of posies. Yet, all are headed for damnation, simply because they do not have the proper cure for the disease. There came out of England in those days a game that children play today. When one of the grave workers was removing bodies, he was heard saying, "Ring around the roses, pocket full of posies, ashes, ashes, all fall down."

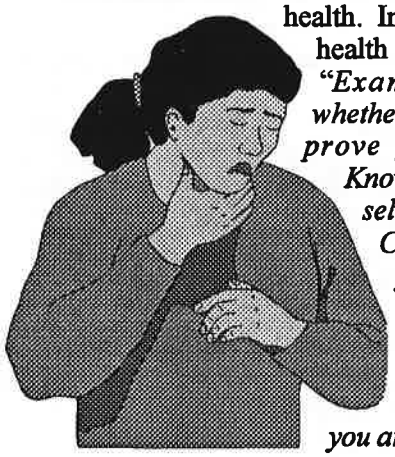
The world is still preaching a pocket full of posies today. Their messages have no cure for the ailing, only Jesus Christ, the Great Healer, has the answer; only the Word of God has the cure for the deadly sin that is in the world today. All we have to do is to get rid of the infestation of sin; just like they should have gotten rid of the rats that carried the fleas, and stopped discarding garbage in the streets which fed the rats. Not a pretty subject, is it? Well, neither is sin a pretty subject. Let us go back to verse 5 of Jude, and read through verse 19 to see what God has to say about how sin can corrupt the Christian, and ruin his work of love.

Jude 1:5-19, *"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deed which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having mens persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."*

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Examine Yourselves (II Cor. 13:5)

We are well advised to undergo a physical examination regularly for reasons of health. Often we discover a disorder, otherwise unknown, that can be threatening to life. Discovered in time, the proper measures can be employed to rectify the problem and insure future good health. Self-examination is a very important part of good health. In the case of spiritual health it is vital. Paul said, *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"* (II Cor, 13:5) The NAS Translation puts it thus, *"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!"*



Doctors who examine patients have standard medical texts against which they compare symptoms. Self-examination necessitates a standard by which we can compare ourselves. This standard is the gospel, composed of the words of Christ and His apostles. (John 12:18; 14:26). What Paul is saying in our text is that we must test ourselves against the gospel, the Word of God. Paul further said in Rom. 1:16, *"... I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. I see it as the power of God working for the salvation of everyone who believes it."* (Phillips).

A Great Need

We understand the necessity of self-examination, and also the need of safe guide, the Gospel. One thing further is necessary, the need to focus. We need to direct our attention to any specific problem(s) that my be brought to light through examination "... *all things that are reproved* (exposed) *are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."* (Eph. 5:13). Let us focus the light of the Gospel of Christ as revealed in His Word!

Be Followers of Me

Note the words of the Spirit according to Paul, *"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."* (Phil. 3:17). We are, thus, directed to follow Paul's example in all walks of our Christian life. To further focus one practice of Paul, let us notice his practice of congregational attendance.

What was his practice?

On all occasions, when physically possible, Paul never failed to be assembled with the church. One needs only to read of his missionary journeys to observe this fact (See Acts 15th to 20th chapters). As a matter of fact, he and his companions PLANNED their journeys so as to visit the congregations along the way. "... *Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."* (Acts 15:36). *"And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."* (Acts 16:5).

Where could one expect to find a better example to follow in matters of congregational attendance?

Our public worship is congregational. The very nature of the word means to come together, to assemble. We are further commanded to "*tarry one for another*." (I Cor. 11:34). This implies that we are to have an appointed time and all be together for worship. In this instance, Paul was discussing the Lord's Supper.

Paul never forsook assembling with a Christian congregation. He commanded, likewise, that we should not forsake this assembly. *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; ..."* (Heb. 10:25).

It seems that some, even in Paul's day were abandoning the assembly of the congregation. Paul was warning us of the consequences of such actions. Continuing his thought, he warns, *"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation..."* (vs. 26-27). Not a very pretty picture for those who abandon the assembly of the congregation! Compare this dedication to God's Word by Paul and most early Christians to what we see today. It seems to be quite common today that Christians will ignore attendance of the church for their own pleasure. That we should plan trips, vacations, etc., while excluding assembling with the church should be unthinkable to a Christian.

Priorities

This practice puts Christ and His church second, while our own pleasure and activities are placed foremost. This is contrary to Christ's teaching in Matt. 6:33 "... *seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ..."*

Which comes first? our desires, or the Lord's? Jesus taught "... *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."* (Matt. 16:24). Note the order of sequence:

(1). deny himself

(2). take up his cross
(3). follow me

Brethren, if our own plans and desires conflict with our congregational duties, which should predominate? Where are our priorities?

Leaders

Those who are leaders of the congregations have special duty, above and beyond that of ordinary members. Paul warned *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God ..."* (Acts 20:28). *"... grievous wolves* (shall) *enter in among you, not sparing the flock."* (vs. 29). *"... of you own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."* (vs. 30).

If this is not enough, special attention should be given to the words of Peter, *"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder..."* (I Pet. 5:1). *"Feed the flock which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder ..."* (vs. 3).

This should be humbling to anyone who has charge of the direction of the flock (congregation). If the leaders neglect the assembly of the church, how can they direct the followers to be faithful?

Will A Man Rob God?

If we put ourselves and our desires ahead of the Lord's, we are in reality robbing God of His proper due. The prophet Malachi asked, *"Will a man rob God?"* He accused Israel of robbing Him! Yet *"ye have robbed me."* Israel asked, *"... Wherein have we robbed thee?"* Gods answer, *"In tithes and offerings."* (Mal. 3:8-9). God had provided for Israel a super-abundance of blessings: protection, land, cities, etc., but they had ungratefully robbed God of the small amount He had required of them!

Israel's sacrifices were to be without blemish (Lev. 22:21). Blind, crippled, sick or otherwise inferior animals were not acceptable. If God's sacrifices were withheld, or if unacceptable animals were offered, God was being robbed. Likewise today, if we withhold our service to God, or put our needs and desires before God's, we are robbing God!

We have a great need today in the church for good examples. Our words will have little or no effect on the world if unaccompanied by an exemplary life.

"Let your light so shine ..."

Your brother in Christ,
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Fellowship

Definition: "companionship, partnership, joint interest, association of persons on a basis of familiar tastes."



Sometimes we get so caught up in the things of this life that we have a tendency to forget the important things for Christians; and we have a tendency to let them slip and forget the admonition to give heed (pay attention) to the things which we have heard (Heb. 2:1). Acts 2:42, in speaking of the early Christians, tells us that they *"... continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."* People, more and more, seem to think that the most important thing is the communion, and have a tendency to let the rest of the admonition slide. If we have fellowship once a week, is that enough? 1 Cor. 15:58, *"... be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ..."* (not just the Lord's Day morning).

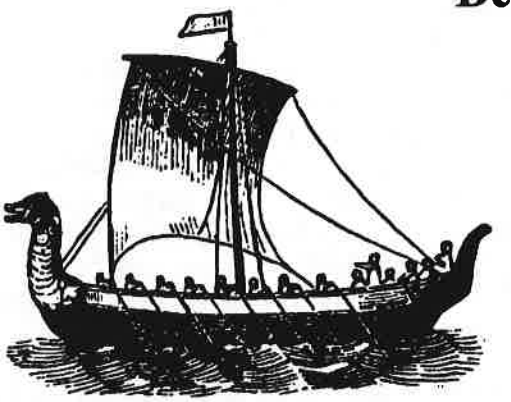
Stedfast (Strong's *4342*): "Persevere, to be constantly diligent, to attend assiduously <u>all</u> the exercises." To be constantly diligent! It seems to me that <u>all</u> the services of the church are very important. If we have fellowship once a week, is this enough? See again the definition. Is our interest in the things of the Lord, or of the world? Titus 2:14 tells us to be zealous of <u>good works</u>, the <u>Lord's work</u>; this does not mean just once in awhile, I'm afraid, brethren. If we should show the same zeal toward our earthly jobs that we do for the Lord's, we would be fired.

Is the Lord going to accept just part-time Christians, or full-time? This is not for me to say, but I do believe that we should give this <u>very</u> serious thought, lest we be found wanting in the Day of Judgment.

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The Travels of Paul: Fourth Journey

Defense Before Felix





Five days after Governor Felix had Paul put in custody in Herod's castle to await a hearing, Ananias, the high priest, along with Tertullus (an orator), and other Jewish elders arrived to make an accusation against Paul (Acts 24:1-2). Having failed to destroy Paul as a mob and with forty conspirators, the Jewish elders then tried another approach. They decided to attempt to accomplish their means with oratory. Tertullus tried his mercenary best to flatter the judge (vs. 3-4).

He then painted Paul as being (1) a pest, (2) an insurrectionist, (3) a mercenary from a sect of the Nazarenes, and (4) one who had attempted to profane the temple (vs. 4-8). All of these charges except number 3 were unspecific, and even it was unsupported by any evidence, whatever. The case for Tertullus was actually pretty weak. They didn't even have any of their witnesses present. He suggested that Paul be examined by the court to verify the things they said were true. This, of course, meant scourging. The rest of the Jews joined in the charge, hoping for an examination of Paul (vs. 9). Perhaps they were unaware of the letter sent by Claudius stating that Paul was a Roman.

The governor then beckoned for Paul to speak (vs. 10). Acknowledging this, Paul said that he was glad to make his defense. He indicated that he had only been in Jerusalem twelve days, which could be proven (vs. 11). The implication is that nobody could form an insurrection in such a short time. His purpose for going to Jerusalem was for worship, not to cause trouble. He stated that while he was in the temple he was not even disputing with anyone or attempting to stir up a crowd (vs. 12), and that his accusers could not prove that he had (vs. 13).

Paul stated that he served the God of their fathers, and that he believed everything according to the law written by the prophets (vs. 14), and that he had a hope toward God and the resurrection of the just and the unjust (vs. 15), and that he had a conscience void of offense toward God and men (vs. 16). He also stated that he had been away from Jerusalem for some years (perhaps five years), and had returned to bring alms to his nation (Christians), and when they found him in the temple he had been purified, which he could prove (vs. 17-18). He did not come there with a crowd to cause a tumult.

Paul claimed that there were Jews from Asia that should have been at the trial, for they were the ones who initiated an accusation against him (vs. 18-19). He said even when he stood before them at the council in Jerusalem there was no agreement that he had done anything wrong (vs. 20-21). The whole case that the Jews had came crashing to the ground. They had already tried Paul at the Sanhedrin, and could come up with no verdict against him there.

Felix decided to await his decision until Lysias, the chief captain, came down for a conference (vs. 22). Meanwhile, Paul was to be allowed certain freedoms, which included his friends coming to visit him (vs. 23). Two years passed without Lysias ever coming (vs. 27).

During this time Paul had opportunity to speak to Felix and his wife Drusilla about Jesus Christ (vs. 24). Felix had hoped for a bribe from Paul, but instead got the Word of God (vs. 26). He became terrified, for he knew Paul spoke the truth (vs. 25), and told Paul, "... *Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*" There is nothing to indicate that "convenient day" ever came.

After the two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus (vs. 27). History tells us that Felix actually despised the Jews, and had led his troops to the slaughter of many of them. This was the cause of his removal from office by his brother Pallas. Festus, however, wanted to show the Jews he was in their favor, so he left Paul in bonds. Josephus, the historian, says that Festus reigned for two years before his death.

Next: Defense Before Festus

Written in love of the truth.

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What to DO With the Fear of the Lord

The fear of the Lord should inspire us to action. Phil. 2:12 shows us this. *"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work** out your own salvation with fear and trembling."*

Heb 4:1 tells us to fear to enter into that heavenly rest.



*"Let us therefore **fear**, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."* Connect that thought to verse 11, which tells us to labor to enter that heavenly rest. *"Let us **labour** therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."* So the fear of the Lord does not lead to inactivity; it leads to labour, so that we may have that heavenly rest at the end of time.

What kind of labor? Let's look at a few specific works the Bible shows are inspired by the fear of God.

First of all, we receive instruction by the fear of the Lord. Psa. 34:11 says. *"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord."* (An interesting side note. The instructions the writer gives in the next few verses are repeated by Peter in I Pet. 3:10-12.) Psa. 111:10. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."* Prov. 1:7. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."* Prov. 15:32-33. *"He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility."*

Not only do we show humility before God in receiving instruction by the fear of Him; we also show humility toward each other by the fear of Him. Eph. 5:21. *"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*

We also reach out to the lost because of the fear of God. Jesus tells us so in Matt. 10:27-28. *"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* Notice Jesus said we do not fear those we are preaching to. We fear Him whom we are preaching about.

Last, the main point of the first article on the fear of God, we depart from evil by the fear of the Lord. II Cor. 7:1. *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* Prov. 3:7. *"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil."* Prov. 16:6. *"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and **by** the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."*

I hope this series of studies has been profitable to all. It was part of a lesson (the other part on the fear of man) that I could not make into one single article. So I simply split it up by main points. I hope it helped you.

Please remember this if nothing else. When the Bible speaks of the fear of God it means just that. Don't water it down in your mind to simply honouring him. It says fear, and it means fear. Psa. 119:120. *"My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments."*

Eccl. 12:13-14. *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."*

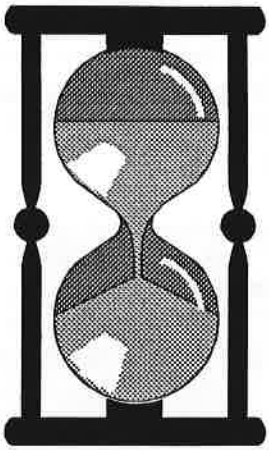
In Christian love,
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Stewardship

1 Corinthians 4:1 tells us to be "stewards of the mysteries of God." If you have ever been on a ship, you know what a ship's steward is. Or, if you have ever been on an airplane, you know what a steward or stewardess is. That person does not own the airplane or anything on the plane. The company owns everything, but he or she is entrusted with its care. That steward has been given the responsibility of taking the goods that belong to a higher authority and dispensing it to the people for their benefit. That is a steward — on an airplane or a ship — and in the spiritual realm as well.

Precious Memories

***It Is Written,* January, 1957.** Brother J. C. Whitley, Furnish Canyon, CO, and Brother Frank Brown, Honeyhill, OK, wrote that they enjoyed the church paper very much, and each sent a check for use in its publication.



Brother J. W. Beddingfield reported on the Somerton and Yuma, AZ, meetings and the passing of Brother C. D. Stewart, of Somerton. Brother Harry Davis, Somerton, AZ, mentioned that a number of their members had been sick or had undergone an operation: Sister Dye was very ill after an operation, and Brother Charlie Parsons was improving from an operation. Brother Willie Doan, Broken Bow, OK, reported that his mother had to have her leg amputated, and asked for the prayers of the brotherhood. Brother J. D. Johnson, Lakeside, CA, gave the address of their meeting place, and invited others to come and worship with them. A letter from Carlsbad, NM, told of Brother W. E. Daniels meeting. Brother R. H. Peel, Crosbyton, TX, mentioned that they had a number of visitors. Brother A. H. Howell, Elk City, OK, wrote that he had visited the Lorenzo, TX, congregation.

***The Christian Courier,* January 1967.** No file copy exists. (Anyone have a copy for our files?)

***The Christian Courier,* January, 1977.** Brother Horace Orendorff, Yuma, AZ, announced that Willard McLear was baptized, married Sister Nora Prinke, then moved to San Pablo, CA; also the baptisms of Eva and John Givens; the illnesses of Sister Joyce Morris, Brother and Sister Davis, and Brother Harry Dye; and Brother Horace Orendorff's meeting to be held in July at Baron, OK. Brother Claude Perigen, Bellflower, CA, wrote about their visit to the meeting at Chico, CA. Glenwood, WA, indicated that they planned on having Brother Sammy Boen hold their meeting in June. Brother James Brown, Baron, OK, noted that Brother Hayse Morris had been quite ill, and had spent quite a bit of time in the hospital. He also announced their meeting in July with Brother Horace Orendorff. Also included was the birth of Joshua James Jared to Perry and Kristen Jared of Yakima, WA, on January 14th.

***The Christian Courier,* January 1987.** Brother J. D. Usrey, Sacramento, CA, stated their meeting time, and invited others to come and visit them. Lorenzo, TX, announced the marriage of Brother David McCay to Sister Sheila Forsman on October 11th. Also mentioned was the move by Brother Willie Howe and family to Dallas, TX; and Brother Earl Howe's heart attack. Brother Ken Harper, Penn Valley, CA, listed their visitors, and mentioned that they looked forward to the 1987 Delta Camp Meeting.

***It Is Written,* February, 1957.** Brother J. W. Bedingfield wrote memorials on Brother Clause E. Scott of Lorenzo, TX, and Sister Bessie Dye of Somerton, AZ. Brother J. S. Bedingfield announced the baptism of Clarence Baker of Bryte, CA. Brother W. E. Daniels, Broken Bow, OK, noted that he visited the congregations at Lorenzo, TX; Carlsbad, NM; and Peck, Kansas. He baptized one person while at Peck. Brother J. C. Spurlin, Reydon, OK, wrote that he had baptized two young people while visiting the congregation at Oklahoma City, OK. Brother Frank Brown, Honeyhill, OK, reported that Brother Mack Buckner was back with them again. Brother Horace Orendorff, Yuma, AZ, mentioned that they were now having Sunday evening services, and having splendid cooperation with the younger brethren. Brother Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, proclaimed a successful meeting with Brother Francis. Brother H. L. Brown, North Highlands, CA, announced that they have a new congregation there.

***The Christian Courier*, February, 1967.** Brother Claude Perigen, Bellflower, CA, reported on visits from Sister Cadwell from Modesto, CA, and Brother Al Davies from Long Beach, CA. He also mentioned attending the meeting at Somerton, AZ. Brother J. C. Whitley, Kenton, OK, indicated that they were a small group, and would be glad if others would stop by. Brother J. H. Lackey, Springfield, CO, reported that they were having some difficulty with the individual cups brethren. Brother W. A. Nelson, Somerton, AZ, listed the visitors of their weekend meeting. Brother Ken Baldwin, Happy Hollow, CO, announced the dates for the Delta Camp Meeting. Brother Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, reported that they had a good meeting with Brother Ken Baldwin. Gene Phillips and Jimmy Lamb were baptized during the meeting. He also included that his home had been extensively damaged by a fire.

***The Christian Courier*, February, 1977.** Brother Steve Spurlin wrote that he enjoyed attending the Chico, CA, meeting. Brother Earl Broadway, Yuma, AZ, reported that they were glad to have Brother Ken Baldwin there for a visit; and that the young brothers in the congregation were doing well. Brother Lloyd Treat, Broken Bow, OK, announced their meeting in June with Brother Jack White of Munday, TX. Brother

Howard McCay, Yakima, WA, reported that they had heard from quite a number of people who were making plans to attend their meeting in June. He also announced the baptisms of John and Debbie Randolph.

***The Christian Courier*, February, 1987.** A letter from the Oklahoma City congregation introduced us to Sister Wood and Sister Bessie Burgess, two long-time members of that congregation. Brother Ken Williams, Waterford, CA, reported that Sister Vivian Baker was recovering from surgery; that Sister Lottie Shaw had lost her grandson in a violent crime; and that he had attended the marriage of Barbara McKinney and Rick Carter in Antioch, CA. Brother Paul Andrews, Goshen, AR, wrote that his grandmother, Sister Lue Lawson, 92, had passed away; that his Dad, Brother Buren Andrews, was admitted to the hospital with double pneumonia; and announced the date of their meeting in June with Brother Howard Taylor. Sister Kathy Treat, Broken Bow, OK, reported the passing of her grandmother, Sister Louisa Parks, 99. She also mentioned that while Brother Howard McCay was by there visiting for just a day, they talked him into staying and holding a week-long meeting, before traveling on. Report from the congregation in Seattle, WA, was that the Forsman's were in the process of moving to a new home where there was another building they could use for worship services. Sister Verda Nelson wrote a loving memory of her husband, Brother Bill Nelson, who passed away February 1st.

Life's Book

No matter what else you are doing
From cradle days through to the end,
You are writing your life's secret story —
Each day sees another page penned.

Each month ends a thirty-page chapter,
Each year means the end of a part —
And never an act is misstated
Or even one wish of the heart.

Each day when you wake, the book opens,
Revealing a page clean and white —
What thoughts and what words and what doings
Will cover its pages by night?

God leaves that to you — you're the write —
And never a word shall grow dim,
Till the day you write the word Finish
And give your Life's Book back to Him.

— Author unknown

Cards and Letters



Cedaredge, CO

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends,

Be sure to mark your 1997 calendars for the Colorado Camp Meeting, June 28th - July 6th. All are welcome, and all are invited. We will write more about the camp meeting next month. Make your New Year's resolution now to be here with us.

Movelle (Mae) Wilkerson has been visiting her daughter and family, Pam and Skip Berry in Canton, GA. We welcome her home. Sister Pam is not feeling well, so let's all remember her in our prayers.

Also, Sister Debbie Wilkerson had a heart attack December 27th, and was in the hospital quite some time. She is home now and doing pretty good. She has to take it easy and not do anything. Let's all remember her in our prayers.

We have all had colds, etc., but most of us are able to be at church on Lord's Day.

Anyone wishing to write or send cards to Sister Debbie, her address is P.O. Box 1135, Cedaredge, CO 81413.

Sister Pam's address is 675 Page Place, Canton, GA 30114.

Both sisters would enjoy hearing from you.

God bless all of you

From Happy Hollow

P.O. Box 663

Cedaredge, CO 81413

Comanche, OK

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We at the Country Side Church of Christ in Comanche, Oklahoma, have some sad news and some wonderful news to share.

Our sad news is that we lost our dear Sister Larrissa Smith on January 30, 1997. She was born on July 29, 1905, and went to her eternal rest on January 30, 1997, at the age of ninety-one years, six months, and one day. She was called away after a struggle of several years with heart problems and diabetes. For the past few years she had been almost blind, but knew us all by our voices.

Sister Smith was an inspiration to all of us that knew her. She always had a hug and a kind word for everyone. When she knew of someone ill, she wanted to know how they were doing, whether in the church or not. She was very proud of her family, often carrying a photograph of a grandchild or great-grandchild for us to see. She wasn't able to see it, but she wanted to share with all of us.

This fine lady could talk the Bible with anyone, and uphold the truth. She and her son, Roy, came 100 miles round trip to be at church. Her mind remained sharp, and she fought a good fight to the end. We are all going to miss her very much. She was the true epitome of a Christian lady.

We have some really exciting news to share, too. During the month of December our little congregation almost doubled in size. We went from fourteen to twenty-five, and have had two baptisms. On January 5th I baptized Carol Roland, and on January 8th Howard baptized Amber Jones. Carol and Teresa had become friends at work, and after some discussion and study, came to us in December with her husband and daughter. Amber is, as most know, the daughter of Brother Richard and Sister Karla Jones.

We are very proud to have growth in our little congregation. It seems rare to find anyone who is interested in hearing the whole truth. Please join us in thanking our heavenly Father for all our blessings and our new sisters in Christ, and pray for us to be good examples to them.

In Christian love,

Audley Barnes

For the Country Side Church of Christ, Comanche, OK

Goshen, AR

Dear Christian Friends,

In the December Courier we put out a plea for the Daniels family in Elkins, Arkansas, due to Melvin Daniels' heart surgery, so many hospital visits, and mounting bills.

Well, I wanted all of you Christian brothers and sisters and the churches who responded to know that the response was overwhelming. Thank God that there are people like you in the Church of Christ who truly care for their fellow Christian brothers and sisters. It was so heart-warming to know and feel such wonderful love. He does say we are to prefer each other, and it was truly shown by all the financial help that came to Elkins for the Daniels family. Once again, from the bottom of my heart, thank you.

God bless and keep you all safe. Please remember the sick in our prayers, and don't let up on striving for that home in heaven.

Sister Mary Serrano

Goshen Church of Christ.

Elkins, AR

Dear Christian Brothers and Sisters,

We openly praise the Lord for His family and the love that so many have shown in the many cards, gifts, phone calls, and visits during the last two months, from November 2nd until the present time; also the many prayers.

Your gifts to help with our daily needs will long be remembered not only by us, but by our Lord and Saviour.

I won't mention the churches by name, as they were many, 15 I believe. You each know what you did, and God knows. Thank you.

Melvin is improving, and he has received his first Social Security check, so we are going to be ok. I have been able to return to part-time house cleaning to supplement his check.

Our dear brothers and sisters, please pray for us, as we do you.

Some very sad news just as Melvin is improving, our dear Brother James Vanderpool, also of Bohannan Mt. congregation, will be undergoing heart surgery shortly after January 6, 1997, to replace a valve he had put in 10 1/2 years ago. He needs your prayers now. Goshen's Brother Love helped conduct services and also Brother Marvin Daniels all during these long six months. We are thankful for them.

Brother & Sister Daniels
170 Oneal Ln
Elkins, AR 72727

San Pablo, CA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Here it is close to another year. Sure are passing by faster and faster. The congregation here in San Pablo, CA has had many visitors, and we are thankful for their presence. On December 15, we had Brother Gerald, and Sister Natalie Brockman, with their girls, Monica and Heather. Brother Gerald gave us a sermon on "Where Could I Go But To The Lord", which was very timely. Mark and Tammy Perigen also were here with Stephen, Kayla, Chelsea and their new baby. Eric and Lillian Smith were here with Garret, Levi, and Alecia.

There were 31 in attendance. What a blessing it is to have almost a full house. Also the ladies prepared a wonderful meal after services, which we all enjoyed. But most of all we enjoyed having each and every one here so we could enjoy the wonderful fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Sunday before, we had a brother come forward for the prayers of church. Brother Tony Clem, Sister Melody Glynnell's brother. We know that angels in heaven rejoiced over one who has come repenting of his sins. Brother Tony was shot some time ago and everyone thought he would not survive. He said that he prayed that God would not let him die, even though he had no pulse or heart beat. God does answer prayers doesn't he Tony?

Let us all remember that when we pray for others, like Brother and Sister Daniels of Elkins, OK who need our prayers for recovery and for finances. Let us all help with what ever we can, those who need help and who need healing. May God bless each and every one of the household of faith.

In Christian love,
San Pablo, CA congregation

Sea-Tac, WA

Dear ones in Christ,

As many of you know we had one of our worst storms this winter, with much snow, freezing rain, cold, then rapid warming causing many floods. Everywhere one looked there were trees with broken branches, and quite a number of buildings where the roofs had collapsed from the heavy snow and ice. Lots of the Seattle area was without power up to several days. In one two-mile stretch of road I saw power lines down in about two dozen places because of fallen trees or branches, and two barn roofs collapsed. We had a lot of surface water running down our driveway, but our buildings were all right. Our next-door neighbor was not so fortunate; he came home from the holidays to find 3 1/2 feet of water in his basement. Many homes were damaged from mud slides. Nearly everyone at work talked about their own personal experiences with the storm.

Although we were not without power, a number of the members here were. With all of the power lines going down, those who still had power had problems with the power surges. My computer which has all of the *Courier* database and publishing data on it took a terrible beating. Although it was off and connected to a surge protector, it sustained a lot of damage from power surges. It is still not completely fixed, but the motherboard, I/O controller card, both hard drives, sound card, CD-ROM, floppy drive, video card, and monitor were all severely damaged. The computer shop where I took my computer said they had been flooded with damaged computers, and that mine was the worst hit of any they had seen. This explains why the January issue did not get out, and the lateness of the February issue.

Most everyone here is doing pretty good, except for the usual winter illnesses. Brother Garold Morris, who is fighting cancer, hasn't been feeling very well. Please remember him in your prayers, along with Brother Howard McCay.

One of the occasional daycare children, Ashley Larson, age 8 1/2, has been diagnosed with cancer. She and her brother Kyle has gone to church periodically. Her family has requested prayers on her behalf.

We were happy to have recent visits from Brother Erik, Sister Lori Harper and family from Sacramento, CA; and Brother Matthew, Sister Kelly Shepherd and family from Vancouver, Wash., as well as others. It's always a pleasure to have them with us. Normally, it's a 12 hour drive for the Harpers, but because of the storm and mud slides it took them almost two days to get back home.

In Christian love,
Ellis Forsman
For the Sea-Tac Church of Christ

Show Low, AZ

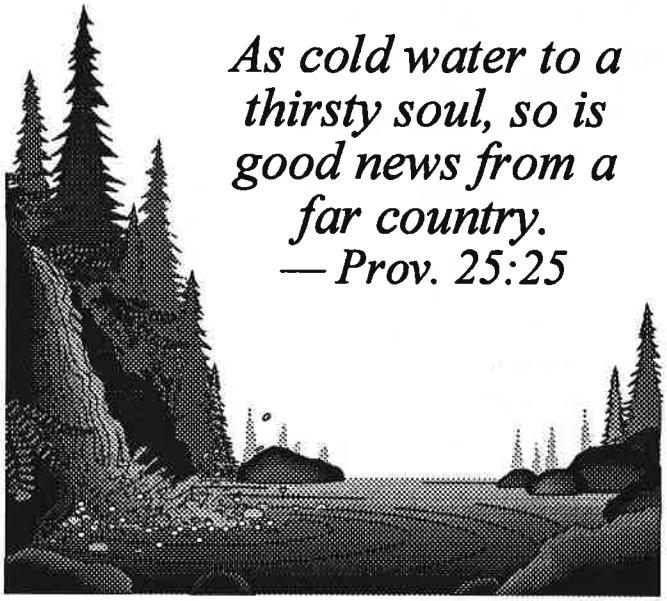
Greetings from the Body in Show Low,

We are doing very well here. We were pretty much snowed in for a couple of days. In fact, Diane and Bonnie missed a day of work. My boss wouldn't let me miss. He put snow chains on his four-wheel drive vehicle and came after me. So, I have spent the last couple of weeks moving snow out from under the wheels of my work truck. But I do thank God for the snow, for it is so beautiful, and it is refreshing for a thirsty land.

We have hundreds of elk all around where we live looking for food, so we have to keep our eyes open at night for elk on the road.

Everybody here is in good health, so that gives us more time to pray for others who do have problems, so we watch in the paper for those in need. We can still always use your prayers that we can be strong in the Lord and always be ready for His return.

God be merciful, and give us wisdom.
We send our love.
Joseph Davis
RR 2, Box 22034
Show Low, AZ 85901



Yuma, AZ

A bit of news from Yuma,

Most here are doing well, but some are still experiencing problems. Brother Horace Orendorff is still not able to get around very well. Brother Dean Heck had surgery on his right shoulder, and has paralysis on his left side. He had some very difficult times, but is recovering well. His mother, Sible, and wife, Billie, have both been under the weather, also. Sister Ruth Duncan has been back to the Mayo Clinic, and is scheduled back again soon. Otherwise, colds and flu have made their way around with most everyone. Also, Sister Donna Beach is to have surgery on her mouth in February.

We have been hearing of the severe weather some of you have been having. We pray for your safety and well-being. Our weather here is not too bad, a few cool mornings.

This is most of the news from here. We are continuing in the faith and pray that all others are likewise being strong.

With best wishes and prayers,
The Yuma congregation

Old or New Testament People?

Elijah	**Hannah**
Zaccheus	**Samson**
Cornelius	**Thomas**
Jonathan	**Naaman**
Ahab	**Nicodemus**
Rhoda	**Miriam**
Stephen	**Gideon**
Jezebel	**Sapphira**
Ananias	**Naomi**
Barnabas	**Eunice**
Esau	**Barabbas**
Benjamin	**Rebekah**
Andrew	**Belshazzar**
Dorcas	**Nathanael**
Boaz	**Shadrach**

BULLETIN BOARD

Meetings

May 2-4, 1997	Randlett, OK	Guest speakers
June 8-15, 1997	Baron, OK	Homer Bryant
June 28-July6, 1997	Delta, CO	Camp Meeting
July 6-13, 1997	Yakima, WA	Roger Walkingstick & J. W. Bedingfield

Births

Alexander Ryan Johnston to Jeff & Debbie Johnston	Yakima, WA	Dec. 17, 1997
Caley Zuriel St. Clair to Wes & Stacey St. Clair	Lorenzo, TX	Dec. 19, 1996
Kyle Jon Harper to Kevin & Janine Harper	Sacramento, CA	Jan. 15, 1997
John Michael Shepherd to Tim & Cassandra Shepherd	Payson, AZ	Jan. 22, 1997

Baptisms

Carol Roland	Comanche, OK	Jan. 5, 1997
Amber Jones	Comanche, OK	Jan. 8, 1997

Prayer of Faith for those in need

Erelene Chessman	Bellflower, CA	Fighting cancer
James Vanderpool	Bohannan Mt., AR	Heart surgery recovery
Pam Berry	Canton, GA	Feeling ill
Debbie Wilkerson	Cedaredge, CO	Heart attack recovery
Ernest Buchannon	Goshen, AR	Fighting cancer
Maysel Buchannon	Goshen, AR	Fighting cancer
Melvin Daniels	Goshen, AR	Heart surgery recovery
Letha Ferguson	Goshen, AR	Fighting cancer
Luke Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Jessica Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Howard McCay	Sea-Tac, WA	Fighting cancer
Garold Morris	Sea-Tac, WA	Fighting cancer
Ashley Larson (8 1/2)	Sea-Tac, WA	Fighting cancer
Donna Beach	Yuma, AZ	Mouth surgery
Zelma Broadway	Yuma, AZ	In a rest home
Dean Heck	Yuma, AZ	Shoulder surgery recovery
Horace Orendorff	Yuma, AZ	Very ill

Passings

Larrissa Smith	Comanche, OK	Jan. 30, 1997