

Crimson & White Connection

A ministry of prayer and encouragement to "High School, College, & Singles" (& others, too)
Values & Character + Spiritual Life + Relationships + Fun stuff

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 Rich or Marie Dymmel
 (336/674-7564 or 336/908-3652)

Crimson & White? What's this?

... This letter is part of a ministry primarily to students and singles. It started with college students. Now about 60% of the mailing list are college students, 20% middle and high school, and 10% are age 22 to 30, and we'll just leave ages unsaid for the last 10% since, well, they're old.. Articles are on character, values, spiritual life, relationships and more ... and some fun.

The theology position is "conservative," i.e. Jesus is God's Son, eternal, part of the single triune God, born of a virgin, sinless, crucified and risen, and is the *only* way to eternal life. We are free to choose Him. He has told us to be holy and that includes behaviors such as: sex outside of marriage is wrong.

This letter and post cards are sent about twice a month. We're trying to say that you are important enough for us to put this in your mailbox. We care about you and want to encourage your character growth and your spiritual walk.

A second part of the ministry is prayer. We pray for each person on our mailing list as the mail is prepared. When you get mail from us, you know someone prayed for you.

A college student reader chose the name **Crimson and White Connection** based on Isaiah 1:18 in the Bible "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." The cleansing of our nature and our sins is a universal need. If you base your trust for entrance into Heaven in Jesus, God's Son, and His death and resurrection on your behalf, then your crimson stains are made white as wool. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no other way. If you admit that you can not reach God's standard, are repentant and sorry for your short fall (sin) and have asked Him to forgive you, then He has forgiven you. If you are truly repentant, then there will be evidence of that in your actions, your life. - - If the "religion police" were to arrest you, would you be turned loose for "lack of evidence"? Or would the evidence of your actions convict you of being a Christian?

If you have chosen to accept Jesus as Lord of your life, either the first time or again, we would like to know so that we can pray for you and encourage you. Write or call us.

You WILL BE and ARE a slave! But you can CHOOSE your master! CHOOSE God today.

John 3:16 is true. Accept no substitute!

Feb 12, 2005

Jan 21 was "Hugging Day"

By Dr. Richard R. Dymmel, Ed.D., (c) 2005

The choir was practicing, "O let the Son of God enfold you with His Spirit and His love; Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul. O let Him have the things that hold you, and His Spirit, like a dove, Will descend upon your life and make you whole." - - I had been waiting for something to stir me write about for this issue... "enfold" - that's to wrap arms around, to hug, and Hug Day was fast approaching. I started writing, then decided to mail ya'll the Hug postcards. National Hug Day. - There actually is a National Hug Day. For real!

I did a web search for "Hug Day" because I didn't want to retrieve the December C&WC issue that had Whiners Day and the web address for the guy who created and copyrighted Whiners Day AND Hug Day. I got 1814 websites back. - International Hug Day greeting cards, World Hug Day (World Peace Society of Australia), and BIG HUG DAY in Helsinki which was held 8/10/04 at Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia. Also the creator's (that's not with a capital c) website: www.geocities.com/hugging_whining/ Here's the story:

National Hugging Day was founded on January 21, 1986. This celebration of hugging has been embraced internationally in places such as the United States, Canada, England, Australia, and Germany. Schools, nursing care facilities, hospitals, and numerous other groups and organizations jumped on and held-on-tightly to this exciting, family-friendly event!

The founder, **Rev. Kevin Zaborney** of the E.C.A., ... He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Michigan, and a Master of Divinity degree from Boston University.

Rev. Zaborney resides in Caro, Michigan

At the website is also the BASIS for the holiday... "Mark 10: 13-16... Jesus hugged!!!"

Mark 10:13-16 (most of, from the KJV) - - *And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: ... [Let] the little children to come unto me, ... And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.*

I don't know about you, but when we head out tomorrow morning at about 5a.m. for a 4 hour drive to go see the grandchildren, when we get there and I 'take them up in my arms,' that's gonna be a hug.

When you read that whole passage, there is a little more there, too. The disciples "shooed them away." (The Message v.14-16) but "Jesus was irate and let them know it: "Don't push these children away. Don't ever get between them and me. These children are at the very center of life in the kingdom. Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in." Then, gathering the children up in his arms, he laid his hands of blessing on them.

To accept God's kingdom, you don't need a PhD in Divinity. You accept it by believing like a child. A child doesn't believe something because they are ignorant. A child believes because they trust the one telling them. They trust that they wouldn't hurt them. They trust that they supply good things. Even if going to the doctor might mean a shot that hurts for a couple seconds, they trust. -

So who do you trust? Anyone? - Have you ever played the "trust game" by falling and have someone catch you? In the Fall, Charlie Brown has Lucy hold the football and he runs to kick it, she pulls it away, and he kicks the air, falling on his back. Lucy can't be trusted. - Trusting an invisible God usually comes after you have learned that there is someone you can trust. Trusting someone might be scary. Trusting an invisible God can be scary, too, till you learn to trust Him. You'll even begin to *see* Him, all around you. He never fails. Trust me, I know, I've experienced Him and seen His work.

In Christ, Rich

Do you have a relationship with God where you know He has accepted you just as you are? A relationship like with a loving father? If not, call me at 336-674-7564. Or call 1-888-NEED-HIM. - With God, you have never gone too far to return. -

E.G.H. just moved in with her fiance, Joseph, this weekend!! They were married Saturday. Congratulations!!!

(E.G. told me I could do this short follow-up piece.) She wrote a piece last Summer for the C&WC about how some people were puzzled as to why she wasn't moving in with him back then. It wasn't right! Monday thru Friday she was in a company training program in Raleigh, about 4 hours away. Then she drove to Asheville where he had an apartment and she would eventually be assigned. She would see him every weekend, but slept at a friend's place.



From the mailbox (Letters may be slightly edited to remove some personal content and identifying stuff. We won't blab your name or email address.) Your letters and notes encourage us, too. Rich
[As with a lot of "forwarded email" the original source gets lost. So for some of these the original source is unknown, so I can't give proper credits for those.]

Subject: 2005 predictions

Date: 1/14/2005 From: Susan M.

The Top Ten Predictions for 2005 (author unknown)

- 1. The Bible will still have the answers.**
- 2. Prayer will still work.**
- 3. The Holy Spirit will still move.**
- 4. God will still inhabit the praises of His people.**
- 5. There will still be God-anointed preaching.**
- 6. There will still be singing of praise.**
- 7. God will still pour out blessings upon His people.**
- 8. There will still be room at the Cross.**
- 9. Jesus will still love you.**
- 10. Jesus will still save the lost.**

Have you mistaken knowing about Jesus for knowing Him?

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/107/11.0.html>

Christian History newsletter, Feb 2001 (Printed under Christianity Today guidelines.)

Then Again, Maybe *Don't* Be my Valentine

Does Saint Valentine's Day have its origins in Christian tradition?

By Ted Olsen |

There are more tales of the "origins" of Valentine's Day than arrows in Cupid's quiver. As expected, most have something to do with pagan ritual (pretty much every holiday—from Christmas to Mother's Day—has *something* to do with pagan ritual). Four centuries before Christ, Romans had a day called Lupercalia. Without going too much into it, I'll sum it up as a sexual lottery. Pull names out of a box at random and couple with a young member of the opposite sex. After a year, you get to pick another name.

Supposedly, this went on for centuries until the Christians had to go and ruin it with their whole morality thing.

But apparently Christians didn't think the practice was all bad. They (Pope Gelasius, according to my source) liked the box idea, and so initiated a custom of drawing saints names out of a box. Whoever's name you drew, you were supposed to emulate for the year. Pity the poor person drawing Simeon Stylites, who spent his life on the top of a pillar, never leaving it for any reason.

But who is this Valentine guy, anyway? Probably he was a martyr buried on February 14 with little or no connection to the dispersal of romantic love. Nevertheless, there are legends.

One story is that Valentine was a priest who secretly performed marriages when Emperor Claudius II reportedly forbade marriage (in an effort to ensure he had soldiers without family ties). Another story says that he was a Christian imprisoned for his faith, and cured his jailer's daughter of blindness. The day before his execution (supposedly Feb. 14, 269), he sent a farewell message to the daughter signed "From your Valentine."

True or not (skeptics are forgiven), Valentine's Day has been a big deal at least since the Middle Ages. In his *Parliament of Foules*, Geoffrey Chaucer adds another legend: "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / When every foul cometh ther to choose his mate." About that same time, the first modern valentines were produced. The first card was sent by Charles, duke of Orleans, to his wife in 1415 when he was a prisoner in the Tower of London. It's still on display at the British Museum. But as both stories demonstrate, even by the Middle Ages, the church's hope for a more spiritual, saint-centered Valentine's Day was lost. And eventually, the idea that Valentine was actually the name of a person disappeared. By 1450, a valentine was the name of one's sweetheart. In 1533, it was a folded piece of paper. In 1610 "valentines" were gifts given to sweethearts. In the 1800s it again meant messages exchanged by couples.

With so many definitions of the word, the next time someone asks you to be their Valentine, you might want to be sure they don't want you to be their martyr.

This article originally appeared in the February 12, 1999 issue of the *Christian History* newsletter.

- Spring of Life -

H. Roger Bothwell

Be Careful Who You Trust

According to Eric H. Erickson, a benchmark human developmental theorist, the very first stage of a child's psychosocial development is figuring out whom to trust. A baby's world is filled with giants. Some of them are nice and some not so nice. If one is to survive in this big bad world one has to know whom to trust. As the years go by most of us learn to trust ourselves. Surely we will always do the best thing for ourselves. But we don't. We over eat. We don't get enough exercise. We spend far too much time in front of the TV. [Some believe others, including the TV, that experimenting and playing with alcohol, marijuana, drugs, and sex won't hurt you, is 'normal,' and 'everyone else' is doing it. – They're not.]

When one learns to fly an airplane one of the very first lesson is do not trust yourself. Trust the instruments. There are times when you [are] absolutely sure you are going up but you are really going down. There are times you think you are flying straight ahead but instead you are banking into a curve. It is called vertigo.

Have you ever been waiting a traffic signal and a large bus or truck beside you starts to move very slowly? You are looking ahead and catch the movement in the side of your vision. If you are like most of us you will press your foot harder on the brake to stop from drifting. Your senses deceived you. You weren't moving at all.

Solomon once said, "There is a way that seems right to a man. But the end thereof is the way of death." One of life's great lessons is do not put too much trust in yourself. Proverbs 14:12

I'm Roger Bothwell and my address is 151 Old Farm Rd. Leominster, MA 01453.

Contemporary Christian Music on the radio:

Check out www.KLOVE.com and find (a) one of their 201 stations in 38 states or (b) listen in-line.

And these others, too. And "talk" programs can be great challenges.

Boone/Black Mtn./Asheville, NC - WMIT - 106.9

Charlotte, NC - WRCM - 91.9 FM - New Life radio

WBFJ - Greensboro, NC-103.5 FM; High Point, NC-102.7 FM; Mt.

Airy, NC-103.1 FM; Salisbury, NC-101.3 FM; Winston-Salem, NC-89.3 FM

Lynchburg, VA – WRVL – 88.3 FM

Cumming, GA-Victory 91.5FM and Atlanta, Ga-93.3 FM ("The station that helps you live the life.") and 90.0 North of Atlanta

Southern Gospel: in NC, find JOY-FM at 91.3, 88.1, and 89.5

BBN (more "traditional" music and programming, is national and international, and carries *great* stuff like "*Adventures in Odyssey*" (cool stories from FOTF) High Point/Greensboro, NC - WHPE, 95.5 FM and 93.5 in Charlotte. Also LOTS of cities around the *world*.

**Is who or what you trust trustworthy,
dependable, stable, immutable,
unchangeable?**

H. Roger Bothwell

"Never Had It. Never Will?"

Do you remember the slogan? "Never had it. Never will." I'm sure you do. Years ago 7-Up made us a promise they would never put caffeine in 7-Up. This afternoon while in the market my eye caught sight of a bottle of 7-Up with an upside down label. It is good marketing. It caught my eye and made me look and read. Here is what I read. "Caffeinated."

Wow – Whatever happened to "Never had it. Never will?"

I am sure they justify this by telling us this is 7-Up upside down and therefore is a different product. However, I remember an old saying that goes something like this. "A rose is a rose by any other name is still a rose." Maybe that is a combination of Gertrude Stein and Shakespeare?

I guess it is not the end of the world just because a corporation violated a slogan. I am trying to figure out my disappointment. Why should I care? Perhaps it has something to do with a childhood memory of drinking 7-Up when I would get an upset stomach. It always seemed to make me feel better and I think I want it to somehow stay pure.

However, I must say, it is comforting to know God's word is filled with promises that will never change or fail. We can count on His unfailing love and care for us. Exodus 15:13 says, "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling." I like that.

I'm Roger Bothwell and my address is 151 Old Farm Rd. Leominster, MA 01453.

[7-UP Plus is hitting the shelves now.]

**Jesus is immutable, unchangeable,
steadfast, stable, dependable, con-
stant, always there, always the same.**

and on the web:

The local station here in Greensboro often says, "*Evangelize your neighborhood* [and I'll add 'your dorm']. *Turn up the stereo!*" But what if you don't know a Christian radio station where you live or go to school? Then try this. Use these web sites to locate a radio station in your area. Then tune it in and turn it up. What if you can't find a local one? Well as long as you have your computer and are on line, you can have a hundred or more stations to listen to via live streaming audio. These sites link to and give you stations ALL OVER the country. You can then turn on your radio or connect to streaming audio.

www.ChristianTuner.com and www.ChristianRadio.com

Also a couple specific stations. (Shane recommends WAYW.)

www.KLOVE.com out of CA

www.wbfj.org, www.wbfj.fm WBFJ - in NC

www.wayfm.com this is WAYW 88.1 in West Palm Beach, FL

A "Good Man" (... or Gal, too)

I was cleaning out a box in the "office" (Marie would rather I just pick up ALL the boxes and pitch 'em, but I try to not let it get out of hand and periodically clean up an area, and she is patient with me - 1 Corinthians 13, love is patient - and I think things like resources and writing to you is more important than seeing the carpet) and I ran across this list. It is from a while ago because it has Prodigy.com at the top and I can't remember how long it has been since I was a Prodigy subscriber.

I remember this was posted on an on-line bulletin board. It is her list of 114 characteristics of her "perfect guy."

Notice # 9 trustworthy, 18 romantic, 60 won't kiss and tell, and 69 kisses good, 72 faithful, 67 a gentleman. - There is an awful lot in Meghan's list that matches with "my" list in "Do they have character or are they a character?" (...I need to reprint that article again...)

#50. "Won't grope me in public - At the H.S. where I teach, PDA has become a real problem with kids 'making out' in the hallway; at a dance I was told by students that some were laying on the floor in corners "all over each other."

Do you have a "list" of what you're looking for? Actually there's a great book out there: *Date Or Soul Mate? How to Know If Someone Is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less* by Neil Clark Warren. In it the author guides you through developing what you want, what you don't want, ... and what you have to offer to get what you want. In Chapter 9 he addresses "making the deal" and if you want quality, you have to have quality to bring to the table, too.

Well, I found this list again and thought Valentine's Day would be a good time to print it.

I have no idea who Meghan Dopuch is, but it was posted in a "public place" and I've given credit to the author as best I know.

[GOODMAN.DOC]

Prodigy.com

Board: TEENS BB

Topic: TEEN TALK

Subject: A GOOD MAN.....

To: ALL

From: MEGHAN DOPUCH

Time: 07/17 10:50 PM

[I think was '98, because I've been with AOL since '99 or '00]

1. Must always respect me.
2. Has to be honest.
3. Can make me happy.
4. Should be friendly and outgoing.
5. Has to respect other people.
6. Needs a good sense of humor.
7. Can have longer hair than me.
8. Wouldn't care how bad I looked.
9. Has to be trustworthy.
10. Isn't too in to himself.
11. Has plenty of self-confidence.
12. Always compliments me.
13. Is good-looking.
14. Has morals.
15. Is well-educated.
16. Is athletically gifted.
17. Practices good hygiene.
18. Is romantic
19. Doesn't smoke.
20. Will hold my hand in public.
21. Enjoys monogamous relationships.
22. Is mature.
23. Is very polite around me.
24. Dresses fairly decent.
25. Can make the first move.
26. Seems approachable.
27. Doesn't have too much facial hair.
28. Is always first to apologize (even if I'm wrong!!):)
29. Has nice teeth.
30. Is taller than me.
31. Will kiss me in public.
32. Doesn't always rely on friends.
33. Won't fish for compliments.
34. Says what's on his mind.
35. Won't hurt my feelings.
36. Isn't extremely overweight.
37. Is financially stable.
38. Cares about his family.
39. Thinks about no one but me.
40. Doesn't act different around his buds.
41. Smells good.
42. Can write romantic poems.
43. Doesn't judge by appearances.
44. Has good taste in music.
45. Doesn't obsess with weapons.
46. Won't use profanity.
47. Would rather hang with me than his buds.
48. Isn't a skin head.
49. Isn't too clingy.
50. Won't grope me in public.
51. Doesn't get insanely jealous.
52. Won't act too macho.
53. Doesn't want it all the time.
54. Won't talk about past flings.
55. Doesn't try to make me jealous.
56. Loves animals.
57. Doesn't plan destruction.
58. Doesn't worship Satan.
59. Isn't too shy.
60. Won't kiss and tell.
61. Keeps secrets.
62. Isn't up for one night flings.
63. Recognizes and accepts his faults.
64. Is not stubborn.
65. Isn't afraid to say "I love you."
66. Is sensitive.
67. Is a gentleman.
68. Is easily understood.
69. Kisses good.
70. Realizes what he's got is good!
71. Can satisfy me.
72. Will stay faithful.
73. Holds the door open for me.
74. Can dance.
75. Will do anything for me.
76. Is comfortable around me.
77. Calls when he says he will.
78. Likes our relationship.
79. Tells me his secrets.
80. Sticks up for me.
81. Is nice to all my friends.
82. Doesn't slack in school.
83. Doesn't bite his nails, or mine!! The nerve!
84. Smiles.
85. Will sing to me.
86. Is original.
87. Doesn't pressure me.
88. Won't compare me to other girls.
89. Is interested in my views.
90. Will cry at sad movies.
91. Will give me massages.
92. Enjoys life.
93. Never steals.
94. Doesn't bite.
95. Can cheer me up when I'm sick.
96. Doesn't point out my flaws.
97. Always has something to say.
98. Takes care of me.
99. Likes me for who I am.
100. Introduces me to his fam.
101. Walks me to the front door.
102. Cares when others treat me bad.
103. Talks to my parents.
104. Enjoys spending time with me.
105. Doesn't have weird posters in his room!
106. Keeps his promises.
107. Will never ignore me.
108. Introduces me as his *girl*friend.
109. Never calls me stupid.
110. Lets me be friends with whoever I choose.
111. Doesn't have a bad temper.
112. Won't fight other guys for me.
113. Won't forbid other guys to talk to me.
114. Will never hit me.

Of course, no guy will ever meet these standards. I don't expect them to, this is just my idea of a perfect guy taken from past relationship experiences. Anything to add?
Comments?

Meghan

150 Ways to Make Love (Without “Doing It”)

- 1) Hold Each Other Close
- 2) Give or Get a Hug
- 3) Make the other person feel important and impressive
- 4) Eskimo kiss
- 5) Find constellations in the stars
- 6) Tell the other person that you care
- 7) Hold Hands
- 8) Go for a long bike ride
- 9) Spend a day at the Zoo
- 10) Be there when you are needed
- 11) Spend time together
- 12) Give a foot rub
- 13) Walk arm in arm
- 14) Make a special tape of love songs
- 15) Talk about your feelings
- 16) Share dreams with each other
- 17) Snuggle up together
- 18) Have a water gun fight
- 19) Take a walk together
- 20) Take a nap together
- 21) Have a picnic in a park or on the lawn or in the dorm lounge. Bring blanket, radio, lunch
- 22) Play a game of Frisbee
- 23) Give compliments
- 24) Relax in a hot tub
- 25) Go swimming
- 26) Just be close
- 27) Go shopping
- 28) Cook a meal together
- 29) Touch each other in a loving way
- 30) Study together
- 31) Plan and go on a day-trip together
- 32) Throw a party together
- 33) Bake Cookies
- 34) Go to the library and read or study
- 35) Browse in a museum
- 37) Find out what's special for the other person and do it
- 36) Just be there
- 38) Do aerobics together
- 39) Gaze into each other's eyes
- 40) Wash each other's cars
- 41) Go fishing
- 42) Talk to each other
- 43) Listen when the other is upset
- 44) Work on a school project together
- 45) Choose a special, favorite song
- 46) Listen to joys
- 47) Tell the other person that you love them
- 48) Use eye contact or secret code to share a special thought
- 49) Write each other love letters
- 50) Talk on the telephone
- 51) Feed each other
- 52) Read romantic poetry to each other
- 53) Meet each other's family
- 54) Go hiking together
- 55) Attend InterVarsity, FCA, or BSU together
- 56) Send candy
- 57) Respect the other's opinion
- 58) Go for a moonlight walk
- 59) Hide a love note where the other will find it
- 60) Blow kisses across the room
- 62) Send Flowers
- 61) Write a poem
- 64) Go to a concert
- 63) Wink at each other
- 65) Watch the sunrise together
- 66) Take a leisurely drive together
- 67) Give each other pet names
- 68) Go sightseeing
- 69) Rent a romantic video
- 70) Do things for each other without being asked
- 71) Give shoulder and neck rubs
- 72) Whisper something sweet in the other's ear
- 73) Find out what makes the other Happy
- 74) Go horseback riding
- 75) Go out Dancing
- 76) Meet each other's friends
- 77) Flirt with each other
- 78) Stay in and have a dance party
Buy a 'beach music' or 'swing' CD set
- 79) Wrestle
- 80) Laugh at something together
- 81) Make a list of things you like about each other
- 82) Hide an unexpected note to brighten their day
- 83) Share private jokes
- 84) Find out what makes the other sad
- 85) Read a book together
- 86) Cook each other's favorite food
- 87) Be best friends
- 88) Make each other gifts
- 89) Do laundry together
- 90) Watch the sunset
- 91) Tell funny jokes
- 92) Feed ducks in the park
- 93) Put a 'personal ad' in the paper
- 94) Share lifetime goals
- 95) Play "Footsie"
- 96) Go rollerblading
- 97) Go to a roller skating or ice skating rink
- 98) Take candles for dinner at McD's
- 99) Dinner at a nice, dress-up place
- 100) Share an ice cream cone
- 101) Swing at the playground
- 102) Eat together in the cafeteria
- 103) Take candles to dinner in the cafeteria
- 104) Go bowling
- 105) Read this list!! and add to it!!
- 106) Kiss – Necking, and first agree to no contact below the shoulders
- 107) Play catch (with a ball)
- 108) Send a greeting card
- 109) Find greeting cards and read them to each other
- 110) Get yourself a greeting card software and make and send lots of cards - Some software lets you create your own cards
- 111) Register with Career Services
- 112) Go to church together
- 113) Watch the game
- 114) Ask each other out on a date
- 115) Go shopping with a \$7 limit for buying gifts
- 116) Pretend you have a \$100 limit and shop for gifts you *would* have bought
- 117) Color in a coloring book
- 118) Clean your room
- 119) Visit the zoo
- 120) Visit the Animal Shelter
- 121-125) Find a community project to do together – recycle – Habitat - Soup kitchen – Read to children at the library – the animal shelter
- 126) Attend an *old movie* or *jazz* festival
- 127) Watch *old* movies on AMC
- 128) Read each other's horoscopes – also usually on menus at Chinese restaurants
- 129) Rent a movie
- 130) Instead of \$15 to see a movie, buy a game at a toy store – good for several dates and parties
- 131) Go grocery shopping
- 132) Make popcorn
- 133) Feed each other popcorn
- 134) Sing to each other
- 135) Feed each other grapes
- 136) Make hot chocolate
- 137) Do the Hustle, shag, swing, ...
- 138) Take a dance class together
- 139) Get up early for the sunrise
- 140) Play a board game
- 141-144) Play tennis, pool, golf, miniature golf, ...
- 145) Play card games – Rummy, Pinochle, Hearts ...
- 146) Make sundaes
- 147) Work out at the gym together
- 148) Make a tape of favorite songs
- 149) Take pictures of each other all over town, have them "1 hour processed," and make a collage.
- 150) Tell why you respect each other

*Deciding to be abstinent and not “do it” can allow your relationships to grow and become more secure. Allow time to get to know each other, share thoughts, and to become best friends... Sex in a relationship can rush things and cause feelings of insecurity and uncertainty. It may even hurt the relationship. **Slow down!** Get to know each other Explain each other's feelings and needs. *Good communication is essential and may help you and your partner decide that abstinence is best for the two of you.* **Abstinence until marriage IS best according to many sources and research findings on divorce and marriage.***

Some of these ideas were borrowed from “101” lists from Texas A&M University, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, and Duke University web sites. Suggestions there included “go to church together,” but also several suggestions that are NOT recommended at all because they are too intimate and/or are potential high risk sexual lead ins. However, I personally know several parents that wish their kids would have done ALL the things suggested at ALL these web sites and even more rather than “doing it” so they wouldn't have had to have dealt with the words “pregnant” and “abortion” and “quickly get married.”

It's can become easy to sleep in on Sunday morning. Or ... do you feel a little something missing in your week when you miss church. Some have excuses. With the Super Bowl over, I was thinking about how much some people paid for tickets to the game. Gee, if we charged admission at church... ... What if people gave the same excuses for go to football games?

Top 10 Excuses to Stop Attending Sporting Events

Football, basketball, hockey, baseball fans, and some church members may relate to these.

- 10. My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up.***
- 9. The games were scheduled when I wanted to do other things.***
- 8. The band played some songs I had never heard before.***
- 7. Some games went into overtime and I was late getting home.***
- 6. Some people only came to see what others were wearing. Hypocrites!***
- 5. The referee made a decision with which I could not agree.***
- 4. The coach never came to call on me.***
- 3. The seats were uncomfortable.***
- 2. The people I sat with didn't seem very friendly.***
- 1. Every time I went they asked me for money.***

CrossTies Devotional Article for February 28, 1999

How Serious Are You?

By Bill Denton

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matt 6:33, NAU)

“It is the highest stage of manhood to have no wish, no thought, no desire, but Christ — to feel that to die were bliss, if it were for Christ — that to live in penury, and woe, and scorn, and contempt, and misery, were sweet for Christ — to feel that it matters nothing what becomes of one's self, so that our Master is but exalted — to feel that though, like a sere leaf, we are blown in the blast, we are quite careless whither we are going, so long as we feel that the Master's hand is guiding us according to His will; or, rather, to feel that though, like the diamond, we must be exercised with sharp tools, yet we care not how sharply we may be cut, so that we may be made fit brilliants to adorn His crown.” — SPURGEON.

How serious are you about following Jesus Christ? There are several passages in the Bible that seem to boil down to the purest of elements, the singularly important ideals of discipleship. In the words of Jesus noted above, it was a matter of priority that we seek God's kingdom and righteousness before we seek anything else. To the questioning lawyer at another time, the sage advice from the Old Testament was reaffirmed that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Loving our neighbor as we love ourselves is a close second, but the first one is first. No other command is greater, and in reality, all other commands are extensions of these two. Such words point powerfully to the idea of desire and purpose.

How serious are you about following Jesus Christ? Are you serious enough to get yourself out of the way? Are you serious enough to disallow your selfishness and self-centeredness from becoming a barrier to the will of the Lord? Can you see that your life here is but temporary, and that what you do and how you handle it prepares you for eternity? The idea that life is but a testing ground is not all that far off. God is looking for people of faith. How shall he find them unless those people have opportunity to practice that faith? How else does faith reveal itself if not in the pursuit of God and godly things?

How serious are you about following Jesus Christ? Are you serious enough to disallow the charms and excitement of friends, or riches, or fame, or importance from enticing you with treasures that glitter but for a moment? Can you manage to lean upon God whether the times are good or bad? Can you yearn for the life of Jesus to be duplicated within yourself regardless what the rest of the world may do? Is God the most important of all?

How serious are you about following Jesus Christ? Today, for example. Is your life and its activities more about you or about the Lord? Where is the evidence? Tonight, when you rest your head on your pillow, will you be closer to God's kingdom and righteousness, at the same point where you started this morning, or maybe further away? That result can be foretold by answering the main question repeated here four times. OK, five. **How serious are you about following Jesus Christ?**

Crimson & White Connection

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Daniel purposed in his heart that he
would not defile himself. Daniel 1:8