

Christian Barrel Racer's Newsletter

"Racin' To Eternity"

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Trusting, Supple & Responsive

By: Christa Conway

We can all relate those terms to our horses. One of our goals as horsemen and women is to have our horse trust us. Of course the reason for building the trust is to have a horse that will be more willing to do what we ask. For many reasons this will benefit both horse and rider in the long term. By gaining a horse's trust you establish a bond that reassures them of their safety and their security. Responsible horse owners will always make sure that their horses are cared for and they will not intentionally put their horses in harms way. Sometimes the issue of trust comes natural for a horse and rider and sometimes we have to work to build a relationship with a particular animal.

Once the trust is established it is much easier to work on a horse's suppleness. The dictionary defines supple as: pliant; flexible; yielding. That last definition of "yielding" should ring a bell from your cowboy jargon. We all like for our horses to yield from pressure...leg pressure rein, pressure...we expect them to react and be "supple" or "yield" when we give them cues. A well-trained horse will sometimes even yield when just a tiny amount of pressure is applied. And when I say pressure, I do mean subtle cues from legs or reins...not in your face, "I'm gonna get you" pressure. When our horses trust us they will most always try to please us by yielding to our cues.

This all makes a responsive horse. As I said before, some horses will almost seem to read our minds and work off of the tiniest bit of pressure. This is a really responsive horse. In barrel racing this can mean the difference between rubbing a barrel and knocking one over. When we have a responsive horse they are so in tune with us that we can shift our weight ever so slightly and they respond immediately.

I am sure many of you wonder where I am going with this... others have probably figured it out.

Think of God as our master...**Matthew 23:8 tells us we have only one Master.** Try to imagine God as the horseman and us as a horse. The same principles will apply.

First we need to put our trust in God. That comes from spending time with God by reading His word and meditating on it and spending time in prayer.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says to us:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path.

Once we establish a trust in our Master...we will become more "supple." Which means we will "yield" more easily when we feel pressure from God. (This would be the Holy Spirit as our conscience.) We will know when a situation calls for us to act, speak or walk away because we are "in-tune" with our Master and are willing to "yield" to His cues.

Hebrews 12:9

...How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

By trusting God and being supple (yielding) we become more and more responsive. We begin to respond like our well-trained barrel horses and sometimes we know where God wants us to go next by His subtle cues. I hope to become that responsive to my Master. I would like to be one He can expect to respond when He needs me...I don't want Him to have to tell me more than once.

The Grocery List

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Louise Redden, a poorly dressed lady with a look of defeat on her face, walked into a grocery store. She approached the owner of the store in a most humble manner and asked if he would let her charge a few groceries. She softly explained that her husband was very ill and unable to work, they had seven children and they needed food.

John Longhouse, the grocer scoffed at her and requested that she leave his store at once.

Visualizing the family needs, she said, "Please, sir! I will bring you the money just as soon as I can."

John told her he could not give her credit since she did not have a charge account at his store.

Standing beside the counter was a customer who overheard the

conversation between the two. The customer walked forward and told the grocer that he would stand good for whatever she needed for her family.

The grocer said in a very reluctant voice, "Do you have a grocery list?" Louise replied, "Yes sir."

"O.K." he said, "put your grocery list on the scales and whatever your grocery list weighs, I will give you that amount in groceries."

Louise, hesitated a moment with a bowed head, then she reached into her purse and took out a piece of paper and scribbled something on it.

She then laid the piece of paper on the scale carefully with her head still bowed. The eyes of the grocer and the customer showed amazement when the scales went down and stayed down. The grocer, staring at the scales, turned slowly to the customer and said begrudgingly, "I can't believe it." The customer smiled and the grocer started putting the groceries on the other side of the scales. The scale did not balance so he continued to put more and more groceries on them until the scales would hold no more. The grocer stood there in utter disgust. Finally, he grabbed the piece of paper from the scales and looked at it with greater amazement.

It was not a grocery list, it was a prayer, which said: "Dear Lord, you know my needs and I am leaving this in your hands." The grocer gave her the groceries that he had gathered and stood in stunned silence. Louise thanked him and left the store. The other customer handed a fifty-dollar bill to the grocer and said, "It was worth every penny of it. Only God Knows how much a prayer weighs."

News From Friends

(Some editing for space)

CHRISTA,

This is a praise I have for Our Lord, I have been searching for some time for a wonderful job like I had when Jim was alive. Well to make a long story short, this has been going on for the whole year of 2006. I had 3 interviews all in one day. I went to the first one, and the lady there wasn't very nice and told me different things and I left there not feeling too good about myself. I then went on to my next interview trying to get myself perked up

and it went better. Well I still had the next interview to go to and I was running late. I called her and let her know I was running late but she said come on in anyway, so I did. While in the interview, my phone went off twice, and I apologized and she said that was quite fine, she understood. As my interview was almost at end, she asked me if I had any questions and I said only one, when can I start?. She said she would make her decision by Friday and let me know either way. When I got home, there was a message from her on the answering machine, offering me the job. I was thrilled and I thought back over the day and everything that had happened, and realized God had put me right where I was supposed to be. If we pray for things, and just let God take control He will. I feel very good about this position and I will do the very best I can do. There has been so many times God has answered my prayers, either by yes or no, but I have found out that if I just let go and let God, He will come through. I truly have been blessed, and I give all my praises to God. Thank you for letting me share this story. It's only by the grace of God that I am here and able to give Him my praises. God bless you all and never give up hope. Through Christ I can endure all things. We can endure all things.

God Bless
Teresa Martin (Aunt)

Amen!!

Christa, thought this would be a nice piece for the newsletter, hope you like it, a dear friend from fla that I haven't seen in years sent to me. I just love this and it reminds us that we need to daily give thanks for everything.

I even thank the lord for the not so good things that happen in my life for I know they have meaning somehow and also teach me, sometimes they even make me stronger!

Thanks for doing the newsletter, your truly a wonderful person and we appreciate your efforts, I know it is hectic with horses and family but you do it and what a great job also! Thanks!

Keeley lee Kuzminski

CONGRATULATIONS!!

A note from A.J. (Price) & Cooper Flinn about their new addition:

As some of you are already aware we welcomed our little boy into this world early. Triston Wade was born on December 26, 2006 at 10:57a.m. He weighed 3lbs 3ozs and is 15 ¾ inches long.

He had a couple of very trying days but now he is off of all breathing help and all I.V.'s . He is eating well, breathing on his own and gaining weight. As of last night he weighed 3lbs 6ozs, so we are on the right track.

It has been an experience to say the least! Now all we have to do is wait for him to grow. We will keep updates coming.

Love,
Cooper & A.J. Flinn

Bible Verse to study for the month...

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:11

Email me with your thoughts.....CC

I Ride

Compliments of email

Such a simple statement...However as many women who ride know it is really a complicated matter. It has to do with power and empowerment. Being able to do things you might have once considered out of reach or ability. I have considered this as I shovel manure, fill water barrels in the cold rain, wait for the vet/farrier/ electrician/ hay delivery, change a tire on a horse trailer by the side of the freeway or cool a gelding out before getting down to the business of drinking a cold glass of water after a long ride. The time, the money and the effort it takes to ride calls for dedication. At least I call it dedication. My ex-husband calls it 'the sickness'. It's a sickness I've had since I as a small girl bouncing my model horses and dreaming of the day I would ride a real horse. Most of the women I ride with understand the meaning of 'the sickness'. It's not a sport. It's not a hobby. It's what we do and, in some ways, who we are as women and human beings. I ride. I hook up my trailer and load my gelding. I haul to some trail head somewhere, unload, saddle, whistle up my dog and I ride. I breathe in the air, watch the sunlight filter through the trees and savor the movement of my horse. My shoulders relax. A smile rides my sunscreen-smear face. I pull my ball cap down and let the real world fade into the tracks my horse leaves in the dust. Time slows. Flying insects buzz loudly, looking like fairies. My gelding flicks his ears and moves down the trail. I can smell his sweat and it is perfume to my senses. Time slows. The rhythm of the walk and the movement of the leaves become my focus. My saddle creaks and the leather rein in my hand softens with the warmth. I consider the simple statement; I ride. I think of all I do because I ride. Climb granite slabs, wade into a freezing lake, race a friend through the Monsanto all the while laughing and feeling my heart in my chest. Other days

just the act of mounting and dismounting can be a real accomplishment. Still I ride, no matter how tired or how much my seat bones or any of the numerous horse related injuries hurt. I ride. And I feel better for doing so. The beauty I've seen because I ride amazes me. I've ridden out to find lakes that remain for the most part, unseen. Caves, dark and cold beside rivers full and rolling are the scenes I see in my dreams. The Granite Stairway at Echo Summit, bald eagles on the wing and bobcats on the prowl add to the empowerment and joy in my heart. I think of the people, mostly women, I've met. I consider how competent they all are. Not a weenie amongst the bunch. We haul 40 ft rigs, we back into tight spaces without clipping a tree. We set up camp. Tend the horses. We cook and keep safe. We understand and love our companions, the horse. We respect each other and those we encounter on the trail. We know that if you are out there riding, you also shovel, fill, wait and doctor. Your hands are a little rough and you travel with out makeup or hair gel. You do without to afford the 'sickness' and probably, when you were a small girl, you bounced a model horse while you dreamed of riding a real one.

Prayer Requests

This newsletter has become a great way to get the word out to our horse-show family when someone is in need of prayer. Everyone, just take a few minutes when you receive your letter and pray over it and the names on this list...we have seen miracles happen.

Laura Lee Thomas and her daughter, Mandi, went to the Dominican Republic last month on a mission trip. Keep them in your prayers. I will be anxious to get a report from her upon their return.

Catie Fairchild, Jim & Fay's daughter, was stepped on when a young horse spooked and knocked her down. In the process, her back was fractured. After some scary tests and waiting for results...She **IS** doing fine, she is wearing a brace. She is still able to attend school, but has to let time take care of her injuries. Please keep her in your prayers to stay positive and to keep looking forward to a quick recovery.

Susan Fox-Jourdan's mom suffered a stroke last month...and after some tests the doctor had some good news. He said it was a small stroke and he expects a full recovery. He said 3 weeks on regaining her speech, and it will take a while to regain the strength in her right leg...but it will come back. They have to either move her to continued care or send her home due to Medicare stay limitations. They aren't sure

if they will have a bed in continued care. If they don't then we will be taking her home and staying with her 24 hours a day. Please keep Susan, her mom and family in your prayers.

Prayer request: **Jana Klein's niece, Kerri Crane:**

On December 7, 2006, Kerri left for a class down at IUPUI and headed southbound on interstate 65. There had been an accident involving 2 semi trucks on the northbound side of I-65, and a helicopter was called in for lifeline services. Because of this, both sides of the interstate were closed, bringing traffic to a stop. Kerri had come to a complete stop with the other traffic, but, unfortunately, a truck behind her was unable to stop and hit her from behind. The impact and whiplash from the hit caused her skull to separate from her spinal cord and top vertebrae. Normally, this type of injury is fatal. Responders from the semi accident on the northbound lanes were able to drive up through the median to reach Kerri and the other vehicles involved. She was then rushed to Methodist Hospital by ambulance. She also suffered a fractured sternum, right femur, fibula, tibia, right shoulder and multiple ribs. She received surgery the next day to "pin" her skull back on. From there, the Doctors said that is all that can be done for her injury. The rest is hope and prayers.

Here we are one month later and Kerri is working very hard in rehab walking with a walker. Simple things like putting on a coat and taking it off takes about 1 whole session of rehab, but she is still keeping good spirits. The trach is gone, the respirator is gone, she can now talk a little, and is trying to feed herself.

Please say a prayer for my niece, she is just 23. Everyday is a challenge! If you would like to read about her whole story, see www.caringbridge.org/visit/kerriocrane and read away. Feel free to sign the guest book if you would like. Kerri can now read any messages. Even if you don't know her, send a real cowboy prayer her way.

No new updates yet, but February will be a tell tale month for us...Please, keep me and Vic and our family in your prayers. Vic's job is a little shaky right now and we aren't sure where God wants us to be...we may relocate if need be, but we want it to be God's will...not our desire to move to a warmer climate (heehee!) Thanks, everyone! Christa

AJ Coffee is in Iraq now and I know he and his family appreciate your prayers for him and other soldiers safety and strength. His email address is aj_coffee123@hotmail.com and I am sure

that he would love to hear from his barrel racing buddies.

Keep ***all military and their families*** in your prayers. They make big sacrifices to secure our freedoms.

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. Mark 11:24

Rick Warren Interview

If you will read this and think about it you may get a brand new insight on the question why??? Why am I here, why is this happening to me and more...

This is an absolutely incredible short interview with Rick Warren, "Purpose Driven Life " author and pastor of Saddleback Church in California

In the interview by Paul Bradshaw with Rick Warren, Rick said:

People ask me, what is the purpose of life? And I respond: In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven. One day my heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of my body-- but not the end of me.

I may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but I am going to spend trillions of years in eternity. This is the warm-up act - the dress rehearsal. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity. We were made by God and for God, and until you figure that out, life isn't going to make sense.

Life is a series of problems: Either you are in one now, you're just coming out of one, or you're getting ready to go into another one.

The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort. God is more interested in making your life holy than He is in making your life happy. We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness.

This past year has been the greatest year of my life but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer. I used to think that life was hills and valleys - you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth. I don't believe that anymore.

Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life. No matter how good things are in your life, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for. You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems.

If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, "which is my problem, my issues, my pain." But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others. We discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of hundreds of thousands of people, God was not going to heal Kay or make it easy for her. It has been very difficult for her, and yet God has strengthened her character, given her a ministry of helping other people, given her a testimony, drawn her closer to Him and to people.

You have to learn to deal with both the good and the bad of life. Actually, sometimes learning to deal with the good is harder. For instance, this past year, all of a sudden, when the book sold 15 million copies, it made me instantly very wealthy. It also brought a lot of notoriety that I had never had to deal with before. I don't think God gives you money or notoriety for your own ego or for you to live a life of ease.

So I began to ask God what He wanted me to do with this money, notoriety and influence. He gave me two different passages that helped me decide what to do, II Corinthians 9 and Psalm 72.

*First, in spite of all the money coming in, we would not change our lifestyle one bit. We made no major purchases.

*Second, about midway through last year, I stopped taking a salary from the church.

*Third, we set up foundations to fund an initiative we call The Peace Plan to plant churches, equip leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation.

*Fourth, I added up all that the church had paid me in the 24 years since I started the church, and I gave it all back. It was liberating to be able to serve God for free.

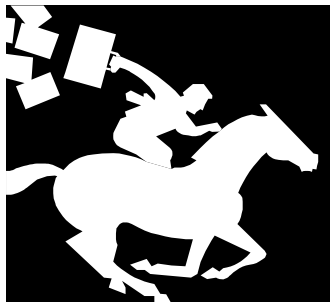
We need to ask ourselves: Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity? Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life)? When I get up in the morning, I sit on the

side of my bed and say, God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better ... God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do. That's why we're called human beings, not human doings.

Email/Mailing List

If you want to be added to the mailing list, just send me your address and I'll be glad to get a newsletter to you. I send out hundreds via email and still many through regular post. So, whether you are on the web or not...I can get one to you if you want. All you have to do is ask. And remember, they are FREE!

If you have a prayer request, a story to share, something to sell or the one's I like the most... a praise, I would be glad to include them in next month's newsletter. Just send them to me mail or email or call me with your request and I'll write them up for you. I can include your name if you like or I can make sure to leave it out if you request.



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Prayer for Unsaved

Many of us have family members and/or friends that are not sure where they will spend eternity. We may feel unsure about approaching them, but we can approach Our Heavenly Father on their behalf.

Here is a passage from the bible to pray as intercession for them. Just say the person's name when you see a blank.

I have not stopped giving thanks for _____, remembering _____ in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give _____ the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that _____ may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of _____'s heart may be enlightened in order that _____ may know the hope to which he has called _____, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.
Ephesians 1:16-23

Last & most important thought...

Jesus died on the cross as the final sacrifice. When He was resurrected on the 3rd day, he defeated Satan for us. All we have to do is believe that He beat death and acknowledge it with our words. **If we believe that and accept Him as our personal savior...we are promised eternal life with Him in Heaven.** You can't earn your way into Heaven; you have to believe your way there. So many people think they "aren't good enough" to get to Heaven... But... **Salvation is a GIFT from God** and you don't earn a gift. Gifts are something someone gives to you and for the gift to be yours, you have to accept it. All we have to do is accept that wonderful gift. I know I have...won't you?

But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many. Romans 5:15

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.
Romans 10: 9-10