



CALVARY MESSENGER

“... God forbid that I should glory, save in
the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...”

Galatians 6:14

SEPTEMBER 2015

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Thought Gems back cover

Jesus Loves Me

(Senior Version)

Source unknown

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow.
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me come to Him.

Chorus: Yes Jesus loves me; Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes, Jesus loves me; the Bible tells me so.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go.
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

Though I am no longer young,
I have much which He's begun.
Let me serve Christ with a smile,
Walking on the extra mile.

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song.
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

When my work on earth is done,
And life's vict'ries have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.

Watch Your Step!

I'm becoming quite "klutzy." Twice in recent weeks I stumbled and fell flat. First, I fell on a basement floor with a bit of carpeting that softened the fall. Later, I fell on a sidewalk with no cushion between me and concrete. Both tumbles were sudden and I could do nothing to slow down my fall. In both episodes, after I got up, I realized how fortunate I was! Apparently, I had broken no bones. Thank God, I could walk!

It's different for children at play. They can easily tumble (sometimes deliberately) and jump back up and run on. But at 81, I can't do that. I must act my age. I must avoid falling, if possible. Falling is serious. We old duffers don't get by with heedless haste!

All it takes to stumble and fall is a little inattention to the surface we walk on. In the first incident, I mistook the bottom stair step to be the floor. Now I know I should have stepped *lower*. In the second incident, at a section where recent rains had lowered adjacent soil

which left a high step, I should have stepped *higher*. There I stubbed my toe on the sidewalk and "gracefully" lost control all the way down (*Did anyone see that?*).

Life is like that.

We can also miss an important step in our walk with Christ. All it takes is overconfidence and failing to watch our step. Spiritually, we are safe only if we are cautious. If we walk with our noses too high, we miss seeing irregularities in our path. Yea, "***Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall***" (1 Cor. 10:12).

Some dangers are "out there." The world and the devil offer many forms of compromise with unbelief and sin. There is debauchery on every hand. We must stay away from anywhere (either physically or electronically) that we would not want to be found when Jesus returns. We must take note of anything that distracts us from being about our Father's business.

Some dangers are "in here." The flesh brings to us many temptations. Someone has wisely said, "Pride is

the stone over which we most often stumble.” Pride brings unbelief and superior and judgmental attitudes that are not helpful. Failure to keep the main thing the main thing can get us to thinking we are Number One. Jesus must have that place in our renewed priorities.

Peter points out that Jesus becomes a stone of stumbling to those who do not believe in Him. But He is a stepping stone (yea, the keystone) for those who accept Him for who He said He is! Peter explains those two possibilities in 1 Peter 2:4-8, *“To whom (Jesus) coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up an spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ, Wherefore it is contained in scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the*

same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word....”

So we either *stumble over* or *build on* Jesus!

Let us watch our step. It is only as we hold onto Jesus’ hand and walk carefully that we go “safely on by the narrow way.” To tumble physically is bad, but to stumble spiritually is much, much worse! When we resolutely take Jesus’ hand we can sense that He’s holding on, too.

Let’s not forget that it is possible for us to let go of His hand. However, Jesus told us that it doesn’t all depend on our grip. He said, **“I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father’s hand”** (John 10:28). Almighty God holds on tight when we hold on the best we can. Our finite grip activates His infinite grip.

Mosie Lister said it well, *“Hold me fast; let me stand in the hollow of Thy hand. Keep me safe ‘til the storm passes by.”*

-PLM 

***It is one thing to praise discipline;
it is another thing to submit to it.***

Re: He Came to Set the Captives Free, July, 2015.

One statement is troubling: “What if it’s not so much a sin problem as a deep love problem?”

The loving God didn’t send His loving Son to resolve a “deep love deficit,” but to resolve the sin problem. The love deficit has been around ever since Cain slew his brother. Sinners are hateful by nature, and quick to hate one another. No surprise there. But the sin problem is not resolved by accepting *the Fathers’ love for us*, so that we no longer feel entitled to gratify the flesh at other’s expense.

Nay rather, the way of salvation is marked with repentance from sin, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the new man puts away the former lusts of ignorance. In being forgiven, he now loves God, and he loves the children of God. Deliverance from sin resolves the love deficit as the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us. The attempt to infuse the love of God into the one in bondage to sin, as a way to rid man of his sin, has no sanction nor precedent from Scripture.

Lester Troyer, Stone Lake, WI

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Dear CM editors:
Christian greetings.

It appears that you are interested in providing the kind of articles that will stimulate subscribers/recipients to read your publication. It is discouraging to any writer or publisher to discover that their efforts aren’t really being valued. The first thing that most of us do when we pick up publications like *Calvary Messenger* is to glance through and observe the titles. I tend to check our the author’s names and if there’s any I know personally, I’ll be sure to read that one. If any titles indicate a connection with a problem/issue that we’re presently facing, most times we’ll read it.

I appreciate that you have some articles that address present-day issues. The one in July, “He Came To Set The Captives Free” was an example of a very real one. (It addressed physical/sexual abuse.) It mentioned the high percentage of youth at a VS unit that have revealed incidences of abuse. I also know that at Calvary Bible School and other places where youth are encouraged

to be open, share struggles, etc., many confess to struggles with and about broken or painful relationships in their homes—to the extent that some despair of living Christian lives altogether.

I have wondered why there are not more articles about home life in your magazine. Is any God-ordained principle under greater attack presently than marriage? Has there ever been a greater need for good communication teaching and admonishment? Why wait till we need to go to Fresh Start, Freedom Hills, Deeper Life, etc.? How do parents stay connected and unified if husband is gone all day and doesn't initiate time to communicate? How do fathers know what the wife, the adolescents, teens, and growing school children are facing if they all leave for different places in the morning? Or does he even want to know? In fact, many Daddys leave for work before the children are up.

Then when they come home in the evening, each one has something different going on—youth activities, board meetings, ladies' nights, shopping with friends, etc., etc. Surely they have time to sit together for the evening meal. Some come home late, so they miss family devotions, or it's late till everyone gathers and then it's hurried—taking

turns reading the verses and so they just skip the ones who can't read well yet, because it takes too long. No one feels free to share anything from the heart or ask questions—and to save time, only Dad prays. If one happens not to have anything planned there's texting, e-mailing from other friends, internet browsing, computer games, etc., to keep occupied with—all without needing to interact with anyone at home.

If Mom has her natural feelers out to evaluate relationships and even gets a chance to speak to Dad about any concern she may be detecting, she is reminded that her place is to be meek and quiet and submissive and to let Dad be the spiritual leader. Telling him about needs she senses causes him to feel inadequate, which he doesn't appreciate. So she watches as walls grow higher and the hearts of their children are lost to others or other things.

Many of us grew up in homes where affection and appreciation for each other was seldom expressed. We had more opportunity (out of necessity, maybe) to work side by side with our parents, creating incidents of companionship and communication, which help assure children of their worth. How is it now? It seems there are people everywhere among us hurting because of relationship

issues. That is why I risk being considered a woman out of her place in writing this. I have seen, heard, felt—many situations that have made me ask, “Should these things be found among God’s people?” And, “Why (I ask) are not more articles of admonishment, teaching, testimony in connection to maintaining and promoting relationships that bless our homes?” “Would they be widely read among your recipients?”

One sister shared with me that she is praying that God would raise up ministers who see this “great relationship drought.” She struggles with the fact that a son left home and the church and now lives in sin, and there was not a good relationship with his dad. Yes, there is no excuse for the son’s wrong choices, but we women still wonder how many of these spiritual calamities could be avoided by proper care and nourishment but we feel so helpless. Sometimes it seems information in growing good crops or good business techniques are more important than

information that promotes good relationships.

One comment on the history feature. This is more encouraging to remain faithful. But what about the story of a 20th century Christian who didn’t follow fads and fashions and served others with all his substance or the story from an era we have a hard time relating to? Which is more difficult and needs more encouragement: To live for Christ or to die for Him?

And yes, I’m a mom watching a son struggle with relationship issues with his dad, and don’t know what to do but keep on praying.

I wish to remain,
Anonymous

[Editor’s note: The foregoing letter to the editor was signed. Surely it deserves thoughtful consideration. Who will take the challenge of writing the kind of material the writer longs to read?]



***Tearing down what another builds
never improves our own building.***

The Wearisome Wear of Size

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The sedan is too small; we need a van. Later, the van takes too much gas, so we need a small, economy car. The garden is too crowded, so we need a larger one. Later, this garden is so big, it takes so much work, we would be better off to have a small garden and buy canning and freezing foods in quantity. A tiny garden is so practical.

Somewhere in life the house is too small. We do need more elbow room. The dream home turns up as a two-story, plus full basement at 4,000 square feet. It takes a lot of furniture and no small amount of stuff to make it look right to actually live in it, plus paying for it for 30 years.

This brings me to the point of this article: Now it is tiny houses as being the promise for a value-studded life. Out with “big,” in with “tiny.” Tiny is the rage for a new approach to life when it comes to a house of one’s own.

Jamie Rye, 31, and his wife and two children will sell their dream home

and build their own 400-square-foot house on a trailer. They say it will be licensed as a recreational vehicle and they will park it on properties of their families or friends. Who will get tired of it first? They or their friends? I say, when the publicity stops, give them five years or so and they will need a bigger house again.

Once, getting a bigger house was the envy of friends and family. Big lawns go with big houses. Big lawns require lots of flowers and shrubs. Lots of flowers and shrubs require a lot of work, which also makes more expenses and larger mortgage payments. Large interiors make lots of indoor work. The whole thing goes with a big house. We’d better sell it and go small (“tiny” is the word). Tiny sounds more creative than down-sizing to a smaller house.

Going tiny is a new way to get attention. The first ones in the social circle to get a tiny house get the “oohs” and “ahhs!” (Everyone, hold your snickers until you are down the

road a safe distance.)

For Mr. and Mrs. Rye, the dream home formerly was a big house. Now, for “dream living,” it will be a tiny house. According the article in which I found this concept explained, this idea came to this country about 10 or 12 years ago.

Discontentment is the prime driver of the American economy. When it is too small, we want it big. When it is big, there are umpteen reasons to go tiny, they say. Cute! Isn't it?

Granted, there are practical reasons for change. But restlessness is not typically given to being practical. Your writer has not always excelled in these matters himself. We know that we can be affected and influenced, even pressured by our peers or prevailing popular opinion straight from the world. What we are looking at here might be called “subtraction by economic asceticism.” Asceticism is exercising strict self-denial, even to denying the body of its normal needs and care. It can also include “the religious doctrine that one can reach a higher spiritual state” by self-abasement. (New World Dictionary)

Paul addressed this situation to the Colossians. False religions have always flourished, ever since Cain and Abel. The early church had people who were attracted to Christianity for its mysteries and

its evident power. Those already given to asceticism loved to teach that self-denial and discipline of the Gospel of Christ is only one step away from doing it more completely and getting public recognition for it besides. The error was in denying the human body its justifiable, routine needs of food, physical rest, and other reasonable creature comforts for religious purposes.

In Colossians 2:17-23, Paul uses such words as “shadow, beguile, intruding, vainly puffed up, have indeed a show,” and “neglect of legitimate and honorable needs of the body,” as he addressed the anti-Gospel practice of asceticism. It takes away from the central focus on Christ and His teachings and places the life focus on self and its legitimate physical needs and experiences.

Paul disapproves the approach, the means, and the intended goal. It centers on self, not on Christ. According to history, asceticism was extreme renunciation, bordering on bodily torture inflicted on oneself.

We think of the search for holiness, for example, of the ancient Hindu lying on a bed of spikes, or the ancient Muslim going on his hands and knees all the way to Mecca, or the religious rites of those who make a plunge into northern frigid waters. In Jesus' time, there were Jews who

took up fasting and disfigured their faces to make themselves look gaunt and physically set back as a way to rise in religious experience. Oh, by the way, it so happened that the two days of the week for Jewish fasting (remember the Pharisee who fasted twice a week?) was on the week's two market days. That way they got more visual exposure. Jesus condemned it.

Back to this economic asceticism— if being realistic to human need instead of going from a 4,000-square foot house to a 400 square-foot house, why not go to a house of 1,500 square feet? Or, how about going from 3,000 to 1,200 feet? If one indeed senses God nudging him to downsize, there should be no good reason to go to extremes. Reducing our living space in not the burden of this article. Going to extremes for the sake of society's fads and peer pressure or just to be noticed and talked about, is foreign to humility.

We have numerous "empty nesters" who still live in a family sized house. Children and grandchildren come home, some from a distance—to stay several days. Then there are out-of-state friends who come for overnight stays. Entertaining church families for a meal or an evening is still a part of the gracious life for us, worthy of godly recognition. Adjusting our living space or our life style need not,

and should not, go to extremes.

The average house in the United States in 1940 was 750 square feet. By 1970, it had gone to 1,100. But now it is 2,300. Meanwhile, average family size was/is getting smaller. Our sense of personal space keeps shifting. To have more, or to arrange for less, can be according to practical need and sensible stewardship. But it can also be promoted by restlessness and discontentment. Did you ever notice where straight chairs or lawn chairs are set up for general use? Almost always a man will move a chair before he sits in it! Restlessness and discontentment needs changes.

Going bigger or smaller is always an option, budget permitting. We are not saying it is never God's will to change the size of our accommodations. The object of this writing is to stir a bit of realistic thinking. How many years will it be until the children could have left our home? Will the extra cost be justified for a mere 10 years of use? Does it fit the budget/lifestyle/family/nurture/witness/calling? How much will it cost for heating and air conditioning compared to what we have now? Somewhere, someone should ask this most important question—Is it God's will for us?

One other thing: We have young families among us who start out small with a planned sense of stewardship.

We don't know it to be reactionary to anyone's lifestyle, but rather a sensible and scriptural approach to their life quest. They don't try to make a big deal of it, nor try to make others feel guilty for their choices that are more average and contemporary. We applaud their noble efforts.

The Bottom Line is that the Christian life is not to be lived in extremes. We are not saved from our sins by being average or less, nor by having more than others. We all know that—or do we? Being disciples of Christ is giving some very

serious thought to life's largest money outlay—the houses we live in.

P.S. Alright! Some of you are wondering about our house. It is a 1,550 square-foot modular, bought new in 2009 for \$75,000. We prepared a finished basement, adding two bedrooms and a bath room, and also a two-car garage. We did not need to provide for a well, sewer, or driveway. All those extras cost \$70,000. That same model house now costs \$100,000. Pretty average, eh? We, at least, think it's pretty!



God-Ordained Evidence

Carolyn Miller

When I was young, singing was my joy. The harmony and blending of voices to God was special to me. I enjoyed singing in a church octet and the practice it involved, but I had a growing concern. We would always pray before our octet practice and ask God to bless our voices so we could bring glory to Him as we sang. I would always get my covering out of my purse and put it on before we prayed. None of the others did that. The church I was in taught the wearing of a covering at church and for prayer, but did not require us to wear it at all times.

But my conviction about wearing

the covering was growing. *If only I would wear it all the time*, I thought, *I wouldn't always have to get it out of my purse*. I remember lying awake at night thinking about it. One day while I was visiting with my mother, I asked her, “Mother, what do you think about wearing the covering all the time?”

“Well, the church doesn't require us to wear it all the time,” she replied. She had always told me to put it on when we thanked God for a meal, but my mother did not wear the covering all the time. I knew it was a New Testament ordinance for the church found in 1 Corinthians 11.

Later, with a heavy heart, I decided

to approach my husband about it. He wasn't sure either if I would need to wear my covering all the time. I knew by his remarks that wearing the covering would be totally my own decision.

Several weeks passed as I pondered what God would want me to do. A special day of prayer was coming up. The president of the church sewing circle was encouraging the rest of the sisters to attend. She called me and asked if I would consent to be one of the speakers at that meeting since I was vice-president.

"What shall I talk about?" I asked.

Her reply took me by surprise, "Why don't you share about the hardest thing you have had to do in your Christian life?"

Immediately I knew what I'd need to talk about—wearing my covering all the time. "O God!" I prayed. "How can I talk about that to the other women?"

Sleep would not come that night. Why was the issue of the covering bothering me so much? With God's help, I accepted the request to speak at the prayer gathering.

I recalled a story I had read earlier in my life. It was a story by Robert Baker about wearing the covering. It was entitled, "A Squeak From the Grass Roots." His story challenged me immensely. The writer appreciated seeing the covering on his wife's head when he came home each evening. He realized that his wife probably had been praying for him while he was at work. They had not come from a

background that would have taught the wearing of the covering.

I, too, recalled seeing my mother wearing a covering sometimes, like one time when I came home from school. At times, I would find a covering in her bed close to her pillow. I thought, *she must pray at night*. Sometimes my brothers and sisters found mother in her bedroom closet. None of us needed to ask what she was doing there with her covering on. We knew.

What was I going to do about the talk at the prayer service? Finally my decision was to immediately begin wearing my covering all the time, before the Friday of the prayer service.

"Why, Lord?" I pled. "I'm going to a Tupperware party on Thursday. No one around here wears a covering to a Tupperware party!"

Immediately God reminded me of my responsibility. What if there would be someone at the party who had a spiritual need and she'd talk to me because of the covering on my head?

"Okay, Lord," I replied. "I'll do it."

I was really trembling as I arrived at the party. I could hardly talk. As I greeted the hostess, I told her. "I-I look different today."

"Turn around," she said. I turned around and said, "I'm going to start wearing my covering all the time."

"Well, that's okay. Come on in," she replied.

The next day, we met at the church for the prayer day. Sisters from at

least five other congregations were also invited to participate. The Lord helped me through the talk. But after the talk was over, I left and cried. When I stopped at our local grocery store, I felt that everyone was staring at me and was wondering why I was wearing a covering to a store.

The next morning I went with my father and mother to the Chicago O'Hare airport. My sister-in-law was flying in from Florida, and we would pick her up. We decided to eat at a small restaurant where a couple of uniformed military men were seated. One of the young men pointed at me and laughed, "Look at the Amish!" he said.

I was humiliated. *Oh Lord, is this the way it's going to be?* I thought.

My mother suggested we go check at the ticket desk and make sure of the flight arrival time. As we were waiting there, I looked to my right down the huge hall to a long flight of stairs. Descending on it was a clean-looking, tall, distinguished-looking man, and he was looking directly at me!

A bit later, the same man talked to my father and said, "You tell your wife she will never know what it meant to me to look down on this crowd of people and see a godly woman with her head covered."

At first this embarrassed me. Did I really look old enough to be my father's wife? Or maybe he looked young enough to be my husband! I felt overwhelmed. My covering must have a powerful influence or something. One person mocks it and

another compliments it.

• • • • •

Quite a few years passed, and I have never regretted my decision to wear the covering all the time. After my uncle passed away, my husband and I were on the way to the visitation. I had just washed my hair and was letting it dry as we traveled for about an hour. Finally, I decided my hair was dry enough to put it up. We were still a ways from our destination. I reached down to get my covering and discovered it wasn't there. Frantically, I asked my husband, "What am I going to do? I forgot my covering."

He made no comment, so I asked again, "What will I do?"

"Maybe you could find a place to buy one in the town when we get there," he finally replied.

"That town has many stores. I'm sure none of them would sell coverings." I looked at him and replied, "We should go back to the city we just passed and maybe I could find something suitable at a Christian bookstore."

Finally, I started praying out loud, "Lord, I need your help!" Then I thought, *Well, maybe I won't wear a covering. The people there probably don't know that I've been wearing a covering all the time.*

I was startled when my husband replied, "No, I think you should wear it."

Down inside I was glad for what he had just said, "Do you have a clean, white hanky I could wear?" I asked.

He pulled out a soiled one.

"That won't do," I grinned.

Then he asked, “Do you know of anyone in this area who makes coverings?”

I did not, so I prayed again, “Lord, if You really want me to wear a covering, You will need to somehow supply one for me.”

At that moment we were nearing the edge of the small town where the funeral home was located. We spotted a riding lawn mower ahead of us on the road. It was puffing a big cloud of white smoke and lots of it. The mower turned into a driveway still billowing out the smoke. Then I thought of how God had guided the Israelites in their wilderness journey, described in Exodus 13:22, “He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”

As we slowed down and looked at that mower, we saw two conservatively dressed women in that yard with coverings on. “Quick,” I said to my husband, “Turn around! I can go tell those ladies about my predicament.” We turned around and parked in the driveway.

A little short man came from the garage toward the lawn mower and then turned toward us, “I know that man!” I said. “He is the nephew of a man in our church.” Rolling my window down, I said to him, “I have a strange request.”

“That’s all right,” he replied. “You just go into the house. I think my wife might have what you want.”

I hadn’t even told him what I needed. When I explained my

problem, he continued, “That’s just all right. My wife makes coverings. You go in, and she’ll fix you up.”

Should I have been surprised? My God is real, and He hears and knows about our every need. I hurried inside. The man’s wife said, “I have a whole stack of coverings for a lady at your church. I’ll tell her you will bring them to her. Just wear the top one and then put it back on the stack when you give it to her.”

I tried one on, but it didn’t fit my head. “Just a minute,” she said, “I have some rejects that people didn’t want.” And she had just what I needed.

I was so grateful and wanted to pay her for the covering. “No, no!” she said. “You just take it. I am glad to help you.”

As we walked out into the yard, the little man said, “There, now you look a lot better. I think this incident was God-ordained.”

As we left, the man continued, “I’m going to follow up with the lawn mower that turned into our driveway and see what was wrong with it.” Later he told me that the mechanic found nothing wrong with the mower.

God had answered my plea for His help, and it came through the guidance of a riding mower puffing a huge cloud of smoke. This was a confirmation to me. I am convinced that I am to continue to wear the covering as taught in 1 Corinthians 11 for God’s honor and glory.

[From Companions, June 28, 2015. Submitted by Mary Keely, Sturgis, MI. Used by permission.]



marriages

May the homes established by these marriages be little substations of heaven, where God reigns and His blessings flow.

Good-Troyer

Bro. Kendall, son of David and JoAnne Good, South Boston, VA, and Sis. Bethany, daughter of James and Miriam Troyer, Quaker City, OH, on May 9, 2015, at Cornerstone Full Gospel Church for Heritage Mennonite Church by Larry Bergey.

Lebold-Ropp

Bro. Joshua Samuel, son of Floyd and Kathy Lebold, Bluevale, ON, and Sis. Debbie Lynn, daughter of Larry and Susan Ropp, Lucknow, ON, on May 22, 2015, at Lucknow Christian Reformed Church for Whitechurch Amish Mennonite church by Laverne Ropp.

Martin-Eash

Bro. Gary Arnold, son of DeWayne and Bev Martin, Goshen, IN, and Sis. Melissa Rose, daughter of Jonnie and Freda Eash, Plain City, OH, at United Bethel Mennonite Church on June 20, 2015, by DeWayne Martin.

Miller-Rohrer

Bro. Karl Dean, son of Marvin and Neva Miller, Grove City, MN, and Sis. Darella Vernae, daughter of Ernest and Sharon Rohrer, of Grove City, MN, at Evangelical Free Church for Believers Fellowship Church on July 18, 2015, by Melvin Beiler.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. John, son of LaVerne and Rebecca Miller, Partridge, KS, and Sis. Crystal, daughter of Oren and Joanna Yoder, Partridge, KS, on July 19, 2015, at Center A.M. Church by David Yoder.

Miller-Yutzzy

Bro. Sylvan (son of the late Noah and Mattie Miller), of Strawberry, AR, and Sis. Betty (daughter of the late Alvin and Amanda Yutzzy), of Plain City, OH, on June 13, 2015, at United Bethel Mennonite Church for Canaan Fellowship Church by Robert Beachy.

Quevedo-Byler

Bro. Vinson, son of Mario and Linda Quevedo, Asuncion, Paraguay, and Sis. Amy, daughter of Wally and Creta Byler, Huntsville, AR, on June 20, 2015, at Calvary Baptist Church for Lighthouse of Faith Church by Mario Quevedo.

Stauffer-Wagler

Bro. Curtis, son of Clifford and Mary Catherine Stauffer, Reinholds, PA, and Sis. Marta, daughter of Mrs. Mary Catherine and the late Joel Wagler, Cross Hill, SC, at Cold Spring Mennonite Church for Cross Hill Mennonite Church on June 20, 2015, by Virgil Kanagy.

Webb-Wagler

Bro. Colton, son of Homer and Anna Webb, Cedar Fork, NC, and Sis. Erica, daughter of Titus and Donna Wagler, Cross Hill, SC, at Laurel Hill Baptist church for Cross Hill Mennonite Church on May 29, 2015, by Virgil Kanagy.



cradle roll

The children which the Lord hath graciously given . . . Genesis 33:5

Beachy, Toby and Sharon (Miller), Arcola, IL, fourth child, third daughter, Sabina Jewel, May 1, 2015.

Beachy, Bryan and Ashley (Miller), Leon, IA (serving in Haiti), second child, first son, Weston Cole, June 21, 2015.

Bender, Loyd and Esther (Yoder), Cottage Grove, TN, second child and daughter, Martha Lynn, June 17, 2015.

Delagrange, Leon and Joanna (Nolt), New Haven, IN, fourth child, third son, Alex James, July 1, 2015.

Harvey, Josiah and Kate (Wade), Columbus, OH, third child, first son, Elias James, July 18, 2015.

Helmuth, Conrad and Amy (Yoder), Whiteville, TN, second and third children and second and third daughters, Lindsey Grace and Lexis Brooke, June 22, 2015.

Hostetler, Glenn and Tina (Mast), Cottage Grove, TN, fifth child, third son, Rylan Andre, July 7, 2015.

Kanagy, Jeff and Rachel (Shank), Blackville, SC, third child, second daughter, Emily Lauren, July 2, 2015.

Kauffman, Arlin and Orpha (Swarey), Cottage Grove, TN, first child and daughter, Janelle Faith, June 27, 2015.

Correction: **Lehman**, John and Hannah (Stoll), Owenton, KY, sixth child, third daughter, Melody Grace, April 14, 2015.

Mast, Jason and Jessica (Miller), Mountain View, AR, fourth child, third daughter, Joelle Eden, June 14, 2015.

Miller, Caleb and Rosalyn (Stoltzfus), Spencerville, IN, second child, first daughter, Alyssa Marie, July 27, 2015.

Miller, Steve and Melissa (Yoder), Auburn, KY, eighth child, second daughter, Temara Jo, July 1, 2015.

Peachey, Tom and Mary (Miller), Russellville, KY, second child and son, Kendal Eric, June 14, 2015.

Raber, Jason and Katrina (Knepp), Lexington, IN, fourth child, second son, Isaiah Luke, Feb. 25, 2015.

Correction: **Ropp**, David and Arlene (Yoder), Blyth, ON, (currently serving in Ukraine) second child and son, Kylan Andre, March 9, 2015.

Stauffer, Jacob and Marie (Showalter), Mt. Pleasant Mills, PA, seventh child, third son, David Elijah, May 10, 2015.

Stoltzfus, Mahlon and Charity (Miller), Morgantown, PA, third child, second daughter, Esther Carise, April 10, 2015.

Troyer, Duane and Melody (Gingerich), Leon, IA, first child and son, Isaiah Norman, July 11, 2015.

Wagler, Jeff and Kristen (Wagler), Odon, IN, third child, first son, Brycen Jeffrey, May 21, 2015.

Wagler, Mervin and Wilma (Wengerd), Cottage Grove, TN, fourth child, third son, Randall Dwayne, July 7, 2015.

Yoder, Enos and Susie (Yoder), Sullivan, IL, fourth child, second son, Emery Matthias, June 4, 2015.

Yoder, Mark and Alana (Rhodes), Leon, IA, second child and daughter, Abigail Joy, June 25, 2015.

Yoder, Mark and Martha (Stoltzfus), Whiteville, TN, eighth child, second daughter, Savannah Layne, July 4, 2015.

Yoder, Robbie and Linda (Dienner), Perry, NY, first child and daughter, Victoria Grace, July 25, 2015. 

obituaries

Gingerich, Mervin, 92, of Sarasota, Florida, died July 20, 2015. He was born August 14, 1922, at Burrton, Ohio, son of the late William and Barbara (Yoder) Gingerich.

In 1940, he was baptized in the Amish Church. In 1971, he and his wife moved to Sarasota, Florida, where he became a faithful member of the Sunnyside Mennonite Church.

His marriage to Alma Schrock occurred at Burton, OH, on April 10, 1949. Alma survives. Other survivors include children: Marvin, Mervin, Jr., and Angela, two grandsons, Josh and Jake, of New Smyrna [Beach], FL; a

brother, Bill Gingerich, Burton, OH; six sisters: Sarah Schrock, Catlett, VA; Barbara Kauffman, Burrton, OH; Alma Miller, Middlefield, OH; Cora Byler, Catlett, VA; Ida Miller, Middlefield, OH; and Wilma Byler, Panama, NY.

The funeral was held on July 23, with Sunnyside Nursing Home Chaplain Jarvis Hochstetler and Lester Gingerich serving. Bill Yoder conducted the committal at the Sunnyside Mennonite Cemetery.

Kuhns, Verna (Kauffman), 85, of Tuscola, IL, died on July 3, 2015. She was born on Feb. 4, 1930, to the late Joel

and Katie Ann (Schlabach) Kauffman of Chesterville, IL.

She was a member of Pleasant View Church, Arthur.

On June 17, 1948, she was married to Harvey B. Kuhns, who survives. Other survivors include four daughters and two sons: Mary Kathryn (Dan) Gingerich, Abbeville, SC; Edna Mae Kuhns, Tuscola; Elsie (Alva) Miller, Arthur; Gary (Ruth Bontrager) Kuhns, Tuscola; Wilma (Wesley) Yoder, Arthur; Duane (Irene) Kuhns, Arthur; 14 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. She is also survived by three sisters: Elsie Yoder, Arcola; Mary Ellen (Lester) Lee, Arthur, and Irene Kauffman, Arthur.

Verna was preceded in death by four brothers, Eli, Daniel, Jacob, and Ervin Kauffman and four sisters, Fannie Miller, Alma Kuhns, Anna Mae Otto, and Abbie Kauffman.

The funeral was held on July 6, 2015, with Howard Kuhns officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Lambright, Gerald Dean, 57, of Huntsville, AR, died Dec. 21, 2014. He was born March 11, 1957, to Richard and Ada (Miller) Lambright.

He was a faithful member of Lighthouse of Faith Mennonite Church. On March 22, 1978, he was married to Arlene Mae Kanagy, who survives. Other survivors include daughters, Catherine, Ramona, Elizabeth (Delwyn) Wadel of Roaring Springs, PA; Anna, and Rosemary; a son, Jonathan, one granddaughter, Kianna Jade; his mother, Ada Lambright, Ava,

IL; two sisters, Linda (Melvin) Troyer, Guthrie, KY; Ruth Lambright, Ava, IL; four brothers, Eugene (Ellen) Lambright, Campbell Hill, IL; Devon (Becky) Lambright, Crofton, KY; Wayne (Irene) Lambright, Ava, IL; Paul (Mary Sue) Lambright, Ava, IL, and many nieces and nephews.

Gerald was preceded in death by his father, Richard, two sisters, Betty and Diane and one brother, Gary.

The funeral was held on Dec. 24, with Joseph Yoder and Dan Byler serving. Ed Yoder conducted the committal at Lighthouse of Faith cemetery.

Nisly, Rebecca (Becky), 80, of Hutchinson, KS, died on March 9, 2015, at Hutchinson Regional Medical Center. She was born May 24, 1934, daughter of the late Jacob and Barbara Edna (Nisly) Yoder. Becky attended East Eureka, a small country school. She was a housewife and an amazing gardener who loved flowers.

She was a member of Arlington A. M. Church. She loved the Lord and the church where her husband pastored. She loved life, not letting her health issues stop her from enjoying her family.

On May 10, 1957, she was married to Willis A. Nisly. He survives. Other survivors include four children; Gerald Nisly of Wichita; Kenneth and wife Luana, Langdon; Twila Nisly of the home; and Rhoda Kretzer and husband Merle of Hutchinson; brothers: Eli (Emma) Yoder; Henry (Velma) Yoder; Ernest (Irene) Yoder, all of Hutchinson,

Andy (Jeanie) Yoder, Partridge; and Jay (Theresa) Yoder, Denver, Colorado; sisters: Esther, Bertha (Paul) Miller, of Hutchinson; Clara Yoder, Phoenix, AZ; Grandchildren, Michael and fiancée Maggie, Plevna; Loren, Stanley, Crystal, Wendy, Kevin, Daria, Kendrick, Karen, and Steven Nisly, all of Langdon, Survivors also include many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a brother Ivan and a sister Verna.

The funeral was held on March 13, with Arlen Mast, Freeman Yoder and Conrad Miller serving. David Yoder conducted the committal. Her mortal remains await the resurrection at Arlington Mennonite Church cemetery when Jesus returns.

Schrag, Daniel Ray, 93, of Hutchinson, KS, died at his home July 5, 2015. He was born Nov. 2, 1921, to the late Reinhold and Marie (Dirks) Schrag at McPherson, KS.

He accepted Jesus as his Savior at a young age and was baptized at Hopefield Mennonite Church in his youth. He was a member of Center A.M. Church at his passing.

Dan attended McPherson schools until 12th grade, when he transferred to Hesston Academy, from which he graduated. During World War II, he served as a conscientious objector in Civilian Public Service, spending most of his 3 ½ years in Glacier National Park, Montana, helping to maintain the park.

Dan grew up on a dairy farm three miles west of McPherson. After his years

of service, he returned to the farm and worked with his brothers in farming and dairying. He learned to be an excellent welder, a skill which served him well on the farm.

On August 9, 1963, he was married to Elizabeth (Betty) Kroeker in Dallas, Oregon. To this union were born four children.

In order to support his family, he worked as a factory welder for 17 years, while continuing to raise wheat on the side.

In 1982, the family moved to a dairy farm in Wisconsin for 10 months, after which they moved to Theresa, New York, and bought a dairy farm there. In 1993, after the children were all gone from home, he sold the farm and moved back to Kansas. He and Betty built their retirement home in the Hutchinson area and joined Center A.M. Church, where he remained until his death.

Survivors include his wife, Betty, one son, Timothy Ray, three daughters, Ann Elizabeth Schrag, Pauline Marie Schrag and Sarah Sue Steckly (and husband Paul); eight grandchildren, one sister, Anna Marie Pratt and husband Ray, Tennessee; three sisters-in-law, Wilda Schrag, Moundridge; Elda Jantzen and husband Dale, Newton; and Maxine Schrag, McPherson. He was preceded in death by one sister, Martha, three brothers, David, Abe, and William.

The funeral was held on 9, with Dwight Miller and LaVerne Miller serving. David Yoder conducted the committal at the West Center Cemetery.

The Old Man

*You see an old man
Drooling in his wheelchair.
I see a man who could make almost anything
With scrap metal from a junk pile.*

*You see an old man, who speaks only when spoken to.
I see a man who told exciting stories
Of his encounters with grizzly bears and getting lost
in the mountains.*

*You see an old man
Whose speech is garbled and confused.
I see a man who sang hymn after hymn by memory
To keep himself awake while driving through the night.*

*You see an old man
Who can't remember his wife's name.
I see a man who prayed for all of his children and
grandchildren, By name, every day.*

*You see an old man
Whose life no longer makes sense.
I see a man whom I can't imagine life without
Because he's always been there.*

*You see an old man.
I see a man I love, my Dad.*

*Written May, 2015
Ann Schrag*

Stoltzfus, Hannah K., 69, died June 22, 2015, at Gordonville, PA. She was born March 30, 1946, daughter of the late Benuel and Lydia (King) Stoltzfoos at Bird-in-Hand, PA.

She was a member of Weavertown A.M. Church.

On Nov. 18, 1965, she was married to Samuel P. Stoltzfus, who is deceased. Survivors include six children: Samuel (Delilah) Stoltzfus, Plymouth, IN; Elvin (Dorcas) Stoltzfus, Farmington, NM; Susanna Stoltzfus, Hermosa Beach, CA; Jada and Naomi Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA; Katie (Anthony) Weaver,

Fredericksburg, PA; and Rosa Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA; and 17 grandchildren. Siblings surviving are Elizabeth, Katie, Annie, Mary, Lydia, Rebecca, John, Eli, Amos, Benuel, and Gideon.

Preceding her in death was a sister-in-law, Mary.

The funeral was held at Weavertown A.M. Church, with Marion Garber serving. Burial was in the Weavertown Cemetery.

Yoder, Margaret Ann, 16, of Lexington, IN, died April 19, 2015, in Kosair Children's Hospital from AVM (Arteriole Venous Malformation). She was born Dec. 29, 1998, a daughter of Ivan and Rosemary (King) Yoder.

Margaret was a member of Living Waters Mennonite church. She enjoyed nature, flowers and especially her horses. She was full of life and added spice to her home.

She is survived by her parents, Ivan and Rosemary Yoder, of Lexington, IN; a brother, Terry and wife, Rachel Yoder, four sisters, Diane, Wanda, Kari, and Janelle, and one nephew and one niece, Kadin and Kianna, all of Lexington. Also surviving is her maternal grandfather, Glenn King and a host of uncles, aunts, and cousins.

Preceding her in death were maternal grandmother, Sara King; paternal grandparents, William and Edna Yoder, one uncle, Stephen King and two cousins, Rhonda and Londa King.

The funeral was held on April 22, with Lonnie Yoder, Floyd Lengacher, Dave

King, and Noah Yoder serving. Burial was in the Living Waters Mennonite Cemetery in Lexington.

Yoder, Mary R., 80, died June 4, 2015, in New Holland, SC. She was born Aug. 21, 1935, daughter of the late Rudy and Elizabeth (Miller) Otto.

She was a member of Pleasant View Church, Arcola, Illinois, and attended New Life Mennonite Church in Springfield, SC. Mary's life was spent surrounded by her family and friends, and church. She spent many years grading Bible courses for prisoners while she and her husband were involved in prison ministry.

On Sept. 17, 1957, she was married to Joe L. Yoder. She is survived by her husband, Joe; three sons, and five daughters: John (Twila) Yoder; Jerry (Jen) Yoder; Elva (Sharon) Yoder; Laura (Glen) Hostetler; Lucille (Eli) Schrock; Rosella (Dave) Miller; Edith (Curtis) Clayton, and Martie (James) Helmuth; 32 grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a son, Paul Yoder, and a granddaughter, Megan Miller.

The funeral was held on June 9, with Howard Kuhns officiating. Burial was in the Pleasant View Cemetery. 

observations

This column is intentionally open to a wide variety of items of human interest.

Historically, our people have been mostly farmers. But because land area does not increase relative to population growth plain people are more and more involved in non-farm pursuits.

Our people are not immune to financial difficulties, but there is a far greater likelihood that serious problems are relational or spiritual in nature.

Generally speaking, the contribution of being creative and having basic manual skills has worked well to provide a livelihood. The overall effect seems to provide a comfortable living plus resources to share with others in need.



I have recently come across a case that strikes me as being unconventional but noteworthy. How is it possible for three households to make a living from 15 acres of land with barely five acres of it tillable?

I am sure that they would say because the Lord is blessing their efforts with Dad, a son, and a son-in-law working together in raising produce. But it is also true that that it takes diligent effort (hard work) and careful working together.

Diversification that includes their own eggs, several greenhouses, baking homemade goodies, making jam and canning pickles round out the operation. There is no provision for frictional loss. I learned recently that they pick tomatoes three times a week, yielding from 20 to 40 bushels per picking, I was impressed.

The purpose of this report is not to tell you how to raise produce, but rather to highlight a case where the combination of inter-generational effort, a ready market, and God’s blessing is working well. Notice that there is no high-tech sophistication involved.

To offer fresh produce to the public does more than provide food for the table. The contacts at farmer’s markets are the occasion for Christian witness and formation of many friendships. One result of these friendships is sometimes being asked to provide singing for a funeral. I am happy to offer this report because it is rather unusual and not only family-friendly, but also witness-friendly.

• • • • •

Smoking inside public buildings is prohibited in Hutchinson. While this was under consideration some restaurant owners realized it could have a negative effect on the number of persons who would patronize them. At this point, it appears that most people appreciate the smoke-free environment, and the absence of smoke residue makes cleaning easier.

• • • • •

Majority rule is considered a basic feature of democratic government. Five members of the nine-member U. S. Supreme Court ruled on June 21, 2015, that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right. This overturns gay marriage bans in 31 states.

In 1996, a Defense of Marriage act passed in the U.S. House by a vote of 342-69. In the Senate it also passed 85-14. (*World*, 7-25)

It seems strange that a fine-line majority in court can overrule a substantial majority of U. S. law makers and a ban in 31 states. These are timely reminders that we are called to be “salt” and “light,” representing a different kingdom.

• • • • •

I am urging husbands and dads to note carefully the letter in “Reader Response” by a concerned sister.

It seems to me that she has some valid concerns. It is true that wives are to be submissive and meek. But

that does not mean that wives are inferior to their husbands. Generally, they are more refined and sensitive than their partner. To be a help meet (suitable) implies active, not passive, partnership. The husband who is not willing to give serious attention to the concerns of his wife does a serious disservice to his family and to the one he has pledged to love...as long as they both live.

Children are entitled to the security of knowing that both parents have a heart-felt love and interest in their welfare.

Mary and I always felt that God had led us together. If I could live my life over, I would want to be a better husband, more sensitive to her needs. The Lord blessed us in spite of my failures. I am encouraged when I see younger husbands/dads who take their God-given roles very seriously.

Another concern expressed in the letter is that our interest in history does not somehow displace our interest and participation in the here and now. Amen!

-DLM



In this column I've been making some comments about adoption. Webster defines adoption this way, "To take a stranger into one's family, as a son or heir; to take one who is not a child, and treat him as one, giving

him title to the privileges and rights of a child."

Adoption describes so well who we are in Christ. Adoption involves previous alienation—a time when we were not sons and daughters of God, but also current, legal sonship, a new name and all the rights of our spiritual and eternal inheritance. I'd like to offer a few comments about each of these elements.

All adoption begins with someone who is not part of the family. We can all identify with that. There was a time when we weren't part of God's family.

We become His sons and daughters by adoption. This fundamentally changes the discussion, because we ARE now family, more than being just LIKE family. It is more than a virtual "sprinkling of pixie dust" or "cooking the books." What Christ has done for us makes us "legal" and legitimate children. Parentage with its privileges and responsibilities is transferred. Family is more than shared genes.

Part of the adoption package is the acquisition of a new name reflecting a new reality. As God's children, we are not simply known as Christians, we are Christians. This sonship comes with the glorious expectation and legal title to his grace for today and an eternal inheritance!

These spiritual realities, together with our own propensities toward rejection of God’s direction and our rebellion, uniquely position us Christians to embrace, with understanding, the concept of adoption.

My heart has been burdened, from time to time, when I hear of families considering adoption, but due to fear of rejection of parental love and guidance as well as fear of unwise decisions by these children that reflect poorly on them, decide not to adopt. Let me hasten to say, that I believe there are many reasons why not all of us are called to adopt. My wife and I have not added to our family through adoption. However, an honest look into our hearts and its spotty record of relational stresses with our Heavenly Father, should provide us with all the humility we need to ensure that the risk of pain and rejection don’t rise very high on our list of legitimate dissuading factors.

• • • • •

Much has been written and said about the importance of developing self-esteem in children. For some parents this means that they adopt the role of cheer leaders, praising and congratulating their offspring’s wonderful accomplishments. Then some people wonder where all these

egotistical, selfish people come from.

In varying degrees, we have probably been influenced by these ideas. However, is self-esteem really what we want to work on developing? Hear me out. Romans 12:3 says, “For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” In his second epistle to Timothy, Paul warns about the perilous last days. He says, “For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...”

I’ve wondered if the drive for building self-esteem is a misplaced response to the basic and legitimate human need for security and love and acceptance. Maybe we haven’t done very well at communicating love and security in our homes and communities. But, I don’t think the answer is more self-esteem. We do agree that God loved us enough to send His Son to die for us. That makes us pretty valuable and cherished in His sight. Maybe we should take a step back and reinforce those things that God esteems in His children and cultivate our “God-esteem” rather than self-esteem. A healthy awareness of God’s love for

us serves as an effective inoculation against trying to impress others and ourselves.



Most of us aren't fond of air travel delays, whether they are weather-related or mechanical. However, I'd venture a guess, that most of us haven't had our flight delayed because the airplane hit a fish! Recently a

NOAA plane almost hit a bird before takeoff. When the occupants heard a tell-tale thud, they aborted the takeoff and returned to the hangar to inspect the damages. It turns out that the bird had escaped alright, but dropped the fish it planned to eat. It was that fish that hit the plane and caused the delay!

-RJM 

Musings from Martyrs Mirror

Tested by Fire

Tim Miller, McKenney, VA

(In about 237, A.D.)

Some Christians were assembled in their churches or meeting places, praising their Savior, when the Emperor Maximin sent forth his soldiers. He had all the churches or meeting places locked up, and then wood placed around them and set on fire in order to burn all the worshipers within. But before the wood was ignited, he caused it to be proclaimed that whoever would come out and sacrifice to the god, Jupiter, would be secure of his life, and moreover, be rewarded by the emperor. They replied that they knew nothing of Jupiter; that

Christ was their Lord and God, by the honor of His name, and calling upon the name they would live or die. It is to be regarded as a special miracle that among so many thousand Christians, there was not found one who desired to go out, in order to save his life by denying Christ; for all remained together with one accord, singing, and praising Christ, as long as the smoke and vapor permitted them to use their tongues. (Martyrs Mirror, page 131)

What If?

How would our churches respond to such a dire situation? Would

all of us, from the youngest to the oldest, stay true to Christ? Would we continue singing and praising Christ as we watched our brothers and sisters, our spouses and children, our parents, succumb to the smoke and flames? Wouldn't it be more likely that we could face death so courageously if we were together to encourage each other, rather than alone?

We are commanded by God in Hebrews 10:25 to assemble together as churches even more as we “see the day approaching.” We can and should do much to encourage each other to faithfulness in the face of the deception of the world and the rise of evil and opposition to the Gospel. Our witness to the world is multiplied when it is a collective witness rather than merely an individual one. The threat to the Roman empire was not private faith but collective faith.

So it is in our day. Our society is comfortable, even appreciative of our private faith and lifestyle. What is becoming more and more odious to many is that there are churches of faithful people who stand together as witnesses against war and violence, against ungodly marriages and abandonment of children, against immorality and deceit.

True churches are committed to showing that what we live by is the truth, and that living by that truth can be done in this day and in this society. When the time of testing comes, may our churches be found to have such a dedication to Christ that the same can be said of us, “there was not found one who desired to go out, in order to save his life.”

“That the trial of your faith might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).



*To be a builder in church,
build bridges instead of walls.*

The Two Kingdoms and Nonresistance

Dwayne Stoltzfus, London, OH

When Rabbi Lord Jesus walked among men,
The truth he proclaimed in the land.
His message was clear--"Repent and believe
For the kingdom of God is at hand."

To all those religious—the scribes of the day,
This teaching did not go down well;
"Who authorized you to teach us these things--
These things about heaven and hell?"

As Jesus kept teaching the Kingdom of God,
His followers furrowed their brows.
*What did He mean that the ones who can't enter,
Are those looking back from their plows?*

His teachings roused interest—they seemed so unique,
So different from what they were taught;
*"Let's make Him our king right here on this earth,
And then all will be peaceful,"* they thought.

But the mission of Jesus was not to be King
On a throne that was here on this earth;
"My kingdom is not of this world," He explained,
"It's a kingdom of immortal worth."

Now this is not something abstract in the sky,
That's only for heaven above;
This kingdom's within you to show to this world
How God meant for mankind to love.

The kingdom of God is so different, you see,
From the kingdom that this world is in charge;
These kingdoms stand contrary—one to the other;
The contrast between them is large.

The theme of God's kingdom is loving and giving;
It sets His disciples apart;
Your love for another lets everyone know
You love God with all of your heart.

Now many believe that my love for my neighbor
Is only if he loves me first,
They don't really think Jesus meant what He said
When He told us to bless those who cursed.

They think they can kill if it's in self-defense
And still show the world Jesus' love;
But Jesus taught clearly what Christians should do
When enemies hurt us and shove.

Love them and bless them and pray for them too,
And give them some water and food;
Let them slap twice on your face if they try,
And give up your coat to the rude.

This model He gave us is hard for the flesh
To really enjoy and feel good;
We'd rather not hear about crosses and thorns,
And loving our foes like we should.

Some want to fight back for the rights that they own,
And try to make peace with the sword,
Explaining away Bible truths that are clear--
Ignoring the words of our Lord.

*But what if the enemy enters your house,
And beats up your wife and your child?
Shouldn't you hurt him and push him away,
Resisting the one who's defiled?*

*What about nations who rise up and kill,
The innocent children galore?
Are we not morally bound to go fight--
Bring justice and call it Just War?*

This way of thinking is natural for all
Who wish for this world to be right;
But Jesus predicted that bad things would happen,
And nations would rise up and fight.

But lay aside reason and seriously ask
A question that's simple instead;
"What if each word that our Master has taught,
He meant it—just like He said?"

The mission of Christians is not to take lives
And try to keep peace on this earth;
But rather to show people what God is like
And show them how much they are worth.

When we show the world what Jesus showed us,
That giving one's life is true love;
Then His kingdom comes and His will is done,
On earth as it is up above.

What would it look like if all Christians loved
As Jesus loved those who hurt Him?
They'd feed them and clothe them and walk extra miles,
Because of God's kingdom within.

Instead of defending their rights and their lives,
They'd love and forgive every foe.
The world would then see the true meaning of love.
God's kingdom would suddenly grow.

For what will profit a man if he gains
The whole world but loses his soul?
Isn't it better to lose your life here,
Than save it and miss heaven's goal?

If anyone wishes to follow the Lord,
Denying yourself is the key;
You must bear your cross as Jesus bore His--
Obeying His Word to the T.

So let's show the world how true Christians love,
Regardless if men think we're odd.
Let's love one another as Jesus loved us,
Displaying the kingdom of God.

(This poem is not copyrighted. May no one do so. It is the author's preference that there be no revisions. May it be used to the glory of God, for the edifying of the brotherhood and the furtherance of the kingdom of God. -D. S.)



Summer Bible School in Crique Sarco

Floyd Stoltzfus, Belize City, Belize

This year in July our missions in Belize directly involved with Amish Mennonite Aid (AMA) conducted Summer Bible School in seven locations. SBS is an arm of the church and an endeavor to reach out to children and homes that rarely hear Bible stories and the plan of salvation. For many years, especially in North America, SBS has served as a springboard to establish mission churches.

I am sitting outside the Sarco Baptist Church in Toledo District in southern Belize. This village of about 70 homes and 400 people is situated in a tropical jungle paradise. The heat of the sun presses down but God seems so near while we observe the white fluffy clouds, hear the singing of beautiful birds, see insects fitted for this habitat, and realize that there are even jaguars in the bush.

We normally have one to two weeks of SBS in Haynes Street. We were searching for another location in the city to conduct one week of

Bible school, but many churches already had their own activities planned for the summer.

Several months ago, we as a Belize City unit took off a few days and visited southern Belize, and Crique Sarco where AMA once had a mission. We sensed the Lord moving us to have a week of SBS there. This vision required careful planning to bring it to fruition. Our AMA board and Daniel Stutzman from nearby Caribbean Light and Truth Mission gave their full support. The church in Crique Sarco welcomed us warmly. We knew many of these people from earlier involvement.

Most of our group of 14 stays in the spot where the mission house was located. Several people sleep in the old government clinic building. The old mission house has been rebuilt but is designed the same as the old one. If these buildings could talk, many stories could come from workers of yesteryear.

The village has no electricity except

what little is produced by a few solar panels. But we are blessed with village well water, propane gas to operate the cook stove and a generator to give us a few hours of light after dark.

The Bible School consists of five, two-hour sessions in three days. There are nine classes from ages nine through 13, with an average attendance of 68. We teach the blessing of giving by taking an offering every day that will be used to purchase food and blankets for refugees in another part of the world. The children are generally quiet and well-mannered.

The Baptist Church has around 15 families. The pastor, Sam Choc, is in his early 40s with a wife and four children. He is a farmer. There is also a Nazarene church in the eastern part of the village. In this part of the world, people have not been in touch with much of worldly thought, and this shows in their homes. Women and children in general dress modestly and do not cut their hair. This may be largely due the absence of television.

In December or January, Daddy goes out to chop from one to five acres of thick jungle. His sons or neighbors may work together on this tiring project. The brush is left to dry for the next several months and then in May, it is burned, in what is called the “slash-and-burn” method,

which dates back to early Mayan civilization.

Normally, when the early rains come in late May or June, it is important to get out there and plant the crops.

Weeding is done during the growing season. During this time there are animals to contend with that enjoy the first fruits of the crop. But there is also the joy of harvest when Daddy brings home heavy loads of corn on his back to store for their daily sustenance. Mother is also working hard as a homemaker. Children are taught to respect their elders and to obey and to work along with their parents. In some communities of southern Belize this old cultural life style is being challenged and swept away by youth being shipped off to high school in nearby towns where they are introduced to a completely different set of values. Of course, every culture is “diseased” with a deeply-rooted sinful nature.

Praise God, the Gospel is adaptable to every people group everywhere. But in Crique Sarco and in other villages in this part of the country a family structure exists. People believe in marriage. Father takes his responsibility as provider and Mother usually follows her husband's leadership. The children are taught to

obey. This provides a firm foundation upon which to bring the Gospel and to build a church which is nevertheless, not easy, because we do have an enemy.

The Gospel seed that was planted during the years our missionaries resided in this village is immeasurable! Many village people have fond memories of those years. Some talk with deep respect about the Bible teaching they received. The influence of the Gospel has changed people's disposition with a deeper freedom and not the hard-core facial expressions of yesteryear.

Several Scriptures come to my mind: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it" (Isa. 55:11). Jesus said,

"...I will build my church..." (Matt. 16:18). Paul rejoices that, "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:18b).

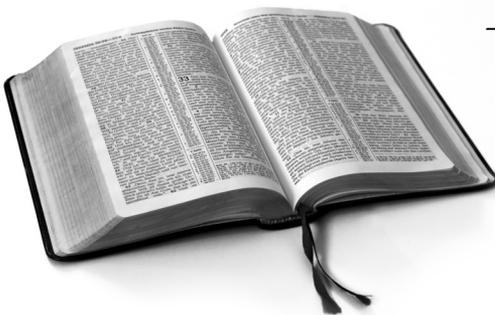
Now, in looking back on several nights while we were in Crique Sarco, we remember it rained heavily. The lightning flashed and the thunder clapped over and over again! The time came to return to Belize City. We had to walk quite a distance through knee-deep water and lots of mud with our suitcases and boxes of things and then go up a stairway to get on the bridge (the road ramps are not completed yet) crossing over the deep Temash River to get to our vehicles on the other side. It was a challenge, to say the least. But the reward of sharing the Good News of the Gospel and the deep joy and peace from the Holy Spirit was worth it all!



How sweet are thy words unto my taste!

Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

-Psalm 119:103



Coping with Stress and Busyness

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

We may refer to the “good old days.” as though they were times of peace, tranquility, ease, and comfort.

Mel and I were married in 1964, so I am thinking about life at that time. We reminisce about buying milk for 95 cents a gallon, a postage stamp for five cents, or a gallon of gas for 30 cents. A new house could be ours for \$20,000 or less. Sounds great, doesn't it? Imagine all the traveling you could do, the money you could save on groceries and investments you could make in real estate.

However, life was not all that idyllic. Mel worked for \$1.50 an hour and we paid \$40 a month for rent. I don't remember the cost of our weekly groceries, but I do know that I did not buy many of the things we keep in our kitchen today. We lived a much simpler life.

The daily news was not good at that time, either. After World War II, the American people seemed to believe that a new age was dawning.

President Kennedy appeared to be an answer to the world's problems. I remember well, exactly where I was when I heard the news that he had been assassinated. Young men were being drafted for the Vietnam War. Then came the Civil Rights movement and major riots. There was strife in the Middle East and the ill-fated invasion of the Bay of Pigs in Cuba.

Many of us believed the return of Christ was very near. We never imagined that the world would still be standing in 2015.

I have pondered much in my heart on these things and hopefully I will be able to put my thoughts on paper. I believe as we grow older life looks a bit different and we desire to pass on encouragement and hope to the next generation.

We talk about the high cost of living and I agree that it is high. It takes hard work and careful management to make a living. The men need good jobs to provide for their families.

Modern technology is an attempt to make life better and easier. In many areas it *has* made life better. For instance, I am using a computer to write this column which is much easier and faster than using a pen and paper.

My concern is the stress and busyness I hear coming from women today. I don't doubt their frustration. I ask myself the question, "Were we as stressed back in the 60s?" I personally do not believe we were, unless I have simply forgotten. Yet, I know I worked hard and was a busy mother. Are there reasons for the depression and frustration in a mother's life today?

Expectations from our families, friends, the media, and society today are sources of stress. Much is expected of a wife and mother today. It is important to look right (be slim and trim), to dress according to the styles and fashions of the day. Her house must be up-to-date with the "in" theme, color and design. Even the kitchen can be a source of stress as she is told what food may or may not be good for her family. I agree with healthy cooking. We can learn much from each other, but beware of all the new fads and diets which can add stress to you and your budget.

A major stress in homes today is finances. Women often feel like they

need to work outside the home to assist with finances. I acknowledge that there are times that this may be necessary and a wife will do what she must to help out.

Several questions to ask yourself before you take that step, are, "Will I make more with figuring in taxes, gas, clothes, and perhaps childcare, by working away than by staying at home?" Also, "How will this affect the children?" I would really encourage young mothers not to work more than one day a week with small children at home, and then *only* if a grandma or trusted motherly friend can care for them. With older children, work with a schedule that enables you to be at home when they arrive home from school.

The Bible tells us to be "keepers at home." Some women may be able to do this even with a job. However, I believe it takes organization to be able to combine both responsibilities. My main concern is what is the atmosphere at home after the mother comes home from work? Is she tired with more work waiting for her? What will the children remember? How will a job away affect the marriage?

Now I want to approach this subject from a different angle. What if instead of working away to make money, you would stay at home to

save money? This will include hard work. Instead of buying prepared food, you will need to bake bread and cookies (cookies can be healthful according to how they are made) Your cooking will be from scratch. You might even sew your own clothes, or create your own décor for the walls, arrange flowers on

the table. Stay at home as much as possible during the day. Do what you can to assist your husband by thriftiness. Live with less and live simply.

Accept life as a challenge; adjust your attitude, and be a cheerful wife and mother, regardless of your circumstances. 

junior messages

Two Angry Men

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Most corn fields and gardens in East Africa do not have a fence around them.

Cattle are seldom in a green pasture with a fence. When people want to allow their cows, sheep, and goats to graze on lush grass, someone must watch them. So a child, a man, or a woman must watch their cattle all day long.

If the animals are not carefully guarded, they will wander into someone's garden (shamba) and will eat up the cornstalks, the sweet potato vines, kale, or whatever tasty morsel they can find.

If the hungry cattle eat someone else's crops, people may become

upset and very angry. People depend very much on their gardens for food—food they need for survival

One day in Nyagondo, a man's hungry donkey (punda) wandered into a cornfield and greedily ate the green corn. When the owner of the field heard that a donkey was eating his corn, he rushed out with a machete (ponga). His anger rose hot and fierce. He gave the donkey's leg a terrible blow with his ponga. He cut the donkey's leg so badly that it could not walk. The donkey was now useless; it died shortly thereafter.

When the owner of the donkey heard what was done, he was furious. Now there were two angry men. He

rushed to the village chief and told how his donkey had been slashed.

Harming the donkey was considered much worse than the straying donkey which ate the corn. The man who killed the donkey was fined. He had to pay a large amount.

Anger does not get you anywhere. Anger displeases God. Anger hurts many people. The Book of James tells us “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”

Another story about anger that I heard is much worse than the first one:

A father became upset and angry at his son for stealing something. Instead of giving his son a reasonable punishment, he cut off his ears.

What a horrible and painful thing to do! Forever that boy will look strange and fear his father in a bad way. I think that father will also regret his out-of-control anger.

Anger can be like drunkenness. It

makes you do things you do not want to do. It causes you to lose control of yourself.

We need God’s help to have self-control and to be people who are kind and not angry.

In the Bible, we are told a story of a man who cut off someone’s ear. Peter was so upset that men were coming at night to catch Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane that he grabbed a sharp sword and wildly swung at Malchus, the high priest’s servant. Apparently, the man ducked or dodged, but his right ear was sliced off.

Jesus calmly told the disciples to put away their swords. He reached down, picked up the severed ear, and put it back where it belonged. Right away, that ear was restored and healed.

We need to ask God to help us to be kind and not to be angry. Anger does not please God. 

The Armed Guards

(Author Unknown)

Have you ever felt the urge to pray for someone and then just put it on a list and said, “I’ll pray for them later.”? Or has anyone ever called you and said, “I need you to pray for me, I have this need.”? Read the following story. It may change the way that you may

think about prayer and also the way you pray. A missionary on furlough told this true story while visiting his home church in Michigan...

“While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, every two weeks I traveled by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies.

This was a journey of two days and required camping overnight at the halfway point.

On one of these journeys, I arrived in the city where I planned to collect money from a bank, purchase medicine and supplies, and then begin my two-day journey back to the field hospital. Upon arrival in the city, I observed two men fighting, one of whom had been seriously injured. I treated him for his injuries and at the same time talked to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. I then traveled two days, overnight, and arrived home without incident.

Two weeks later I repeated my journey. Upon arriving in the city, I was approached by the young man I had treated. He told me that he had known I carried money and medicines. He said, "Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. But just as we were about to move into your camp, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards.

At this I laughed and said that I was certainly all alone out in that jungle campsite. The young man pressed the point, however, and said, "No sir, I was not the only person to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all

counted them.

It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone."

At this point in the sermon, one of the men in the congregation jumped to his feet and interrupted the missionary and asked if he could tell him the exact day that this happened. The missionary told the congregation the date, and the man who interrupted told him this story:

"On the night of your incident in Africa, it was morning here and I was preparing to go play golf. I was about to putt when I felt the urge to pray for you. In fact, the urging of the Lord was so strong, I called men in this church to meet with me here in the sanctuary to pray for you. Would all of those men who met with me on that day stand up?"

The men who had met together to pray that day stood up. The missionary wasn't concerned with who they were--he was too busy counting how many men he saw. There were 26.

[With the author unknown, this account is unverifiable, but surely we believe that God is able "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Submitted for publication by Willis A. Nisly, Hutchinson, KS]



Thoughts about Guns (and Other Issues That Draw Fire)

Gideon Yutzy, Hutchinson, KS

Questions abounded recently when a young white man entered a church in South Carolina and shot nine black worshipers. But perhaps the most prominent question for me was, *Why are the gun laws in America so relaxed that even a psychopath can get one relatively easily?*

I gained insights into that conundrum in a book I happened to be reading: *A History of the American People*, by Paul Johnson. A historian in the best sense of the word, Mr. Johnson has the ability to make connections between the past and the present. Guns, he shows, are ingrained in the American psyche because they were originally needed for survival—as defense against enemies and as offense for the abundant game. (Aside: the average American male of the mid-1700’s consumed 200 pounds of red meat per year, causing him to

be two inches taller than his British counterpart).

While my own experience with guns has been limited, I thought of Reuben P. Yutzy, my ancestor of a century and a half ago who made guns for a living. Leroy Beachy, an Amish historian from Ohio, happens to own one of the few surviving Yutzy rifles and he tells Reuben’s story in his recent book, *Unser Leit*. I noted several things from the book. First, Reuben is the only Amish gun-smith on record and second, he was in business during the Civil War.

Given this information, I wondered if this unusual ancestor of mine was nonresistant. While details are sketchy, it is almost certain Reuben associated with the Anabaptist church all his life. Thus it is unlikely that he sold guns for combat. It is more likely that Reuben saw gun-making as a marketable skill, a needed craft in his quasi-

wilderness setting. Indeed, a few of his exquisitely-crafted rifles remain and sell today for prices comparable to my yearly salary (which may not strike you as that impressive—but still). In one case, a gentleman, unaware of the significance of Yutzy rifles, listed his on auction as an “old muzzleloader.” He was pleasantly surprised by the handsome amount for which it sold.

All of which was very remarkable. But what, I wondered, do I really think about guns?

First of all, I am an amiable family man. The subject of guns is not very germane to my existence (I’m happy to say) and I will not dedicate large amounts of time and energy to thinking about it. Nonetheless, I refreshed myself on the main arguments—from both sides.

Those against guns sing the praises of countries who legislate strict gun control, such as England where, according to *The Economist*, only one mass shooting was recorded since 2000. Though these figures do not account for population differences, America saw 133 shootings during that same time period. Several more anti-gun ideas include: (1.) Overturn the second amendment—unless everyone uses weapons from that time period. (2.) Ban the use of firearms for

anyone who is too young or mentally unstable (3.) Provide assault rifles to law enforcement officials only.

Pro-gun Americans counter argue that guns in the hands of the right people make society safer. If only more civilians carried concealed weapons, madmen would think twice before opening fire into a crowd. Further, gun control does not reduce crime because people, not guns, do the killing. It is but common sense, they argue, for all loving, responsible household heads to protect their families by keeping some manner of firearm in their homes.

My conclusion? I’m against guns. After all, the pro-gun arguments are moot points in light of Jesus’ teachings. Didn’t He teach (by example, ultimately) that we may need to give up our physical lives at the hands of sinful people? Should we fear those who, though able to kill our bodies, cannot harm our souls?

That was my conclusion—predictable enough given my demographic. My hunch is that most readers of this publication, like Reuben Yutzy, would never own (or make) a gun unless it would be to obtain meat or control the varmint population.

After which came the final,

most sobering part of my thought experiment: how did I really reach my conclusion? Do I feel bound to my conclusion because of the subculture to which I belong? Do I eschew guns because owning one connotes a plebeian image? Have I set aside my biases and presuppositions?

I came to a realization. Regardless of whether one is pro-gun or anti-gun, one could reach a position without being guided by a love for truth. *Knee jerk*. That was the word that came to me. According to my trusty Merriam-Webster's dictionary, knee jerk people are "characterized by reacting with an automatic, predictable response."

Thus the issue of guns, clear cut as it may seem to us Anabaptists, is not the crux. The crux is the part about being knee jerk. The gun issue, after all, will be replaced by other knotty issues, like: *What is good music? Should we follow professional sports? What should be our response to legalized gay marriage?*

And as those myriad questions arise, what will guide us in answering them? Will it be the number of likes we can acquire on Facebook? Will it be the view that gains us credence with the blue collar, working-class crowd (or for that matter, the beatnik, hipster crowd)?

Or will a zeal for Truth guide us? No one will ever know Jesus without listening to His voice on all issues. Thankfully, that Voice does not speak to us in a vacuum but uses travel-worn means to guide us. As John Wesley put it in his now famous Wesleyan Quadrilateral, God's guidance has four aspects: Scripture, tradition (history), reason, and experience. A community where the Wesleyan Quadrilateral is the norm—count me in.

Consider the people who have learned to form honest, unbiased conclusions. Such people are refreshing. Why? Because one never knows the finer points of their position on a given issue. In short, they aren't knee jerk. Conversely, someone who toes the party line can state his views on one issue and it will immediately be clear how he feels on most other issues.

It is time we listen, amid today's cacophony, to the Voice that guided Elijah. He still speaks, far away from the noise of the thoroughfare. His directive remains wonderfully simple: "Follow Me." While it is seldom intuitive or popular, it is always life-changing. And those who heed it, passionately and in every area of life, have yet to be led astray.



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Periodicals

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Today it is common to spend more to amuse a child than was spent to educate his father.

• • • • •

Christians are born—not made.

• • • • •

Periodic Christianity is perpetual hypocrisy.

• • • • •

Church has two purposes—*gathering in* and *sending out*.

• • • • •

Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

• • • • •

Depression can come from a lack of commitment.

• • • • •

Knowledge humbles a great man, astonishes a common man, and puffs up a little man.

• • • • •

Salvation is free; discipleship is costly.

• • • • •

A goal is a dream with a deadline.

• • • • •

He who can read but won't, is worse off than he who cannot read.