



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

SEPTEMBER 2019

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Calvary Messenger

September 2019

Purpose of Calvary Messenger is:**To propagate sound Biblical doctrine;****To stimulate a deeper study of God's Word;****To anchor and fortify the faith of Christians;****To point lost and dying souls to Christ the Savior;****To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;****And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.**

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¿Con Que Pagaremos?

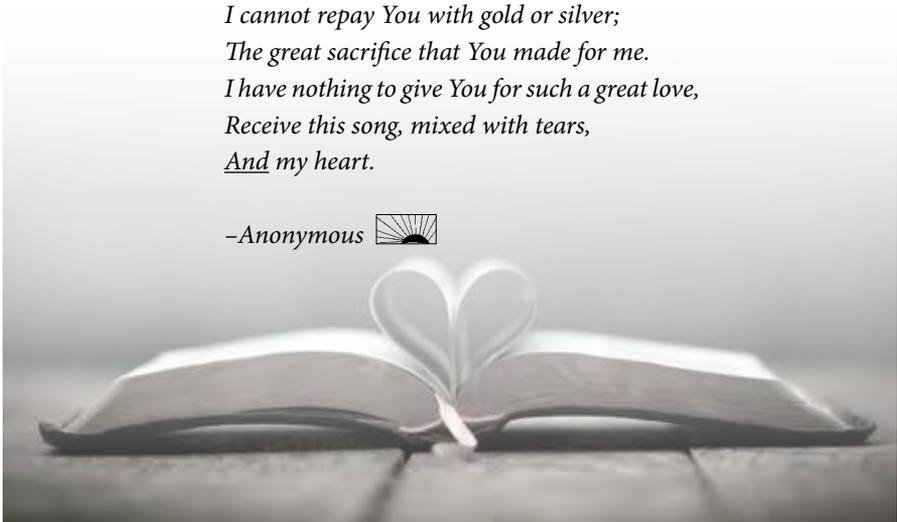
¿Con qué pagaremos amor tan inmenso?
Que diste tu vida por el pecador;
En cambio recibes la ofrenda humilde,
La ofrenda humilde, Señor Jesucristo,
De mi corazón.

No puedo pagarte con oro ni plata
El gran sacrificio que hiciste por mí;
No tengo que darte por tanto amarme,
Recibe este canto mezclado con llanto,
Y my corazón.

*How can we repay so great a love?
That You gave Your life for the sinner?
In exchange, receive this humble offering
This humble offering, Lord Jesus Christ
From my heart.*

*I cannot repay You with gold or silver;
The great sacrifice that You made for me.
I have nothing to give You for such a great love,
Receive this song, mixed with tears,
And my heart.*

-Anonymous 



Languages for God's Kingdom

"Now the whole earth had one language and one speech" (Genesis 11:1).

The railroad tracks crossed the road at an acute angle that made it difficult for Dad to see trains approaching from the right side. I leaned forward in the passenger's seat to see if a train was coming around the curve on my side and was shaken by the discordant blast of the train's horn! The locomotive's bright light pierced through the afternoon light, adding to the warning. Instead of responding to my dad's question, I interpreted the sounds that I heard and yelled, "NO!" Unfortunately, my answer was not what I should have given. Fortunately, we made it safely across the tracks.

Even before we are born, we hear sounds that bring responses. After we are born, we begin to recognize meanings for those sounds, and finally we can repeat those sounds with meaning. We begin to talk. As we gain proficiency in our language, we use metaphors, similes, puns, and poetic language to brighten and

enrich our communication.

In the beginning of time, mankind spoke with one language. But in Genesis 11 God chose to hinder mankind's efforts and brought confusion by changing their speech and understanding. Mankind has been frustrated ever since.

While there are many frustrations in learning new languages, there are blessings and ministries that open with acquiring any level of proficiency in other languages. While there is no spiritual merit in any language, we do give our offspring an advantage in giving them "free" languages that they so easily learn as children.

Many homes in our constituency are bilingual. Of course, we should be fluent and proficient in the common language wherever we live. Parents can encourage an openness to other languages by the attitudes we show about other languages we encounter. There are places in the world where you can readily

hear and use multiple languages. I recall hearing two Canadian-born Mennonite men talking casually about a piece of machinery and to my best estimation one of them used five different languages in one sentence. While we may never be fluent in many languages, growing up with a second language will almost certainly make it easier to learn and understand other languages. Christ's final words to His followers should open our minds and hearts to the needs around us, from our own Jerusalem to the far corners of the world and their languages (Matthew 28:19-20).

Besides the approximate 7,000¹ verbal languages in the world, there is a myriad of ways to communicate. The audible languages include speech, music, non-word sounds—including grunts, and more. Mankind has given machines languages that effectively communicate to us. I clearly got the warning message at the railroad crossing years ago.

When God gave mankind the language of music, He greatly enriched our world. Music complements the message of the words and possibly communicates the meaning on a subconscious level. Music aids memorization to

the extent that, according to a state policeman, an inebriated person can often pass the ABC's field test if he can get started singing the ABC's. The language of music aids us in remembering and appreciating hymns and praises to God. This is especially true in acquired languages. The poetic language in an acquired language can become more meaningful as we combine it with the language of music.

This is true for the poem in the Meditation section this month. It contains two stanzas of a Spanish song. As is possible, the translation loses some of the richness of the original language. The most significant part of this song, to me, is the change in the first stanza “**from** my heart” to “**and** my heart” in the final stanza. The language of poetry and music helped me appreciate that concept of devotion to God.

Nature has many languages. Animals use audible languages that even humans can understand. We can easily distinguish the difference between contented bird sounds and the warning signals that speak of nearby threats.

“The heavens declare the glory of God...” (Psalm 19). Their language is universal. They also declare God's righteousness. “The heavens declare

his righteousness, and all the people see his glory” (Psalm 97:6). Jesus referenced the weather signs in the sky in Matthew 16:2-3.

Recently, the farmer across the road brought his combine and began cutting wheat. Although there are other ways to observe the maturity of crops, the language of color is a beautiful way to communicate the time for harvest. Jesus desires that we would be observant of the ripe harvest of souls around us (John 4:35).

There are countless other visual languages in our world. Facial expressions have many similarities across the globe. Body language can communicate our feelings and intentions. Our actions express our feelings when we cross the street to avoid someone. I suppose all of these, and others, are what we call “signs and wonders” that communicate when the spoken language is not common.

God desires that we use languages for His kingdom. “...look on the fields (*read the signs*); for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35). He has distributed His gifts of language to each of us. Those gifts are often unique to our person. Some of us struggle with expressing our thoughts verbally, even in our

native language, but we may have an open facial expression that speaks God’s love to those we meet each day. Some people may equate writing an article for the *Calvary Messenger* to getting a root canal at the dentist but can easily share their faith with the person pumping gas next to them at the gas station. While many people enjoy singing psalms and hymns, they may not be able to read or write music. God will bless the cultivation of His gifts.

We have the advantage of having the Holy Scriptures in written form in our native language. Various organizations are translating the Scriptures into local languages, so people can hear them in their mother tongue. Native-tongue Bible translations can speak to the heart in ways that may not happen in an acquired language. (All-Nations Bible Translation, or ABT, is a conservative Anabaptist organization that is carrying out that vision.) It is often difficult to have a heart-to-heart talk when the native languages are not the same. Long-term missionaries can more clearly understand the nuances in an acquired language because of years of exercise.

Children often come crying to

parents when two of their friends are whispering secrets to each other. The feeling of exclusion can be very painful. There is a satisfaction when you can catch a few words of a conversation in an acquired language to know that they are talking about selling cows instead of getting rid of the foreigner in their midst. At the least, it is easier to laugh along with a joke when you catch the gist of the conversation. Visitors who attend our gatherings may feel uneasy to be in an unfamiliar setting. We demonstrate the Christian grace of love by speaking the common language even when we are not in direct conversation with them.

Our personal worlds are becoming increasingly global as we encounter many cultures and ethnicities in our local towns. Even if we never travel outside our country, we do encounter many different languages. Even within our own subculture we hear dialects that reveal different locales. We may have potatoes for dinner while our friends in the south eat taters. How can we serve our God best in relating to languages and things we call “strange”? Is it important? How can we broaden our world?

Broadening our world is possible

even if we do not travel far from our communities. While we usually do not consider food as a language, we can prepare our children for a life of service in other parts of the world by introducing them to ethnic foods. All of us have acquired tastes and most of that happened at Mom and Dad’s table eating “normal” foods for our community. But an open mind usually comes before an open mouth in trying new foods. Many of our Mennonite cookbooks have recipes for ethnic foods that can prepare our children for the foods that can shock our palates when we experience them in a full ethnic experience. Trying a local ethnic restaurant can help us learn to enjoy the richness of the world around us.

Whether (or not) we acquire languages at home or abroad, our focus should be on speaking Christ’s love to all people. An openness to the variety and richness of the people around us will help us to draw people to Christ. It may even prepare us for the celestial language when we will unite with saints from all peoples, kindreds, and tongues to sing praises to the Lamb for all eternity. Worthy is the Lamb!

¹ *Christianity Today*, June 24, 2019

–AY 

They Do Not Know

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Let me tell you about several of my grandchildren. Mauren and Elya were scheming and planning something girlishly cute around their younger brothers, Isaiah and Joseph. I overheard Mauren say to Elya, “And the boys don’t even know that they don’t know!” Pretty neat way to get and keep the upper hand, eh?

Somehow, it always seems to be superior to know what others do not know. In adults, it would appear a bit arrogant to gloat over knowing what others do not know. Children can do this in innocence; adults might discover their guilt when they realize they should have spoken and didn’t or kept some juicy news to themselves.

In Acts 23 is the moving story of over forty men who swore by a serious oath that they would not eat or drink until they killed Brother Paul. They would request another hearing in court for Paul, and on location they would break out and kill him. They might have become

very hungry and thirsty, for Paul made his escape from Jerusalem that night under the escort of 200 Roman soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen. They thought they knew that Paul and his Roman captors did not know of their deadly scheme. Paul’s nephew heard of it and informed the chief captain. The forty men thought they knew what others did not know.

The intrigue of this story is that the chief captain was informed and by that knew what the 40 men didn’t know that he knew.

There are many people in our world who don’t know that they don’t know about God and Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent to be the Savior of the world. Not knowing that they do not know is a sad state of affairs. That is the truest form of ignorance. But even so, it is not an ignorance that can be lightly overlooked by the God in heaven. We should, as ambassadors for Christ, participate in programs to help inform the masses of humanity who do not know the Lord.

Besides that truest form of ignorance, there is also what can be called willful ignorance. Willful ignorance is when knowing could be chosen and pursued, but a choice is made to remain ignorant. Peter cites men who “willingly are ignorant” concerning the return in judgment by Jesus Christ as is clearly stated “by the word of God,” and that “the Lord is not slack concerning His promise.” This is addressed in an interesting and broader dimension in II Peter 3.

Those who are truly ignorant, who do not know that they do not know, are without excuse according to Romans 1:17-21. How much more is guilt and condemnation upon those who are willingly ignorant.

There are also people who glory in their ignorance and mock those who make some effort to know the Lord Jesus and the Word of God. Scoffers are not treated lightly by the Holy Lord God. They not only resist the Lord as they walk after their own lusts, but they defame and ridicule those who try to know God and His will for their lives. Their chosen resistance against knowing the higher and nobler things of God causes them to be combative against the learners and disciples of Christ. They are combative with malicious words to discount the seriousness of revealed truth, the knowledge unto

salvation, and holiness of life.

There are times and places where this combative stance includes becoming physically injurious. That may at occasions lead to evil reports in the press or air waves and incite public opinion against the believers. Many people in our world suffer from malicious verbal attacks and many are physically injured or even murdered for their faith in Jesus. Truth cannot be attacked to any real degree; whatever one says against the truth cannot change or cancel that truth. Therefore, the enemies of truth go after those who know and embrace the truth of God. Truth will always triumph.

Ignorance, as an enemy against the truth of God, is seldom neutral, passive, or without resistance of some kind. Ignorance, whether real, willful, or combative, must take sides against truth, or else it must repent and turn to God in humility for guidance and alignment with it in real life.

The older girlies may glory in knowing what their little brothers do not know that they do not know, but for believers, we should be burdened for the lost in sin who do not know the Lord.

Childish immaturity can, by the grace of God, transition from an immature thought of glee that thinks “they don’t know that they do not know” toward a confidence in Christ

that we know that we know Him and commit ourselves to keeping His commandments. That idea is spoken by John in a precious verse in I John 2:3,4. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." The whole enterprise of salvation is based on knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. We thank God that we can "know that we know Him."

The Bottom Line is that all believers in Jesus should rally in some way to join those who are making efforts toward evangelizing the world. Many efforts and sacrifices are being made by faithful and sincere Christians to inform the world of the God of the universe, the God of all living, the God of truth and eventual justice and judgment, and of Jesus Christ our blessed Savior. Knowing God enjoins upon us the love and responsibility to share that knowledge with others. 

Announcements

Faithful Men Seminar

November 9, 2019

Rebuilding

Disaster Strikes — Tom Johnson, Plain City, OH

Picking up the Pieces — Denver Yoder, Somerset, OH

Operation Rebuild — Dave Snyder, Plain City, OH

Breakout Sessions

a. Pornography & Masturbation — Ben Waldner, Plain City, OH

b. Technology in the Home — Dave Snyder, Plain City, OH

Registration Deadline: October 26, 2019

Hosted by Free Indeed, Paradise, PA

For registration contact:

Free Indeed Ministries

143 Harristown Rd.

Paradise, PA 17562

(717) 442-4973

dking@freeindeed.biz

This seminar is sponsored by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd

Plain City, OH 43064

614-873-1199

www.dlmohio.org



Announcements from the Editor

New Feature

We are trying a new feature this month. The center page spread can be pulled out for posting on the refrigerator or some visible place to review at your leisure if you so desire.

Fax Number

I regret that my fax number has not been working for you. Please use the following number if you choose to fax information to the editor: 800-956-7850. 

Thank you, Aaron Yoder

Salt and Light Training Seminar

September 2019

Are our neighbors in North America a new “unreached people group”? Does the typical young person in your neighborhood know who Jesus is? Has the Anabaptist community simply accepted the lost around us as normal and believe we need to board an airplane to be a missionary? What would the impact be if the Amish, Mennonite, German Baptist, and other Biblical church groups became intentional about being missionaries as a part of our daily lives?

To learn more about this outreach opportunity, register for upcoming Salt & Light training seminar:

Haven Fellowship, Plain City, OH

September 26, 27, and 28, 2019 (Thursday evening, Friday all day, and Saturday morning)

Registration deadline: September 3 (register by August 2 for \$50 discount)

Cost: \$150 per person or married couple (includes meals and meeting cost)

For more information or to register, call: (330) 893-2428

Email: saltandlight@camoh.org

Visit: www.Christianaidministries.org/salt-light 



What is God doing among Muslims?
How can we begin to engage with them?
At the Muslim Impact Training Seminar we will explore
Muslim worldview, history, beliefs and cultures
to better equip Anabaptists to engage with Muslims.

**Muslim Impact
Training Seminar
September 19-21, 2019**
Location: Lancaster, PA

2019 Speakers Include
Allan Roth, Elijah Yoder, Arnold Eby, Chris Stoltzfus,
Kenneth Kauffman, Dean Taylor, Brent Stoltzfus,
Duff and Kathy Browne, Jay Smith, David Bercot,
Edsel Burdige, Stephen Russell, and more.

REGISTER AT:

www.gifc.net
mit@gifc.net

Encouragement for the Faithful

James 5:7-12

Bill Miller, Phoenix, AZ

Vs. 7 — “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

You, the person who has truly become the brother of Jesus Christ,

have the full attention of the Lord. He is watching the fruit of our “earth,” our flesh, which is under His direction and guidance. May the Lord receive the 100-fold fruits of our humble, faithful, and loving work in the Kingdom of God as the early and latter rains fall.

Vs. 8 — “Be ye also patient; stablish

your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

You, brother of Jesus Christ, be patient. Don't run ahead of God's direction or get frustrated when you don't see immediate results for your faithful labors. Let your faith in God grow deep. Trust in Him, for He cares for you, His child. Let His Word dictate your life. The more you do this, the closer you get to the Lord, and the closer He gets to you. He loves you.

Vs. 9 — “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold the judge standeth at the door.”

Forgive those who have hurt you and sinned against you, otherwise God cannot forgive you. Granting full forgiveness to those is the exact way Jesus forgave you. He allowed your sins to kill Him while He trusted His Father to raise Him back to life. Now you can have a father-son relationship with His Father. Forgive those who have hurt you so that your heavenly Father can show His love by forgiving you and you can love Him. Otherwise, the greatest judgment against you is the Father not being able to relate to you because of your unforgiving heart.

Vs. 10 — “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”

Receive the prophets' examples of patience. Receive the real people who speak and teach the truth of God.

Listen to those who present the truth with love, accuracy, and dedication, and who lead a life of holiness despite what others think or during uncontrollable circumstances.

Vs. 11 — “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

It was when Job proved his dedication to God that He restored all that he had lost. God was full of tender mercy throughout Job's experience. It was the devil who challenged Job, and once Job declared the truth, his life was in total dedication and praise to God. Let's endure, be happy, and joyful during these experiences. What greater joy can we have than to endure for our Savior's sake after all He has done for us? He is patiently waiting for us while we declare and prove our dedication to Him.

Vs. 12 — “But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.”

Let's not place our trust in anything except Jesus and His Word. May our yes to Him and His cause be a full YES, and our no to the devil and his evil ways a solid NO. Amen.

My brethren, you are where you are because of choices you made each step of your life. Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul, and all the thousands of martyrs, ended up where they did

because of choices they made every step of their lives.

Willing, obedient, and humble service is a choice between two

options. Praise God, we have many examples of these in the Scriptures, our Anabaptist history, and in our present day.



Still the World in Darkness Lies

Steven Troyer, Sugarcreek, OH

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh...” (Romans 9:1-3).

When I read this passage, I am uncertain whether I can actually stand with Paul, but I am not uncertain whether this is a godly condition to be in. The world, including many we know and love, lies in darkness. For us to bear no conscious heaviness, grief, or burden is un-Christlike.

Around us are people walking in darkness. Some we know by name. Laurita’s grandmother. Lisa’s brother. James Clark. Some we know by name only. Some are the subjects of magazine covers at checkout counters. Some are heroes of the sports world. Some are preachers, singers, or writers of false gospels. Some are lovers of pleasure. Some are disobedient to parents. Some are without natural affection. Some have never tasted that God is gracious.

Others, however, have turned, after having been washed, to “the mire.” That mire may be the “weak and beggarly elements” of self-righteousness. It may be excesses of riot. It may be materialism. It may be apathy.

But today some of them met their Maker. All of them have come a day closer to meeting Him.

The rich man in the Lazarus story believed his brothers were in danger and begged Abraham to send Lazarus to them. Abraham didn’t deny the danger or the tragedy but affirmed the sufficiency of God’s revelation through Moses and the prophets.

Recently our deacon preached on suffering. Here is a suffering we should participate in. Have any of us witnessed (let alone engaged in) weeping for others’ hardness? I have, but so rarely I scarcely think it is normal for American Christians.

If a man’s silence is nearer the truth than his words, might his tears be nearer yet?

Jesus was moved with compassion when He saw the multitudes. Will we be moved with Him? Will we be

moved with one another? We are, after all, with Jesus in the world. The world still “lies in darkness.” We know Who is the Light of the world. We are His children; children of light. We are brothers together of the Son of God.

What we do, and what we do together, matters. It not only matters for our well-being. It matters for the well-becoming of the world—the world to whom God is yet showing His mercy. He showed His mercy to us long enough for us to repent. While we are in this world, it is a great privilege to work together for Him.



marriages

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

Chupp-Steiner

Bro. Brad, son of Mark and Freida Chupp, Eden Valley, MN, and Sis. Lucy, daughter of Kenneth and Susan Steiner, Paynesville, MN, on July 20, 2019, at Paynesville Evangelical Free Church for Believers Fellowship Mennonite Church by Mel Beiler.

Funk-Beiler

Bro. Kendrick, son of Dana and Susan Funk, Chambersburg, PA, and Sis. Rebecca, daughter of Lloyd and Bethany Beiler, Greensburg, PA, on July 27, 2019, at Word of Life, for Trauger Mennonite by Merv Lapp.

Hofer-Mast

Bro. Brandon, son of John and Grace Hofer, Lethbridge, AB, Canada, and Sis. Bethany, daughter of Jon & Sarah Mast, Russellville, KY, on June 8, 2019, at Providence Mennonite Fellowship by Jason Miller.

Lopez-Brenneman

Bro. Mauricio, son of Francisco Lopez and Natividad Morales, Las Casitas, El Salvador, and Sis. Hannah, daughter of Henry and Vera Brenneman, Rochelle, VA, at Iglesia Rhema for Iglesia Fuente de Vida (Fountain of Life Church), Texistepeque, El Salvador, on July 20, 2019, by Joseph Miller.

Miller-Mast

Bro. Jordan, son of Earl and Patricia Miller, Cross Hill, SC, and Sis. Racine, daughter of Russell and Regina Mast, Plain City, OH, on July 6, 2019, at United Bethel Mennonite Church for Bethesda A.M. Church, by Elmer Stoltzfus.

Miller-Peachey

Bro. Chadwin, son of Daniel and Cristine Miller, Cottage Grove, TN, and Sis. Elizabeth, daughter of Louie Jr. and Olive Peachey, Woodville, NY, on July 12, 2019, at Northern Light Christian Fellowship by Wilmer Peachey.

Miller- Stoltzfus

Bro. Friedrich, son of Paul and Miriam Miller, Sugarcreek, OH, and Sis. Renita, daughter of Dave and Leah Ruth Stoltzfus, Honeybrook, PA, on July 20,

2019, at Conestoga Mennonite Church for Summitview Christian Church by Dave Stoltzfus.

Witmer-Miller

Bro. Walter, son of Daniel and Carol Witmer, McKenney, VA, and Sis. Rachel, daughter of Tim and Vivian Miller, McKenney, VA, on June 15, 2019, at Olive Branch Baptist Church for McKenney Mennonite Church by Tim Miller.

Yoder-Beiler

Bro. Kevin, son of Edward and Lois Yoder, Huntsville, AR, and Sis. Rhoda, daughter of Reuben and Naomi Beiler, Gap, PA, on July 6, 2019, at Martindale Fellowship Center for Summitview Christian Church by Dave Stoltzfus. 

cradle roll

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

Beiler, Sheldon and Faith (Zook), Cherry Tree, PA, second child and daughter, Jennika Brielle, June 25, 2019.

Eash, Brian and Kimberly (Yoder), Vanleer, TN, fifth child, fourth son, Jasper Cole, July 8, 2019.

Gingerich, Josh and Judith (Swarey), Auburn, KY, third child, second daughter, Kenzie Lyn, June 30, 2019.

Horst, Duane and Malisa (Peachey), Arthur, IL, fourth child, second daughter, Elena Saree, July 8, 2019.

Kanagy, Ron and Larissa (Miller), Accident, MD, first child and son, Trenton Zane, April 5, 2019.

Kauffman, Curtis and Kelly (Shenk), Leon, IA, fourth child, second daughter, Ariana Rose, June 12, 2019.

Kauffman, Steven and Marilyn (Brenneman), Free Union, VA, second child, first daughter, Heather Naomi, July 19, 2019.

Kreider, Dan and Audrey (Kuhns), Arcola, IL, second child and daughter, Roxana Peace, July 9, 2019.

Kurtz, Michael and Elizabeth (Brubaker), Adams, NY, eighth child, fourth daughter, Sarah Joanne, June 27, 2019.

Mast, Caleb and Lisa Mast, Ronks, PA, fourth child, second daughter, Heidi Ann, June 25, 2019.

Mast, Robert and Amanda (King), Vanleer, TN, sixth child, third son, Kendric Robert, June 18, 2019.

Miller, Matthias and Kathleen (Yoder), Huntsville, AR, first child and son, Gordon Allan, July 11, 2019.

Miller, Nelson and Lydia (Miller), Owenton, KY, first child and daughter, Kaitlyn Beth, June 29, 2019.

Miller, Vince and Juanita (Beachy), Huntland, TN, fourth child, third son, Karter Bennett, Jan. 4, 2019.

Otto, Mark and Robyn (Godwin), Humboldt, IL, second child, first daughter, Miranda Grace, May 21, 2019.

Rohrer, Kelton and Sabrina (Miller), Atwater, MN, first child and son, Kenton Duane, July 16, 2019.

Ropp, Dave and Arlene (Yoder), New Philadelphia, OH, third child, first daughter, Addison Whitney, July 11, 2019.

Smucker, Kevin and Krystal (Barkman), McConnelsville, OH, fourth child and son, Ravi Evander, June 1, 2019.

Stoltzfus, John and Melody (Ebersole), Parkesburg, PA, second child, first son, John Daniel, May 19, 2019.

Stoltzfus, Kyle and Annie (Stoltzfus), Sarasota, FL, third child, second daughter, Cheyenne Kate, July 19, 2019.

Troyer, Merlin and Amy (Gingerich) Garden Grove, IA, fourth child, first daughter, Sierra Nicole, June 19, 2019.

Weaver, Levi Jr. and Glenda (Stutzman), Auburn, KY, eighth child, fourth daughter, Gwen Elizabeth, July 8, 2019.

Yoder, Justin and Melissa (Good), Mannsville, NY, fourth child, third son, Kadrik Lynn, June 17, 2019.

Zook, Anthony and Judith (Yoder), Wytheville, VA, fourth and fifth children, twins, third son and second daughter, Alexander Blake and Addison Kate, July 10, 2019. 

ordinations

May the grace of God be upon our brothers as they minister faithfully. Let us pray for them.

Bro. Josh Gingerich, 28, (wife, Judith Swarey), Auburn, KY, was ordained as a minister of the Plainview Mennonite Church on June 2, 2019. Preordination messages were given by Raymond Fisher, Greenville, TN. The charge was given by Luke Troyer, assisted by Raymond Fisher and Jim Gingerich.

Bro. Galen Helmuth, 32, (wife, Edith Beachy), Huntland, TN, was called through the church and was ordained as a minister at Belvidere Mennonite Church. Preordination messages were given by John Roy Miller, Crossville, TN. The charge was given by Stephen Beachy, assisted by Perry Miller and John Mast.

Bro. Marcus Yoder, 36, (wife, Becky Miller), Russellville, OH, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of bishop for Still Waters Mennonite Church (Brown County) on July 28, 2019. The charge was given by Dave Miller, assisted by Paul Weaver and Perry Troyer. 

Kauffman, Mary S., 71, of Leola, PA, died June 16, 2019, at her home after having been diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor on March 30, 2019. She was born April 14, 1948, daughter of the late Amos Z. and Lydia P. (Stoltzfus) Stoltzfus.

She was a member of Weavertown A. M. Church, Bird-in-Hand, PA.

On April 13, 1968, she was married to David S. Kauffman. To this union were born five sons: D. Glenn Kauffman, Gordonville, PA; Lauren (Glenda Stoll) Kauffman, Odon, IN; Stephen (Valerie Mann) Kauffman, Ronks, PA; Michael (Sarah Johnson) Kauffman, Paradise, PA; and Anthony (Judy Riehl) Kauffman, Gordonville, PA; and 16 grandchildren. Other survivors include brothers: Steve (Mary Etta) Stoltzfus, John (Ruth) Stoltzfus, and Ivan (Darla) Stoltzfus; sisters: Anne (Ray) Yoder and Barbara (Nelson) Schrock.

Preceding her in death: a brother, David Stoltzfus, and a son, Stanley Lee Kauffman, who died at birth.

The funeral was held on June 19, at Ridgeview Mennonite Church with Nathan Bange, Glenn Miller, Marvin Kauffman, and David Stoltzfoos serving. Interment was in the Weavertown A.M. Cemetery.

Shenk, Demetrius Eugene, passed from his mother's womb to the loving arms of Jesus on May 27, 2019, in

Hutchinson, KS. The signs of the fall were evident in his little body but so was the beauty of the image of God.

Demetrius is survived by his parents, Brian and Cynthia Shenk, and sister Aliyah of Hutchinson; grandparents: Marvin and Rose Kauffman of Leon, IA, and Harry and Edith Shenk of Partridge, KS; 21 aunts and uncles, and 21 cousins.

We look forward to being where God Himself will wipe away every tear from our eyes, where there will be no more death, no more tears, and no more pain. We rejoice to think that Demetrius never had to experience any of those things.

Demetrius is in the presence of Jesus, enjoying the warmth of His embrace, and being overwhelmed with His incredible love. We long to meet him there, even as he longs to meet every one of us there.

To walk through this valley of grief without the presence of God and His people would be inconceivable. Your love, concern, and support have been incredible. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and we bless you in the name of Jesus.

Sommers, Emma L., 89, of Amherst, VA, passed peacefully from this life to her eternal rest on June 24, 2019, at Blue Ridge Christian Home, Raphine, VA.

She was born on January 22, 1930, in Sugarcreek, OH, to Lester and Katie (Troyer) Troyer.

On April 5, 1956, she was united in

marriage to Allen Sommers, and they shared 63 years together.

She gave her heart to the Lord in her youth and faithfully served the Lord all her years. She was a member of Bridgewater Mennonite Church.

She is survived by her husband, Allen; two sons: Samuel (Suzanne) Sommers, Franklin, PA; Jason (Miriam) Sommers, Rural Retreat, VA; three daughters: Sarai (James) Horst, Port Clements, BC; Joanna Horner, Piney River, VA; Lois (Wesley) Heatwole, Auburn, KY; 31 grandchildren; 25 great grandchildren; one brother, Lester Troyer, Jr. and three sisters: Mattie Schlabach, Malinda (Roy) Mast, and Laura (Jacob) Hershberger.

She was preceded in death by her parents, two brothers: Menno Troyer and Melvin Troyer; one sister, Alma Beachy, son-in-law David Horner, and one grandchild.

The family wishes to express their sincere appreciation for the sympathy, comforting words, prayers and all the expressions of kindness and concern.

To the Bridgewater Mennonite Church, we appreciate the support, love, and kindness you have shown, first to our dear parents and also to us as a family.

Also, a huge thank-you to the staff at Blue Ridge Christian Home. We will be forever grateful for the awesome care you gave to our precious mother. 

Recommendations for the Better Life

Marvin E. Yoder, Meyersdale, PA

- It is better to have a small bank account and live a godly life than to have a fat checkbook and live wickedly.

Psalm 37:16; A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked.

- One day of humble service is better than 1,000 days of enjoying the pleasures of sin.

Psalm 84:10; For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the

house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

- It is better to trust the Lord in difficult circumstances than to expect others to solve the problem.

Psalm 118:8; It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

- It is better to trust the Lord than to rely on government officials.

Psalm 118:9; It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

- The commandments of God are more valuable than one million dollars.

Psalm 119:72; The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver.

- The wisdom of God is better than anything (or everything) on your wish list.

Proverbs 8:11; For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.

- A good job and personal income are better than a welfare check.

Proverbs 8:19; My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver.

- A modest income with the fear of God is better than the headaches of a six-digit salary.

Proverbs 15:16; Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure with trouble.

- A tossed salad with loving friends is better than a steak dinner with nitpickers.

Proverbs 15:17; Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred.

- A faltering economy where people are treated fairly is better than

a booming economy where people are exploited.

Proverbs 16:8; Better is a little with righteousness, than vast revenues without justice.

- Seeking to gain wisdom and understanding is better than striving for the almighty dollar.

Proverbs 16:16; How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

- Having a humble spirit and living among common folk is better than sharing stock market gains with prideful folk.

Proverbs 16:19; Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

- Controlling one's temper is better than being a general in the army.

- Controlling one's reactions is better than having the strongest military in the world.

Proverbs 16:32; He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

- A piece of bread without butter or jelly in a peaceful setting is better than a seven-course dinner where

there is argument and bickering.

Proverbs 17:1; Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife.

- It is better to be poor, but truthful and honest, rather than demonstrating one's folly by lying and dishonesty.

Proverbs 19:1; Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

- It is better to be poor and kind than to be one whose truthfulness is suspect.

Proverbs 19:22; What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar.

- It may be better to live in the attic than in the main part of the house with a bickering wife.

Proverbs 21:9; Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

- It may be better to live in a cabin by oneself than with an argumentative and angry wife.

Proverbs 21:19; Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.

- It is better to be unassuming and let others extol our accomplishments

rather than being presumptuous and later humiliated in the presence of others.

Proverbs 25:7; For it is better that he say to you, "Come up here," than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen.

- It is better to speak truth honestly than to love half-heartedly.

Proverbs 27:5; Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.

- It may be better to ask a good neighbor for help rather than a relative living at a distance.

Proverbs 27:10; Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.

- It is better not to make a promise than to make a promise and not keep it.

Ecclesiastes 5:5; Better to not vow than to vow and not pay.

- A good reputation is better than the most delightful perfume or manly deodorant.

Ecclesiastes 7:1; A good name is better than precious ointment.

- It may be better to go to a funeral than to a fund-raising dinner. It will help us to consider our humanity and the certainty of death.

Ecclesiastes 7:2; Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart.

- Serious reflection on issues of life will do more to improve our spiritual condition than the light-hearted amusement of a comedian.

Ecclesiastes 7:3; Sorrow is better than laughter, for by a sad countenance the heart is made better.

- It is better to hear the rebuke of a wise man than to hear the flattery of those who want to make you feel good.

Ecclesiastes 7:5; It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools.

- It is better to loosen a nut using some WD 40 than twisting the bolt off with sheer strength.

Ecclesiastes 9:16; Then I said: "Wisdom is better than strength." 

observations

Robert Mueller was appointed to investigate whether President Trump's presidential campaign worked with Russia to get him elected back in 2016. The investigation took about two years and more than \$25,000,000 to complete. The results of this investigation were released earlier this year. Mr. Mueller spent about 7 hours one day in late July answering United States Congressmen's questions related to his report.

During the two years that it took to complete the investigation, after the report was released, and after Mueller's testimony, many people were convinced President Trump

should be impeached. Also, many people argued that he didn't commit anything worthy of these drastic measures. Without knowing for sure, it is my impression that there were not many people who changed their minds throughout the whole process. As of this writing, the Democrats are trying to figure out if it is expedient to pursue articles of impeachment against Trump, even though they are quite doubtful that a majority exists to confirm these articles.

Watching this whole scenario unfold is a very interesting illustration of confirmation bias. By that I'm referring to the simple fact that we tend to view and interpret

information through the lens of our prior assumptions. The whole process of Mueller’s investigation, report, and his answers about that report seems to have had scant effect in shaping the opinions of those whose minds were already made up before the “facts” were presented.

The Scripture reminds us that heavenly wisdom is “easy to be entreated”. I sure hope that my assumptions are always subject to revision and improvement through the nudges of the Holy Spirit, the input of God’s people, and previously misunderstood information. But it is humbling and sobering to remember that we are not immune to the tendency to limit our understanding to our prior assumptions.

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I was born in 1965. I remember those people the age of my parents recount the emotions and foreboding they felt when they learned about the attack on Pearl Harbor that occurred on Sunday morning, December 7 of 1941. That event left an indelible imprint on the memory of that generation. Something similarly monumental occurred on September 11, 2001, when hijackers commandeered various airliners and killed almost 3,000 persons. Both of these events were pivotal because of how they illustrated our vulnerability

to attacks on our own soil, and subsequently the way people viewed the world.

The response of many people in the USA since the terrorist attacks 18 years ago this month has been one characterized by promoting isolation as a means to protect ourselves from bad people, systems, and ideologies.

One casualty when we adopt the protectionist view is the thoroughly Christian priority of hospitality. A wonderful byproduct of hospitality is that we expand our circle of friends. Friends are not as likely to do bad things to each other as enemies are. I believe that Christ is pleased when we focus on trying to make more friends than try to protect ourselves against our enemies.

This principle is much broader than the national debate about who migration officials should allow to enter this country. It applies to relationships within our brotherhoods too.

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My wife and I heard a talk by David Hazel, about 10 years ago, entitled “Insulation or Isolation” in which he likened our children to electrical wire. Insulated electrical wire that is connected to a power source is able to transmit that power to distant locations. But wire that stays isolated on a roll in a warehouse doesn’t

accomplish the important duty of transmitting power to places that need electricity.

He exhorted us to seek to insulate our children from the world's pressures and mindset so that they will be able to transmit Christ's power to distant places rather than isolating them from the world. Our children must be connected to Christ: the source of power for right living in today's world. Proper insulation means we are connected to Christ, grounded in the claims and demands of Scripture, and responsive to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, let's not underestimate the role of the community of faithful believers in developing that insulation on the hearts and lives of our children.

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"What is the Purpose of Our Planet?" This is the title of an article written by John M. Grondelski for *Crisis Magazine*. In western civilization today, some young couples are choosing to not have children because they do not wish to bring children into a world that is polluted and dangerous and consuming diminishing resources. The underlying but not often expressed assumption is that humans are bad for our planet.

The author outlines three assumptions that inform the Christian

view of creation stewardship as follows:

That God created man "in his image, male and female He created them," so that sexual differentiation and complementarity is willed by God and not the outcome of some discriminatory "gender binary."

That God blessed humanity with the gift of fertility as his first gift—"be fruitful and multiply"—so that fertility is not indifferent, inconvenient, or even pathological, but good.

That God gave man dominion over the world—"have dominion over the birds of the air, the beasts of the field"—not to abuse it but to use it in service of humanity as creation's crown.

My first comments in this column pointed out the need to not let our prior assumptions inoculate us against truth we had not previously understood. But equally important is to consider life's variables in the context of unchanging truth. Let's make sure that these three points inform our perspective of the joys and privilege of parenthood, children, and the stewardship of God's creation.

The big story, the meta-narrative, is God and His purpose. It is not creation, neither us, nor the world we live in. It is He, and we are stewards of what He has entrusted to our care.

Thanks to Christopher Miller for pointing out this article to me.

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I got a sample copy of a publication in the mail last week. It is called “*The Vanguard*—A Publication of the Christian and separated life.” The editors are Elmo Stoll and Jonathon Stoll. I am impressed that some of our Anabaptist brethren who choose to live their lives with minimal modern conveniences see considerable value in writing about their faith and practice. The presentation of this magazine suggests to me that the project is one that uses publication and printing techniques that might be considered more laborious than efficient in today’s publication community.

Here I sit, pecking away at the keyboard on my laptop to compose this column. Does the ease of transferring my thoughts to print

enhance the quality of this document? I’m afraid that it can work the other way. Often, the easier it is to record our thoughts, the less developed our thoughts become. The skill and discipline involved in serious thought and pondering is still a very useful—maybe I should say an essential—exercise for Christians today.

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In the last year Rosedale Mennonite Missions (RMM) decided to change its name to Rosedale International. RMM president, Joe Showalter, explained that it is hoped that this name change will make it easier to work in sensitive locations. He says furthermore, “We want to give people time to know who we are through relationships, not preconceived notions.” (*Mennonite World Review*, July 22, 2019)

–RJM 

mission awareness

**A preview of part two to
“The Magazine That Has Blessed Thousands.”**

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

You will enjoy reading part one of the following article (in last month’s issue in case you have not read it) to see how God has blessed His Word through a magazine with such a

humble beginning. According to my records an article of the *Antorcha* was submitted to *Calvary Messenger* several years ago. Here are a few excerpts of introduction from that

installment: “The following material was graciously provided by Duane Nisly. In April 2012, Mennonite World Review published a report by John D. Roth, professor of history at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. Roth also directs Mennonite Historical Library and The Institute of Global Anabaptism. Here are excerpts of Roth’s article. –Paul L Miller “The village of Pital de San Carlos—nestled in the shadow of Costa Rica’s most active volcano—is home to a small Beachy Amish congregation and the editorial office of *La Antorcha de la Verdad* (*The Torch of Truth*), a periodical with the largest circulation of any Mennonite publication in the world.

“Beachy Amish first settled in Costa Rica in 1968. The community has since expanded to include a cluster of thriving congregations of Costa Rican converts, Kleine Gemeinde immigrants from Belize and a host of second-generation Yoders, Schrocks, Heiseys, and Nislys. Every two months the small printing press at Publicadora La Merced in nearby Santa Rita de Rio Cuarto prints and distributes more than 200,000 copies of *La Antorcha de la Verdad*, a 34-page bulletin-size magazine that finds its way into Spanish-speaking churches, prisons, schools, and homes in nearly 50 countries.”

The Magazine That Has Blessed

Thousands Part II — (continued from last month)

Publicadora La Merced has not been limited only to the production of the *Antorcha*. We have produced tracts, booklets, and a few books. From the beginning the vision for PLM included developing Christian School material which has become an integral part of our work. There was very little Christian School material available in the early 1990s when we began this pursuit. Today, from Rod & Staff, Christian Light Publications, and PLM, there is a very nearly complete curriculum available from grades one through six which comprises the elementary level. There are now efforts to produce secondary educational material as well.

At the end of 2018 we were sending 4,227 *Antorchas* to the United States. One of the uses of the *Antorcha* in the U.S. is in prison ministry. If you are involved in prison ministry, I am sure you are aware of the number of Hispanics who are behind bars. Here is a way a person with little or no knowledge of Spanish can minister to the Spanish population in prison. Others are using them to minister to the immigrant population in their areas.

Our hands and hearts are raised to God in thanksgiving for what He has done. We are so humbled to have a small part in the larger scheme that God has for His Kingdom. Many of

you have also had an important part in the ongoing work of proclaiming the Word to the nations. Pray that we could be faithful, and we thank God for His promise in Isaiah 55:11, “my word ... shall not return unto me void.”

Following are some excerpts from readers:

“How are you, brethren? May God bless you as we send you a huge greeting from Cuba. I am so grateful to you for the literature you have sent... The literature has served as spiritual manna from heaven in the desert. And other brothers with whom I share this literature are also very happy and thankful.”

“May God bless you brothers, and I greet you in the name of the Lord. I attend the Western Baptist Church in my district. I am writing to you because I wanted to let you know how badly we are in need of Christian literature in our church and community. This literature has been a very useful tool for mission work in our area. I would like to personally receive your literature so that I can continue the work here in Cuba more effectively.”

“I am a minister of Jesus Christ in the church, Ambassadors for Christ in Colombia, South America. I am part of the theological staff at the Corporación Facultad Teológica de Colombia of which I am the president. I would like to receive your

magazine, *La Antorcha de la Verdad*, and other Biblical materials that will serve to edify our students at this theological institution.”

“Praise our Lord Jesus Christ. I am Rev. John Gathirwa, and I am serving a rural congregation in Laikipia County, Kenya, Africa. I happened to read a very educative and exciting article in your magazine, “Five White Lilies.” My request is if you can kindly send me your Christian materials for free distribution in our area.”

Brothers, may God multiply His blessings to all of the Board of Directors, and may the peace of the Lord fill your hearts. We have been blessed by your magazine, the *Antorcha de la Verdad*, for many years here in Cuba. Many truths have come to light. Today we are no longer young but are serving the Lord of the harvest as ministers of God. And I trust that we have not been too forward by using many, many times the illustrations or messages from the magazine to bless the little flock of the Lord. Every section of the magazine has been very useful. I don't know what else to say but a great thank you.”

“Grace and peace to you in the precious name of Christ Jesus from Cuba: Brother, I want to thank you for having increased my subscription to 10 copies. I give them to people desiring to learn the truths of God. The Lord continues to provide and

sustain me in this work of promoting the sound gospel of our Lord. There are an increasing number of people who come and ask me for the magazine, some to obtain Biblical teaching, others who are Sunday school teachers and are looking for material to teach in their classes or just to inspire their students, or a story for the children. Still others are interested in learning more about the teachings of the Anabaptists. Many of the evangelical Christians that I meet are overjoyed to know there are faithful and obedient churches such as the Conservative Mennonites. This is so different from what one is accustomed to see in most of the other evangelical churches, with winds of doctrine that are contrary to

the Bible. I would greatly appreciate if you could increase my subscription number to twenty-five.”

“Your revelation of sound doctrine has been a great blessing to my life and to my family and church in Belize. May God receive the glory, and may you continue to be faithful in the work. It is so difficult to find material that is founded upon true doctrine and especially so in Spanish. Recently, my sister opened an ultrasound clinic, and we have your magazines available for the patients. They are asking where we receive these magazines, or if we can give them a copy of the magazine. Would it be possible for you to send us more copies, so we would be able to give them to our patients?” 

A Woman After God's Heart

Yes, Lord, but Cancer?

(Part 2 of 2)

Barbara Yoder, Judy Beachy
Compiled by Susan Schlabach



Last month, two sisters shared their journey with cancer. They allowed us an inside view of struggle, pain, and triumphs. They continue, in this issue, to wrestle with questions we all do well to absorb.

6. From your perspective, how can family members, sisters in the church, and friends best support someone who

is battling a life-altering sickness? List meaningful ways others ministered to you, or ways you wish someone would

have reached out to you.

The support was overwhelming, and we appreciated all of it so much! I was diagnosed the end of August, and by the end of the year I had gotten over a hundred cards, including Christmas cards, with expressions of love and support. Even six months after the diagnosis I was still getting occasional cards and texts expressing concern with questions about how I'm doing. My answer to those comments and questions is still, "God's grace is truly amazing!" My husband has never done a lot of cooking and food was brought in by church people and even by casual acquaintances. The church ladies and relatives learned about my diet and were very conscious of having food that I could eat. Another thing that I appreciated so much was how some appeared periodically to do whatever needed to be done—cleaning, making beds, etc. While at a board meeting with my husband, the other ladies went shopping as usual, but one of them stayed behind with me. I deeply appreciated that!

We have had so many blessings all along the way. I have a physical family and church family that have been there for me all along. They brought meals, cleaned my house, visited me, and prayed for me. The

local Catholic priest, whom we know quite well, met my husband one day and said they were praying for me. The dean from the Church of Ireland did the same along with neighbors all around. Many neighbors, meeting my husband in town, still ask him how I am. I received many cards and letters, both from friends I knew, and others I didn't. All assured me of their care and prayers.

Look for opportunities to enjoy life with the one who bears the diagnosis, especially while that person feels well. Organize a special time together, such as an excursion, or a getaway that provides for quality fellowship and memories. After Barbara completed chemo, her siblings and spouses joined her and her husband for several days in a sort of celebration of gratitude and life.

7. What do you say about advice offered by others regarding treatment?

Most people who offered suggestions did so very cautiously, but my husband had a good answer. "Yes, we get a lot of suggestions and obviously we can't use them all, but we are happy for any input you might have." To us it seemed like it took our big local hospital a long time to get on my case. In the meantime, we got the name of

a clinic in Mexico and ended up going there for three weeks. In a nutshell, their treatment helps build the immune system in order to fight the cancer. We learned a lot from them. However, that approach works slowly, and usually with cancer you have no time to lose. Traditional medical science often uses cruel treatments that work more quickly but leave the body worn out and open to other complications. The medical profession is beginning to recognize that and is coming up with more targeted medication that is geared to attack only cancer cells. God planned for me to have the kind of cancer that can be treated with this kind of medication. What a blessing from our loving heavenly Father!

People would do well to remember that there are so many variables in cancer and its treatment. It would be impossible to follow everyone's advice. Even though one approach worked for one, it does not mean that it is the best choice for another. Advice and treatment options are usually given with good intentions, and it is comforting to remember the advice as simply that. Treatment choices are complex, very personal, and already feel like a trial bearing life or death. What is needed most

during this time is respect and support, not undue pressure to follow someone else's proposed ticket to health!

8. Some face cancer as a single person, or in a small child. Following are comments relating to living with it in a marriage.

Most concerns, questions, and support are directed toward the one who has cancer. That is all good, right, and needful. But there are times when the healthy spouse is treated sort of like a shadow. The spouse is suffering too, and most others don't know or notice. There are tons of questions to ask about the cancer for the person with cancer and not many for how the spouse is doing. Perhaps we can create an awareness!

One husband told his wife, "*You do not have cancer. We have cancer.*"

I remember a sermon on marriage where the minister said that marriage is a good place for sickness, because you have someone who has promised to be with you in sickness or in health. Of course, a severe sickness, like cancer, affects a spouse very deeply. My husband said more than once that it would have been easier to suffer himself than to watch me be sick. He was a very good nurse

and a great emotional and physical companion, making sure I had everything I needed. It is the hard times we go through that bring us closer to each other. He was and still is a very valuable gift!

9. *Any further comments about your journey:*

We have no idea what God will have for us in the future, but as I look back over the past six months I can see and feel God's hand at work in my life. My deepest desire is to praise Him with all I have, trust His all-knowing wisdom, and be totally prepared to go with Him when He calls me home! Several days ago, I was given another verse from Isaiah, "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee" (Isaiah 41:13).

During times of intense pain, I followed the suggestion given by a friend who has suffered pain: use distraction to its fullest benefit! I took the opportunity to read books that I had long wanted to read. One of my friends who suffered cancer told me she couldn't read books about cancer, but I felt a kinship to authors who wrote their experiences. Another friend loaned me a set of CDs called *The Mystery of History*. It's a world history course from a Christian

standpoint, reaches from creation to the 1700s, and is very interesting. I enjoyed those immensely, and it provided hours of distraction. Reliving memories through looking at photo albums also helped.

However, none of those things provided lasting comfort and strength like the Word of God itself. I returned to it again and again for hope and comfort. Several years ago, we got a Pennsylvania Dutch Bible, and I've enjoyed that a lot. It has been good for me to read through the Bible in another translation.

It has been a very difficult and painful journey at best, but I have learned (and am still learning) to be truly grateful for it. I hope this doesn't sound idealistic. I truly did struggle and struggle hard! I'm simply not worthy of His abundant grace, but it's there all the time in endless supply!

While touring a church on the shore of the Sea of Galilee I had the privilege of seeing a painting called: *Encounter*. It is a large painting of feet and robes. From the side comes a lady's hand reaching for the hem of Jesus' robe. You can see her sleeve and her robe as well, down among the dirty dusty feet. Many people who see the painting stand in front of it and put their own hand where the lady's hand is. It moved me greatly as I did

that. I had to sit awhile and wipe tears as I thought about it. The virtue of Jesus flowed out of Him into the lady who was brave enough to touch His hem despite the crowds. I don't profess to have felt healing; yet, I too had been blessed by her Jesus.

10. *What words do you have to share with anyone who has just been given a cancer diagnosis by her doctor?*

I used to think about the question of what I would do if I heard the dreaded diagnosis, and I truly didn't know. I'm not saying that we did all the right things, but my feeling is that you should do what you know to do. In other words, if you can think rationally at a time like that and know of something that has helped others or that feels right for you, do it. But even before that, **cry out to God!** He knows what He's doing even if we don't. Ask Him for wisdom in what type of treatment you should pursue. Asking counsel of close friends can be helpful but sometimes that can be confusing at best. Give yourself time. Yes, we need to do something ASAP, but we need time to sort through our possibilities and time just to get used to the idea that life is changing and may even end before long. Give yourself time to work through the pain and crushed

dreams, learn how to pick up the pieces, and go on by God's grace. Try to look at this as a win-win situation. If God chooses to heal me, I win. If He chooses to take me to heaven, I win even more! However, facing the possibility of needing to leave our dear earthly friends hurts and may even feel impossible! God will do what is best.

No one plans for any sickness nor is ever ready for it. Cancer destroys lots of plans and limits you in many ways. It is never a walk in the park. It gives you dark nights and long days. It presents you with hard decisions and unplanned events. But it is limited in many ways. It cannot take God's love and presence from you. It cannot take away the love and prayers of your family and friends. It cannot take from you what really matters most. Praise God!

What Cancer Cannot Do

(Dr. Robert L. Lynn)

It cannot cripple LOVE.

It cannot shatter HOPE.

It cannot corrode FAITH.

It cannot eat away PEACE.

It cannot destroy FRIENDSHIP.

It cannot suppress MEMORIES.

It cannot silence COURAGE.

It cannot invade the SOUL.

It cannot steal eternal LIFE.

It cannot conquer the SPIRIT. 

A New Bible Story?

MaryEllen Beachy, Dundee, OH

The Word of God is amazing. We can read it many times, and yet there is always, always more to learn. Always.

One morning I read a story that seemed new. I know I had read it before, but I did not remember it. This story is found in II Chronicles 29 and 30.

I did not remember that King Hezekiah had sent runners throughout the land of Israel and Judah. These messengers went from city to city with an invitation from the King to come and join them in the Passover Feast. How was this message from King Hezekiah received?

Hezekiah was twenty-five-years old when he became the King of Judah. It is written that Hezekiah did what was pleasing in the eyes of the Lord.

When a young man wholeheartedly serves the Lord, it is astounding what can be done. In the first month of the first year of

his reign he worked a major reform in the land. He opened the temple doors. They had been damaged and shut. He repaired and opened those magnificent doors.

He called the Levites to purify themselves and the temple. He said, "My sons, do not neglect your duties any longer. Our fathers have forsaken God and deserted his house; the lamps have gone out, and incense is not burned. The Lord has chosen you to stand in His presence. The Lord has chosen you to work, to minister, and lead the people in worship and to present offerings. Today, I am calling you to work. The temple is neglected and dirty. A thorough cleansing is needed."

The influence of godly and good King Hezekiah was great. The Levites showed up and got right to work. Cleaning the temple was a needful and good work. There was dust and cobwebs to be swept out.

Idols and altars to idols had been

set up in the house of God. These all had to be removed. The men worked with a will and carried out much filth and the idols and pagan altars. The dirt and any vile thing was taken and dumped into the Kidron Brook. (Do you think they had wheelbarrows to take out the trash?) It was not enough to just clean the temple. The Levites also first had purified themselves.

I wonder how many men were in that cleaning crew? They worked energetically, and in sixteen days the temple was clean and shiny.

Early the next morning the king and city officials went to the beautiful temple of God. They brought animals for burnt offerings: seven bulls, seven rams, and seven male lambs. They brought seven male goats for the sin offering. King Hezekiah specifically stated that these offerings should be made for all of Israel (for the divided kingdom). Joyous songs of praise were raised to God till all the offerings were completed. The people bowed down in worship and then brought their sacrifices and offerings.

The magnificent temple was once again used to worship the Lord. King Hezekiah and the people rejoiced greatly.

King Hezekiah now sent the

runners through the land of Israel and Judah inviting all to the Passover Feast. He was encouraging them to turn back to God.

Many people mocked the messengers and laughed them to scorn. They made fun of them. Some turned a deaf ear and pretended not to hear. It is a great tragedy when grown men, young men, and even children choose to mock and laugh at the invitation of God to turn to Him and be blessed.

However, there were some who humbled themselves and made the trip to Jerusalem. The people of Judah had a heart to obey God and follow His Word. They worked together and destroyed the pagan altars in Jerusalem. A huge crowd came and celebrated the Passover feast with sacrifices and singing with the Levites serving.

There was great joy in the city. Not since the days of Solomon, King David's son, had there been a celebration like this one.

What do I do when I am warned? What do I do when I am criticized? Each of us is given a choice. Will we change when change is needed? Will we love and serve God? Will we worship Him and work for Him? Or will we laugh, mock, and turn away?



Guns or Frying Pans?

Merlin Mast, Whiteville, TN

“**Y**oung man, you put that gun down!” Louise Degrafinried commanded firmly as Riley Arceneaux burst into her home pushing her husband, Nathan, ahead of him at gunpoint. “Young man, I’m a Christian lady and don’t believe in violence,” she continued. “You put that gun down right here. Son, you must be starving. Now, how do you want your eggs?”

Several days earlier on February 18, 1984, Riley, along with five others, had escaped from the Fort Pillow Correctional Facility in West Tennessee where he was serving a 25-year prison sentence for second degree murder. He was cold, wet, desperate, and lonely as he stumbled onto the home of Nathan and Louise, a God-fearing couple in their seventies, who were active members of the Mt. Sinai Primitive Baptist Church. The entire community was on edge because of the escaped convicts. Louise was on the phone with a friend of hers about this very subject when Riley and Nathan burst into the house. She simply said, “Well, they’re here now,” and hung

up the phone.

“I haven’t eaten in three days,” Riley growled as he cooperatively laid his gun by the sofa. Louise quickly whipped out her trusty frying pan and soon the tantalizing smell of African American “soul food”—frying bacon, eggs, toast, and coffee—filled the small house. Louise set out her best napkins and sent Nathan to bring Riley a pair of dry socks. Louise began asking about his family. Riley mentioned that Louise reminded him of his grandmother who had recently passed away. “I have no one who cares anything about me. No one cares if I live or die,” Riley lamented.

“Young man, I love you, and God loves you. God loves all of us, every one of us, especially you. Jesus died for you, because He loves you so much,” Louise assured him as she patted his leg, and a tear ran down his cheek. As Nathan, Louise, and Riley sat down to eat their breakfast, Louise took Riley by the hand and thanked God for the food and that Riley was safe. She asked Riley if he had anything to say to God. Undeterred

by his disinterest, she coached Riley through a simple prayer, “Jesus wept.”¹ As they ate, the elderly couple entreated him to simply give himself up to the authorities. In Louise’s own words, “I went to giving him Bible.” Louise told Riley, “When we do wrong, we have to be punished.”

Unknown to Riley, Louise’s friend, who she was talking with at the beginning of the confrontation, had notified the police. As the threesome enjoyed their breakfast, they heard the sirens in the distance. “The police will kill me. I know it!” wailed Riley.

“No, I won’t let them. You do what is right, and I won’t let them hurt you,” Louise assured him.

Soon the yard was filled with police cars with officers crouched behind their car doors with their guns drawn, fully expecting a criminal to burst out of the door shooting for his freedom. Instead, they were met by a 73-year-old grandmother with her hands on her hips. “Y’all put those guns away, I don’t allow no violence here. You put those guns down. This fellow is going to give himself up, but he needs to finish his breakfast first,” she instructed with the same

authoritative voice she had used on Riley several moments earlier. The police reluctantly agreed but remained wary.

Several moments later Riley stepped out onto the porch with his hands above his head, Nathan and Louise on either side with their arms around him. He was arrested without incident and taken back to Fort Pillow prison. Newspaper headlines highlighted how this woman with her Bible and frying pan did what all the law enforcement in West Tennessee was unable to do!

Less than 12 hours later, Paul Windrow, a fifty-nine-year-old local tire dealer as well as a church elder, was grilling steaks on his patio. He had also heard about the convicts being on the lam, and he had taken the precaution of carrying his pistol on his belt at all times. Ronald Freeman and James Clegg, who along with Riley Arceneaux had held a family hostage two days before, came bursting out of the kudzu covered bushes behind his house. Paul fired two shots, neither which struck the convicts, before they fatally shot him. Underscoring Jesus’ words, “They that take the sword will perish with the sword.”²

The pair then burst into the house and took Paul’s wife Elizabeth hostage, and forced her to drive

1. Jn 11:35. When someone asked her later, “Why did you tell him to say ‘Jesus wept’?” She said, “Because I figured that he didn’t have no church background, so I wanted to start him off simple; something short, you know.”

2. Mt. 26:52

them several hours to East Tennessee, where they left her at an interstate rest area, and fled. She was unable to cope with the memories of her husband's murder and her kidnapping and had to leave her home. She moved to a new location in an effort to bury the trauma.



While Riley went back to prison, he didn't drop out of Nathan and Louise's life. Louise asked for a picture of Riley which she put in their family album. The police asked them to press charges against Riley, but the Degrafinrieds refused, "Because that boy didn't do anything to us," they said. Riley still received an additional 20 years added to his sentence for escaping and for his involvement with an earlier kidnapping. Louise continued to visit him in prison and wrote letters in spite of the fact that her arthritis made writing legibly difficult.

Unfortunately, Riley didn't respond to the Gospel immediately. Four years after his initial escape, he attempted to escape from prison again. While he wasn't successful in this attempt, he was sent to solitary confinement for a time. While he was by himself for 23 hours a day, he began to think seriously about the claims that God had on his life. He remembered especially the testimony of Louise Degrafinried, and he realized this was what real Christianity looked

like in real life. Louise continued to write letters in which she encouraged him, "I believe in you. Trust God to work in your life. Be patient, study your Bible and look for the good in everybody." Riley said the lack of fear that Louise showed convinced him to become a Christian in 1988. "She (Louise) was real Christianity. No fear," Riley said. When Louise prayed with Riley on a visit to the prison, she began her prayer by saying, "God, this is your child. You know me and I know you." Riley knew that was the relationship he wanted with God.

The Degrafinrieds worked to get Riley released from prison, which finally happened in 1995. Riley moved to Nashville, got a job, and began to build life instead of destroying it.

Louise died in August, 1998. Among the crowd of 300 mourners at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church was Riley Arceneaux, who was serving as a pallbearer. He also spoke to the crowd in his eulogy, "This woman was a real Christian. No fear! It was through her that I turned my life around." He reassured the family that he was staying out of trouble. "It's not just a jailhouse religion like some guys get. It does stick with some people. To me it's how much you really seek after God while you're in there," he said.

By this time, he was working as a foreman at the Crown Tent & Awning

Co. He was living in Nashville with his wife and young son. His was truly a life redeemed.

What will be your weapon of choice? Gun or frying pan? Are you willing to beat your guns into frying pans?³

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I Offer a Prayer

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

I offer a prayer on behalf of Your people today,
those of us who profess to be plain Anabaptists.
In all honesty, I acknowledge we have gone astray
from the course we once traveled as separatists.

We have lost the two-kingdom concept, oh Lord,
and been captivated with the politics of our land.
Thus, we find ourselves compromising Your Word,
and the values on which our forebears took a stand.

They understood that the teachings of Christ's gospel
demanded faithful obedience to Jesus at all cost.
And only by consistently living out Bible principles
would we have a salvation message to offer the lost.

Yes, we still profess to worship You as our Savior,
yet, at the same time, bow to the idol of materialism.
We consider affluence as a sure sign of Your favor,
and consequently, do not take time for evangelism.

Furthermore, we have sacrificed our darling children on the ubiquitous altars of communication technology. We notice them behaving as worldly women and men, and wonder why they subscribe to a secular theology.

All these new ideas have resulted in an identity crisis, so that we confuse the line between Protestants and us. We now see ourselves as one of many Christian choices; the main difference being, we insist on a plainer dress.

Oh Father, the blame falls on us as parents and adults, for we are the ones who must set the church's direction. Hence, unless we honestly review the apparent results, we will certainly fail to keep the succeeding generation.

I beseech You; please arouse us from our complacency, and vigorously shake us from our spiritual laziness. Renew in us a passion for New Testament Christianity, and a deep burden for a daily life of practical holiness.

Forgive us for allowing our society to haze our vision, distracting our concentration from that which is eternal. Remind us that the fundamental purpose and mission while we are on earth is not centered on the temporal.

Fill us with a holy courage and Your divine boldness to take whatever steps we need to correct our ways. Perhaps if we genuinely repent of our waywardness, we and our seed will be blessed to enjoy better days!



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My son, keep good sense, and do not let wise purpose go from your eyes.

But the way of the upright is like the light of early morning,
getting brighter and brighter till the full day.

True lips are certain forever, but a false tongue is only for a minute.

The hater of authority, searching for wisdom, does not get it;
but knowledge comes readily to the open-minded man.

How will money in the hand of the foolish get him
wisdom, seeing that he has no sense?

He who has knowledge says little: and he who
has a calm spirit is a man of good sense.

The ornament of a man is his mercy, and a
poor man is better than one who is false.

Life brings tears, smiles, and memories: the tears dry,
the smile fades, but the memories live on forever.

Wisdom is divided into two parts:
(a) having a great deal to say, and (b) not saying it.

The grass is always greener on the other side;
until you jump the fence and see the weeds up close.

Don't prepare the path for the child, prepare the child for the path.