



# Calvary MESSENGER

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

*Galatians 6:14*

## MARCH 2021

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Calvary Messenger

March 2021

**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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## Treasures in Darkness

*Karen Yoder, Fincastle, VA*

Should His light,  
that shaft of brilliance,  
slay us with its blinding sheen,  
So He kindly  
shrouds His glory,  
veils it from humanity.  
Just a hairline crack  
is pierced with a  
beam of beauty—Grace.  
This white radiance  
glows with splendor—  
Mercy thus withholds His face.  
For if Glory were not  
tempered, it would snuff  
the human race.



# My Brother and I

Ryan Horst, ON, Canada

## Love is Essential

Love for my brother is essential if I am traveling to glory with him. The book of I John, gentle yet poignant, is very decisive on the matter. I John 4:20 says, *"He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?"* Love for our brother, the kind that seeks his ultimate spiritual best, is the heartbeat that pumps life into the church, the body of Christ. True godly love is never self-seeking. Rather, it consistently takes upon itself the role of a servant and seeks the good of another.

This principle cannot be emphasized enough. Brotherhood is dependent upon men and women who are willing to set aside personal preference and seek the spiritual good of their brothers and sisters. The spirit of contention does not enter our church unless the **doorway of pride** has been opened to make a way for it to pass. It must also be true that the Holy Spirit cannot enter and bring unity unless the **doorway of humility** is flung wide open.

## Not Matters of Right and Wrong

How far should I take this business of loving and respecting my brother?

Should I adopt the convictions that my brother holds even if they feel excessive and much higher than my own? Should he not conform to mine? In Romans 14, the apostle Paul deals extensively with this very question. First of all, we must be clear on the fact that we are not discussing issues of right and wrong; the issues we refer to are areas of personal opinion, areas of personal conviction, and areas of personal application of biblical principles. This is why a study of Romans 14 is so conducive to the subject of brotherhood and the practical issues of how we relate to one another in the church.

## Not Everyone Is at the Same Place

Paul begins by reminding believers that there will be differences in conviction! This is critical to understand. Not everyone is at the same place in their experience with the Lord. This does not mean that we just accept everyone just as they are, but neither do we deny them because they don't believe exactly as we do. As in nearly every area of life, there are two ditches (one on either side) and a place of safety and balance in the middle.

## Two Mindsets

There are two ditches we need to avoid in this matter. In Romans 14:3, Paul introduces two possible mindsets that could take hold of a person. The first is the mindset of **despising your brother** for his restrictive views. When we feel free in our conscience to live a certain way, it becomes very easy to despise those who do not feel the same way. We view them as narrow-minded, restrictive, stuffy, old-fashioned, and ultimately a threat to our own freedom we have in Christ.

The second is the mindset of judging the person who has “lower” standards than we do. Even though the brother is not breaking a clear command of Scripture, we are tempted to **judge him as unfaithful** because his standards are less than what we are comfortable with. But the rebuke of Scripture is sharp for this view as well. *“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand” (Romans 14:4).*

## Two Concepts

A proper balance on this matter is found in two powerful concepts that Paul shares in Romans 14. The first is that **none of us is living for himself**. Rather, whether we live or die, it is to the LORD. We are not our own! We have been bought with a price. Therefore, we choose to live

our lives in such a way that we are always bringing glory to our God. This is love for God.

The second concept should also sound familiar. It is to **walk charitably with our brother**. *“If your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died” (Romans 14:15).* This verse makes it clear that if there is something we are doing that we have no convictions against, yet we are knowingly grieving our brother because of genuine convictions that he holds, we are not walking charitably toward him. “But,” you may argue, “if the item in question is such a small thing, why does it have to be a big deal to my brother?” The answer is simple: If you are right about the fact that it is a small thing compared to the spiritual health of your brother, why hang on to it? Why not give it up?

Our reasoning can be so backwards. We say, “The Kingdom of God is not in meat or drink, so therefore I can eat what I want and drink what I want, and it should not matter to my brother.” But listen to what the Scripture is saying. The Kingdom of God is not found in food or drink; therefore, it should be a small thing to make some sacrifices in this area out of love for a brother.

## The Perspective of Judgment

To gain perspective as to just how

far this kind of love will go, let us look at a parallel passage. In I Corinthians 8, Paul is dealing with the subject of brotherhood relationships. Again, the pressing topic is meat offered to idols. The principles we see in this passage can be applied to many modern-day issues.

Paul begins the chapter by acknowledging the argument that a false god has no power to change the meat itself, but notice the transition in verse seven triggered by the word *howbeit*. From this point on, the conversation is pivoted from focusing on “personal liberties” to something of far greater significance – the conscience of another brother.

In I Corinthians 8 the message is clear: our personal liberty of conscience in any area dare not be exercised at the risk of our brother’s downfall. *“Beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak” (I Corinthians 8:9).*

I Corinthians 8:12 also lends weight to this caution—causing a brother’s downfall—by informing believers that when we wound a weak conscience, we sin against Christ. *“When you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.”*

#### Committed to Each Other

Perhaps what strikes me the most about this passage in I Corinthians 8 is Paul’s personal testimony on

the matter. He concludes this way: *“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend” (I Corinthians 8:13).*

Oh, that our churches were full of men and women who would go to that kind of effort to ensure that they are not being a stumbling block!

#### Honoring One Another on the Mission Field

We understand this concept well on the mission field. When ministering to the people of the Middle East, we will willingly adopt their modest, yet rather different, style of dress out of a burning desire to reach them with the gospel. In India we will avoid eating with our left hand. In Thailand, we will be careful not to point at anything or move anything with our feet; such a gesture is considered extremely rude. We will go to great lengths to ensure that we fit into the culture as much as possible, in order that we may reach the people we are working with. We will even do things that are rather uncomfortable for us (as long as they are not wrong) in order to put ourselves in a position to impact those we seek to reach.

#### Honoring Our Brother at Home

Yet how often, in our own brotherhood, do we abandon this approach and simply choose to do what we want to do? If we are willing to go to great lengths to reach the lost in a foreign country, should we

not extend the same kind of love and concern for the convictions of a brother at home? In short, are you willing to view our everyday choices, big or small, through the biblical lens of love for our brother?

For instance: A friend once related to me the clear understanding they had in their home that when they attended a certain family gathering where most in attendance were a

part of a more conservative church setting, there would be a special effort made to wear clothing that would not be offensive. I was so blessed by that attitude!

It is not wrong or hypocritical to do something that is different than what you would choose for yourself. It is love.



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## *Announcement*

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## No Apology Is Needed

*Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA*

Somehow it has become fashionable for speakers in church to apologize for the use of a Bible verse or text, and preface it as a “familiar verse” before reading the verse. Is it beneath our dignity to hear someone read or quote a Bible passage which some of us have heard previously? The brother who has a children’s meeting in church has the compulsion to warn the children that he will talk to them about a “familiar” Bible story. Why destroy their expectation as you begin their little special-interest meeting? They deserve better. Just use the Bible story with a build-up to a special emphasis as a worthy lesson for their lives. After all, every speaker will tell it in a different way. Children seldom tire of a storybook written on their level, even when read to them ten times. The same is true for our children’s meetings.

The brother who has the devotional on Sunday morning at church apparently considers his presentation as needing an apology for using such a “familiar passage” of Scripture.

How did we get to assuming that all the Bible is well-known to everyone, and that everything we have ever read or heard before is boring? I also do not know. There are even some preachers who forewarn us before reading or quoting a “familiar” Bible passage in their sermon.

There is a newness about God’s Word that is best served by being interested and excited about it in our church assemblies. The Bible refreshes our spirit and on through to our soul, mind, emotions, and will. When we are forewarned about the Bible passage being, sadly, not a new proposition, we are addressed as losers. Should we have just stayed at home to read a new book? God forbid!

The equivalent would be where we are invited to a wedding. The moderator for the reception will need to tell us about the “familiar” salad that will be served. After that, the servers will bring the mashed potatoes and ham gravy, which the poor fellow needs to tell us is our “familiar” food. Then when the



fortunate guests have eaten their familiar main dishes, they can go to the dessert tables to help themselves as desired. But he needs to be sure to tell them that the cake is the “familiar” kind of wedding cake, and that the several kinds of ice cream are, somehow, already familiar to us all. We are told to select our coffee, if preferred, either the familiar decaf, or the regular, which is maybe just as familiar, or even more so, to some people.

No one would enjoy being that kind of moderator at a wedding. All this familiar food would be unfairly discounted despite the best efforts of the cooks. Some speakers seem to do it at church as a sense of duty, seeming to make apology for the Word of God.

Here is my point. No one among us is so highly accomplished that he needs to apologize for any Bible verse, including the majestic quote of John 3:16. Neither is any speaker so new and inexperienced that he needs to deduct from the power of the Word by making any disclaimer for any Bible passage. The Holy Spirit can put a newness into any Bible reference when it is read again or given orally from the heart.

It also occurs to us that the Spirit-filled apostle Paul does not apologize for writing related things in his

epistles, or even writing the same components for the new birth or elements of righteous living. To those in Philippi, he says, *“To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe”* (Philippians 3:1).

I have also often heard speakers or teachers classify some Bible doctrine as being a negative subject. That has been said about Biblical non-resistance more often than any other subject. Let me say it as strongly as a mere man can give it in writing; there is not one negative subject in the Bible! All Bible teaching is truth of the highest order, and all of what the Bible “speaks” to us has a positive result. And besides, it is never apologetically discounted or lacking in power by being a familiar subject.

**The Bottom Line** is that we should give room to God’s Word of Truth and hold it high in our assemblies. Let us remove the worn-out phrase, “this is a familiar verse,” from our presentation of the living Word of God. Likewise, let us renew our passion for the eternal Word as from God Himself and present Bible stories to our children without the cheap, discounted line of apology, “This is a familiar story.”

The Bible itself says, *“For the word of God is quick* (living, deathless),

and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). It has the power to save us from sin and to move us upward to that exalted

position in Christ. Prefacing it by saying, “This is a familiar verse,” or story, cheapens the value of the eternal Word and compromises or even takes away from its exalted position as the Word from God Himself.



## A Visionary and His Book (Part 1)

### *A Short Biography of Thieleman J. van Braght*

*Evan M. Bender, Boyceville, WI*

**T**hieleman J. van Braght was born January 29, 1625. He was a cloth merchant, he was ordained in 1648, he compiled the *Martyrs Mirror*, and he died October 7, 1664. Before I get into any more detail, I would like to give a little background history. I find that it helps to understand a man if you understand his times.

The first Dutch Anabaptist martyr died in 1531, the last in 1574. Persecution did not completely cease then as there were still certain occupations that Anabaptists were barred from and they were harassed considerably. They were at least no longer imprisoned or killed for their faith and soon become tolerated

by general society. The years 1557-1664 were a time of much internal strife for the Mennonites;<sup>1</sup> a time of division, attempted reconciliation, and new division. “Those who were willing to face death for their faith were also often ready to break fellowship with a brother if they thought him wrong; it was the heritage of an age in which religious conviction ran deep, and tolerance

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1. The Dutch Anabaptists very shortly became known as Mennists, or Mennonites, because of the tremendous influence of Menno Simons. My heritage is not officially Mennonite at all, but rather Swiss Anabaptist with a little French Amish for variety. Most Anabaptists who read this probably refer to themselves as Mennonites but are most likely of Swiss origin, not Dutch.

was not a virtue.”<sup>2</sup> Once you have begun to separate yourself from those with whom you disagree, where do you stop? The height of the ridiculous was seen in Emden, where the minister Jan van Ophoorn eventually excommunicated everyone in the congregation except himself and his wife.<sup>3</sup> That is tragic!

One man who stands out for his efforts to bring unity during this time is Hans de Ries. By his efforts, and with the help of others, most of the internal wrinkles among the Mennonites had been ironed out by the middle of the 17th century. The mid-17th century was also the beginning of the Golden Age of commerce and culture for the Dutch Republic. It was a good time to make money and lots of it. The Mennonites, being sharp business people, did not let this opportunity go to waste. The overseas trade with Greenland and nearly all of the whaling and herring fishing industries were in Mennonite hands.<sup>4</sup> These industries made the Dutch

Republic one of the richest nations of the 17th century. However, all this social progress and prosperity was detrimental to the spiritual vitality of the church. Hans de Ries lamented, “The goods are enriched but the soul is impoverished. Clothing has become precious, but the internal decorations have perished. Love has cooled and diminished, and quarreling has increased.”<sup>5</sup> In an effort to combat this trend, Hans published a martyr book in 1615 to remind the church of the heritage of their martyr parents. This book became the basis for the *Martyrs Mirror*.<sup>6</sup>

Enter Thieleman J. van Braght. He was born on January 29, 1625, in Dordrecht. Incidentally, that was seven years before the “Dordrecht Confession” was written. His father was a cloth merchant, and T. J. van Braght eventually took over the business. We have little information about his life. Most of what we know of him we learn through his writings. A highly intelligent and

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2. Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*, 96

3. *Ibid.*, 97

4. *Ibid.*, 100

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5. *Ibid.* 101-102

6. Thieleman J. van Braght, *Martyrs Mirror*, 19; Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*, 98

well-educated man, van Braght knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and German besides Dutch. Also, as his writings show, he was a very fluent speaker and author, and he knew what he believed and why he believed it. These traits were developed over years of practice. T. J. van Braght was not afraid to get into a religious discussion with someone. On the contrary, he was a staunch apologist for and defender of the Mennonite worldview and principle. He would engage someone in a discussion whenever and wherever the opportunity arose.

Ordained a minister in 1648 at age 23, van Braght was concerned about the worldliness he saw creeping into the church as a result of the affluence and relative freedom the Mennonites now enjoyed. He was also very burdened for the young people in the church. He feared that since the cost of Christianity had decreased, the level of commitment was rapidly following it. He wrote, "These are sad times in which we live; nay, truly, there is more danger now than in the time of our fathers, who suffered death for the testimony of the Lord... for then Satan came openly, through his servants, even

at noon-day, as a roaring lion... his chief design then was to destroy the body: but now he comes as in the night, or in the twilight, in a strange but yet pleasing form, and... lies in wait to destroy the soul..."<sup>7</sup> "O that Satan would show himself, as he really is, and that the world, too, might come forth without disguise or mask; then certainly no one possessing reason would allow himself to be deceived by them."<sup>8</sup>

In 1657, van Braght published a little booklet, *School of Moral Virtue*, to deter youth from unrighteous living and lead them to a true fear of God. Shortly after this book was published, he began work on what is probably the most common (besides the Bible) and, sadly, possibly the currently least read Anabaptist book ever written, the *Martyrs Mirror*. The original plan was to simply reprint the martyr book of 1631 without alteration except the addition of any martyr stories since 1631. When the *Martyrs Mirror* was published in 1660, instead of being merely an update of the former martyr book,

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7. Thieleman J. van Braght, *Martyrs Mirror*, 8

8. *Ibid.*, 10

it was a complete revision. Since persecution had ended, van Braght now had access to the government records and could correct any errors and add the stories of those who had simply disappeared.<sup>9</sup> He also added a treatise on holy baptism for each century since the time of Christ. Whether because of stress in trying to finish the book, or some other reason, he became sick and was confined to his bed most of the winter of 1658-1659. Against the advice of his doctors, it was during this time that most of the writing was actually done.

In the introduction to the *Martyrs Mirror*, Thieleman J. van Braght presents the two main reasons he wrote this book. The primary reason was to remind the church of his day, especially the youth, what their forefathers had suffered for Christ.

“We shall lead you into dark valleys, even into the valleys of death (Psalm 23:4), where nothing will be seen but dry bones, skulls, and frightful skeletons of those who have been slain; these beheaded, those drowned, others strangled at the stake, some burnt, others broken on

the wheel, many torn by wild beasts, half devoured, and put to death in manifold cruel ways; besides, a great multitude who having escaped death bear the marks of Jesus, their Savior, on their bodies, wandering about over mountains and valleys, through forests and wilderness, forsaken of friends and kindred, robbed and stripped of all their temporal possessions, and living in extreme poverty.”<sup>10</sup>

This is truly a terrifying description of human suffering, or would be without Christ. But van Braght was not intending to merely write the script for a horror film, he also intended to show that even though God’s people endured terrible suffering, through all things they were more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. “*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Romans 8:37-39).

“The inconvenient seasons of the

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9. Ibid., 19

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10. Ibid., 6

year, the heat of summer, the cold of winter, the wetness of spring and fall, together with the contingencies of thunder, lightning, hail, snow, rain, wind, hunger, thirst, sickness, fatigue, and other innumerable troubles with which they met while wandering about and suffering persecutions, were to them sweet pleasures and recreations in the Lord, for they knew that this would afterwards be turned into joy to them, since it is written: *'Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh'* (Luke 6:21). Again: *'That we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God'* (Acts 14:22). And, in another place: *'If we suffer, we shall also reign with him'* (II Timothy 2:12)."

"This caused them to say with the apostle: *'For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's'* (Romans 14:8)."

"Many of them would not have exchanged the darkest and severest of dungeons, or the caves of the earth, in which they had to hide themselves, for royal palaces. The wilderness was to them a delightful pleasure-garden, the howling of

the wild beasts which surrounded them, as sweet music or the songs of birds..."<sup>11</sup>

*"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"*

Van Braght also hoped that God could use this book to inspire faith, to draw people closer to God, and to challenge those whose love had grown cold.

"Come now, ye earthly-minded and ungodly, and learn here to become heavenly and godly-minded... Here the passionate must learn patience and meekness from the most patient and meek, who endured without murmuring the greatest reproach and ignominy, yea, even death. Here the unmannered are taught modesty; the proud, humility; the discontented, contentment; the avaricious, benevolence; the insatiably rich, voluntary poverty; those who live after their lusts, the forsaking of all carnal desires; the irreligious, piety; and the wavering and inconstant, steadfastness unto the end in all these things."<sup>12</sup>

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11. Ibid., 7

12. Ibid., 14



# The Bluebird's Song

I know the song that the bluebird is singing  
Out in the apple tree where he is swinging.  
Brave little fellow! the skies may be dreary—  
Nothing cares he while his heart is so cheery.

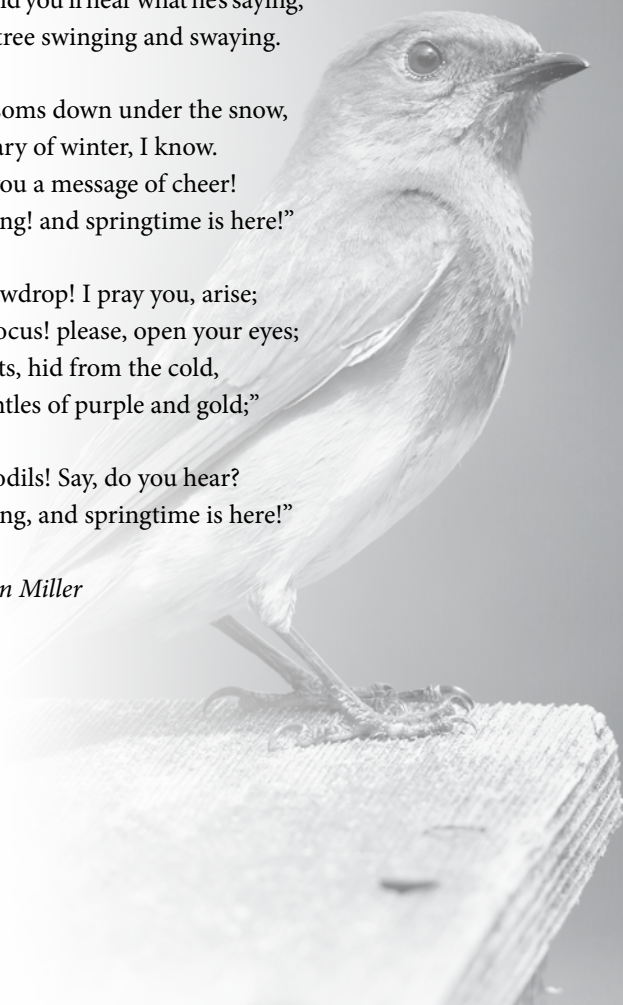
Hark! how the music leaps out from his throat!  
Hark! was there ever so merry a note?  
Listen, a while, and you'll hear what he's saying,  
Up in the apple tree swinging and swaying.

"Dear little blossoms down under the snow,  
You must be weary of winter, I know.  
Listen, I'll sing you a message of cheer!  
Summer is coming! and springtime is here!"

"Little white snowdrop! I pray you, arise;  
Bright yellow crocus! please, open your eyes;  
Sweet little violets, hid from the cold,  
Put on your mantles of purple and gold;"

"Daffodils! Daffodils! Say, do you hear?  
Summer is coming, and springtime is here!"

*Emily Huntington Miller*  
Public domain



## marriages

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

### Eash-Schlabach

Bro. Jonathan, son of LaVern and Carolyn Eash, Cumberland Furnace, TN, and Sis. Sharalyn, daughter of David and Esther Schlabach, Vanleer, TN, on June 12, 2020, at Compassion Church for Lighthouse Mennonite Church by Paul Overholt.

### Gregory-Zook

Bro. Justin, son of Joey and Donna Gregory, Gallatin, TN, and Sis. Brenda, daughter of David and Arlene Zook, Belleville, PA, on December 18, 2020, at Valley View A. M. Church by Eli B. King, Jr.

### Miller-Eash

Bro. Lavern, son of Ralph and SueAnn Miller, Daleville, VA, and Sis. Jessica, daughter of Jonnie and Freda Eash, Plain City, OH, on November 21, 2020, at Bethesda Fellowship Church by Elmer Stoltzfus.

### Schrock-Zook

Bro. Mervin, son of Phil and Rachel Schrock, Cumberland Furnace, TN, and Sis. Ashley, daughter of Leighton and Edith Zook, Parry Sound, ON, on January 22, 2021, at Lighthouse Mennonite Church by Paul Overholt.

### Stoltzfus-Glick

Bro. Ryan, son of Alphie and Teresa Stoltzfus, Gap, PA, and Sis. Alycia, daughter of Dwayne and Rosie Glick, Perry, NY, on January 9, 2021, at Crystal Valley Mennonite Church by Dathan Stoltzfus.

### Troyer-Weaver

Bro. Lloyd, son of Noah and Ina Troyer, Downing, MI, and Sis. Anna, daughter of John and Mattie Weaver, Millersburg, OH, on November 28, 2020, at Gospel Haven Mennonite for Grace Haven Fellowship by David Yoder.

### Wagler-Quevedo

Bro. Andrew, son of Mark and Rose Wagler, Hartville, OH, and Sis. Jelinda, daughter of Mario and Linda Quevedo, Campo Nueve, Paraguay, on December 4, 2020, at Light and Hope Mennonite Church by Mark Wagler.

### Yoder-Amstutz

Bro. Alex, son of Dwight and Jennifer Yoder, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Marissa, daughter of Maurice and Joyce Amstutz, Wooster, OH, on October 24, 2020, at Chester Mennonite Church for Chester Christian Fellowship Church by Maurice Amstutz.

### Yoder-Yoder

Bro. Weston, son of Wesley and Laura Yoder, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Shirley, daughter of Joseph and Janet Yoder, Montezuma, GA, on August 8, 2020, at Clearview Mennonite Fellowship Church by Noah Yoder.





## cradle roll

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

**Beachy**, Darren and Heidi (Salazar), Hutchinson, KS, fourth child, third daughter, Diana Grace, November 5, 2020.

**Beiler**, Duane and Mary (Metzler), Mt. Pleasant, PA, third child, first daughter, Daria Hope, January 16, 2021.

**Eash**, Benji and Charity (King), Charlotte, TN, third child, first daughter, Hope Elizabeth, January 23, 2021.

**Gingerich**, Jolynn and Kathryn (Byler), Mechanicsburg, OH, second child and son, Gilbert David, January 7, 2021.

**Hostetler**, Leon and Melody (Beachy), Auburn, KY, fourth child, third daughter, Oaklyn Rylee, January 14, 2021.

**Kauffman**, Dwayne and Marcia (Wagler), Fredonia, KY, second child and son, Easton Dwayne, October 24, 2020.

**Kauffman**, John and Emily (Wagler), Fredonia, KY, second child, first daughter, Brandy Kaylene, November 24, 2020.

**King**, Leon and Loretta (Schlabach), Lexington, IN, fifth child, third daughter, Megan Kate, January 6, 2021.

**Kline**, Shannon and Michelle (Yoder), Millersburg, OH, second child and daughter, Brooklyn Kate, November 15, 2020.

**Lengacher**, Nelson and Krista (Coblentz), Lexington, IN, fourth child, second daughter, Amiyah Nicole, November 16, 2020.

**Miller**, Carl and Kayla (Stoltzfus), New Holland, PA, currently serving at Mt. View Nursing Home, Aroda, VA, second child and daughter, Shaniya Adelle, November 7, 2020.

**Miller**, Duane and Diane (Weaver), Uniontown, OH, first child and son, Will Ramon, November 15, 2020.

**Miller**, Matt and Gina (Troyer), Conneautville, PA, third child, first son, Liam Chase, January 16, 2021.

**Morinigo**, Jonas and Kerri (Byler), South Hutchinson, KS, second child, first daughter, Felicity Joy, December 26, 2020.

**Overholt**, Jamison and Jessica (Yoder), Whiteville, TN, third child, second son, Tristan Zayne, November 17, 2020.

**Stoltzfus**, Daniel and Mary Jean (Miller), Lewisburg, PA, second child and daughter, Larinda Jean, October 15, 2020.

**Stoltzfus**, Jay Wendell and Krystal Joy (Lapp), Christiana, PA, second child

and daughter, Adelyn Kate, December 21, 2020.

**Stoltzfus**, Nathan and Rose (Fisher), Perry, NY, first child and daughter, Shaniah Ruth, January 10, 2021.

**Sutherland**, Derick and Lydia (Ernst), Whiteville, TN, third child and daughter, Moriah Joy, September 15, 2015; fourth child, first son, Delbert Michael, December 2, 2016; fifth child, fourth daughter, Lorinda Abigail, June 22, 2018; received by adoption December 2, 2020.

**Weirich**, Joel and Stephanie (Yoder), Aroda, VA, fourth child, third son, Seth Logan, January 9, 2021.

**Yoder**, Chad and Angela (Overholt), Montezuma, GA, fourth child, second son, Jaxson Kyle, October 28, 2020.

**Yoder**, Eldon and Tinslie (Wagler), Montezuma, GA, first and second children (twins), first son and first daughter, Harrison Reed and Hadassah Kate, June 9, 2020.

**Yoder**, Jared and Rosanna (Miller), Hanover, IN, second child, first daughter, Holli Skye, September 23, 2020.

**Yoder**, Jonny and Kathleen (Byler), Cumberland Furnace, TN, third child, first daughter, Oaklyn Raine, November 29, 2020.

**Yoder**, Justin and Melissa (Good), Henderson, NY, fifth child, fourth son, Latrell Addison, December 8, 2020.

**Yoder**, Lynford and Jolene (Yoder), Sebringville, ON, first and second children (twins), first son and first daughter, Bryson Elmer and Natasha Brielle, December 26, 2020.

**Yoder**, Roman and Marie (Yoder), Cumberland Furnace, TN, first child and daughter, Kiahna Cheyenne, September 25, 2020.



## ordinations

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

**Bro. Joshua Lebold**, 28, (wife, Debbie Ropp), Bluevale, ON, was ordained minister for Whitechurch Amish Mennonite Church on December 20, 2020. Preordination messages were given by Luke Wagler. The charge was given by Larry Ropp, assisted by John Gerber and Arnold Jantzi. Alvin Gerber shared the lot.

**Bro. Dwight Yoder**, 41, (wife, Jennifer Stutzman), Montezuma, GA, was ordained bishop for Clearview Mennonite Fellowship Church, Montezuma, GA, on January 24, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Raymond Yoder and Luke Troyer. The charge was given by Noah Yoder, assisted by Raymond Yoder and Luke Troyer. Clyde Yoder and Henry Overholt, Jr. shared the lot.



**Beiler**, Linda K., 47, Wytheville, VA, peacefully passed away at her home on December 17, 2020. She was born August 6, 1973, in Lancaster, PA, to Ben and Leah (King) Yoder.

Linda loved the Lord and was an active and faithful member of Light of Hope Mennonite Church. She was a loving mother and bishop's wife with a heart full of compassion for everyone she met. She enjoyed reading, gardening, and socializing with friends and family.

On July 31, 1993, she married John Omar Beiler in Madison, NY. Her husband of 27 years survives along with her children: Lynita (Nicholas) Funk, Jerek, Jadrian, and Kianne, Wytheville. Also surviving are her parents, Ben and Leah Yoder; four sisters: Martha (Matthew) Stoltzfus, Edna (Ervin) Kauffman, Kathleen (Matthias) Miller, Arlene (David) Ropp; and three brothers: Samuel (Mary), Albert (Karisa), and Raymond.

The funeral service was held on December 21, 2020, at Light of Hope Mennonite Church, officiated by Wayne Yoder, Samuel Yoder, and Daniel Beiler. Interment followed at Light of Hope Mennonite Cemetery, committal by Ray Miller.

**Gerber**, Mary, 98, passed away peacefully at Knollcrest Lodge, Milverton, Ontario, on September 22, 2020. She was born January 19, 1922,

to the late Moses and Fannie (Lichty) Zehr. She was the beloved wife of Amos L. Gerber who predeceased her in 1985.

Mary was the dear mother of Wilmer (Marjorie) Gerber, Laura (Ron) Hergott, Doris (Wayne) Zehr, Doreen (Rick) Gingerich, and Ray (Elizabeth) Gerber. She was the loving grandmother of 23 grandchildren and 45 great-grandchildren.

She was the dear sister of Norman (Amy) Zehr, Elmer (Ethel) Zehr, Esther (Ohmer) Jantzi, and sister-in-law Alma Zehr.

She was predeceased by brothers, John and Jacob, sisters, Emma Wagler and Laura Jantzi, brothers and sisters-in-law: Esther and Mary Zehr, Allan Wagler and Elmer Jantzi, Elmer and Sarah Gerber, Nicholas and Emma Schmidt, David and Esther Schwartz, Elias and Laura Jantzi, Solomon and Eva Gerber, Ohmer and Sarah Gerber, Ralph and Sarah Leis, Alvin and Elmina Jantzi, Moses and Mildred Gerber; still-born granddaughter, Emily Gerber, granddaughter-in-law, Mary Gingerich.

Mary was an avid quilter and loved scrapbooking and gardening. She taught all her grandchildren to fish and spent many hours playing games with them. Her door was always open, and she loved to serve everyone.

The funeral was held September 26, 2020, at Faith Mennonite Church, with the ministry of Cedar Grove A. M.

Church officiating. Private interment followed at Cedar Grove A. M. Cemetery.

**Mast**, John Henry, 75, Hartville, OH, residing in Colorado Springs, CO, passed away on December 12, 2020.

John was a hard worker; a carpenter, and farmer. He loved gardening almost as much as he loved hunting and fishing. He was a faithful member of Pleasant View Mennonite church. Nobody was a stranger to John. He was friendly to everyone.

The son of the late Henry Y. and Miriam (Gingerich) Mast, he is survived by his wife of 54 years, Iva (Wittmer) Mast.

He was a loving and caring brother, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He is survived by his seven children, five daughters and two sons: Elsie (Dallas) Martin, Cuyahoga Falls; Melinda (Ron) Burke, Aurora, CO; Rachel (Mast) Erdie, Colorado Springs, CO; Mary Ann (Bobby) Sands, Canton; Carolyn Mast, Colorado Springs, CO; Robert (Amanda), Vanleer, TN; Jason, Hartville; 14 grandchildren: Michaela Burke, Joseph and Christian Erdie, Caleb and Alex Diaz, Cheyenne and Dyllan Sands, Brandin Williams, Conner, Kelsey, Aubrey, Rylan, Heidi, Kendrick Mast; and three great-grandchildren: Cloe, Serenity, and Adalyn Malone.

He is also survived by eight siblings: Melinda (Henry) Miller, Chestertown, MD; Martha (Melvin) Byler, Brooksville, FL; Elmina (Sam) Miller, Charleston, SC; Anna Mae (Eli) Hershberger, Dover;

Wayne (Wilma), Dover, DE; Jacob (Mary Ann), Tallahassee, FL; Elmer (Mary Jane), Dover, DE; Benjamin (Christine), Dover, DE; many nieces and nephews, whom he loved dearly, and a host of cousins and friends.

He was preceded in death by a great-nephew, Matthew Kelly, and a great-niece, Dakota Troyer.

The funeral service was held at the Hartville Conservative Mennonite Church with interment following at Pleasant View Mennonite Church.

**Nisly**, Harley, 87, Hutchinson, KS, died peacefully at his home August 13, 2020. He was born March 28, 1933, to the late Edward D. and Elizabeth (Yoder) Nisly in rural Hutchinson.

Harley was a faithful member of Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite Church and lived out his faith in many practical ways. He invested many years in prison ministry, including M2. Prison Fellowship and Freedom Challenge. He reached out to men who needed a friend and mentor. He served for many years as administrator of Pilgrim Christian School.

On November 17, 1955, Harley and Emma (Yutzy) Nisly, were married in Hutchinson. She preceded him in death on May 17, 2019. He is survived by two sons and four daughters: Duane (Ruth), Pital, Costa Rica; Christina (James) Barkman, McConnellsville, OH; Janet (James) Shetler, Hutchinson; Dwight (Marlene), Brooklyn, NY; Linda (Arno) Miller, Hutchinson; Doris (Matthew)

Yoder, Hutchinson; 25 grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren; brothers: Lester (Edna) Nisly, Larry (Barbara) Nisly, John Frederick (Sara Mae) Nisly; sister, Barbara Ellen (David E.) Miller; brother-in-law, Paul W. (Nancy) Nisly, and sisters-in-law: Iva Nisly, Cora Nisly, and Elizabeth Nisly.

He was preceded in death by a grandson, Nathan Edward Nisly; two sisters: Vera Mae and Laura; three brothers: William, Daniel, and Elmer Nisly.

The funeral was held with a graveside service at West Center Cemetery on August 17 with Lee Nisly and Paul Miller serving.

**Nisly, Lester**, 84, Abbeville, SC, passed away October 23, 2020, at his residence surrounded by his family. He was born March 28, 1936, to Edward and Lizzie (Yoder) Nisly in Hutchinson, KS.

Lester was a charter member of Cold Spring Mennonite Church. He relocated from Hutchinson, KS, in 1969. He was the owner of Nisly's Electric for 44 years. The slogan for his business was "Let Us Help You See the Light." Most importantly, his desire was to show others the Light of Jesus. He also owned a chicken operation. Sunday mornings always found him greeting visitors after church. Lester enjoyed gardening and sharing his produce with others. Watching and feeding birds were favorite pastimes. He spent hours singing, listening to music, and leading songs.

In addition to his parents, he was

preceded in death by his siblings: Harley, Daniel, Elmer, William, Vera Mae Nisly, and Laura Nisly.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Edna Hershberger Nisly, his children: Delores (Kevin) Kauffman, Gina (Glen) Swartzentruber, Carolyn Nisly, Ken (Gloria), Wayne (Leona); siblings: Larry (Barbara), John Fredrick (Sara), Barbara Ellen Miller; sisters-in-law: Iva Nisly, Elizabeth Nisly, Cora Nisly; and his grandchildren: Brandon (Krista), Anthony (Melissa), Wesley (Amy), Alanna (Ryan) Miller, Kendra, Grant, Kayla, Braden, Rochelle (Chad) Miller, Justin (Jalisa), Brad, Cassandra, Landon, Tyler (Larissa), Shannon, Rachel, Shari, Cam, Cooper Freeman, Kolt Collins, Enslee, Ellie Wallace, Jenny Belle Brantly, Annsleigh McCaslan, Taylor Grace Morgan, and Titus Speer. He is also survived by ten great-grandchildren.

An outside service was held October 26, 2020, at Cold Spring Mennonite Church.

**Nisly, Sadie**, 100, Hutchinson, KS, died July 30, 2020, at her home in rural Hutchinson, KS. She was born December 3, 1919, to the late Samuel M. and Nettie (Miller) Beachy.

On June 12, 1940, she married Ora C. Nisly. After 64 years of marriage, he preceded her in death on March 27, 2005.

She was a loyal member of Cedar Crest A. M. Church. She was a homemaker who loved to cook, host, garden, and quilt, making many quilts for children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

She also did some custom quilting.

Sadie is survived by sons: Melvin (Clara Mae), Hutchinson; Samuel (Arlene), Hartselle, AL; Earl (Irene), Hopewell, OH; Philip (Ellen), Freeport, OH; Clifford (Sue), Calvin (Andrea), Partridge; and Millard, Haven; daughters: Esther (Marlin) Yoder, Partridge; Alma (David) Hochstetler, Carol Nisly, Aroda, VA; Grace (Lorne) Kuepfer, Beulah Nisly, Hutchinson, Dorothea (Lysner) Jean, Haiti; and Darlene (Lynford) Schrock, Unionville Center, OH; 52 grandchildren, 139 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren; brother, Harley (Susie) Beachy, Hutchinson; sister, Katie Yoder, Hutchinson; brothers-in-law, Willis Miller, Hutchinson; Paul (Nancy) Nisly, Grantham, PA; sisters-in-law: Katie Beachy, Wilma Beachy, Hutchinson; and Viola Miller, Flint, MI.

Preceding her in death were a son, Charles, a grandson, Matthew Nisly, three great-grandchildren; brothers: Melvin, Eli, Alvin, Roman, Leslie, Samuel, Jr.; and sisters, Susie Miller and Verna Schrock.

A private family service was held on August 3 with Lee Nisly, Paul Miller, and Donald Miller serving. Interment followed in the West Center Cemetery. Earl Nisly conducted the committal.

**Nisly**, William "Bill", 88, Hutchinson, KS, died at Mennonite Friendship Communities, South Hutchinson, KS, on August 5, 2020. He was born in rural Hutchinson, KS, October 22, 1931, to the late Edward and Lizzie (Yoder) Nisly.

On April 29, 1956, he married Elizabeth Yutzky in Hutchinson, KS.

He was a loyal member of Cedar Crest A.M. Church.

From 1952 to 1954, he served as a conscientious objector at Denver General Hospital in Colorado. When he returned, he helped for some years on the family farm because of his father's failing health. In 1962 William began working for Henson Dairy Supply as a serviceman where he made many friends. In 1974 he bought the business with two of his brothers where he continued until his retirement.

Other involvements through the years included Mennonite Friendship Communities board, ETC. Shoppe, and prison visitation ministries.

William is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; their five children: Loretta (Arlis) Helmuth, Kalona, IA; Rosalie Nisly, Hutchinson; Darrell (Kathryn) Nisly, Sioux Narrows, ON; Joanna (John) Riehl, Hutchinson; Eugene (Sharon) Nisly, Hutchinson; 15 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren; brothers: Harley, Lester (Edna), Larry (Barbara), John Frederick (Sara); sister, Barbara Ellen (David E.) Miller; brother-in-law, Paul W. (Nancy) Nisly; and sisters-in-law: Iva Nisly and Cora Nisly.

He was preceded in death by granddaughters: Victorious Sunshine and Rhiannon Elizabeth; sisters: Vera Mae and Laura; and brothers: Daniel and Elmer.

The funeral was held August 8 with James Shetler and Paul Miller serving.

Committal by Julian Nisly and interment were in West Center Cemetery.

**Peachey**, Lewis E., 78, Belleville, PA, suddenly left his earthly home on January 13, 2021, as God painted a beautiful sunset. It was a comforting confirmation of his glorious entry into eternal rest.

Lewis was born September 20, 1942, to the late Aaron and Hannah (Kurtz) Peachey. He married the love of his life, Rebecca (Kauffman) Peachey, on March 19, 1963.

He is survived by his four brothers: Joseph, Leroy (Sally), David, Lester (Shirley); and three sisters: Mary (Sheryl) Wert, Sara Ann (Levi) Peachey, and Arlene Peachey. Also surviving are his eight children: Viola (Noah) Sharp, Wanda (Mervin) Hostetler, Twila (John) Hostetler, Sharon (Mark) Yoder, Charity (Ryan) Hostetler, Aaron (Regina) Peachey, Anna (Dave) Lapp, Louella (Amos) Swarey, 28 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Jesse Peachey, a daughter, Darlene Peachey, a grandson, Anthony Hostetler, and a sister-in-law, Mary Ann Peachey.

Lewis was a butcher most of his life and a former owner of A.J. Peachey & Sons Inc. He loved serving the community, and people were his biggest asset. He was well-known for his positive and optimistic outlook which carried him through life's challenges.

He was a member of Valley View Amish Mennonite Church.

The funeral was held January 17, 2021, at Valley View Amish Mennonite Church with Matt Peachey and Jesse Zook officiating. Interment was at Allensville Mennonite Cemetery with Earl Peachey serving.

**Stutzman**, Emma, 96, died November 20, 2019, at Mennonite Friendship Communities, South Hutchinson, KS. She was born to the late Samuel A. and Delila (Beiler) Nisly on March 18, 1923, in rural Hutchinson.

Emma and Ervin Stutzman were married on August 8, 1943. They shared almost 75 years of married life together before Ervin's death on January 26, 2018. They were very supportive members of Cedar Crest A. M. Church.

Emma was a homemaker with a very green thumb. In 1956 she and her husband, Ervin, started Stutzman Greenhouse which they owned until 1985. After retirement, they moved to Haiti where they did volunteer work. Together, they started Haiti Relief and Missions, serving in Haiti for ten years.

Emma is survived by children: Virginia Ferguson, AR; Florence (Michael) Galloway, Hutchinson; Mahlon Stutzman; brother, Melvin S. Nisly, Hutchinson; brother-in-law, L. Perry (Silvia) Stutzman, South Hutchinson; sister-in-law, Matilda Stutzman, OH; 12 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and seven great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a son, Don Ferguson; sisters: Amanda Yoder, Rebecca Bontrager, Katie Helmuth, Mary

Nisly; and brothers: Menno, John, and Jonas Nisly.

The funeral was held November 23 with Lee Nisly serving. Interment was in West Center Cemetery.

**Weaver**, Jeffrey Allen, son of Joseph and Melody (Miller) Weaver, Lexington, IN, was born November 11, 2020, in Clarksville, IN, and went to be with Jesus November 14, 2020, at Norton Children's Hospital, Louisville, KY.

Jeffrey is survived by his parents and four brothers: Jason, Julian, Joel, and Josiah.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandmother.

The funeral and burial were held November 16, 2020, at Living Waters Mennonite Church.

**Yoder**, Barbara, 99, Partridge, KS, died at her home on December 27, 2020. She was born February 12, 1921, to Levi and Mary (Borntrager) Nisly.

On November 25, 1948, she married Alvin Chriss Yoder. Survivors include a brother, Raymond Nisly, her six children and spouses: Emma Lois Yoder, Partridge; Oren (Joanna), Partridge; Ernest (Mary), Parsons; Rachel (Ron) Bontrager, Arlington, WA; Marietta Yoder, Partridge; Frieda Yoder, Partridge; 13 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, her parents, two sisters, four brothers, and three grandsons.

She was baptized in her youth in

the Amish Church. By her example and values, she influenced her peers to live a higher moral standard. Through the years she continued to be a source of spiritual encouragement to others. Her life was characterized by kindness. She was a very devoted mother and grandmother who took a keen interest in the lives of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, praying faithfully for them. Her love and attraction to children remained obvious in spite of decline in later years. She was a faithful member of the Center Amish Mennonite Church.

The graveside service and burial were held on December 28, 2020, at the West Center Cemetery, with Dwight Miller, David Yoder, and LaVerne Miller officiating.

**Yoder**, Rosanna, 58, Winesburg, OH, passed away on January 12, 2021, after a brief battle with cancer. She was born September 3, 1962, to Dan and Esta (Miller) Borntrager. On October 2, 1982, she married David Alan Yoder who survives.

Rosanna faithfully served her Lord, church, and family. She will be remembered for her singing and her practical expressions of love. She served her family as a homemaker and was a faithful member of the Grace Haven Fellowship Church.

In addition to her mother, Esta, she is survived by five children: Grace (Shane) Funk, Worthington, WV; Michael (Rosina), Winesburg; Brian



(Faith), Winesburg; Charity (Bradley) Miller, Millersburg; Jared Yoder of the home; 14 grandchildren; her brothers; Dean Borntrager, Trail; Bruce (Laura) Borntrager, Winesburg; and sisters: Karen Miller, Walnut Creek; Becky (Joe) Yoder, Kidron; Miriam (Marvin) Wengerd, Walnut Creek; Martha (Linford) Glick, Cañon City, CO; and Ann (Josiah) Schrock, Sugarcreek.

She was preceded in death by her father, Dan Borntrager.

Funeral services were held at the Messiah Amish Mennonite Church, Millersburg, January 15, 2021, with David J. Miller officiating. Burial was at the Grace Haven Cemetery.

**Zehr**, Erma, 82, Brunner; ON, passed from time to eternity at her residence December 30, 2020. Erma was born February 14, 1938, in Millbank, ON.

Erma is lovingly remembered by her five daughters: Marlene (Daniel) Wagler, Bernita (Kenneth) Jantzi, Gwen (Clare) Gerber, Patty (James) Gerber, and Brenda (Paul) Gerber. She was a cherished and devoted grandmother

of 28 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren. Erma will be remembered by her brothers: Roy (Barbara) Kuepfer, Ian (Dorothy) Kuepfer; sisters: Elsie (Aaron) Steckly, Clara (Norman) Lichty, Reta (Albert) Kuepfer, Mary Jane (Donald) Jantzi; brother-in-law, Joe (Deborah) Zehr, as well as her many nieces and nephews and the Zehr family.

She was predeceased by her husband, Mervin, on November 22, 1967; parents, Allan and Clara Kuepfer, infant brother, Elverne, grandson, Richard Wagler, and sister-in-law, Katherine (Cornelius) Erb.


Erma was a member of the Fairhaven A. M. church.

A private family funeral was held January 3, 2021, at Mornington A. M. Church with Arnold Jantzi officiating. Burial was at the adjoining cemetery.

**Correction:**

*Obituaries, January 2021*

**Roth**, Esther Viola, fourth paragraph

*Along with her parents, she was predeceased by a brother, Nelson Roth, sisters, Edna (Eli) Miller and Mary Roth, and a brother-in-law, Lorne Ruppert.* 

It is impossible for two persons to hate each other  
AND BOTH OF THEM TO LOVE GOD.

Today when many of us need to make a purchase, we start out by thinking, “Let me see what I can find on Amazon.” The retail climate is so different than it was in the mid-90s. In 1994 Jeff Bezos started a modest online bookstore called Amazon. He commented that the question he heard most frequently in the early days was, “What’s the internet?” This effort grew from its humble beginning to a \$1.7 trillion conglomerate in which sales topped 100 billion dollars in the fourth quarter of 2020. The global pandemic accelerated the migration toward online retail shopping.

The initial bookstore grew to include a wide variety of tech and entertainment goods and services. With time Amazon became known as the “online store” where a person could buy almost anything. More recently, Amazon expanded its financial interests from online to brick-and-mortar retail when it acquired Whole Foods. Early in 2021 Bezos surprised many by announcing that sometime later this year he will be stepping down from his position as CEO of the company to assume a position on the board.

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The ability to purchase goods and services through online means

offers enormous benefits in terms of efficiency. But let’s remember that this efficiency comes at a price.

One price is that we humans tend to spend more when it is easier to do so. It’s more convenient for me to buy something that I don’t need if I don’t need to be physically present in order to do so.

Online shopping can never replace the face-to-face interaction that physical presence provides. Personal interaction with real people is important. Superficial interaction through shopping is not a big piece of the human interaction puzzle. But it is a piece. I prefer walking into our hardware store to buy something if it’s there rather than going online for a lower price. I’ve concluded that part of the reason that is preferable for me is because I will probably talk with Ryan who owns the business or one of his helpful employees. And one of the things we will talk about is to make sure that I’m finding what I need. So, I leave the store with a greater confidence that what I’ve bought will do the job. Physical presence and human interaction simply provide an intangible level of satisfaction that online shopping can’t replicate.

God created us in His image as social beings. This awareness helps

us inform how we understand both ourselves and our Creator.

.....

In the first day or two of February, the number of persons who had received a COVID-19 vaccine in the USA surpassed the cumulative number of confirmed cases of COVID-19. President Joe Biden stated a goal of having 100 million persons vaccinated during the first 100 days of his presidential term. Despite distribution glitches and vaccine hesitancy among the populace, the numbers indicate that his goal might be attainable. The initial sputtering distribution has given way to an average of more than a million doses administered daily in the USA.

As of February 1, confirmed cases of COVID-19 were in a 20% week-to-week decline in the USA.

.....

Words and languages are both very intriguing and vexing, by turns and simultaneously.

One brother who was in the early days of learning Spanish had an embarrassing moment after he had led a prayer in church during which the congregation stood. He wanted to say that everyone should be seated on the benches. But he used words for “everyone” and “benches” that are very similar to their Spanish counterparts, but not accurate. What he ended up saying in Spanish was,

“The bulls can be seated on the cows.” What he said sounded close to giving the right message but ended up very, very far from conveying the message he desired.

Another problem that often manifests itself is that figures of speech usually lose their luster or their entire meaning when a translation attempt is undertaken. Trite phrases like, “bang for your buck”, “scared to death”, or “fly off the handle” don’t work very well when they are translated to another language.

My older sister once said that all adults should undertake learning another language simply for the benefit of the humility that the process affords us. It’s hard work, all right. It’s humiliating too when you are constantly aware that you are the one in the crowd who is least capable of accurate, verbal expression. Keep in mind that the presence of children in the crowd doesn’t change the fact that you are the most inept person present.

.....

Without going into much detail, an awareness of the complexity and diversity of language should have a couple of important effects on our understanding of Scripture. First is the incredible miracle of the preservation of God’s Message to us. This Message faithfully points us to the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We should be inspired and grateful beyond measure!

Secondly, this awareness also should serve to bathe our preferences and convictions regarding Bible translations in humility. This humility is born out of the knowledge that none of us was present when the message of Scripture was recorded. All our impressions regarding the accuracy, clarity, and faithfulness to the original text and intent, are based on our impression of what others have said or written. Good scholarship is very helpful in understanding well. But even the good scholars who expound on these things today weren't present back then. We weren't either, but we know and trust the One Who was there. But He's more than that. He's the Author Himself!

This doesn't mean that some translations aren't better than others. But we want to be vigilant that this awareness doesn't contribute to the efforts of the enemy to sow seeds of distrust in us regarding the legitimacy of God's Message to us. The enemy is pleased, and God is grieved, when we believe that Scripture says something it isn't saying or that it isn't saying something that it is. I don't see these concerns as unreasonable cautions.

However, we should be careful that legitimate concerns do not morph into striving about words in ways that are divisive rather than inspiring

us to gather around the Scriptures and rejoice together in God's good provision for us. He is so good in that He provided this Message for mankind. This Message has been preserved to the salvation of countless souls throughout human history. We have the privilege of being part of that multitude. The preservation, efficacy, and cohesion of Scripture stand as eloquent testimony to its authenticity. Praise the Lord!

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The following is based on anecdotal accounts rather than hard statistics. To the extent that the anecdotes reflect reality, the statistics likely exist somewhere. But I haven't seen them.

One of the ripple effects of last year's pandemic lockdown is a strengthening of the used automobile market. There are a couple of reasons that I've heard set forth for this phenomenon. One of the reasons is that the infusion of cash through economic stimulus measures have given people more money to spend.

Added to that, some manufacturing of new automobiles has suffered interruptions and delays, reducing the production of new vehicles. So, some folks who needed to replace a vehicle shifted their efforts to buying a used vehicle rather than a new one.

.....

Those in my generation had not experienced the kinds of interruption of goods and services and supply

lines that we saw glimpses of this past year. Many of our parents and grandparents lived through times of rationing and limitations imposed by a major wartime effort. The deprivation of those times often affected those who experienced them with an ongoing priority of thrift and careful stewardship.

In years to come it will be interesting to look back and see if the difficulties

experienced during this pandemic led us to more thoughtful and careful stewardship. I am not fond of, nor gravitate toward, discomfort and inconvenience. But collectively, we were probably long overdue for the reminder that the Hebrew writer left with his readers, found in 13:14, *“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”*

RJM 

## mission awareness

### Contributions of Jacob J. Hershberger

Brother Jacob was a ready and prolific writer, gifted with efficiency and dispatch. Though not noted for accurate spelling, he was noted for his gift of expression, good judgment, and for accuracy with figures.

When Amish Mennonite Aid was officially organized, it was obvious that Brother Jacob (the only typist among the three elected brethren) should be the secretary-treasurer. In that office he labored untiringly to the day of his unexpected and untimely death. He wrote business letters to various officials pertaining to permits, passports, visas, tickets, and travel reservations for AMA

personnel and activities; business and personal letters to AMA workers on the field and to prospective workers and contributors throughout the brotherhood; answered critics of his Budget columns; wrote letters of encouragement to fellow ministers and others; yea, letters unnamed and unnumbered! Of practically all letters pertaining to AMA business he sent carbon copies to his fellow board members. The policies of AMA in those beginning years were largely the fruit of his initiative and zeal. His selfless dedication, to God and the church, sanctified and made available his natural business abilities to the glory of God.

Personal notes and letters of admonition written to himself documented his fear of self and love for God. He had written letters addressed to himself in which he warned himself of the dangers of success, the hazards of reliance upon self, and the tragedies of pride. He had written a note and placed it on his desk to stare him daily in the face, saying, "Jacob! Work while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work!"

And Jacob did work, writing hundreds of letters. He wrote a weekly feature, "Lynnhaven Gleanings," for *The Budget*, consisting of a news column and another column of spiritual admonition, appreciated by thousands, and disliked by others whose inconsistencies it exposed.

"A man's gift maketh room for him..." (Proverbs 18:16) and so it was with Brother Jacob. Now the Hebrew word here translated "gift" means a present given—not an ability one possesses. Though Jacob was endowed with natural aptitudes, the secret of his life was his diligence in giving himself wholly to his calling.

He was born January 21, 1908, ordained to the ministry November 11, 1941, and to the office of bishop December 18, 1960. He applied himself just as diligently to his ministerial duties as to the AMA work and was used extensively throughout our churches.

Death came suddenly and unexpectedly in a tragic highway accident close to Franklin, Virginia, early Tuesday morning, September 14, 1965. He and three other brethren were en route to Alabama to investigate relocation possibilities for the brotherhood at Kempsville, whose farms were being swallowed up by the rapidly growing city. Suddenly an oncoming automobile swung out from between two semi-trailers in an effort to pass, crashing head-on into the car in which Jacob was a passenger. All other occupants in both cars were hospitalized, but Jacob apparently had died instantly of a broken neck.

On the evening before his passing, he had written several letters and checks for AMA workers. With his office work brought up to date, he said to his brother Andrew, "Everything is in order and I'm ready to go." He meant, ready to go to Alabama. But we believe he was also ready to go to be with the Lord which became a reality before daybreak the next morning. For more than a year he had been making obvious preparations for the work to continue after his demise. It was apparent timing of the Lord.

*[Reprinted with minor changes from Into the Highways and Hedges, chapter three, In Memory of Jacob J. Hershberger. Used with permission from Marvin and Mildred Yoder.]*



## Singles Speak (part 3)

*Susan Schlabach, Ripley, OH*



In two earlier articles we related discussions with numerous single women, subjects like: losses or gains in singlehood, how can marrieds and singles relate meaningfully? And much more. Thank you, sisters, for giving me the substance for these articles. Your introspection and honesty continue to inspire me. As I reflect, two facts about you rise to the top. 1. You don't all fit tidily into one clear-cut box. 2. You (allow me to put you into a box!) walk intimately with your Savior.

The discussion concludes with this article.

### **What about moving away from one's parental home to set up housekeeping?**

I was quite young when an unmarried friend in her thirties moved away from home and into her own apartment. I remember raised eyebrows and tongues clicking, questioning her move. I thought deeply about the stir it created. Years later, I was pleasantly intrigued when another single friend was about to move into her own home for the first

time. She was absolutely smitten with paint samples and décor inspiration. It became clear to me that despite tension on this question, marriage does not necessarily precede a nesting instinct.

This looks different for everyone, of course, but it seems incredibly important for every woman, married or not, to have a place that she can make her own. Here she can reign queen of her own kitchen and can entertain guests as she pleases. Renting might be a better plan for some, thus avoiding maintenance issues. Good things happen when homemaking responsibilities fall on one's own shoulders. The move should be undertaken with an awareness of the self-discipline it calls for. Be aware that living alone can increase feelings of loneliness. It is a caring thing to do when a single's support group initiates this move with a housewarming shower or support that resembles wedding gifts. This gesture could include hours of labor during the moving period.

Some may see setting up one's

own home as a permanent farewell to marriage, but we know God's plans aren't inhibited with this undertaking. One bonus is the almost magical relational enlargement that happens between a woman and her parents after she moves out. Her parents may anticipate having her stop in for a meal or asking their advice on issues. Moving out doesn't require a *reason* other than that both parties can often relate in healthier ways when each lives in his own space.

Staying with one's parents when they need care is a logical arrangement for a season that calls for flexibility, respect, and communication. Trusted mentors and extended family are key to this balance. If living with one's parents, an older single should not assume that Mom will always pick up after her. Respect flows both ways. If she is earning her own living while living at home, she does well to go beyond what is expected of her in the line of duties and costs. On the other side, she may appreciate being exempted from family routines and schedules. Two grown women under one roof day after day calls for intentional yielding and deference, with kind and purposeful communication about duties and expectations.

Next question: **Was singleness in God's original plan at creation?** Are unmatched men and women a

secondary result of man's sin? The answers came in as far apart as the east from the west. One suggested it was unreasonable to ask the question!

Listen in. *"Looking squarely at this question has helped me view my singleness from a better perspective. I don't see God as arbitrarily withholding marriage from me, but I see my singleness as part of living in an imperfect world. And just like God can take all the other broken pieces of our lives and make them beautiful, He can do that with singleness too."*

*"My first response to this question was an emphatic and resounding 'NO!' [It is] rather preposterous that anyone would even THINK something like this!"*

*"I don't think it's a significant point to meditate on or moan over any more than it would be for married ladies to moan over the fact that their marriages fall short of perfection, as well, on this side of Eden."*

One suggested that the original design by God was to be married (Genesis 2:18), but the post-sin result from that does not detract from our God-created purpose for living. Our purpose is to fear God, to keep His commandments, to know Him, and to walk humbly with Him. God fully redeems all people completely and wholly based on their confession of Him and not on their marital status. If singleness is a result of the curse it was also a vital part of our



redemption; think about Jesus or Paul.

*“Are doctors and nurses a result of the curse? Firefighters, meat processors, preachers, and missionaries? Better stated, singles might be a result of the curse, but not a part of the curse. As I peer through the glass darkly it appears to me like each person on earth, including singles, is part of God’s original plan.”*

Another asks a valid question: *“If God created male and female in His image, expressing separately His masculinity and femininity, is our journey to wholeness a walk with God that develops, in part, the strengths of the opposite?”*

Probably for every single person who desires marriage, there is a married lady who longs to be single. Wasn’t that the essence of Eve’s temptation, to reach for what she did not have, convinced that it would bring her happiness? Married and single, we live in her shadow.

I quote from *To Have and To Hold* by Sharon Yoder: “Single people may not know why they did not marry, or why they lived singly for many years before they married. Jesus reminded the disciples that God, in His sovereignty, does permit people to remain unmarried. However, Jesus did not explain all the whys and wherefores. It may be that some people are single primarily for God’s own delight. He is a God who longs

for undivided worship and devotion from His created ones. I wonder at times if God may intervene and hinder marriage opportunities so He can use single people for the advancement of His kingdom. Our finite minds do not have the capacity to understand everything God is working in this earth that will bring us to the consummation of all things. He is incomprehensible in His omnipotence and omniscience. How can we even begin to give definition to all the things we do not understand in the light of eternity past, present, and future? Who are we to say that God has made a mistake in orchestrating our life events? God does not owe you or me any explanations. The bottom line is that ‘I exist for God and for God’s purposes, not my own.’ When I can embrace this concept I can stop asking, ‘Why in the world are there singles?’ and accept the reality, ‘Why, in the world there are singles!’”

We talked about **whether they felt comfortable to verbalize their desire for marriage**, if, in fact, they did desire it. About fifty percent acknowledged they would, if surrounded by understanding friends, and the others said they would hesitate to do so, lest they be viewed as discontented. One acknowledged that her hesitancy to recognize and name that desire had hindered her from receiving God’s

sufficiency in that specific personal loss.

We spoke about **third party matchmaking**. A few were dubious or said no, but most acknowledged that if undertaken with the help of the Holy Spirit and with sincere love and concern for all involved, it could yield positive results. However, some ventured that God can do His work without additional help!

I can't resist sharing this: *"I think one of the best ways to encourage marriage is this: what if everyone would sit down with one unmarried friend that they have, and find out what is holding that person back from marriage? Then, as a community, we rebuild what is broken or sinful or selfish. I think there are three basic reasons why there are single people: selfishness, sin, and being scared."*

And this one: *"I would love if our families or church families could assist single people in finding marriage partners. If we feel like marriage and companionship was God's plan in creation, surely, we can actively help each other accomplish that."*

**These quotes are helpful:** When you get to know someone, labels disappear. (John Steiner) Wherever you are, be all there. (Jim Elliot) Receive with gratitude what you've been given and seek to build on that. (Steven Brubaker) Do you mind if I pray for a husband for you? (various)

**These quotes—not so helpful:**

Leftover blessings, old maids, single girls (who says married girls?) | Singles are set in their ways. | Oh good! She deserves a really good husband. | I never knew how selfish I was until I had children. | Why isn't she married? She's such a nice girl.

**And the following are helps they named:**

Christian biographies of singles  
Seminars at Deeper Life and Penn Valley

*Life is for Living* by Anita Yoder  
*Feminine Beauty* by Evelyn Miller  
*Daughters of Promise* magazine  
*To Have and To Hold* by Sharon

Yoder

*Free to Be Single* by Elva MacAllister  
*Singles at the Crossroads* by Al Hsu  
Blog: *Desiring God*

*Did I Kiss Marriage Goodbye?* by Carolyn McCulley

*Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby

Hebrew/Greek Study Bible  
*Let Me Be a Woman* by Elizabeth Elliott

*Shadow of the Almighty* by Elizabeth Elliott

*Choosing Gratitude* by Nancy Leigh Demoss

*The Rich Single Life* by Andrew Farmer

These ladies named the following ways God has become real to them. His provision with financial needs, His care, infinite love, faithfulness, and unselfishness. He

is sovereign, Redeemer, Father, Shepherd, Provider, Sustainer, Rock, Omnipresent, and Omniscient. He is enough, will never leave, and restores what is lost. He is a refuge, speaks to us in real ways, and understands our needs. He does all things well and is in control. He is Rest and He is always good. He gives wisdom and full acceptance.

In conclusion, allow me to draw a picture for all of us, single or married,

who are single in devotion. In our lives, we cradle a costly alabaster box containing our love, commitment, and desire. Desire, fulfilled and unfulfilled. As we break, pour, and anoint our beloved Master, the aroma envelops Him, us, and those around us. This act of worship allows us a preview of the day when all our losses will be completed, and we will be perfectly wed to the Lover of our souls.



## junior messages

### The Peace Oak

*Love and Mercy to Friend and Foe*

*Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH*

The story, “The Shepherd of Salm,” took place over two hundred years ago on the Salm Plateau in a mountainous area of France, 4,500 miles from where we live. The same God Who watched over His children so long ago in the northwest corner of the Alsace is watching over us today.

Christian and Anna Gerber were shearing sheep on a sunny spring day. Their marriage was a happy one and they enjoyed working together. A neighbor boy, François, stopped

by and greeted Christian. Christian finished shearing the sheep. When he looked up, he was surprised to also see two French officials in red caps, from Paris, standing there with four men carrying a chair for a crippled government official.

“The officials; they have come. What would they say?” wondered Christian.

Christian, bishop Jacob, and others had previously traveled to Paris on foot and by public stagecoach to speak with the rulers of their country,

requesting tolerance to their Biblical views. They asked them if they could promise allegiance rather than swearing an oath and told them they gladly pay taxes but would not kill their fellowman or take part in the military. They had stated that they would show love and mercy to friend or foe. Now today, what answer would these men give?

Christian calmly finished shearing the sheep while the men waited. His father-in-law, Jacob Küpferschmitt, the shepherd of Salm and Amish bishop, greeted the men respectfully and told them, "We wish to live in obedience to the laws of the land, but first we must obey the Word of God. We cannot take up arms to fight our fellow men. We practice non-violence and show love and mercy to friend and foe alike. Our Anabaptist brethren had been persecuted in Switzerland because they could not participate in the army and now have settled on scattered farms in the Alsace and Lorraine. We wish to live in peace and show love to our fellowmen."

The officials listened quietly and remarked, "These men are like the Quakers."

"Anna," Christian spoke quietly, "Run and inform our believing neighbors that the government officials are here. Also, make plenty

for supper for these guests."

The officials wanted to see the ruins of a château (a large French house or castle) on the mountain, so Christian and some of his friends from church guided them to the place. When they returned, bishop Jacob met them and said, "It's time for the evening meal; come inside and dine with us."

Their home was warm and welcoming as the women placed dishes of steaming food on the table. After the meal Jacob drew his Ausbund from the shelf. How precious were these hymns, written by their brethren, some dating back to the 1500s. "If you don't mind, we will sing a song for you," he said. He opened the small thick book and led several verses of song number three. The little company of God's children in the room sang the song of the persecuted church. "We stand where the martyrs stood, on the threshold of uncertainty, in the face of the authority of the land; willing to give our lives as they gave theirs." Their singing rose, as if on the wings of the evening breezes, away up to the heavenlies to their Father Who was watching over this small group of believers.

When the song ended, Christian glanced at the officer and saw his eyes were glistening with tears. God's Presence was near in their

humble home. Finally Goupilleau, the government official in charge, wiped his tears and spoke, "If you people take care of the farming, we will take care of the military duties."

Joy rose in the hearts of the children of God. Jacob said, "God bless you for your kindness to us. Let us bow our heads and thank the Lord for His mercy."

After prayer, Goupilleau asked more questions. Again Jacob explained, "Jesus teaches us to love our enemies, to do good to all men, and tells us, 'Do not kill.'"

It was getting late when the government officials departed with some of the believers escorting them down over the winding mountainous road as far as the nearest town.

As time went on, the group of believers on the Salm Plateau needed a young man to work with elderly Jacob in shepherding their flock. One Sunday after Jacob's message, the congregation filed out to share their vote with the bishop and deacon. One by one they came back in to wait patiently and prayerfully for the voice of the church.

At last the leaders came back in to the front of the room and announced that Christian Gerber was chosen to be the new Amish bishop.

Later, Christian's father, Peter, recounted what he was told when he

was ordained, "We will give account of the souls that are entrusted into our care. God will give grace and strength for His work."

Father-in-law Jacob shared words of wisdom, "Be humble, Christian, be humble. God can only use humble men. We will pray for you."

As war continued to rage across France, once again in 1793, the men from Salm sent another delegation to Paris. Bishop Jacob spoke to a crowd at the convention, "We are representatives of the Taufer brethren (today known as Mennonites), we pay our full taxes, take care of our poor, and wish to keep the laws of the land. But the Word of God forbids us to bear arms or to take part in the National Guard."

Angry hisses and dark looks spread across the balconies. This convention was a dangerous place. After a Catholic bishop spoke and calmed the crowd, Goupilleau took the floor and told of their visit to the Salm Plateau and of the peaceful way of life of the Christians. They were told the matter would be referred to the Committee of Public Safety and were ordered to leave.

*[To be continued]*

*Resource: The Shepherd of Salm, by Joanna F. Martin, Rod and Staff Publishers, 2014*



## Sold Out

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

Most of us have gone shopping for any number of items, only to be met by a sign or an employee who says “Sorry, we’re **sold out**.”

“*Sold out*? Really? Are you sure there isn’t any in the back?” We hold out hope that maybe they do actually have the item we are looking for. We don’t want to accept the truth of those two little words, *sold out*. *Sold out* means nothing is available. Everything has been purchased or redeemed and until another shipment comes, there will be no sales of that item. If a concert or event is *sold out*, it means that there are no more tickets available. There is no room for anyone else, and therefore all others will be turned away at the door. When items sell out quickly we often refer to them as a “hot seller.” What does this have to do with you? What does *sold out* mean for the Christian? Let’s take a look at what the Scripture says about it.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all recount the story of the rich young ruler. Picture with me, a young man full of good intentions with a good pedigree, raised with good teachings, having solid morals

and showing responsibility (hence his appointment to a ruler at a young age). From all appearances this young man had it all together. Older people in the community comment what a wonderful young man he is. Mothers wish he would ask to court their daughters. Others enjoy being around him, and parents never worry if their children are with him. Church leaders wish more young people would aspire to be just like him. What is wrong with this picture? Nothing! This man was doing everything that he knew to be right! Jesus, on the other hand, looked straight through the young man into his heart, analyzing what was keeping him from complete surrender. 1 Samuel 16:7b “...for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” Jesus addressed the area in the young man’s life that was hindering him from being in the center of God’s will, but the young man considered the cost and decided it was too high.

There are people just like the rich young ruler sitting next to us in church each Sunday. Notice I didn’t say young people in that last sentence?

All of us struggle with being 100% surrendered in 100% of our lives. Are we ***sold out*** for Jesus Christ and the Kingdom? Perhaps like Ananias and Sapphira, we exude an air of giving all while still keeping back an area of our lives. We have that “room in our hearts where even we don’t go.”

Remember I mentioned a *sold-out* item is usually considered a “hot seller?” Revelation 3:15-16 says, “*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*” That’s pretty strong language, and a clear description of how God feels about the Christian and the church that is not *sold out*. If we are *sold out*, then often we are a “hot” item, right? If we are cold, we are still in need of saving. If we are lukewarm, we know what is right and choose not to do it, therefore making ourselves accountable and unpalatable to God.

What is keeping us from being *sold out*? In a recent youth book study, we studied a chapter entitled *Serving Leftovers to a Holy God*.<sup>1</sup> It was a real eye opener and a reminder of how blessed we are as God’s people. A Christian work ethic coupled with business principles based in Proverbs has many of us doing well financially. This reality influences the amount of time that we have and take for leisure and relaxation. We have it so easy

that I believe it influences our ability to really grasp the meaning of being *sold out*. For some, like the rich young ruler, our hindrance is our wealth. For some it may be hobbies, sports, or work. For others it may be hunting, fishing, or working on that car or truck you bought. Could it be working out to have that perfect body or focusing so much on my looks and the current trends and styles that will help me fit in and be popular? Am I spending so much time keeping up with my friends on social media or reading the news that I don’t take time to study and meditate on the Word? Are we allowing our lives to be so full that we have no room for Jesus? Is He just getting the scraps or leftovers of our time and attention? If we look at our lives right now in light of eternity, are we satisfied with where we are? Would a marriage relationship flourish if given as much attention as we give God? As a part of the bride of Christ, I challenge each of us to answer these questions for ourselves. Challenge others to examine their lives and then hold each other accountable. Start a discussion among your friends and family about it. When a competitor for attention knocks on your life’s door seeking your time and attention, will they see a sign saying, “All items have been purchased or redeemed by someone else, we are ***SOLD OUT?***”

1. Chapter Five of Crazy Love by Francis Chan, published 2008



## THOUGHT GEMS

Where love reigns, God reigns.

• • • • •

Never answer an angry word; it is the second one that starts a quarrel.

• • • • •

Hating people is like burning the house to kill the rats.

• • • • •

Rudeness is a weak man's imitation of strength.

• • • • •

A believer at war with his brother cannot be at peace with his Father.

• • • • •

So live that when people speak evil of you, no one will believe it.

• • • • •

You can always tell an informed man—his ideas are the same as yours.

• • • • •

An excuse is a skin of a reason stretched over a lie.

• • • • •

"They say" is often proved to be a great liar.

• • • • •

Love that doesn't understand the language of sacrifice is not love.

• • • • •

The only way to understand your enemies is to love them.

• • • • •

When God measures a man, He puts the  
tape around the heart—not the head.

• • • • •

A love that will not bear all, care for all, share all, is not love at all.