



CALVARY MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2014

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Which Way Should I Take?

Joshua Smith, Culdesac. ID

I stood at the crossroads one day,
Where a decision I needed to make.
To the left or the right—which way shall I go?

The road to the left looked
Wide and exciting; it was smooth
And easy, with a gentle slope.

The road to the right looked
Narrow and wearisome, filled with
Stumbling blocks and thorns.

I shaded my eyes and tried in vain
To see where each road would lead,
But they quickly disappeared in a mist.

At the head of each way stood a figure
Doing his best to convince me
That his way was the best.

The figure on the left said his road was
Well-maintained, heavily-traveled, and safe,
With plenty of attractions along the way.

The figure on the right told of a road
Filled with danger, toils, and snares, but
He promised a Guide, a home and a crown.

With a start, I remembered that I had
A guide book; in it I found that
One leads to death and the other to life.

Suddenly, I recognized the two figures;
The one was the devil dressed
As the world; the other: Christ.

As I turned to take the road to the right,
The devil threw off his guise and
Began to hurl fiery darts.

He claimed I was a traitor; he said I was
Too great a sinner; he portrayed that I was
Insincere. He roared many a lie.

But the Holy Spirit gently said, “The just shall
Live by faith alone.” So I took His armor, and
Walked with Him; and He has never let me down.



Staying Fresh and Green

At four score years, I find it a challenge to maintain a growing edge. I keep on reading the Bible. I pray every day. I have not yet reached a level of holiness that precludes the need to apologize, at times. In short, I am still human—very human. I just hope that as I’m getting older, I’m also getting wiser.

Notice Paul words of encouragement to the Corinthians: “...*but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*” (2 Cor. 4:16b). That tells us that we don’t simply get to “shift it into neutral and coast to a stop at our journey’s end.” Here are some things I find helpful:

•Read purposefully.

I now find time in my schedule that allows me to read more than ever. This may seem a cruel irony, because remembering what I read is not getting easier. But that’s alright; I can still get some nourishment for the spirit, even though comprehension is fading. Some things are drawn into sharper focus. I think I actually understand and live grace better than I used to.

•Establish helpful routines.

I have been reading a one-year Bible every year for a number of decades. Do I have to work at concentration? Absolutely! Might I not just as well quit? Hardly! If I find my mind going off track, I say to myself, *Let’s go back and read that again.* I call it self-discipline.

•Encourage those who take on our work.

When our strength fades, someone else will carry on. They will find ways of doing things that surprise us. Let us do what we can to encourage them to develop their gifts. Which is better, that we strain and grunt to do the work we have often done, or to encourage someone younger to do it? When we do that, they might even ask questions about how it was done earlier. That’s exciting!

•Expect eternal realities to become ever more real.

Thinking that I may be in my last decade draws life into a sharper focus. Musings like, “What might I be doing in ten years from now?” seem quite different now than they did in the first half of life. Paul told the Corinthians that when this happens,

we seem to find a better focus. We look more intently at the things that are not seen, instead of the things that are temporal (2 Cor. 4:18).

•**Anticipate a growing desire for heaven.**

Things change. We wake up too early. Our health weakens. Our endurance fades. Our vision dims. People younger than we are, die. Disappointments abound. People desert Jesus. But heaven will have *no* disappointments. Our longing to go on and be with the Lord grows. Realizing that heaven is far better (Phil. 1:21-23), we set our house in order. We craft a will to make it easier for our heirs.

•**Find new ways of living meaningfully.**

That's right, we don't need to fold up and quit. We can find new ways of serving, as health permits. This can be a time of pursuing a hobby. We can take more interest in the grandchildren. If an ailing, widowed person needs company, we are available. If a special call for prayer goes out, we can take the time for it, because we are not as busy as a young bread winner or homemaker. If we think of someone and wonder how he's doing, we can give him a phone call or write a letter. If opportunity comes to visit those incarcerated, we can go. It's impressive to see an older

person leaning on a cane coming to prison visitation.

•**Pay attention to people's counsel.**

We may overestimate our faculties. Have you heard the apocryphal story of three older men commiserating one day about how things were deteriorating as they got older? One said that he misses a lot of things by not being able to see well. The second mentioned that even though he had heard what the first man said, he often misses what people say, because so many now mumble. The third one mentioned that his reflexes have been slowing down. When he's going down the road and sees something ahead, he is unable to respond as quickly as he should. After a bit of silence, the first man offered this optimistic comment : "Fellows, you know we, however, *do* have a lot to be thankful for. *We can all still drive!*" Don't you think their need for advice was greater than they realized? When you and I need counsel, let's not make it hard for those who see our needs better than we do.

"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green" (Psalm 92:12-14 NIV).
—PLM 

Re: Two articles in January issue

“A Quiet Heart,” by Mary June Glick, though obviously written for women, spoke also to me. I was personally assaulted twice in six months’ time by armed men and I struggle often with fear, but desire a peaceful and quiet heart. “Only in accepting God’s will and plan in my life can I experience peace,” Sis. Mary June wrote. I agree with that, but I have found it a big challenge to accept these difficult experiences as the will of God. “A forgiving heart receives peace,” she also wrote. My testimony is that as long as I cannot forgive those who harmed me, peace evades me. Thank you for writing this article.

The second: “Growing Through Persecution,” by Ernest Eby is in the Youth section. I have been asked at different times if what we have suffered in the total of three armed robberies was for the cause of Christ. I have struggled with that question and this article helped me very much to understand what persecution is and how it affects us. Thank you, Ernest, for writing.

Both articles blessed me more than words can tell, but the tears they caused to drip down my face tells you something about how much they blessed me.

*Laban Eichorn,
Colonia Luz y Esperanza,
Paraguay*



Calvary Bible School Announcement

Calvary Bible School is planning for the fifth annual Young Men’s Discipleship Training Course to be held September 9-19, 2014, in central Pennsylvania. This course provides an environment for young men to evaluate their walk with God, experience spiritual growth, and develop leadership skills by serving each other and the local community. Elementary training in wilderness survival and first aid will also be included. Men 18 years and older are invited to apply. Applications are welcome through August 15. All applications received before July 1 will receive priority status and will be reviewed the first week of July. To receive a brochure and application, contact Ernest Eby (814-325-9009). ernest.eby@gmail.com



Worship Practice

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Here is a new one: A person with whom we do business was not available on Wednesday evening. He explained that he must go to a meeting for “worship practice.” Worship practice? I wonder what they do?

At our church, we turn that around. We practice worship. We have a song leader lead out in several songs, then one of the church brothers leads us in a devotional meditation. Then the Sunday School superintendent dismisses the congregation for classes. This is followed by a sermon by a designated minister. That is our typical practice in worship. It all is worship in God’s house and is uplifting and soul nourishing, if we have been paying attention.

To turn that around and make it a worship practice must somehow be more fun. Or is it that with worship practice one becomes more skilled and can really “get with it.” Being more or less clueless, we can speculate.

Before the real game, ball players

do some practice. They throw the ball furiously and swing the bat as though their life depends on it. Over in the “bull pen,” the pitcher is warming up. We ought to have a good game tonight. This is starting to make sense. But applying this to worship practice makes it seem unusual. Perhaps someone can come up with some really neat ideas how we would do it so that we can be “really cool” in a worship practice.

However that is for them, our practices in worship are not above needing evaluation. When the ball team’s coach says you need to be at the big game one-half hour before game time for practice, or you will be replaced by someone else, he means it. We merely “encourage” people to be on time at church, preferably five to ten minutes early. I am still looking for that special Sunday morning when not one person is late.

Our practice for Sunday morning worship is to use the hymn books. Even adolescent boys and girls can and do help sing. The overhead

projector may be good for a new song on a special occasion, but using hymn books has a special value for all ages, and is usually preferable.

We practice taking our own Bibles along to church for worship. Following along in the Scripture texts has distinct blessings. It enables one to become more and more familiar with the Bible and seeing the context of the verses used by the speaker is uplifting in our practice of worship.

We practice personal sharing and testimony after the sermon. Hopefully, it will not be used to inform the church of personal travels, nor to highlight some clever instance of “witnessing to a non-Mennonite.” The intended practice is to highlight Jesus Christ and the Word of God, especially something at least remotely related to the sermon just given.

We practice fellowship after the benediction. This isn’t a party. This is real-life encouragement that touches our social needs and goes beyond that to minister to needs of the heart and spirit.

Our practice in worship is for participation in some way for everyone. We practice four-part singing. We use songs with melody

that is easy to reach, and harmony that doesn’t require a Wednesday evening practice. An occasional new song from the hymn book is good when it is dispersed among more familiar songs. Every Easter, at Weavertown, we sing The Easter Anthem. We have done it for years. No practice needed! A good practice it is. You ought to hear the men sing that special bass part! Even some such tradition can heighten the practice of worship.

My friends, worship practice is for the sake of Sunday morning *performance*. Our practice in worship on any given Sunday morning is geared toward *participation* by everyone. Let all the redeemed say so! Open your mouths and sing! Be joyful and bless the name of the Lord, for He is good and His mercy endures forever.

The Bottom Line is that when participation in the practice of Sunday worship is lagging, then the Wednesday evening worship practice might be brought in to restore genuine worship. Even a sleepy church can be awakened by full participation in the godly practice of worship. 

He who lives content with life’s necessities is well off.

The Christian Hymnary Hymn Conference

Hymn Singing! Hymn Writing! Hymn Messages!
To be held, the Lord willing, May 30 to June 1, 2014
At Roxbury Campground, Orrstown, PA

Everyone welcome!

- Bring your Christian Hymnary song books.
- If you wish, bring one of your original song compositions; have it typeset and bring 50 copies.
- Notice to Compilers: There will be time for you to introduce your book, English or German, with or without notes. Please notify in advance.

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REGISTRATION

- There is no registration fee to attend; expenses are covered by free-will offerings.
Please come prepared to share.

FOOD PREPARATION AND DONATIONS:

- To donate food, contact Head Cooks, Enos and Rhoda Byler (814-789-4710).

BOOK STORES REPRESENTED:

- The Christian Hymnary Publishers (941-373-9351) and Others

CONFERENCE RECORDINGS:

- Victory Music Recordings (443-480-1489).

COORDINATORS: Nathan Overholt, Matthias Overholt, Daniel Hershberger.

For more information contact:

The Christian Hymnary Publishers

P.O. 7159

Sarasota, FL 34278

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Ministers' Meeting Messages — 2013

This is a condensation of the two final messages preached at the ministers' meetings hosted by our Holmes County churches on April 2-4, 2013, and held at Fairlawn Mennonite Church, Apple Creek, OH. Seven sermons and two women's sessions are available from Victory Music Services, P. O. Box 1498, North Highlands, CA, 95660, for \$50, postpaid. Telephone: 443-480-1489.

6. The Work of the Holy Spirit

*John Mark Yoder,
Bluffton, IN*

I find nowhere in Scripture where the Holy Spirit draws attention to Himself. He is trying to get us to see Jesus and He will guide us.

Our family has a business of making storage sheds. One of my prayers has been that God would daily open doors for us to minister to people. There are hurting people all around us. I don't want to have a business just to make money. As we do business with people we have opportunity to sow the seed of God's Word. They come from various religious backgrounds. Recently I've noticed again that what we have been taught from our youth goes with us. I am not opposed to what I've been taught, but I want to have the Word of God speak to me and not just repeat what I've been taught. One sincere

Christian man told me recently that he had just never seen certain Bible truths as I understood and explained them. Can that be a hindrance? It can, but it doesn't have to be.

A little red light comes on and asks, "But what about Balaam?" What was the problem with Balaam? This question explains that, "Do you really want to know God's will?" God does not offer a buffet to let us choose what we want.

In John 10, we have a big Father who is able to keep us in His will. No one is greater than our Father. When I sit in my Father's lap, He has His arm around me. No man can come up and pluck them out of His hand. Jesus said, "My Father is greater than all."

Today many guarantees and warranties are available to us. We hear words like: "Lifetime warranty." In John's Gospel we have "eternal lifetime warranties" because our

Jesus lives forever. He said He would send the Comforter and He did. He is the Revealer of truth, the Spirit of truth.

He expects us to keep His commandments. The Holy Spirit can be treated different ways. We can “do despite” or insult the Spirit. The Holy Spirit can be “lied to.” He can also be “tempted,” “grieved,” “quenched,” “blasphemed,” “defamed” or “railed upon.” I wonder how many of you have even been tempted to think that you might as well give up because Satan said you had blasphemed the Holy Spirit. That thing caused me disquiet for years. I am glad to say that I do not struggle with that anymore. My Jesus lives!

We can relate to power that makes a tractor or a truck or a space ship powerful. But this is divine power, the kind that makes an inert human body into which the Creator blows His breath and brings it to life. When He spoke at the creation He made all kinds of creatures. That’s not just a little horse power spinning around in the mud. That is divine, unlimited, unmeasurable power. This power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

He calls us to glory and virtue. We are invited to behold His glory. He gives us exceeding great and precious promises. When we do

these things, we shall not fall. We are not safe until He pulls us inside and says, “You’re safe!” He doesn’t want us to fall, so He’s given us all we need *not* to fall.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead quickens our mortal bodies. It is as one preacher said, “If that doesn’t light your fire, your wood is wet.”

Some say, “I want the Lord to go with me.” Does this depend on our asking? We have His promise that He will go with us, so why do we keep asking Him to? He wants a house that’s swept and garnished so He can take over the whole thing.

But there may be a closet or corner somewhere that we hope no one knows about. Or we don’t want to address the issue. Sometimes we can put some unconquered territory under cover and call it a “struggle.” Recently we were doing construction work on site. When I entered a part of the building we were working on, I noted a calendar hanging on the wall with a picture that was indecent. I felt I should mention it to the owner, but waited until I called him on the phone a few days later. Then I told him my concern. He acknowledged it, but said that he’d just never thought of it that way before. But he said, “Right after we hang up here, I’m going to take that picture down and stick it

in the trash can.” He was easy to be entreated. He said, “I see what you’re saying; thank you for calling me.”

I’ve given my business to God. After all, it’s His.

God forgave Peter. He didn’t give him just an experience, but a new life style. Peter’s heart was full of the Holy Ghost, and when Ananias came walking into Peter’s presence, he asked him, “Why has Satan filled your heart to *lie* to the Holy Ghost?” Later Peter asked Sapphira, “Why have you agreed together to *tempt* the Spirit of the Lord?”

When Peter preached at Pentecost, some 3,000 came to Christ and were filled with the Holy Ghost.

We face challenges and questions to our faith positions. We try to give answers. It is unfortunate when those questions affect us more than do the answers we give do to those we give them to. When Jesus went with His parents back to Nazareth, He was subject unto them. He didn’t say, “Mom and Dad don’t want me to spend more time in the temple, so I can’t be doing what I need to do.” He was subject to them and He increased in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. He prospered. Submission is also our choice.

Jesus came to set us free. If you’re still under the law, I ask, “What are you doing under there?” The Spirit

sets us free from the law. Get out from underneath there and let the Spirit work in your heart.

Ephesians 5 tells us we should be filled with the Spirit. Sometimes when we deliver a storage barn, a man will come out of the house with a drink in his hand. The Bible says I should not be drunk with wine (there’s plenty of that) but I should be filled with the Spirit. The two are opposite.

My days aren’t all easy. My family is not perfect. We sometimes have to work through difficulty. But I would rather have Jesus and His Holy Spirit in that situation than being without God and have a long, hard day. We have the privilege of prayer. What happens when we do that? I sometimes have needless pain because I don’t carry it to Him.

Just remember, what we give, He takes; what He takes, He cleanses; what he cleanses, He fills; and what He fills He uses.

7. Reflecting His Image

Daniel Bontrager

Shipshewana, IN

Some time ago, I was asked to preach half a message. I hardly knew how to go about it, but I think it may be somewhat like bringing this last message. The messages we have heard are completed only as we live them out and take them wherever we go. Is it really fair that we enjoy all of

this together when many people in the world have not yet heard the first word of God's truth?

When God created man, He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." So God created man in His own image... Male and female created He them. This must be more than just in God's physical likeness, and more than just our capacity to reason, because God had said that the day they eat of this tree they would die.

They ate of the tree and they died, but their physical image continued on. Their bodies continued to exist. They continued to breathe. It must be something deeper that died. I tend to believe that the image of God stamped in man's heart is what died. Man had been alive in a dimension that he lost in the fall. Man found himself facing an uncrossable chasm between himself and his Maker. He had no way to cross over to the other side.

Then we heard the story of re-birth, of new life, that involves repentance, transformation, and other aspects of the new life. God had something He wanted to share with man. Jesus said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

God also wants to receive something from man. Jesus didn't come down here to live with us so much as He came down to take us to be with Him. In the intervening time, God is present with man through the Holy Spirit.

In the past sessions, we have seen that God wants us to see His glory. We are to ponder and access His infinite glory. All over this earth man inhabits the earth. God looks down on this scene and has love in His heart for all of us. Is it fair that somebody opened the door and let in the light for you and me? The Gospel is for the whole world. For God so loved—who? The world! That means the people of the world—all of mankind.

On my assignment this quotation appeared: "We are called upon to reflect the character and nature of almighty God." Wow!

Can we even conceive of an infinite God with a finite mind? As I pondered this, I wrestled mightily; there were tears, then a sense of futility. Once a Sunday school teacher was describing God to his class of children. Suddenly a child spoke up and said animatedly, "I know that man. He lives just down the road." Wouldn't that be a wonderful message to give to those who know us?

Our relationship with God is not

necessarily most importantly in the mind. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

When Isaiah was facing the death of King Uzziah, he also saw the Lord, high and lifted up. So it is for you and me. God has an “also” for every extremity we face. That experience gave him a sense of God’s holiness and his own need. He said, “Woe is me!” When we see God in His glory and might, we will get a picture of something else—our need.

It is important that we see Him with the eye of faith. He is above everything. He has all authority. He is sovereign. He plans our birth. He plans our departure. He has our lives outlined and we should give Him the authority to direct our lives.

We are to reflect or mirror God’s life and love. The real purpose of a mirror is not to display the mirror, or the frame around the mirror, but to reflect an image. It can only reflect what is before it. I am not ever really in a condition to reflect the character of God unless I am in line with God. When I’m in His presence, His reflection comes out. The purpose is not to call attention to me or to the framework.

When the Apostles were evangelizing, they were put into prison, with this invitation: “If you

stop evangelizing, we’ll let you out.” They said, “We can’t help it. We’re so full of it, it’s got to come out.”

Any time the people of God met the conditions of God, they also experienced the blessings of God. God is faithful! He said, “If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14). This contains a guaranteed promise.

In 1 Peter 2:9, we read, “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” In our day we are invited to make our lives easier, but in 2 Timothy 1:8 the call to the people of God is given: “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.” I fear that we have forgotten that the Gospel is the Gospel of the cross. Christianity without a cross won’t do the job. It won’t reflect Jesus Christ or the eternal God.

Jesus was the express image of God. When we look at Jesus, we see a perfect reflection of God. It was His

highest motivation “to do the will of Him that sent me.”

When I came to Christ, I was not in a revival meeting. I had fallen asleep on my parents’ couch at home. Then I woke up and realized that I needed Jesus. If you would have asked me afterward to explain just what had happened to me, I would have needed to say with the man whom Jesus healed: “ I don’t know, but one thing I do know—once I was blind and now I see.”

Sound doctrine is important. Titus 1:9, includes this character trait for ministers: “...that he may be able by sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers.” When there’s a mixed doctrine, what does that do to the people around us? Is it any wonder

if some are confused and say, “Which really is the right religion?”

Jesus prayed for our unity. “Father, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in Thee.” After wrestling with the issues facing them, the summary statement of the Jerusalem conference was, “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.”

Doctrinal unity is good, but there’s more. Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love to one another.”

The way we believe and the way we behave reflects our commitment to the Gospel. We must believe the whole counsel of God. I believe Adin Troyer sometimes said with characteristic conviction, “Away with this dead correctness!” 

Announcement — REACH 2015

REACH helps non-profit ministries connect with one another, churches, and individuals who have an interest in ministry.

March 19, 2015, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM: Seminar for nonprofit organizations. A full day of workshops, fellowship, and inspiration.

March 20, 2015, 9:00 - 5:00 pm: A day of workshops, ministry presentations, and inspirational sessions to equip people for ministry.

March 19 & 20, 7:00: Times of worship, inspiration, and information to cultivate a vision for ministry.

Hosted by Faith Builders Educational Programs at Manor Church in Mountville, PA.

Email fbep@fbep.org or call (814) 789-4518 for more details.

Registration will open this summer. 

marriages

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

Beachy-Schrock

Bro. John Wesley, son of Nolan and Ann Beachy, Rural Retreat, VA, and Sis. Malissa, daughter of John and Iva Schrock, Safford, AL, at Light of Hope Christian Fellowship, Wytheville, VA, on March 29, 2014, by John Beiler.

Beiler-Metzler

Bro. Duane, son of Lloyd and Beth Beiler, Greensburg, PA, and Sis. Mary, daughter of Wes and Lois Metzler, Peach Bottom, PA, at Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren for Trauger Mennonite Church on Oct. 19, 2013, by Dave Stoltzfoos.

Jackson-Beachy

Bro. Evan Dale, son of Sam and Carolyn Jackson, Abbeville, SC, and Sis. Clarissa Jane, daughter of Ken and Diane Beachy, Laurelville, OH, at Lancaster Vineyard Church for Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Amanda, OH, on March 8, 2014, by Ken Beachy, father of the bride.

Schmidt-Morinigo

Bro. Joshua, son of Daniel and Crystal Schmidt, Crossville, TN, and Sis. Estela, daughter of Joaquin and Elizabeth Morinigo, Crossville, TN, at Greene County Mennonite Church, Greeneville,

TN, on Feb. 28, 2014, by Raymond Fisher.

Swarey-Wengerd

Bro. Josh, son of Reuben and Freida Swarey, Henry, TN, and Sis. Miriam, daughter of Andy and Dora Wengerd, Paris, TN, at Bethel Fellowship Mennonite Church on Nov. 1, 2013, by Lewis Bender, Jr.

cradle roll

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

Burkholder, Marcus and Wanda (Eash), Vanleer, TN (currently serving in Nakuru, Kenya), fifth child, second dau., Megan Jo, Feb. 22, 2014.

Correction: **Burkholder**, Scott and Suzanne (Troyer), Bremen, IN, fourth child, second dau., Abrielle Jana, Feb. 26, 2014.

Chupp, Ivan and Carol (Mast), Holmesville, OH, third child, second son, Kaiden Jerell, March 5, 2014.

Graber, Weston and Esther (Zook), Amboy, IN (presently serving with CAM in Nicaragua), second child and son, Judson Daniel, Jan. 17, 2014.

Hershberger, Conrad and Esther (Koop), Greenville, VA, sixth child, fourth son, Franklin Loyal Myles, Jan. 22, 2014.

Hershberger, Kelvin and Beth (Hershberger), Stuarts Draft, VA, sixth child, fourth dau., Katriel Grace, Dec. 27, 2013.

Hershberger, Kristin and Andrea (Miller), Partridge, KS, first child and son, Emitt Cade, March 6, 2014.

Hostetler, Chris and Donna (Martin), Auburn, KY, second child and son, Stuart Allen, Feb. 4, 2014.

Hunsberger, Conrad and Julia (Miller), Malvern, OH, second child and dau., Ava Joelle, Feb. 3, 2014.

King, Lavern and Marlene (Smucker), Belleville, PA, first child and son, Arlin Matthew, March 14, 2014.

Lengacher, Sheldon and Alisa (Miller), Lexington, IN, second child and dau., Robin Faith, March 18, 2014.

Miller, Joe and Darlene (Hostetler), Cumberland Furnace, TN, third child, second son, Wade Tyrell, Feb. 24, 2014.

Miller, Randy and Sharon (Zook), Stuarts Draft, VA, first child and dau., Ashlynn Rose, Feb. 28, 2014.

Ropp, Matthew and Sheila (Erb), Milverton, ON, fourth child and son, Daniel Nicolas, Feb. 9, 2014.

Stoll, Tris and Lisa (Wagler), Elnora, IN, third child, first son, Grant Tristan, March 17, 2014.

Stoltzfus, Chet and Cindy (Kauffman), Mt. Pleasant, PA, fifth child, fourth son, Shawn Tyrel, Dec. 13, 2013.

Troyer, Jamie and Priscilla (Miller), Dundee, OH, sixth child, fourth son, Christen Ben, Feb. 24, 2014.

Wagler, Lavern and Ruth (Wengerd), Paris, TN, third child, second son, Jaden Lee, Nov. 29, 2013.

Wagler, Milan and Grace (Beachy), Cottage Grove, TN, sixth child, third dau., Amy Joann, Nov. 14, 2013.

Weaver, Duane and Ruth (Miller), Stuarts Draft, VA, eighth child, fourth dau., Leah Ruth, Feb. 4, 2014.

Yoder, JoeAllen and Glenda (Bender), Rural Retreat, VA, first child and dau. Tiffany Lashae, March 17, 2014.

Yoder, Josh and Tammy (Yoder), Blackville, SC, first child and dau., Moriah Brooke, March 12, 2014.

Yutz, Douglas and Elizabeth (Nissley), Yoder, KS, first child and son, Caleb Ray, Feb. 27, 2014.

Yutz, JR and Rhoda (Hochstetler), Huntsville, AR, first child and son, Bryce Dominic, March 11, 2014.

Zimmerman, Javin and Matina (Overholt), Oswego, KS, seventh child, sixth son, John Charles, Jan. 8, 2014.

ordinations

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

Bro. Lee Fisher, 49, was called by voice of the church and ordained as minister at Faith Mennonite Fellowship, Lott, TX, on Feb. 9, 2014. The charge was given by Mervin Lantz, assisted by Brian Bontrager and Raymond Fisher.

Bro. Ryan Good, 38, was ordained as bishop at Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Amanda, OH, on March 23, 2014. Pre-ordination messages were given by Ben A. Stoltzfus, Morgantown, PA. The charge was given by Lonnie Beachy, assisted by Ben Stoltzfus and Mark Yoder. 

obituaries

Eicher, Marie, 88, of Grabill, IN, died on July 2, 2013, at her residence. She was born May 5, 1925, at Grabill, IN, daughter of the late Samuel and Mary Graber.

She was a charter member of Fellowship Haven Church, New Haven, IN. She was a homemaker and helped her husband and sons run Eicher Excavating.

On Oct. 26, 1944, she was married to Daniel Eicher. He died on July 22, 2010. Surviving are her children: Janetta (Willard) Hochstetler, Hicksville, OH; Eugene (Margaret) Eicher, Grabill, IN; Marietta (Melvin) Roes, Gadshill, ON; Samson (Wilma) Eicher, Butler, IN;

Timothy (Judy) Eicher, Suetta (Harvey) Graber, and Thomas (Hana) Eicher, all of Grabill, IN; 26 grandchildren; four step grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren; 17 step great grandchildren, one sister, Amanda (Michael) Eicher.

She was preceded in death by one infant daughter, Phyllis Eicher; brothers: Joel, Joseph, Jonas, Henry, and Jeromia Graber; and one sister, Margaret Graber.

The funeral was held on July 5, at the Cuba Mennonite Church with Howard Eichorn, Roman Miller and Melvin Roes serving. Burial was in the Fellowship Haven Church cemetery. 

***A true Christian is like the figure 6—
upset him and he will
increase in value.***

Richard Brown, writing in *The Hutchinson News*, (March 20, '14), notes the discrepancy between medical advancement and the health of U. S. citizens compared to other countries.

- our life expectancy is number 64
- our infant mortality—26
- 42 percent of men fat—6
- 48.3 percent of women fat—4

The U. S. spends 19 percent of our gross national product on health care. This is double the next highest nation.

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A non-local brother has told me that church schools throughout our constituency are struggling to keep adequate funding for their schools. This was news to me. I assume that we agree that it was a good idea to provide a church-led alternative to widespread exposure to the public school system. Surely if God has led in the formation of these schools, He will also want to provide for their ongoing success.

Public schools are funded with taxpayer money. This means that whether or not a taxpayer has children in school, he is supporting the school. Our government considers education worthy of general support, including

non-parents.

Private schools are often funded by tuition from the parents. If our schools have significant funding problems this seems to merit serious attention. Though it has been quite some time since we had school-age children, I feel privileged to help support the schooling of other people's children through regular church offerings. This is much easier for us now than when we were a young family.

Part of the big picture is that having church schools does not relieve us of supporting public schools with our taxes.

Our teachers fill a very vital role in providing a healthy climate of learning and nurture for our dear children. Surely they are entitled to ample compensation for their dedication and hard work.

Does it not seem right that the parents of our children should have not only the approval, but also financial support from the entire body? Locally, we have addressed the salary question for our school teachers by endeavoring to give them a salary comparable to the average wage earner among the patrons. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the

proposed budget is divided by the number of households, plus single wage earners over 25, to determine the suggested amount to contribute to the monthly school offerings.



The oft-repeated term, “Cleanliness is next to godliness,” is not a quote from Scripture. But it does address the importance of personal cleanliness. One of the things that has changed a great deal during my lifetime is the ease of personal hygiene and cleanliness. The luxury of easy access to a shower and bath tub is a far cry from a weekly Saturday-evening bath in a galvanized metal tub.

It is good to be reminded that God is also concerned about our personal sanitation. 2 Corinthians 7:1 says, “Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” It is possible to be very diligent about our physical cleanliness, but have serious needs of spiritual sanitation. The imperative of cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit is a searching statement.

The world will pass away and the lust thereof. The lust of the flesh is foreign to the spirit of Christ and is in need of being sanitized by repentance and forgiveness by the

blood of Christ. Filthiness of the spirit includes our thought life and our attitude toward others. God wants us to be concerned about our personal sanitation. Cleansing “by the washing of water by the Word” (Eph. 5:26) by regularly applying its cleansing properties to our spiritual lives is an essential part of spiritual sanitation.

What are the promises mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7:1? The latter part of the foregoing chapter is linked to this opening verse. It includes the teaching that to belong to God and avoid the unequal yoke with unbelievers is a precondition for God to accept us as His sons and daughters in His very own family. What a promise! What a challenge and motivation to be cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit!

-DLM



In early March, Mr. and Mrs. Sean Canning found themselves in court defending themselves against a lawsuit brought by their daughter, Rachel. Both parties agree that last fall, when Rachel turned 18, she left home and moved in with the family of a friend. From there, the perspectives change.

She alleges abandonment and sued her parents for \$650 per week for expenses, plus tuition fees at her

private high school, future college expenses and legal fees.

Her parents indicated that the rift between them was due to her unwillingness to abide by their expectations of cooperation with minimal household chores and a curfew of 11:00 P.M., as well as activities and involvement that any thoughtful parents would be very concerned about. “I know Rachel is a good kid, an incredibly rebellious teen, and she’s getting some terrible information,” her father stated. The father of the family she moved in with bankrolled the lawsuit.

The presiding judge, Peter Bogaard, denied the teenager’s request to obligate her parents financially. She decided to move back in with her parents and has dropped the lawsuit. Sean Canning told media members who staked out their house to please respect their privacy since the family has some healing to do.



First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO, part of Mountain States Conference (in MC-USA), has licensed Theda Good as pastor of nurture and fellowship. The fact that she is an openly-practicing lesbian makes this a first for the Mennonite Church, as far as I know. This serious compromise is contrary to Scripture in a number of ways. When people

begin to question the authority of Scripture, it really does open the door wide for deception and embracing apostasy.

The decision to license this person was preceded by four listening meetings held across the conference last fall. Rhoda Blough, the moderator of the conference explained with reference to these meetings: “These were places where people could share. It was not to be a place for debate; it was a place for prayer and then eating together.”

Eastern Mennonite University recently announced a six-month listening and discernment period during which they will be re-evaluating the policy of prohibiting staff from pursuing same-sex relationships. During the review period the policy is to be suspended.

These “listening” exercises jogged my memory about another story about listening that will ring a bell with some of you. A certain woman entertained this question, “hath God said...?” God’s directive to Adam and Eve wasn’t vague or uncertain, but rather very clear. She listened. Balaam also heard very clearly from God the Lord, but he asked and listened again. History, both old and recent, is strewn with examples of people questioning God’s clear mandate. Such stories don’t typically end well.

When we listen to questions where God has clearly spoken, our enemy is very pleased to introduce his perspective into the question.

On issues where God has spoken with clarity, we don't need academic rigor, nor special knowledge, but courageous faithfulness. It's not complicated.

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The questions of origins is another one where the question, "Hath God said...?" is asked. There is current chatter in the creation camp about reconciling the "big bang" theory and old earth theories with the creation account. I offer the following points with regard to this issue:

- Scientific theories regarding origins are based on current observations and extrapolation and assumption.

- Since we weren't there at the beginning, our position on origins is one of faith. We will have faith in the God of creation or something else. Belief based on what isn't independently verifiable is faith. Where is your faith?

- It seems probable that God created an adult Adam and Eve. It shouldn't be seen as a difficult task for Omnipotent God to create an adult universe. Hence, a young earth with some marks of an old earth isn't contradictory.

The Scripture starts out with, "In the beginning Cod created the heaven and the earth." Do complicated theories about how all this came about distract us from the simplicity of this message and our faith in our Omnipotent Sovereign God? If not, let's reject them.

—RJM 

Parenting with Purpose

Lydia Nissley, Catlett, VA

We learn from the young parents with the fussy—very fussy—little girl. Mama held her, then Daddy took a turn. Church behavior was a trial. Oh, how she cried!

Fast forward a few years. Now she is three—almost four. Daddy was recently ordained and was a new preacher sitting up front. Mother had

little sister and wanted her to go to sleep in the nursery. So the little girl should go sit with her "Daddy way up on the front bench."

What a brave little girl! She walked up the long aisle to Daddy. He picked her up and placed her on his lap. How still she held herself! Hardly a wiggle at all. So, dear parents, take heart, and continue on. The crying little

children can learn as you patiently teach and continue on.

One mother told me how her daughter used to walk in her sleep. She was an only daughter, with brothers, so of course, she slept alone. The mother decided to go and chat with her daughter before she went to sleep. She thought, *I must be there and care*. The daughter's night walking ceased.

Example three: a mother with a 15-year-old son who has his learner's permit, but not yet a driver's license. He fixes people's lawn mowers and weed eaters, and so on. So she went with him to pick up things that needed to be fixed, as well as returning them afterward.

Does she feel like she has the time in the midst of all her other work and children? No, but it's a great time to spend with what he is doing. Life's lessons "are caught more than taught" and while they spend time together she can teach and exemplify honesty, faith, courtesy, and other Christian virtues.

Quilting is not what another mother enjoys, but she believes it is a good thing to do with her grown daughters. So she put a quilt in frame and they quilt. More quilts have followed and they kept on talking. As the small stitches sew together the quilt top, batting and lining, caring stitches sew together life's meaning with the Word of God and wisdom

from a "Titus 2" older woman.

The mother on the dairy farm is now older. She has spent quite a few years in the barn milking with children, while learning spelling words or multiplication facts, or even Sunday School or school memory verses.

Now she isn't necessarily needed in the barn anymore, but occasionally fills in. She wonders when and where she can work with her grown sons. They live on a farm. There are no girls at home so she has lots of house work. They have lots of farm work. The best place to hear their stories or their "heart thoughts" is while they are milking the cows. And so sometimes, she goes to the barn and milks cows. On other evenings when she is not milking, she goes out around five o'clock and takes them a snack. It might be chips or peanut butter bread, vegetables, or whatever, and then they chat a little bit and she gets a gallon of milk and continues on her way.

Mothers have so many things to do, Continue on. Continue on.

Choose life. What a beautiful, worthwhile choice.

Continue making meals, again and again.

Doing laundry, with a thankful heart for a washing machine.

Trips to the dentist, store, church. Year after year. Continue on.

Taking care of the children's hurts.

*Giving encouraging words.
Continue rocking the babies
Continue when the nights are short
and the days are not long enough.
Take time to settle disputes between
the little children, then the school-
age children, and then adding words
of wisdom to the older children's
conversations and discussions.
Build Lego houses. Make a farm on the*

*floor with the little ones. Read to them.
Enjoy the wonders of gardening
together, the first ripe strawberry, finding
a growing watermelon, digging out
huge sweet potatoes. Such wonders and
surprises!
Spend time in prayer.
Obey God's word.
Respect your husband.
Continue on.*



The Generation Before Eternity— The Folly of Forever Young

Jennifer Anderson, Newcomerstown, OH

In this church of older people, I discovered a fallacy in my thinking. Those who cross the Christian finish line aren't the buff, strong and young. It was here that I saw walkers, canes, years of experience and a dependence on God for each day that finishes well—God bless you!

Why would anyone want to go to that church?" I knew her thoughts behind it: That church is composed of 'old people;' there's no future for that church; they're old-fashioned; who are the youth supposed to hang out with? It will die out." The thoughts disgusted me.

I grew up surrounded by older people. In fact, the church of my preschool years was a church of older people who helped my mother with her firstborn in a remote town in western New York. I had many "grandmothers'

and a few "grandfathers" who nurtured Christian faith in me by their example. From older people I learned about the local grain mills that Grandpa worked in—now abandoned, the family farm when Dad was young, about the air tasting metallic during the Three Mile Island incident, and the blizzard of '77 with pictures of canyons and drifts of snow piled high. From them I learned about life: that a life enriched with God extends into eternity, when I whispered my last goodbye and remembered their Christian testimony.

I also learned at a young age to be quiet, still, respectful, to listen and to be careful and tender with older things that they pulled out from their childhood along with a treasure trove of memories. They loved having visitors, especially children, and as a child, I learned how precious older people are.

Patient with the young: Previous to the 1950's, young people generally followed their parents and grandparents. When a boy came of age and began to strike out on his own, he donned a suit like his father. The large population of teen-aged youth with access to money, leisure, and entertainment and adult activities without adult responsibilities created a youth culture which was foreign to adults in behavior, careers (or lack of), language, and dress. They forged a path of their own making and no longer followed "Mom and Pop's ways."

Today there is the worship of the teenager and youth to the point where older people want to be youth, called "kidults." No longer do the youth and families look to the older generation as they once did.

One Sunday, I noticed a front row of elderly women dressed very traditionally. Their countenances were almost sad and withdrawn. At the back of the church, much younger women were very expressive, fashionable, and up-beat. I mostly noticed the very

distinct void between them. It seemed as if the older people were left behind for progress and whatever the younger generation wanted.

Many churches give youth what they want—from swimming pools, coffee houses/teen hangouts, television and movies, and sports teams, etc., in order to keep them in, despite the even lower retention rates, while older generations are pushed out, ignored, or left behind. Older people are told they are too old, too senile, or too old-fashioned, even though they are still able to contribute much to the church. Somehow, many senior citizens graciously forgive and patiently resign themselves to that.

Young in spirit: Many pearls of wisdom can come from older people. A dear woman called "Grammy" loved to teach young women. When she was well enough (being afflicted with an on-going illness), she would open her journals and talk about God, her Beloved, for hours—it brought joy and very sweet fellowship. She is a steady witness and well-loved by everyone in church and a treasure for her doctors, to whom she brings a Bible verse specifically for them at each visit. She was an inspiration in knowledge; the older people are inspirations in zeal.

"Mary" loves the Lord and loves to sing to Him ambitiously. "Mary" isn't always on key, nor is she with the rest, at times. When she is not with the rest,

someone patiently points out where the rest are in the hymnal, and she adjusts. In some places, people would want her to go elsewhere, shut her out of the church or even determine she may not know what she's doing anyway—excluding her so that the church singing “would be pure and more beautiful to God.”

In a growing culture (and churches) where it is the most fashionable, most popular, most athletic, and the best singers who decide what's in and what's out, where does it leave older, true worshipers, such as Mary? Such injustices should not happen, but unfortunately, they do.

Forever young? One Sunday afternoon, an older couple invited me along to visit some older people that they knew. Most of them were in nursing homes that had a diversity of residents, including plain people. After leaving one particular festive nursing home, the couple commented, “An old people's home is a place where people are preparing to die. It shouldn't be like a youth party.” I was startled at the statement, but there was a truth that stood out. They are facing their sunset years and are preparing for eternity. While the marimba CD was playing and the staff was holding up the arms of a weakened body “dancing” to the music, it attempted to put back the fast pace of youth into their bodies and minds, which had surrendered.

Back home, the area is dotted with

abandoned little missionary churches. Because of economic depression, most young people have left the area leaving a high population of older farm folk. Many of the churches were abandoned because they felt that a church of old people, which would soon die out, wasn't worth the expense. Churches in most areas of that region are in the towns or cities, youth and entertainment-centered, and contemporary. They are not local and inter-generational as they once were and older people are left out while facing their sunset years having no church.

While much of our emphasis is on youth and keeping our families, older generations seem to sit on the sidelines as the younger take control of the church. Older people need the church and other people, especially in their sunset years.

Granny dumping: Coined by the media, “granny dumping” is a form of elder abuse where people abandon an elderly person, mostly in public areas or institutions. It is becoming a problem in society that at signs of dementia or limited function, a spouse files for divorce so that they are not tied down in later years. Sadly it compares with when I visit older friends at churches with primarily older people and they wonder why I would bother with “us old people.” It's a shame that they would feel that way—left alone until no more gathering on earth can

be done. Youth and young families don't seem to be interested in them anymore, so they fade away.

Have we lost respect for older people? Is the strand of the sacredness of human life unraveling from our fibers so much that we push and pull for progress and youth?

Have we adopted the worldly mentality that respect is earned—not given? This does not align with Jesus' teaching that respect is given to all human souls, *especially* if they are older. Whether a person is young and able or physically weak and dependent, good or evil, they deserve respect.

Sometimes people think they are smarter because their electronic gadgets give answers instantly, instead

of passed-down knowledge and human experience. As people become less interconnected on a human level because of technology, the elderly will be the first to become disconnected because they are less techno-savvy and are left to fend for themselves. Sacredness of human life, especially in the elderly, is discarded where the worship of youthfulness ignores the social, spiritual, and sometimes physical needs of older people.

A Chinese proverb states that a home with grandparents contains a precious jewel. As the young get older and fill their place, will they be jewels teaching the younger? Or will they be jewels tucked away where only a few can behold their beauty? 

mission awareness

Particular Significances of the Veil – Part 2

J. Otis Yoder

In about 51 A.D., the Apostle Paul was on a missionary journey in which he came to the city of Corinth. There he established a church by preaching the Gospel “in weakness and fear and much trembling.” Some years later he wrote a letter to these people, instructing them in a number of great doctrines of the church. One of these is the meaning of

the veiling or covering for Christian women, based on vital creation principles (1 Corinthians 11:2-16).

Brethren (especially fathers in the home, ministers in the church, and Bible teachers in Sunday schools or Bible schools) need to be convinced of this important doctrine and keep teaching it with conviction and enthusiasm. Deep joy and rich

blessings follow obedience to God's holy Word. This message is not written just for Corinth in Paul's time, but for "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord..." (1 Cor. 1:2).

Last month we presented three "Abiding Bases for the Veil: the divine order, the social relation, and the natural distinction, which make up the first reason why the covering or veil should be worn." This month we continue this subject with further teaching by J. Otis Yoder. We see this as just as vital as it was for Paul who said what he teaches in Corinth he teaches wherever he goes. (See 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33; and 16:1.)

-FS

The veiling is a symbol of woman's sanctification. "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth and prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered" (verses 4, 5, and 6). Turning to the basic structure of this epistle (1:30) we underscore that Christ is made unto us sanctification. The veil signifies that a woman is

dedicated to Christ. From history we learn that in the days of the apostle Paul a woman convicted of adultery had her hair shorn, which showed her infidelity. The modern cutting of the hair came from the immoral houses of Paris and was brought to America following World War I.

Let it be understood that the apostle is saying, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." If she dares to come into the presence of God with unveiled head, then it is indeed as though she was a harlot of the street. "For if a woman be not covered, let her also be shorn." It is as much as if to say if it is not observed, then it is the same as to be shorn. In fact, it would be just as well for her to cut her hair very short. But Paul argues that it is a shame for a woman to cut her hair.

Please be informed that Paul is not raising a question as to whether it is a shame for a woman to cut her hair, he is affirming it is a shame. Sometimes it has been argued that today it is no longer a shame for a woman to cut her hair. Therefore it is right to do so. This is not the teaching of the Bible! The apostle is giving us to understand that it is a shame for a Christian woman to cut her hair, therefore, she is to be veiled when she

comes into the presence of God. It is a symbol of her sanctification. By this veil she sets herself apart as having nothing to do with the surrounding immoral culture in which she lives. The veil should speak to the woman in her daily life.

It is a symbol of submission. “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man” (verse 7). Man reflects the glory of God, being first in creation. Woman reflects the glory of man, coming second in creation, and having been brought to his side to be that help suitable for him. Now let us think seriously and carefully about the modern movement for the freedom of women. They have problems because there seems to be a continual spiraling of woman’s place until there is the possibility of a woman as president. This is not to say a woman could not do the job, but she is out of her natural sphere in such a role. There is a similar spiraling in the church. The veil is the symbol of woman’s God-given role.

It is a symbol of authority. “For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels” (verse 10). The word “power” contains as its basic meaning “authority.” This authority may look two directions. It may look to her

own, that is, that it gives her right to come into the presence of God. It may look to the authority that the veil recognizes in the order God has set up, in which man is her head. Thus the veil not only applies to the women, but it also applies to the men of the congregation in that it urges them to assume the place that is theirs in the divine order. By the very fact that we men urge the observance of this teaching, we are saying that we accept the responsibility that is set forth. (Brethren, we need this teaching, too! -FS). Therefore, we ought to be willing to take the place in the divine order that the veil symbolizes, whether man or woman.

With regard to the “angels” in this verse, one can learn the attitude of angels by reading Isaiah 6. In the experience of Isaiah in the temple, he saw the cherubim covering themselves in the presence of God. Paul taught that women should follow the example of the angels.

The veil and insubordination cannot go together. The significance of the veil may be summarized in this way. It symbolizes sanctification; it symbolizes proper submission; it symbolizes authority. These constitute the second reason the veil should be worn.

(Used by permission. To be continued on Specific Applications of the Veil) 

Single With Purpose

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

May is the month to honor mothers. I have a deep respect and appreciation for my mother, the one who loved me unconditionally and taught me many things. My mother implanted in me an appreciation for nature and a love for reading and art. She taught me a good work ethic and joy in seeing work done well.

My mother had two single sisters who played an important part in my life. My Aunt Christianne inspired me with her love and appreciation for life. She took time for her nieces and nephews. Even after we moved to Belize she blessed our family with packages supplying craft and sewing supplies and little gifts for the children. She even took the opportunity one year to spend Christmas with our family in Belize. Mel's Aunt Becky worked as a midwife for several years in Belize with us and was a tremendous blessing to our family who was far away from our family in the United states. She was Aunt Becky to our children and grandchildren until she died a few months ago. Single aunts can have an enormous influence on their nieces and nephews.

This year I have chosen to honor single women on Mother's Day. I realize this is often a dreaded day for those women either single or married who would love to be mothers. For some reason, God has not chosen to honor them with children by birth and yet they have given love and security to many other people's children. For those of you with mother hearts, yet empty wombs, may God give you a special blessing on this Mother's Day. I trust this article will remind others to touch these special women with a kind and loving gesture on Mother's Day.

Recently a single sister encouraged me to write an article for singles. Personally, I don't like to place people in groups, for as we know, each of us is special and precious in God's sight. At the same time, I realize we are each in differing circumstances, depending on our age, or vocation in life, social and economic standards and are either married or single. The Apostle Paul reminds us in Philippians 4:11 to be content in whatever situation we find ourselves, which includes being married or single.

Singleness is a subject I cannot be

completely objective with as I got married at a young age, and never lived on my own or by myself. I have appreciated many single friends throughout the years and have been blessed by their input in my life. I have chosen to draw thoughts and ideas from single ladies. For this subject, I would like to address the blessings and challenges of singleness and also touch on areas where we married women could bless our single friends.

Women are single for different reasons:

Some are single by choice. Some women choose not to be married because they feel God's call upon their lives to serve Him in areas where a family would hinder their ministry or they may choose to wait till later in life to marry.

Some are single by God's design. There may be no opportunity or they may choose not to accept an opportunity for marriage. A single woman will accept this as God's will and plan for her life.

Some are single through loss or misfortune. This includes death of a spouse, or a broken marriage or engagement.

This article does not attempt to determine why a woman is single, but to encourage ways of finding purpose and fulfillment in singleness. I will include excerpts from letters and thoughts given to me but I have chosen to allow privacy by not naming

my sources. Thank you to all of you who have opened your hearts on this subject.

Single women are not really different emotionally and physically from their married sisters. They face many of the same struggles, fears, and challenges. However, they do live in a different world. Many are not in a home setting with a husband or children. Their lives revolve around their jobs and social activities. If they choose to live with parents, they may be faced with caring for their physical or emotional needs and may be limited to outside work or involvements. Each person however, does need to find purpose and fulfillment in her life. Women need to be loved and they want to give love in return. Otherwise, their lives will feel meaningless and empty. A woman can become self-absorbed and lonely unless she has friends or family in whom she can confide and share her thoughts and emotions. She also needs someone to whom she is accountable.

A single faces fears, unmet longings, and emotional insecurities. She faces the thought of growing old alone. Will there be anyone there to care for her if she becomes sick or disabled? She struggles to know where she fits in. She does not have a husband, so where does she belong in a setting of couples, such as weddings, Sunday dinners, and other special events? There may also be various age group

differences among singles, so she may be asking, “Am I a youth or do I belong with the older singles?” There are awkward situations where they don’t seem to quite fit in or wonder where they belong.

A single woman may feel the stress of financial obligations. She is the breadwinner in the home, yet she also has the responsibility of routine maintenance for the home. Some women struggle with barely enough income to meet the expenses—not sure if their pay check will reach. What about the repairs on the house, the car, and the lawn without a man to take charge of these things?

A single woman may experience unique temptations. She may feel left out of life and forgotten by others. She may struggle with loneliness and an unfulfilled longing for intimate companionship. She may be tempted to become involved in an unwholesome or unscriptural relationship to satisfy that longing. She must remember that only God can supply her deep longings and fill the desires of her heart. Even married women must learn not to expect their husbands to fulfill those desires that only God can fill. Singleness is more to be desired than a marriage outside of God’s will.

Now here are some of the positive aspects of being single which were shared by some of these satisfied and courageous women. One woman

writes, “I really don’t have a lot of time to focus on the fact that I am single. I live a very full and busy life. I am happy where God has placed me and I have dreams of where I want to go and things I want to do. I want to make a difference in people’s lives and don’t know how God may want to use me to do that. That is a bigger focus for me than getting married.” Another says, “I am so blessed; I enjoy life.”

Contentment and thankfulness were mentioned by several women. Accept singleness as a gift and use it as an opportunity to reach out others. Enjoy the little things in life. Look for the beauty around you; enjoy the marvels of God’s creation. See the good in people. Take advantage of doing things with other people. Enjoy the opportunities in your area—the parks, libraries, and museums. You don’t need to have a family to enjoy a picnic. Call a couple of friends; pack a picnic lunch and find a secluded place where you can relax and enjoy spending time with each other. Take the opportunity to travel with friends.

Last, but not least, when you are discouraged, reach out to someone and lift a helping hand. Here are some suggestions that were shared.

•**Encourage young mothers.** Do some baking for their family. Offer to babysit the children. Compliment them on the way they teach their children. Ask them about their lives.

Bless them with words of life. Share your needs and prayer requests with them.

•**Be a friend to the younger girls in church or community.** Invite a few girls out for coffee with you (and pay their drinks). Share your own struggles and ask them to pray for you. They need to know that even though you are older, you identify with their emotions and want to be a part of their lives. Bless them and tell them about the positive things you notice in their lives. Encourage them to a deeper walk with the Lord.

•**Minister to the widows or older women in your church and community.** Take them out for lunch; they don't mind if you are much younger. You might take several women and ask a few friends to join you. I know of older singles that take

meals to the widows and eat with them. Widows may enjoy an evening of games and a snack. Remember the older sister in the church with a card or small gift for her birthday or drop in for a visit. Express your appreciation for her godly example.

One woman shares: "Make wherever you are a *mission field* whether it is at college or on the job." Life is full of opportunities for married women or single women. The first responsibility for married women is their families. Single women, as Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 7:32,33, are free to give themselves more fully to ministry than their married friends. Be faithful and use what God has given you.

Next month, Reaching out to single women in our churches: What can we as a church do to accept and make life more pleasant for single women? 

junior messages

The Bear in His Path

Jonathan Goforth, Man of Courage

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Jonathan's heart was full of love for God. Often he was asked to preach in country churches. If he did not have enough money for train fare, he would just get up early and walk the country dirt roads to church.

One sunny spring morning he was

on his way to preach. He decided to take a short cut through the thick woods of Canada. As he walked around a bend in the trail, he stopped short. Just ahead of him on the path was a big, black bear!

Months before when Jonathan was witnessing in poor slum districts, an

officer asked him how it was that he was brave enough to visit the rough section of the slums all alone. This area was filled with criminals and misfits. “I never go in there but in groups of two’s and three’s with other policemen,” the officer said.

Jonathan stated, “I am never alone here in the slums. God is always with me.” Now in the vast woodland, Jonathan remembered those words. “I am not alone. God is with me. I am about my Father’s business and surely God will protect me, but what about this huge bear blocking my path?” Jonathan knew that if he turned around the bear could easily overtake him. So with a prayer on his lips, he marched courageously on—straight past the bear whose claws glittered in the morning sunshine.

The bear stood still like a statue as Jonathan brushed past him on the narrow footpath. Jonathan did not look behind him. He quickly went on through the forest praising he Lord for protection from the bear.

He arrived safely at the church where he was to preach. He thought of how God had shut the mouths of the lions for Daniel. He thought of how God had sent a whale after Jonah and how Elijah was fed by ravens. His

heart was full of praise to God for protecting him from the bear, for he knew that God truly is all powerful!

Later, Jonathan wrote his parents about the big black bear he met on that Sunday morning. He thought he would never meet anything more dangerous than that hungry bear.

God was preparing this courageous young man to be a missionary in China. Little did he know of the untold dangers that would try to block his path in that vast and hostile country.

Jonathan continued to study the Bible and preach. As he had done in the slums, he determined to visit each home where he lived in China. He went from house to house and invited people to come to church where he would preach the Word of God. The people were surprised. Most of them had not been personally invited to church by a preacher before. Many of them came to church to hear this enthusiastic young man o God.

If you want to read a story about this courageous man who was totally sold out to serve the Lord, read *Jonathan Goforth, an Open Door in China*, by Janet and Geoff Bengé.

Read and stand in awe of our powerful God who watches over His children.



***The church has the success it
prays and pays for.***

Science and the Christian Worldview

Rose Fisher, Mifflin, PA

Science is “knowledge about the physical world gained through...the systematic process of gaining knowledge about the material world”¹ through observable realities. A scientific theory arises from repeated observation and testing and must be reproducible. Natural laws arise out of theories which are descriptions of and represent the best understanding of how something works. Scientism displays explicit trust in the reality of the observable by its implicit belief that it can discover truth in any discipline. Although empirical observation is valid many times, it is not the only or the best way of knowing. It does not always hold true and it cannot predict that natural laws will continue to be accurate descriptions of reality indefinitely.² Other valid ways of discerning reality include special revelation, intuition, and reason.

The study of science ultimately leads to the question of origins. How did this incredibly complex and beautiful creation come into

existence? Can we find out through empirical observation? If man recognizes the validity of revelation as a way of knowing, he will recognize the marvels of Creation as the work of the hand of God Himself, and the study and knowledge of God can become the ultimate purpose of creation, to glorify God. Nature by its sheer existence reveals portions of the character, personality, will, and mind of God. It points man to a further understanding of His Creator and causes him to fall on his face with exclamations of adoration time and time again.

Although the observations of science reveal something of the mind, will, and nature of God, the Bible is the best revelation we have of Him since it was written by humans in human language. Nature speaks without words and can be more easily misunderstood. The Bible reveals Jesus, the Word of God, who was God Himself incarnate in flesh. “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person...”(Heb. 1:3 KJV), came to

earth in human flesh to give us a clearer picture of God. The writers of the Bible "...spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21 KJV). Man still needs the Holy Spirit to actively enlighten his eyes to understand the revelation of truth in the inspired Word. Paul says that no one has seen, heard, or imagined the things of God, "but God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10 KJV). God longs to reveal Himself to us and gives us the Spirit of God "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2:12 KJV). Jesus says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3 KJV). Special revelation, therefore, is a more reliable way of understanding truth than empirical observation, but man is finite and does not perfectly understand even special revelation.

Reason is also a major way of coming to know something. During the Enlightenment, men like Voltaire, David Hume, and Thomas Paine attacked religion as unreasonable and silly, and proposed that the only way to know and understand truth is through reason. During this period of time many scientific advances were being made and people often

scoffed at the antiquated dogmas of the church. The general populace was very optimistic about the progress that mankind was making and believed that man had the potential to reason his way into becoming a higher-functioning being. Although reason is a gift of God for use in interpreting the data of the world, this irrational optimism was crushed by the stark, cruel realities of World Wars 1 and 2 and finally led to the despair of nihilism.

Due to this disillusionment with naturalism, today there is a major shift toward supernaturalism. Intuition, a perception of truth that is not obviously related to observable facts,³ is viewed as a more valid way of discerning truth. Some people are more intuitive than others, but most people have at least a limited ability to know or perceive truth without knowing why or where it came from. However, caution must be exercised in depending solely upon intuition in forming beliefs.

Materialism is "a theory that physical matter is the only or fundamental reality and that all beings, processes, and phenomena can be explained as manifestations or results of matter."⁴ If this is true, it follows that feelings, moral law, and man's ability to make judgments are simply products of matter acting

upon matter. Could simple matter have the capacity to create other matter? How can natural laws that govern matter be explained? While material reality is a reality, I would like to propose that beyond the physical reality exists an omnipotent Being Who was not only the Mind behind the creation of matter, but is the One who sustains it today. Without this omnipotent Presence, natural laws would fall apart and scientific experiments could not be reproduced. Man would have no conscience. All would be dreadful chaos and the entire universe would cease to function or exist.

Historically we can watch the unfolding of the belief that material reality is the only reality. In the supernatural hysteria of medieval days, anything unexplainable was attributed to God.⁵ As the Enlightenment dawned, man found ways to describe the way things work and called them natural laws. Since only the unexplainable had been attributed to God and the boundaries of the unexplainable were being pushed back at astonishing rates, man forgot that the normal, everyday realities also are the direct result of His power. In Hebrews, Paul speaks about Jesus “upholding all things by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3 KJV). God reminded Job of this truth

when He asked him, “Are the bands of the Pleiades fixed by you, or are the cords of Orion made loose?” (Job 38:31 KJV).

Man is not satisfied with descriptions of what is. The description of the law of universal gravitation that causes an apple to drop off the tree to the ground when its stem weakens and that keeps the moon in orbit around the earth does not explain why the apple exists to drop off the tree, why the moon exists to orbit the earth, or why anything exists instead of nothing. Man is plagued with the question of the purpose of not only the universe at large, but the purpose of man himself.

Hebrews 11 gives us a stirring account of heroes who believed that there was an ultimate purpose for the existence of matter. They believed that “the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18 KJV). As evidenced by their actions, they believed there is an eternal purpose worth enduring “cruel mockings and scourgings... bonds and imprisonment... [being] stoned...sawn asunder... tempted...slain with the sword... wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered

in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Heb. 11: 36-38 KJV). Would to God that man today would find the cure for his purposeless despair in the exhilarating reality of God, the Maker and Sustainer of all things!

What should a Christian do when science and the Bible seem to contradict each other? As we have seen, science and Scripture are both valid ways of coming to know truth about God and the world. There is ultimate truth in both science and the Bible. Man’s propensity to split the two and pit one against the other has created bewildering, complex problems. Since the Bible is the Word of God, its authority should trump the scientist’s, who is merely stating his observations. There is a greater margin of error for him. Some scientific “facts” are merely speculations. Generally science and the Bible speak about different sets of truths, and man is limited in his ability to interpret those truths. The scientist observes the earth and its processes and formulates hypotheses about what that which

he has observed. He tests and retests the observable data before he forms a theory to describe a natural law. The truth-seeker interprets the theory into his own understanding of the meaning thereof, but due to his limited perspective, he grants that he is subject to error. Science itself daily discovers new truths which discount prior “truths” it had discovered.

The Bible is a special revelation of God written in human words through inspiration of the Holy Ghost. However, every author wrote within his culture and added his own personal flavor and flair to the words he wrote. Seekers reading the Bible may or may not be open to or filled with the Holy Spirit as they read. The Bible is true and does not lie or contradict itself, but man is limited in his interpretation thereof and subject to error. Two Christian men who are inspired and led by the Holy Spirit may come to differing viewpoints on the same words of Scripture. Since the Bible is ambiguous at places and man today lives in a different culture from that in which it was written, careful reading and an honest effort to understand the context are imperative to forming a proper concept of its true meaning.

As scientific advances are being

made and biblical culture becomes clearer, man should increase his attempts to reconcile the two. If the Bible is ambiguous on a subject and science has a substantive rather than a merely speculative reason for a certain position, it is only logical to adopt the scientific view. Man should, however, accept the most natural reading of the Bible as the true and accurate one, trumping science if the scientific view is merely speculative.⁶ Our positions even as Christians may need to change as further progress is made throughout the entire process and remember that “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1 KJV). He is Truth and guides His own into truth, and He is the sustaining power that not only created the earth but also holds it in place today. It is essential to understand and accept the fact that “Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor. 13:12 KJV).

God has given us everything that we need to know and understand in order to fulfill His ultimate purpose for creating man,⁷ which will ultimately be fulfilled when we, with the “four and twenty elders fall down before him that [sits] on the throne,

saying, ‘Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created’” (Rev. 4:10-11 KJV).

Christians await the final acts of His supernatural power when He returns in the clouds and fully reveals Himself. Mortal bodies will be changed. Natural law will not have the last word. Along with Job, we believe that “though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19:26 KJV).

Endnotes:

¹Stephen Brubaker. *Principles of Science*. Class notes, Feb. 20, 2012.

²Nancy R. Pearcey and Charles B. Thaxton, *The Soul of Science* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994), p. 42.

³Stephen Brubaker, *ibid*.

⁴Stephen Brubaker, *ibid*, March 7, 2012.

⁵*ibid*.

⁶Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds, *Three Views on Creation and Evolution*, eds. J. P. Moreland and John Mark Reynolds (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999) 71-73.

⁷Stephen Brubaker, *ibid*, Feb, 27, 2012.

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Character is like a tree; reputation is like its shadow.



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If you are where Jesus put you, He will meet you where you are.



When I do what's wrong, it's me. When I do what's right, it's God.



When you see what God is doing and do not get fired up, your wood is wet.



Don't forget that living with your neighbors is also hard on them.



Doing your duty with a smile doubles its value.



Whether man or motor, something is wrong if it's knocking.



No power on earth can make a man do wrong without his consent.



If we expect our relationship with Christ to last, we must put Him first.