



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

Galatians 6:14

OCTOBER 2006

Meditation

Picking Flowers 1

Guest Editorial

Christ's Crucial Concern: "Do You Love Me?" 2

Announcement of Continuing Offer 5

Reader Response..... 6

Announcement 8

Rediscovering the Radical Legacy..... 9

A Productive Grapevine 12

Mission Awareness

Patient in Suffering 13

Annual Ministers' Week 15

Marriages..... 16

Cradle Roll..... 17

Ordinations 18

Obituaries 19

Observations 19

Ministers' Meetings Messages—2006 23

To Whom Shall We Go? 30

Helpers at Home

Gathering In 31

Junior Messages

The Stain of the White Dahlia 32

Youth Messages

Answers to this Month's Question 36

Thought Gems back cover

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 Saviour;
 To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;
 And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.

Calvary Publications, Inc., is a non-profit organization, incorporated in the State of Ohio, for the purpose of sponsoring, publishing, and distributing Christian literature. The board is elected, one member annually, by the ministers of the Beachy Amish Mennonite Churches, at their annual spring meeting.

Board of Directors

(*Calvary Publications, Inc.*)

Elmer Glick, Chairman
 Nathan Yoder, Vice-Chairman
 Enos D. Stutzman, Secretary
 Ralph Miller
 Glenn Yoder
 David L. Miller

Material for *Calvary Messenger*, marriages, births, ordinations, obituaries, and general articles—send to the **Editor**. Other Material—mail to their respective **Editors**.

Subscriptions, renewals, changes of address, etc.—mail to **Circulation Manager**. **When you move**, please notify the Circulation Manager one month in advance, giving your old and new address in full, so that your mailing label can be properly corrected and your credit be kept in order.

Editor: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paulmiller@mindspring.com

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 RR 1 Box 47-C, Augusta, WV 26704

Associate Editor: David L. Miller
 P O Box 73, Partridge, KS 67566

Contributing Editors:

Simon Schrock
 Enos D. Stutzman
 Aaron Lapp

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus
 186 Skyline Dr., New Holland, PA 17557

Youth Messages Editor: Ernest Eby
 4812 Hwy. 5, Mountain View, AR 72560
 eeby@aristotle.net

Junior Messages Editor:

Mrs. Anita Yoder
 10393 N 1100 W, Ligonier, IN 46767

Helpers at Home Editor:

Mrs. Mary June Glick
 10351 Fayetteville Rd., Bealeton, VA 22712

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:

Mark I. Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624
 markbeachy@characterlink.net
 330-852-2982

Calvary Messenger (USPS 767-160) is published monthly by Calvary Publications, 2673 TR 421, Sugarcreek, Ohio 44681. Subscription rates are: 1 year (U.S.) \$7.50, 3 years (U.S.) \$21.00. Renewal \$3.75 when you also give a 1-year gift subscription at \$3.75. For congregations using the every-home-plan, \$6.00 per year to individual addresses: \$3.75 gift subscription offer also applies. Second class postage at Sugarcreek, Ohio. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvary Publications, Inc., 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW, Dundee, OH 44624.

Picking Flowers

Irene Miller · Townville, PA


In summertime I walk the fields
Along the dusty roads;
And gather many a pretty flower
That in the sunshine grows.

With special thought I choose each one:
Long-stemmed, bright-eyed, sweet-smelling.
All are unique and have a place
A message of cheer they're telling.

Although I choose not every flower;
Each has a role to fill;
For if all were in my vase,
The fields would be quite dull.

So does our Lord walk in His fields,
Among His people there.
He gently leads some away
To serve Him in missions rare.

Yet some are called to stay at home
And bloom in open fields.
Though sometimes it's a dreary job;
Great the reward it yields.

And so, my friend, we're called by God
To bloom where'er we are.
We're all a part of the Kingdom
Whether serving near or far. 

Christ's Crucial Concern: "Do You Love Me?"

George R. Brunk II (1911-2002)

We are concerned here with our Lord's interrogation of Peter as recorded in the 21st chapter of the Gospel of John. The account of what happened in this chapter is highly dramatic and of utmost significance. We are told that this is the third manifestation of our Lord to the disciples after His resurrection. Very soon He would be ascending back to heaven.

A Review of Previous Events

The material in Luke, chapter 5, and the material at hand in John 21 show a striking resemblance. The setting in both cases is the Sea of Galilee, 7½ miles wide, 13 miles long, and 200 feet deep at its greatest depth. In both instances, the disciples are fishing, but they have "caught nothing." In both instances, the Lord gives instruction for a successful catch. Our Lord's counsel to Peter in Luke was that he should become a fisher of men; His counsel in John 21 was that he should "feed my sheep."

The Luke incident was near the

beginning of our Lord's ministry while the John 21 incident was after His ministry on earth had come to a close. Between those two terminal points, a great many things had taken place. The combined Gospels record 38 parables, 36 miracles, 36 dialogues, 19 prayers and 16 sermons, all by our Lord. We may be certain that there was much which is not recorded as John says, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book" (John 20:30).

In order to get the full impact of the interrogation recorded in John 21, let us review the high points of the life and ministry of Peter prior to this incident. We are told that he soon became the first of three which formed the inner circle of the apostles. We read again and again of "Peter, James and John." These three were present at the raising of Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:51), they accompanied Him to the Mount of Transfiguration, and all three were closest to Christ in the Gethsemane experience. When the

fickle crowd turned from Jesus, He asked the apostles if they would also go away. It was Peter who responded saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68,69).

In answer to the question of Jesus, "but whom say ye that I am?" it was Peter who replied with that great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16).

It was Peter who cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the Jewish high priest (John 18:10,11). It was Peter who denied his Lord three times beside "a coal of fire" in the outer court of the high priest (John 18:17-18, 25-27). We note the second reference to "a coal of fire" in John 21 where Jesus prepared a meal for the seven disciples. It was Peter and John who hastened to the empty tomb on hearing the report of Mary Magdalene. It was to Simon Peter that our Lord made a special appearance, according to Luke 24:34 and I Cor. 15:5.

We come now to the incident in John 21 where Peter, with six other apostles, gathered at the Sea of Galilee where they had fished "that night and caught nothing." There was a miraculous catch of 153 fishes at Christ's command (the last recorded miracle

of Jesus prior to His ascension).

But something must transpire in the life of Peter before he is prepared to become the leading spokesman of the newborn church, before he is to preach the first sermon of the Christian dispensation, before he is to heal the lame man at the temple gate, before he is to pass divine judgment on Ananias and Sapphira for lying to the Holy Ghost, before he is to heal many sick believers and before he is to open the door to the Gentiles (Acts 10:17-48).

All of the 12 disciples (except Judas) were from Galilee. At least these seven had returned to their home territory. Again, Peter was in the lead when he said, "I go a fishing." It is difficult to believe that they had given up, since they knew full well that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

The Restoration of Peter

What memories the "fire of coals" brought forth, we do not know. What gracious words those were when Jesus said to them, "Come and dine." We read that "Jesus then cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise." After they had dined, "Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" We observe here that Jesus did not address him as Peter, the Rock. Our Lord addressed him

as He did in His earlier acquaintance with Peter. Such address must also have been noticed by Peter. Let us remind ourselves that this conversation between our Lord and Peter took place in the presence of the other disciples. Had they witnessed his denial and were they also to become witnesses of his restoration? Perhaps Peter had been privately restored but was on this occasion reinstated.

Twice, in the initial question of our Lord, he employed the Greek verb, *agapao*, the same word used in John 3:16. Twice, Peter answered with the Greek word, *phileo*. In this, Peter was saying, "Yes, You are my friend and I am fond of You." Then, in the third instance, our Lord comes down to Peter's level and uses his weaker term as if to say, "Peter, do you really have that kind of love for Me?" Doubtless, it was this that grieved Peter. Did the lingering thoughts of his denial of the Lord make him ashamed to use the stronger term?

The instruction of our Lord to Peter in the first instance was "Feed my lambs" (vs. 15). In the second instance, there is a different Greek word which means "to tend, protect or discipline my sheep" (vs. 16). In the third instance, the instruction is again to "feed" my sheep (vs. 17).

In the 1 Peter 5:2-4 passage, we have these words which relate to

our Lord's instruction in the second instance above, as follows: "Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."

It is noteworthy that our Lord did **not** ask Peter about **his obedience**. He did **not** ask him **whether he had been filled with the Holy Spirit, but** He did ask him **about his love**. Are we therefore to conclude that this is a matter of highest priority with our Lord?

Over and over, our Lord had said in essence: "The proof of your love is in your obedience to what I have commanded." He had said, "If you love me, you will keep my word." We are confronted on the one hand with people who make loud claims of their love for the Lord, but are living in obvious disobedience to His Word. On the other hand, we have people who conform to the external commands and ordinances, but whose hearts seem cold and whose lives seem powerless and are very obviously lacking in their love for Christ. **Both**

are pathetically wrong. Certainly, believers are expected to be obedient to the Word as an expression of their deepest devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The question Jesus raised with Peter about his love should challenge us to test the fire of our own hearts and the glow of our own affections. Is Christ supreme in our own hearts and does He occupy that throne above all competition? Without this deep agape love, one is but nothing, though he may excel in many things. Here is the essential qualification for effective Christian service. As it was with Peter, so it is with us.

It is His flock, and He will have only

shepherds, workers and pastors who love him supremely. Others must stand aside and wait. Any candidate for leadership responsibility in the church must search out his own heart regarding both the quality and quantity of his love for Christ.

Since our Lord put this crucial question to a man of Peter's caliber, none of us can be exempt. There **He seems to stand in front of each of us** asking that same searching question, "**Do you love me?**" Let each one give his answer.

From *The FCM Informer*, July/August, 2006. Boldface added. Used by permission.



Announcement of Continuing Offer

Calvary Publications board wishes to inform Calvary Messenger subscribers that we are continuing for the present the half-price offer given in May, 2006:

Regular subscription price is \$7.50 per year.

Give gift subscriptions at half price and renew your own subscription at half price!

For \$3.75, you can give a one-year subscription (12 issues) of Calvary Messenger to a friend. When you do this, you are entitled to extend your own subscription for one year at the same price. This offer does not benefit your subscription price if you are in a congregation with Every Home Plan. You can, nevertheless, give as many one-year subscriptions at half price as you wish.



Re: Concern, 2004, (August 2006)

Thank you for this timely editorial. I share the concern and see it as an issue that is found in most of our communities and churches. Why?

We often look at it as a sister's problem, since they are the ones to wear this mark of distinction and sign of headship. However, when I stop and consider the core of the issue I conclude that those to whom the sisters are to be subject may be at fault. That comes back to me—husband, father and church leader.

What are we giving them as a challenge in the area of leadership? I believe that when we are godly models, both the principle and the application will be maintained. God's order for headship is His idea and plan.

May we as godly brethren live exemplary loves before our wives, daughters, and sisters to follow. Then—and only then—will the application be kept alive and cheerfully practiced.

Ernest Hochstetler, Abbeville, SC

• • • • •

I affirm the concern the bishop committee held up for our people's edification. It seems to me that there is a tendency to separate the symbol of headship practice from the headship principle. Then it often follows

that people decide that the principle can be expressed with a symbol other than a covering or veiling.

I am sorry to see the deterioration of this teaching by what appeals to us, rather than by what the New Testament Scriptures teach.

Joseph Miller, Melvern, KS

• • • • •

Since I'm not a woman, I don't know what it's like to wear a veiling in public or in a worship service in a church where few others wear it. I believe the concerns of the Bishop Committee are legitimate.

It seems to me there are veilings that fit the biblical requirement better than what I call the conventional covering. I am thinking of the white hanging veil of adequate size.

It seems some sisters want to wear a veiling that is as inconspicuous as possible. Therefore, instead of wearing a white hanging veil they may wear a small black veil so small that it can barely be seen. This seems to suggest that they would rather not wear it at all.

I believe we need to teach the principle and the practice.

Elmer Beachy, Salisbury, PA

• • • • •

I read your editorial in the August issue with interest. I can understand

the concern and underscore its validity. Isn't it amazing that a heavy golden bracelet becomes virtuous when a watch is installed upon it?

We are newcomers to this constituency, having begun to attend in January, 2005. That fall we became proving members, gaining full membership this spring.

I was impressed with the recommendation by the Bishop Committee calling for biblical teaching, admonition, and effective enforcement. My observation is also that there is a noticeable deficiency of teaching in this respect. Paul could say in Acts 20: 26, 27, "I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

I would think the bishops and ministers who are aware of this statement (and even if they are not aware of it, they have the Scriptures and are obligated to declare them) would feel uncomfortable in regard to being pure from the blood of all men.

We are no longer young people and grew up as Mennonites in _____Conference. If no corrective measures are taken, the Beachy Church is as doomed as the conference we came from.

*Mrs. Donald (Dorcas) Herr,
Aaronsburg, PA*

• • • • •

Brother Paul:

I appreciate the timely and well-stated editorial: "A Concern From April, 2004."

With your permission, my fellow ministers and I have made copies of it and will distribute them to our membership.

Thank you for the call to maintain principle and practice in this doctrinal expression of godly order.

Lyle Kropf, Wickenburg, AZ

• • • • •

Re: Chemical Sensitivity

Concerning the recent comments on chemical sensitivity, (July, p. 17, and Sept., p. 4), the following happened at our church at Weavertown recently.

A couple in their upper 60's visited our church one Sunday morning. They were from out of state. They seemed to be fervent Christians who would gladly fellowship with us. When I asked them what church they attend, they said they had been active in a church in our fellowship of churches but because of health problems do not presently go to church anywhere. Then they explained further: All the churches they would consider attending in their area have significant numbers of people who heavily use powders and cologne. In recent years, they

have such a physical reaction to that that it makes it impossible for them to be present. They said they actually mentioned it to the pastors of two of the churches in their area, but no perceptible changes came about.

I risked asking them how they found it in our church, say, on that very morning. They said it was absolutely no problem. They said if they lived in our area, they would definitely consider becoming mem-

bers. They also came for communion services that evening. By invitation, they each gave a good testimony. We, however, require that if visitors commune with us that they are members in good standing at home. So we had to forego inviting these precious people to the Lord's Table with us.

Surely temperance and moderation apply to every area of our lives.

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA



Announcement

(Re: proposal in August issue, page 21)

In August, Bro. Chester Weaver expressed his willingness to get together with interested ministers to seek the Lord for direction in recapturing godly vision for the church today. With the feedback he has gotten, he offers the following observations and questions:

“Some response to last month’s proposed Anabaptist Retreat questioned the wisdom of holding the retreat that far from [our denomination’s] Anabaptist geographic centers. In my mind, having the retreat seems more important than where it is held.

“Does anyone have a suggestion of a suitable location?

“Also, I would solicit themes for discussion. Those who would be interested in such an event have burdens, visions, questions, and a passion about making the Anabaptist worldview a living, practical reality today. Would anyone care to share input as to how to make such a proposed event as worthwhile as possible?

“Please note that my e-mail address is chesterweaver@pcfnet.net. My phone number is 817-866-3692. Thank you.”

Let us not fail to take our needs seriously. Let us seek God’s will in this matter. May I encourage additional feedback? To God be the glory!

—PLM 

Rediscovering the Radical Legacy

Javan Lapp · Gordonville, PA

My great great grandfather, Christian Nissley, was born in Germany in 1787. At seventeen, he realized he would soon face conscription. He left his family on May 7, 1804, and reached his destination in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on October 12, of the same year. After landing, he became indentured to a farmer, Christel Zug (probably later Zook), until he could pay off his debt.

One of Christian's chief reasons for coming to America was the hope of more leniency about serving in military endeavors for his homeland. I believe others, perhaps many others, came for the same reason.

In Germany, as is common even today, the middle class and poor people were the ones to go to war. I thank God for Christian Nissley, who would become my forebear. He made a courageous decision regarding the prospect of becoming a soldier for the Kaiser. It appears to me that he chose to be a soldier for Jesus Christ.

Some Anabaptist immigrants seem to have come with good motives but later suffered the loss of Kingdom priorities. As the following article points out, such a loss of vision took an unfortunate toll.

While we have no control over what happened in the past, we can learn from these examples. We are not required to repeat others' failures, unless we fail to reckon realistically with the challenges of our time. —PLM

When Anabaptists tired of persistent persecution, the fires waned and these “Radicals” were tamed into farmers and merchants who expended their primary energies into just that—the material world. Their zeal for excellence and completion was thrown into agriculture, engineering and trading. They soon became known as diligent workers, becoming the domesticated “lap-dogs” of the monarchs of Europe. They often won favors in exchange for their support of the ruling powers.

Sick of warring monarchs and facing the rising power of their rivals, the peasants, Mennonites eagerly reached for new freedoms and economic opportunities in America. But for many, their zeal on this continent was for prosperity and self-betterment. Their churches became a religion of maintenance programs to hold the community together for the sake of economy—that is, until

integration and assimilation came to be seen as an acceptable route to economic success. After 300 years in North America, what have we done; what have we changed? There is no doubt that we have had some impact, but the influence of hundreds of thousands of people over three centuries pales in comparison to what several thousand early Anabaptists accomplished in a few decades. What is keeping us from showing our world the vision that the Anabaptists proclaimed to their world?

For starters, many of us have become servants of mammon, the power of money. We tend to serve our own interests. Even our defenses against this fact—that we make money to share—sound empty and hollow to the rising generation. Jesus declared the Kingdom to outcasts, the down-trodden, and the losers of the world. In some ways, the power of the Kingdom runs counter to the power of economic systems. Jesus Himself said noncommittally, “With God all things are possible” when asked who could be saved if a rich man cannot enter the Kingdom. Our practice, I fear, does not reflect very well this part of God’s Kingdom.

When weary descendants of the Anabaptists traded their birthright for the quietist vision, they moved from being viewed as traitors to being

some of the best citizens, from being the enemies of civilized governments to being their allies. In the quest to be left alone at all costs they paid a very dear price.

If we trust in worldly governments for protection, we trust in their power. We tend to think that they are the primary bearers of history, that they really “make things happen.”

We must see the Kingdom of God as the primary agent of history. Governments have a function in preserving the world from self-destruction, but that preservation is meant to give the church time to offer a message of redemption. One day the Kingdom will have crushed the powers of political systems. Our calling is to be a part of that Kingdom now as well as then.

One of our greatest weaknesses lies in our tendency to rely on visible patterns to the degree that many of us seldom stop to evaluate honestly who we have become, what we are doing, and where we are going. We have emphasized practice, and rightly so, but too often we have emphasized it to the point of excluding critical thinking, resulting in a nonconformed practice, but not nonconformed thinking. If we have bought into other models of thinking, we have had to hold tenaciously onto an irrational ethic to preserve

our nonconformity.

The fact is that our practice needs to be reevaluated, but how can we do that when we have trouble thinking of new ways to approach issues in a helpful and constructive way? We also need to face up to and realize our preconceived ideas. We will always have preconceived ideas; we cannot be fully objective. I cannot and you cannot. But we need to realize our subjectivity and look carefully at our approaches and interpretations.

Possibly our largest problem lies in what Protestantizing has done to our understanding of Jesus and His mission. The ethic of Christ has become something to fit around the edges. Salvation has become chiefly escapism—an individual contract that gives us the promise of escaping this world, of insuring us against hell fire, rather than being a redemptive presence in the world. Once we realize that Christ heralded a new world order that will crush the powers of the present age, we will need to throw all our energies into the battle of Kingdom living. This shift, however, will not be easy because it means a new realization of how God works in this world.

I fear that in altering Anabaptism, we have tamed Jesus and domesticated God. Love and peace are God's declaration to the world, as well as

the way of the future—not something to be ashamed of.

Once we understand the present reality of the Kingdom of God and its progressive realization in this world, we will need to function as an eschatological community. By living with an eye to the future among the present realities, we will give prophetic witness against the current systems. This entails separated thinking. And indeed, it is the undergirding of a nonconformed witness. Our separatedness, our faith, which is a way of living based on yet-to-be-realized realities, must speak to the world. After all, we go about proclaiming—yea, living—the new creation of God in a fallen world. Our duty is to be bearing witness to the new way because the old things are passing away. We must critique the present by living the future as revealed to us in the ethics of Christ. The way God has declared that things will be must be more basic to us than the way things currently are.

The rural Mennonite communities scattered throughout North America have resources waiting to be tapped. If the Holy Spirit can have His way, a powerful witness for the Kingdom of God will follow and the result will be unimaginable in magnitude. But as of yet, it seems to me that Mennonites are known mostly for their quaint-

ness, their quietism, their exclusiveness, and their millionaires.

Meanwhile, many of their youth grow up enjoying recreation and being trained to be the next generation of prosperous Mennonites. Some of those who dare to think seriously, honestly and critically are marginalized and in their quest for truth often leave because the half-breed Protestant theology and the common Mennonite lifestyle fails to convince them. It is time to re-evaluate what is happening.

We would do well to start from the

vision of the first-generation Anabaptists who seemed to follow closely the original disciples of Jesus. It is time we grasp a new vision of God's Kingdom and serve as a witness against the goals and methods of this world by refusing to bow to ungodly influences. The result of communities of disciples living out such a display of what a close relationship with Jesus produces can be nothing less than New Testament Christianity. Indeed, that would be the world itself turned on its head.



A Productive Grapevine

Shirley Lebold · Millbank, ON

If you're just looking for the shade,
Just let your grapevine be.
Untrimmed upon the arbor, but—
The fruit I'd rather see.

So cutting here and pinching there,
My soft heart almost bled.
The shade is very beautiful—
But give me fruit instead.

Oh, take my life, dear Lord, prune hard,
To make me more like You.
Although it sometimes hurts a bit—
To You I will be true.

Oh, God, I thank You for the grapes,
I glimpse upon my vine,
Now nurture them, and make them be,
Mature fruit—in Your time.



Patient in Suffering

Verda Glick · Zacamil, El Salvador

“El Salvador is the smallest and most densely Spanish-speaking mainland state in the Americas. In the year 2000, the population was 6,276,000. Centuries of exploitation of the majority followed by twelve years of civil war held back development of this impoverished nation. There was some improvement during the 1990’s, but 80% still live in deep poverty. Two large earthquakes of 2000 and 2001 were further setbacks.”

(Report taken from Operation World. Used by permission.)

According to another source the density of the population is estimated at 736 persons per square mile. Eli Glick shared his burden with me several years ago and talked about the many communities and villages in eastern El Salvador that are without a true Gospel witness. People are controlled by fear and superstition, being steeped in idolatrous Catholicism. Let us continue to pray for the church in this small but needy country. The following story shows how, in some cases, people must be helped one-to-one. —FS

Marcelino Barrera is a member of the church in El Paste. He has never

gone to church for one simple reason: He can’t.

Twenty years ago, when Marcelino was nineteen years old, he got into a fight. His opponent shot him. Two bullets injured his spine, causing him to be paralyzed from his waist down. Marcelino has not walked since.

He had been bedfast for around five years when the El Paste church started. Someone told Eli Glick about Marcelino—so he went to visit him. He found this young man lying all alone in a poor shack. His bed was a wooden frame with a network of ropes stretched across it.

Marcelino listened attentively when Eli talked to him about God. After several visits, he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. Marcelino wanted to learn more about his Lord, but he couldn’t read. One of the teachers at the church school offered to give him reading lessons. Soon he could read so well that his neighbors would gather in his shack and listen to Marcelino read the Bible.

Marcelino must spend almost all his time lying on his abdomen and sometimes on his side. With the help of a long forked stick, He would build

a fire on the dirt floor beside his bed. He boiled his own coffee, cooked his own beans, and heated tortillos his mother brought him every couple of days.

The long forked stick served another good purpose. With it, he could drive off the rats that came to nibble his feet.

Marcelino decided to set up a store and sell things to his neighbors from his bedside. Just above his bed and within easy reach, he hung his wares: bags of cookies, snack foods, and crackers. He also sold eggs and sweet rolls. People took advantage of him. Several times thieves stole his store things and money. Many customers got things on credit and never paid for them.

Sometimes his losses caused Marcelino to be discouraged. During those times his friends could more easily persuade him to drink and smoke. Then conscience-stricken, he would repent again. After repeated episodes of backsliding, Marcelino finally found victory. About three years ago, Philip Glick baptized him right there in his bed inside his little shack.

Marcelino never goes to a doctor, clinic, or hospital. Sometimes people share their home remedies or bring him medicine from town. If he gets really sick, he just stays sick—until

eventually he gets well again. A wheel chair stands unused in a corner of his room. He hasn't used it for many years because it used to make his bed sores worse whenever he did use it.

Once when a health care worker from town visited him, she declared she had never seen anyone in such a dire situation. She was appalled at the idea of a paraplegic living by himself, bathing himself, and cooking for himself in such a poor home. She feared his open fire would ignite his bed and his shack would burn down on top of him. While this never happened, Marcelino did develop respiratory problems from inhaling the smoke from the fire beside his bed.

Eli repeatedly offered to try to get him into a convalescent home or some institution where he could get good care. Marcelino declined. He didn't want to leave his friends and relatives and he did not want to be in an institution. He had his mother who looked after him every couple of days. He said he was all right.

Then his mother died. Two years after her death his brothers persuaded Marcelino to move near their home about three miles away. Now his sister-in-law brings him his meals. No longer does he have to cook his food on a fire beside his bed. He has a much nicer room now, but he is lonely. He misses his neighbors

who used to visit him in his shack. Sometimes he thinks of giving up his better accommodations and going back to fending for himself in his shack where he can be among his friends.

In his visits with Marcelino, Eli has

been impressed by his uncomplaining spirit. In spite of his poverty, in spite of his suffering, Marcelino radiates joy. He has an attitude of gratitude, and is a true example of a man who is patient in suffering.

[From an AMA Newsletter]



Annual Ministers' Week

To be held at Calvary Bible School | Calico Rock, Arkansas

DECEMBER 5-7, 2006, D.V.

Come ye yourselves apart 'in an Ozark place' and rest awhile.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00.....Breakfast

9:00.....“Church, Family, Work—Fulfilling all our Responsibilities” – *Elmer Gingerich*

10:00.....Singing/Chorus

10:30.....“Christian Counseling” – *Mervin Graber*

12:00.....Lunch

1:30.....“Current Issues Facing the Church” – *Menno Kuhns*

2:30.....Round-table discussions and prayer times

5:00.....Supper

7:00.....Evening service

• Public Speaking Tips • Messages of Encouragement – *Ray Stutzman*

- We extend a welcome to all bishops, ministers and deacons to make use of the good accommodations at Calvary Bible School for a time of challenge, learning, encouragement, fellowship and refreshment.
- Supper will be provided at 6:30 on Monday evening, December 4. Come early and get a head start on the potential for rich fellowship. Attendees will benefit most by arriving Monday evening in time to get a good night's rest. Breakfast will also be provided on Friday morning.
- Your family is welcome. Some activities will be provided for children.
- To assist us in planning for food and lodging, please contact Tim Stoltzfus before November 17 of your plans to attend. **Phone: 870-741-1614, e-mail: timstoltzfus@emypeople.net**



marriages

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

Eby-Horst

Bro. Ernest, Mountain View, AR, son of Ray and Janet Eby, Flintstone, MD, and Sis. Cathy, daughter of Ervin and Erma Horst, New Hamburg, ON, at Country-side Mennonite Fellowship, Hawkesville, Ontario, on August 5, 2006, by Elmer Gingerich.

Goertzen-Kuhns

Bro. Peter Goertzen, son of Gordon and Emily Goertzen, Canby, OR, and Sis. Rachel Joy, daughter of Anna and the late Willard Kuhns, Belleville, PA, at Valley View A.M. Church, on June 24, 2006, by Eli King, Jr.

Krahn-Heeter

Bro. Wendall, son of Abe and Judy Krahn, McAllisterville, PA, and Sis. Lauren, daughter of Gregg and Dee-Dee Heeter, Leesburg, OH, at Wilmington Church of Christ for Faith and Light Christian Fellowship, on July 8, 2006, by Perry Troyer.

Kurtz-Peachey

Bro. David, son of Mary and the late John Kurtz, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Ruth, daughter of Leon and Elsie Peachey, Reedsville, PA, at Locust Grove Mennonite Church for Valley View A.M. Church, on May 27, 2006, by Eli King, Jr.

Miller-Sommers

Bro. Jethro Ryan, son of Laverne and Ida (Miller) Miller, Hicksville, OH, and Sis. Sharla Marie, daughter of David and Patricia (Masters) Sommers, Abbeville, SC, at Cold Spring Mennonite Church on July 1, 2006, by Ernest Hochstetler.

Miller-Stauffer

Bro. William, son of Joseph and Mary Miller, Centreville, MI, and Sis. Gwendolyn, daughter of Esther and the late Roger Stauffer, Sturgis, MI, at Calvary Chapel for Pilgrim Fellowship on August 26, 2006, by John Miller.

Schmidt-Wagler

Bro. Jeremiah, son of Daniel and Crystal Schmidt, Crossville, TN, and Sis. Naomi, daughter of Thomas and Sadie Wagler, Trout Creek, MT, at Dripping Springs Baptist Church for Mt. Moriah Mennonite Church, TN, on July 21, 2006, by John Mast.

Yoder-Weaver

Bro. Douglas Paul, son of Ervin and Wilma Yoder, Plain City, OH, and Sis. Rita Renee, daughter of Lewis and Karen Weaver, Mechanicsburg, OH, at United Bethel Mennonite Church for Haven Fellowship on July 8, 2006, by Lonnie Beachy.

cradle roll

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

Alimowski, Marek and Sarah (Overholt), Sarasota, FL, first child and son, Samuel, August 23, 2006.

Beachy, Mark and Carolyn (Hostetler), Plain City, OH, fifth child, second son, Coleman Jon, July 26, 2006.

Beachy, Michael and Phyllis (Troyer), Leesburg, OH, third child and dau., Adriana Joy, May 26, 2006.

Bontrager, Dan and Dorcas (Coblentz), Linneus, MO, first child and son, Daniel Anthony, July 19, 2006.

Byers, Jason and Loretta (Graber), Bloomfield, IN, fourth child, third son, Ivan Ray, Aug. 9, 2006.

Eash, Kenneth and Becky (Schwartz), Woodburn, KY, sixth child, fifth dau., Ryann Nicole, Aug. 21, 2006.

Eicher, Marvin Joel and Regina (Hershberger), Millersburg, OH, second child, first son, Andrew Joel, Aug. 1, 2006.

Fawcett, Ian Daniel and Gloria Diane (Miller), Kinzers, PA, first child and son, Jeremiah Daniel, August 3, 2006.

Fisher, Matt and Violet (Overholt), Abbeville, SC, second child and dau., Kyra Dawn, Aug. 3, 2006.

Helmuth, Allen and Melody (Yoder), Chappells, SC, seventh child, third dau., Carissa Anne, July 13, 2006.

Helmuth, Micah and Natalie (Overholt), Abbeville, SC, first child and dau., Olivia Kate, Aug. 3, 2006.

Hochstetler, Dale and Carolyn (Hochstetler), Middlebury, IN, fifth child, third son, Cameron Dale, July 1, 2006.

Kauffman, Kevin and Delores (Nisly), Abbeville, SC, fourth child, second son, Braden Matthew, Aug. 3, 2006.

Kuepfer, Calvin and Martha (Schmidt), Wellesley, ON, third child, second son, Brandon Shane, July 21, 2006.

Lapp, Curtis Edwin and Ella Mae (Wagler), Kinzers, PA, first child and son, Johann Drew, July 23, 2006.

Mast, Merlin and Catherine (Miller), Bolivar, TN, first child and son, Jackson Lloyd, May 11, 2006.

Miller, Dave and Gina (Miller), Martinsburg, OH, fourth child, first son, Logan Samuel, Aug. 3, 2006.

Miller, Marlin and Hannah (Schrock), Linneus, MO, fourth child, third son, Joel LaRay, July 22, 2006.

Miller, Nathan L. and Miriam (Miller), Holmesville, OH, second child, first son, Austin Lloyd, August 10, 2006.

Overholt, James and LaDonna (Baer), Auburn, KY, second child, first son, Gregory James, July 21, 2006.

Overholt, Nathan and Janet (Peaster), Sarasota, FL, first child and son, Daniel Paul, Aug. 27, 2006.

Riehl, Ken and Vivian (Miller), Penn Yan, NY, fourth child, third son, Kevin John, July 28, 2006.

Shenk, Keith and Dinah (Willey), Martinsburg, OH, fourth child, third dau., Laura Rose, July 27, 2006.

Swarey, Maynard and Cynthia (Yoder), Mifflinburg, PA, first child and dau., Phebe April, August 3, 2006.

Wagler, Michael and Lisa (Wagler), Montgomery, IN, second child and dau., Tyra Elaine, July 18, 2006.

Yoder, Kevin and Malinda (Byler), Whiteville, TN, sixth child, fifth son, Zachary Wyatt, May 30, 2006.

ordinations

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

Bro. Forrest Mast, 28, was ordained to the office of minister at Summersville Mennonite Church, Summersville, KY, on August 6, 2006. Preordination messages were given by Andy Coblentz.

The charge was given by James Hershberger, assisted by Melvin Troyer and Lavern Eash. Ed Coblentz and Morris Hochstedler were also in the lot.

Bro. Lonnie Yoder, 42, was ordained to the office of deacon at Summersville Mennonite Church at Summersville, KY, on August 6, 2006. Preordination messages were given by Andy Coblentz.

The charge was given by James Hershberger, assisted by Melvin Troyer and Lavern Eash. Ivan Yoder was also in the lot.

Bro. Norman Yoder, 44, was ordained to the office of minister at Pilgrim Fellowship, Nottawa, MI, on May 21, 2006. Preordination messages were brought by Homer Zook.

The charge was given by John Miller, assisted by Homer Zook. Also in the lot were Ray Miller and Jonathan Yoder.

Evolution: Elaborate Science Fiction

obituary

Yoder, Sierra Marie was stillborn July 19, 2006. She was the first child of the bereaved M. Jeremy and Lois (Beachy) Yoder.

Close relatives are maternal grandparents: Alvin and Elsie (Kanagy) Beachy, London, OH; maternal grandparents: Marlin and Julia (Peachey) Yoder, McVeytown, PA; maternal great grandparents: John and Elsie Kanagy, Blacksville, SC; Simon and Luella Beachy, London, OH; and paternal great grandparents: Kore and Sadie Peachey and David and Sara Yoder, McVeytown, PA.

Funeral services were held on July 20, with Ezra Peachey, Matthew Peachey and Eli King, Jr. serving. Burial was in the Locust Grove Cemetery, Belleville, PA.

observations

The conflict in the Middle East continues to provide much material to the media for day-to-day reporting. Attacks and counter attacks seem to be commonplace. To the casual observer it may seem that both sides are equally aggressive and heartless.

Columnist James Pinkerton points out that there are some basic differences between Israeli philosophy and that of the Arab/Muslim world.

The difference quite simply is that Arab opinion leaders quite openly advocate wiping Israel off the map, but few around the world seem to notice or care.

Israel would have the military capability to destroy their enemies. But with the Nazi holocaust so fresh in their memory their response has generally been basically defensive. Their survival is dependent on their ability to defend themselves. While their restraint may not seem readily apparent, it does become apparent when viewed in light of their superior military capability. Pinkerton says they could wipe out the entire population of the West Bank, Gaza, and Southern Lebanon and still have plenty of fire power left over to destroy every Arab capital. (*The Hutchinson News*, Aug. 2, 2006)

From the perspective of a non-resistant Christian, it is unspeakably sad to see this perpetual violence and suffering. One wonders if the Prince of Peace, the Righteous Judge of all the earth will soon intervene with the final solution. When that happens, we believe the "solution" will be world-wide. (Today's date: Aug. 2, 2006.)

• • • • •

It is a well-known fact that many rural communities are struggling against declining population. Often

this trend is influenced by sending their young people to college to receive training for vocations for which there may not be openings in a rural community. Urban centers typically have far greater income potential than do rural communities.

Many people would agree that a small town or rural community has many advantages over the larger urban setting when it comes to wholesome environment for a growing family. It is important to remember that it takes more than a good environment to raise a Christian family. Only Christ can make the family Christian.

It seems apparent that extensive formal training generally contributes to uneven population distribution. There is widespread demand for manual skills for which college training is not needed. To visit my wife's home community, Kalona, Iowa, is always a fresh reminder that small towns and rural communities need not wither and die. That area is increasingly crowded. Real estate values are inflated to the point that some families are looking elsewhere for resettlement possibilities.

The first Amish settlers came to Johnson/Washington County, Iowa, from Somerset County, PA, in the 1840's. There are presently nine Amish church districts. There

are also at least four congregations who are identified with Mennonite Church USA. Three congregations are there with Conservative Mennonite Conference. There are several other Anabaptist options that are neither mainstream Mennonite nor Old Order Amish. It is interesting to remember that this diverse Anabaptist community has derived from Amish beginnings more than a century and a half ago.

The purpose of these comments is not to analyze the religious dimension of that community, though that would be instructive. But it is to notice some of the things that have caused the Kalona community to flourish:

—The agricultural dimension is supported by soil that is very productive.

—The people generally are industrious and creative.

—The community has had and continues to provide manual skills such as construction, mechanics, and others.

—Rural people are becoming increasingly diverse in their manner of making a living.

—Relatively new ventures include goat dairies, greenhouses, farmers' markets, wholesale production of garden produce, retail groceries and several other retail stores, including a

successful appliance sales and service outlet.

—There is also a substantial facility for the senior population.

It seems apparent that the things mentioned above do not require more than very basic formal training. Success is the evidence of God’s blessing. It is also evidence of diligence, good management, and creativity.

What is true at Kalona is illustrated on a much larger scale in northern Indiana, Holmes County (and surrounding counties), in Ohio, and SE Pennsylvania.



It is impressive to notice that these basic principles can apply to other new Anabaptist communities. Usually farming opportunities are limited. But demand for service and manual skills is nearly universal. With a strong work ethic, a commitment to honesty and the Golden Rule, conservative Anabaptists seem to do rather well materially in some new communities. Sad to say, sometimes serious problems arise that are more likely to be relational than financial.

When I started the above comments, I had in mind to call attention to the fact that there is a good demand for manual skills and other endeavors that do not require extensive formal training. These skills

can be family-friendly and friendly to strong community development. They also provide opportunity for Christian witness and outreach.



Sometimes we are asked about our view of higher education as conservative Anabaptists. I have answered that it seems justifiable in case it is needed for service such as health care or teaching. To regard formal training as a status symbol is an unworthy motivation.

In 1957, a number of us went to Topeka, our state capital, when compulsory high school attendance was pending. We were respectfully received by lawmakers and Governor Robert Docking. Our appeal included the following statement:

“We hold that all learning must be tempered with moral and spiritual priorities if it is to constitute a net value to our society.”

It seems apparent that such priorities are missing in much of the academic community. It is also noteworthy that an openness to learn outside of the classroom can be more valuable than diplomas and degrees.



A woman who was concerned about animal welfare talked to an Amish dairyman about the injustice of separating calves from their

mothers and to raise them without benefit of being fed by their mother. The farmer listened patiently while the woman ventilated her feelings. Then he explained that the calves' mothers were "career cows." The caretakers were baby sitting for the mother cows. The visiting woman had nothing more to say. This incident is reported in the book, *House Calls and Hitching Posts*, by Dorcas Sharp Hoover.



One reads more and more that measurable benefits come from human babies getting their mother's milk rather than formula. A study in the United Kingdom suggests that these babies handle stress and anxiety better than their formula-fed peers. Other studies suggest that this natural diet is favorable to better intellectual development. It seems safe to note that the child whose mother gives him or her priority over her career is more fortunate than the child whose mother places her career ahead of her child.



Inner Change Freedom Initiative (IFI) is a program administered by Prison Fellowship. Joel Belz, (*World*, 8-12-06), reports on such a program at Newton, Iowa. Inmates enter voluntarily. If they want to drop out, they may.

The system within the larger system has surprisingly pleasant quarters, far more "social-friendly" than the usual cell block pattern.

Their day starts at 5:30. It is recommended, not required, that participants spend half an hour in Bible-reading and prayer. Classes throughout the day include person finances, time management, anger control, family relations and job preparedness. There is also Bible study of basic Bible doctrine. There is lots of Scripture memorization. No TV is allowed for the duration of the program. (18 months)

Similar programs exist in Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Minnesota. The program is considered tough and demanding. But it is also effective.

The article says that typically about 65% of the prisoners that are released from American prisons will be arrested within three years of their release. Present indications are that recidivism for IFI graduates may be as low as 20%.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State brought suit against Prison Fellowship and IFI, claiming that the program is pervasively religious and is not entitled to government funding.


Judge Robert W. Pratt, Des Moines, has said the whole effort is unconsti-

tutional and must be discontinued. His decision is being appealed and the program will continue until the appeal is resolved.

Warden Terry Mapes feels that for what he considers a relatively modest cost, “I get a substance-abuse program, a victim-impact program, and a pro-social skills program.” The results seem very encouraging. Mapes would be very disappointed if the program could not continue.

Sixty per cent of the funding is

provided by IFI. The state funds 40%. Judge Pratt said that even if IFI had not used any public funds, he would still have ordered an end to the program. He ruled that the program is so pervasively religious that it constitutes an illegal establishment of religion by the state.

To me it seems appropriate that we pray that our sovereign and wise God would overrule an earthly judge who appears to have a strong anti-religious bias. —DLM 

Ministers' Meetings Messages—2006

This is a condensation of a message given at the annual Ministers' Meetings, April 4-6, 2006, at Sugarcreek, Ohio. The set of eight cassette tapes with 11 messages is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$40 or a set of 11 CD's for \$45, postpaid.

5. Healthy Biblical Interpretation

—Ronald Border, Minerva, OH

I appreciate the emphasis we've been having here on Jesus Christ. I shall continue with that same emphasis by using four statements which shall shade my presentation:

1. Your Christological orientation determines your interpretation.
2. Your interpretation determines your theology.

3. Your theology determines your lifestyle.

4. Your lifestyle determines your final destination.

That's how serious this is.

The church of Jesus Christ is comprised of born-again believers who have committed themselves to being disciples of the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the Head of the Church. These Christians follow Jesus Who is the blessed Word of God. There is the written Word of God—the Bible and there is the revealed Word of God—Jesus Christ. As we read the written Word of God, we discover the revealed Word of God—Jesus. By Him and in Him we come to know God. There is no other way.

We believe that the distinct purpose of the Bible is to introduce us to God in Christ. The Reformation years saw a keen interest develop in God's Word. Three streams of reformation developed in medieval Europe: Luther's, Zwingli's and the Swiss Brethren, nicknamed Anabaptists. The latter are the spiritual forebears of those who have assembled here today. They took the Word of God seriously. They were committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. As such, they became students of the Word, which they refused to compromise in the face of pressures and persecutions. Their constancy is well recorded in the book, *Martyr's Mirror*, and in other writings of those days. It is a precious part of our spiritual heritage.

The correct interpretation of the Scriptures has been a priority for devout Christians from the beginning. Jesus had to confront the Pharisees for their interpretation of the Scripture. On one occasion Jesus said to them, "Do ye not therefore err because ye know not the Scriptures neither the power of God?" Jesus knew that they knew many Scriptures by memory, and that they made great effort in following the Word. Jesus told them that they were missing the meaning, the intent, the correct interpretation of the Word.

In 2 Timothy 2:15, we have an interesting Scripture: "Study to shew

thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth." This verse is often used in the Christian day school program to prod students into studying. I believe it means something else. 'Study' means to be diligent and to make application toward. When you do this you will rightly interpret the Word of God.

We remember John Wycliffe, who lived in the 1300's, and is often called the Morning Star of the Reformation. He was a faithful preacher who wanted to put the Word of God "into the hands of every ploughboy." He wanted everyone to have access to the Word of God.

Wycliffe was once asked, "How must the Word of God be preached?" His answer: "Appropriately, simply, directly, and from a devout and sincere heart."

In the midst of his ministry, the bishop of London refused him the privilege of preaching. He, nevertheless, continued preaching, writing, and translating the Bible into English so it would be accessible to all the people. Thirty-one years after his death the Catholic Church ordered all his books burned. They ordered his body to be dug up, his bones burned, and the ashes spread on Thames River. Over 600 years ago now, Wycliffe wrote these words, which I greatly appreciate: "It shall greatly help thee

to understand Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth.” In this statement we find the seed elements of faithful Bible interpretation.

“A man cannot rightly interpret the Scripture if he stands outside the experience of spiritual life.” Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2: 14, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.”

A man can through mechanical and scholarly means come up with an interpretation. Unless, however, the Holy Spirit is an active force in any man’s study, the Bible will not reach in and transform that heart as God intends. That’s how vital the Spirit is in faithful interpretation. A man cannot receive the true impact of the Word unless the Spirit guides. Yes, you can have a mechanical interpretation but it’s a poor substitute. Don’t expect to have more head knowledge than you have heart experience. It is important to pray for Spirit illumination to lead us into the Word and open the treasure house of discovery. We must pray for the Spirit’s guidance if we would truly interpret the Word of God.

Progressive revelation helps to open the Scriptures. Simply stated, progressive revelation is the concept that God meets man where he is. In a process of unfolding revelation, through the Scripture, He reveals more and more of Himself. In other words, God started with the Old Testament types, shadows, illustrations, and stories. He progressively revealed Himself until the fullness of time when Christ came. We say, with Peter, “Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.” We also confess with Paul, “In him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily.”

Soon after my conversion I was given the book by Myron Augsburger, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation in Mennonite Theology*. It is excellent, but it is out of print. At this time, I’m in touch with Herald Press about reprinting it. Here are some points from it:

1. *The Scripture is an unfolding revelation which progresses to Christ and finds its ultimate expression in Him.* I was converted in the Baptist Church. My pastor there often said, “You can start anywhere in the Bible you wish, but make a beeline to the cross.” I agree. Unless we do this, our interpretation will be flawed.

2. *All Scripture is inspired as an infallible disclosure of God expressed in the person of His Son.*

3. *The New Testament is above the*

Old in the progress of revelation and is the final rule for faith and life.

4. *Christ is the Lord of the Scriptures and as such judges and reinterprets sub-Christian elements of the Old Testament.* Christ said more than once: “It hath been said, but I say unto you....”

5. *The Spirit who inspired the Word is the necessary agent in understanding it.* Don't forget to ask for the Spirit's guidance. Don't trust your own scholarship or your study books. The Spirit would guide us when we acknowledge our need of Him. Some good study aids may help us to discover God's truth.

All of the above statements point to the Christological priority as being the starting place for biblical interpretation. We can't do it any other way and be faithful to God's Word.

For the Anabaptists the Spirit of God inspired the total Bible as an unfolding revelation with its fullness being in the person of Jesus Christ. Menno Simons said, “All Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments, on every hand point us to Christ Jesus if we are to follow Him.” He said further, “Moses gave the law and Israel had to obey it until Christ Who was promised appeared.” Menno also emphasized knowing the will of God as found in the perfect example of Christ. He found fault with those who “read the prophets according to

Jewish understanding.”

At his trial, Michael Sattler indicates the Christological priority of his hermeneutics, which is the study of interpretation. He said, “Counter to and against the Gospel and the Word of God I do not know that I have done anything. In witness thereto I appeal to the words of Christ.” Notice the priority he places on the words of the Savior.

One of the finest statements by Anabaptists on the principles of interpretation is found in *Martyr's Mirror* in a confession of faith written in about the year 1600. “The Old Testament is to be expounded by and reconciled with the New Testament and must be distinctively taught among the people of God. Moses with his stern, threatening, punishing law over all impenitent sinners that stood under the law, but Christ with His new tidings of the holy Gospel over all believing, penitent sinners as not under the law but under grace.”

Menno Simons discussed his principle of interpretation on 2 Timothy 3:16 with this: “All scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, rightly explained according to the intent of Christ Jesus and His holy apostles is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” It is clear that early Anabaptists accepted both testaments as being inspired of God. Taking the

progress of revelation seriously, they didn't look at the Bible as a flat, plain situation, which is the approach of most Protestant theologians. Those who view the covenants as equally in force at this time get into trouble on a number of issues. Examples are divorce and remarriage, swearing of oaths, and others. They say the Old Testament has just as much authority as the New. We believe the Old and New Testaments were both inspired, but do not share equal authority in the church age.

Anabaptist writers stated again and again that the New Testament stood above the Old Testament in progressive revelation, because it lifts up the perfection of Christ. We as Anabaptists must not forget the perfection of Christ. It's different than most books out there. The Schleithem confession says repeatedly, "By virtue of the word of Christ." It says, "The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ." It also refers to "Christ, who teaches the perfection of the law."

The Dortrecht Confession of 1632, in Article 14, on defense by force, emphasized the importance of Jesus Christ being preeminent in our interpretation of Scripture and in the application of faith and life. "The Lord Jesus has forbidden His disciples and followers all revenge." It also comments, "According to the example, life

and doctrine of Christ." In yet another place, we find the words: "according to the law of Christ."

Pilgram Marpeck, a leading theologian in southern Germany, wrote a book, *Testaments Erlauterung*, in 1544. In it he compares the Old and New Testaments. He calls the Old Testament 'Yesterday.' He calls the New Testament 'Today.' The Anabaptists believed that God had a further word to say than what was said in the Old Testament.

The message of the Gospel is the call of being a new creature in Christ. It is the call to cross-bearing and discipleship. The Anabaptists believed that only a true disciple can really know Jesus and what Jesus wants to say. Hans Denck, during his days of Anabaptist witness, said, "Niemand vermag Christum wahrlich zu erkennen, er folge Ihm denn nach im Leben." [No one can truly know Christ unless he follows Him in life.]

That's why Anabaptist doctrine is so insistent on discipleship. It's not a loose membership that allows you to do anything you want, but a discipleship in Christ Jesus that is structured according to the perfection of Christ and the New Testament.

Here are some pointers for interpretation that I hope are helpful:

1. Approach the Scriptures from the historical setting and elements that surround the text. I recommend

the careful use of Bible encyclopedias, dictionaries, commentaries, books on Bible customs, and other study helps that open the doors of our awareness. “Where did this happen? Who was ruling then? What were the political and religious tensions of the time?”

2. We must be careful about false emphases, agendas, and doctrines which may appear in those books. If the Christological priorities do not measure up, we can use the study guides without being controlled by them. Commentaries are valuable, but they are not the Gospel. Let us also not allow the cultural and historical dimensions to overshadow the real meaning of the text.

3. Evaluate words or phrases from a grammatical perspective. What is meant? Is the meaning clear? Have the meanings of the word changed since the translation was made? Does the word refer to an antecedent? For example, in Romans 12:9, we are instructed to “Let love be without dissimulation.” The dictionary says that dissimulation means to be hypocritical, to hide one’s motives, so this verse speaks to the serious Bible student, “Let your love be genuine and sincere, not merely for show.” Don’t neglect dictionaries and lexicons which go into the depth of the original language meaning of the word. Strong’s concordance is a good help.

In Galatians 6:2, we are instructed to bear one another’s burdens. Strong’s concordance defines the first use of the word ‘burden’ to mean a burdensome weight. In Galatians 6:5, it says that every man shall bear his own burden. Strong’s word study takes us into the meaning and informs us that there the use of ‘burden’ means a task or service.

4. Study from the literary perspective. The Bible student is wise to differentiate between the various literary genres used. Some stories are real happenings. Some are teaching stories. When Jesus referred to Herod as a fox, Herod had not been changed him into a sly, four-legged creature. Jesus did, however, give us an unmistakable and negative depiction of Herod’s character. It seems to offer an explanation, for instance, as to how Herod might have stolen his brother’s wife. Here ‘fox’ is used as a metaphor. The Bible is made of prose, poetry, proverbs, allegories, parables, similes, metaphors, apocalyptic prophetic literature, and other literary forms which all beg to be properly understood.

5. Study the Bible from the contextual perspective.

6. Study the Bible using synthesis. This means the Scripture should interpret the Scripture. This makes it possible to help understand more difficult Scriptures by comparing them

with easier Scriptures. If, for instance, we take certain verses about prayer by themselves, we could conclude that we simply ask for anything we want to have. But by taking into consideration more verses that deal with prayer, we learn that we should certainly pray to God but we should also be mindful that God's answers are conditional upon God's will.

7. We must take the practical approach.

Light obeyed increases light. Light rejected brings night.

Some say because the Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures, they will ask the Holy Spirit to interpret the Scriptures to them. They will rely on no other help. Lazy Bible study has the tendency of bringing forth self-serving interpretations and applications which fall short of the ultimate in God's Word. Bible interpreters must beware of the individualism that says, "God told me." Our interpretations must be subject to the brethren which is the first proving ground for authenticity.


Let us also be careful not to approach God's Word with preconceived ideas of interpretation. Some people are so convinced about war because they have the veil of the Old Testament over their eyes that they can't see New Testament realities. From personal experience I must say that until I saw Jesus Christ as

the centerpiece of God's Word, I was neither able to see nor to understand the doctrine of nonresistance.

Interpreters of the Bible should not overlook the literal meaning of Scripture. We must spiritualize some scriptures, but unless many Scriptures are taken literally, they have little life-changing potential.

Even though the Bible is an exceedingly rare book of literary and historical value, we must never forget that its chief value is a source of revelation. It's a book which leads to life. There is no other such book. There may be inspirational books, but no other God-breathed book.

The Bible shows God working redemptively in history to deliver a man from his sin and rebellion. Without the Bible man cannot understand life. He's a lost soul in a lost world. In the Bible man finds that God has the answer. He meets the God who knows all about him and is concerned about him.

In the Bible man finds that God makes Himself known to man in the person of Jesus Christ. This revelation can only come through the Word of God. The Bible brings men to Christ, builds them up in Christ, and sends them out for Christ. When you look at the Word of God, interpret it carefully and prayerfully. May God bless you and may you be encouraged to a deeper study of His Word. 

To Whom Shall We Go?

Ernest Strubhar · Perkins, OK

[Trusting what Jesus said has no safe alternatives. His words are all true. —PLM]

In John 10, Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd...I lay down my life for the sheep...I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish.” What a claim! Jesus backed it up with this astounding statement, “I and my Father are one.”

Hearing that, “The Jews took up stones to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works have I shown you from my Father. For which if those works do you stone Me?’”

They responded, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, make yourself God.” They understood His claim to be God! (John 10:32, 33 NKJV)

At Jesus’ trial, the high priest said to Him, “Put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Jesus answered, “Yes, I am.”

“Blasphemy!” they cried. “What further need do we have of witnesses? He deserves to die!” (See Matthew 26:62-66).

What kind of man would openly declare that he is the Son of God, one with his father, equal with God! Would you die for such a claim? He did!

The Options


Was Jesus a liar, a deceiver—the biggest in history? But how could a deliberate deceiver give the world its greatest moral teachings? How could a liar open the eyes of the blind? And how could He transform sinners even today, making them honorable people?

If Jesus was not the Son of God, and was not deliberately lying—there’s only one other possibility: He really believed his own preposterous claim, and yet was a lunatic, a crazy man. Do his words and deeds seem to you to spring from a twisted, disillusioned mind?

Either Jesus is who He claimed to be—the Lord of all—or He is a liar, or a lunatic.

Lord? Liar? Lunatic? Take your pick. If he was liar or a lunatic, we have no Savior. Why listen to Him? He died a fool, for his own sin. And we who follow Him are fools, too, dreadfully deceived.

However, if He is LORD, God in the flesh, born of the virgin Mary—as He claimed and as I believe—then what fools are we if we do not listen to Him!

“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36). 

Gathering In

Mary June Glick

October is one of my favorite months. With the crisp feel of autumn in the air, the cool refreshing mornings, the scent of burning leaves, the bright colorful blooms of flowers that escaped frost, the brilliant landscape of changing leaves—who could even dare to think that there is no Creator? I feel like a squirrel in autumn as I attempt to “gather in” all those left-over bounties from the outdoors before the winter wraps around us again.

First, I browse through the garden finding enough vegetables to make a pot of my garden soup. I sauté celery, onions, and peppers in butter. Then I add a few leftover beans, chunks of sweet potato, okra, carrots, cabbage, this and that, and add some dried beans, small pastas, mashed butternut squash or pumpkin and season to taste. Serve with a warm bread or muffin and I have a meal fit for a queen!

Next, I gather up herbs and either dry them or chop them in the food processor along with onions and peppers. Then I freeze them in ice cube trays. Next winter, I’ll just add a cube

to season soups or sauces.

If you have basil, make some pesto. It’s delicious eaten with homemade bread. Hot peppers and herbs can be hung up in your kitchen. Many end-of-garden flowers dry well, too, just by hanging them up.

I used to walk through the woods and find nuts, dried weeds, and branches to make wreaths and arrangements. If you have young children, take them with you on a treasure hunt through the woods, and stir up their creative energies. Gather the family for an afternoon of raking leaves. Then treat them to hot chocolate with marshmallows. It’s much more fun when you work together.

As I grow older, I am more aware of the process of...

Gathering in the memories of friendships, love of family, and care for each other

Recently, I visited a friend and cousin by marriage (also a minister’s wife), who has cancer and has lost her eyesight because of a tumor. I thought of the memories I have *gathered in* from her life: her friendly, cheerful

personality, our sharing together at ministers' meeting, and so on.

We are constantly *gathering in*. Young mothers, take time to play with your children, read to them, and make yourselves available to hear what they want to tell you. You are building memories for the future. All of us need to take time for friendship: visit each other, share a cup of tea, and listen to each other. We need to take time to visit the elderly, the widows and others who are alone.

I hear discussions frequently lamenting the fact that this isn't happening like it used to in our Mennonite communities. We will need to take steps to remedy this or it may be lost in the next generation.

We need to spend friendship time with others in the church family. I remember that as a child we had events like corn roasts and hot dog cookouts—not fancy meals, but fun times together.

We need to rekindle the vision of Sewing Circle, taking food to the sick, and simply caring about each other. We must *gather in* thoughts that are pure, noble, kind, and good and remember to live by these things.

I am now in the autumn of my life. I want to dwell on the good things that I have *gathered in* through the years, so the season of winter can wrap me in the memory of the love of friends and family—and of God's loving care and provision.



junior messages

The Stain of the White Dahlia

Mollie Zook (1912-2005)

The two cousins, Kathy and Mary, skipped and ran as they came to the narrow strip of woods. It was a perfect day to take a walk. The leaves and grass yielded green finery.

“Look, here is a beautiful fern leaf,” cried Mary. “I’d like to press this one.”

“There are a lot of things you could

press. Here is a bigger patch of them. Look at this yellow speckled leaf. It has a yellow bell flower.” Stooping, she picked some for nature-loving Mary.

The two girls rambled on through the woods. Soon they found themselves at the opening which led to the road.

“Who lives in the big, white house?”

asked Mary, pointing.

“Oh, that’s the Bensons. They’re old people. He was a senator or something like that. And they grow beautiful flowers,” emphasized Kathy. “Mrs. Benson is very friendly and likes to show her flowers to people.”

“I’d like to see them. Do you think she’d care?” asked Mary.

“Not if she’s at home; she’d love it,” responded Kathy.

“Let’s go see, if you think it’s okay,” Mary said excitedly.


Mrs. Benson was soon leading the two girls to her dahlia garden with snips in her hand. The girls “oohed” and “aahed” when they saw the beautiful colors of the large dahlia blooms.

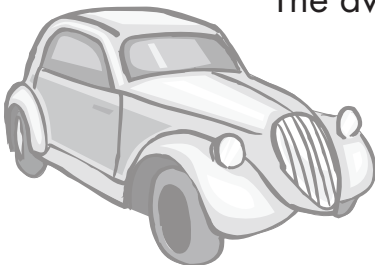
Mrs. Benson snipped some of the magnificent blooms, handing them to Kathy. Mary was hoping she would give her some, too.

“We’ll be able to enjoy the buds opening up if we snip these that are open already,” Mrs. Benson explained. She reached to snip a large,

white dahlia. Mary’s heart leaped. Oh, how she wanted that large, pure white one! Almost without realizing it, she reached out and took the flower as Mrs. Benson was handing it to Kathy. Mrs. Benson hadn’t planned to give it to her. Why had Mary taken it? She was too humiliated with self-guilt to speak. She held the flower loosely. Somehow the beautiful, white dahlia was stained. She no longer enjoyed its pure beauty.

She received a few more blooms from Mrs. Benson. The joy of the flowers had faded. Mary realized her covetous heart had not brought her satisfaction. She smelled the dahlia’s rich fragrance. She wanted her heart to be pure like the white dahlia, not stained with selfishness.

[From Calvary Messenger, July, 1999. This is one of the last contributions of Mollie Zook, who edited this column for many years from the time of CM’s beginning in January, 1970. It is reprinted in honor of her love and writing for children.] 



The average man is able to detect
a rattle in his car
more readily than
one in his head.

Dear Youth,

I hope your summer has been a time of growing closer to God. Many people find that busy seasons are times when they backslide spiritually. This is a fact of life, but it need not be so for us. If we find it difficult to stay close to God when our schedule gets full, we can know that something inside of us needs changing. When our only goal in life is to please our Heavenly Father, we will find ourselves spending quality time “a long while before it is yet day” communing with our Heavenly Father. The busier life gets, the more we will find ourselves needing Him to help us place our affections on things above. Busy times should spur us to call on God many times throughout the day for wisdom and direction. If our goals are divided and we are trying to serve two masters, our communion time with God will get shortchanged.

As we discussed last month, whether or not we grow spiritually during testing times depends a lot on how much we have decided to make Christ’s way of life our way of life. For some, the cost of living the life of Christ may be the loss of their own physical life. For us in America, the cost is often monetary and social. It means spending less time on the job and spending less time “hanging out with friends.” Our level of commitment to living Christ’s way of life, will influence us to care about the things that God cares about and to do the things that He would do.

This month’s question is centered on becoming the kind of person who draws others to Christ, rather than one who hinders people from turning to Christ. Choosing to take up the life of Christ puts us in a position to grow into the character of Christ. The writers for this month share some good thoughts on this subject. —EE

This Month’s
QUESTION

What are some Bible principles that we can follow that will guide us in relating to those who are indifferent spiritually? (What ways of relating encourages people to repent and turn to God and what hinders people from repenting and turning to God?)

I have a friend who comes from a conservative Mennonite family, but doesn't show much, if any, interest in spiritual things. I have struggled to know how to relate to this individual. I want to be a friend to him, because he needs friends who love God and who are hopefully bearing at least some fruit to show that they love Jesus. Yet, I have also struggled with the fact that, as much as I want to be a good example to him, unless I have a living, vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ, eventually his behavior will have more of an influence on me than I realize.

I really haven't ever talked to him much about spiritual things, mostly because I am scared and because I am not sure how he would respond to what I say. I am afraid that he would feel that I am preaching at him, and then he would be driven even further away.

I think that we as Christians have a perfect example to follow in the life of Jesus Christ. I believe Jesus used both His example and His words to show people the way to Him. Jesus didn't always preach at those He came in contact with, but He was rarely silent, either. Jesus' example was always there and was never in-

consistent with what he taught. Jesus also spent an incredible amount of time in prayer.

I think there are at least three things we can learn from Jesus' example: First, we must invest much time in prayer for the individual for whom we are concerned. Second, we must find a balance between *only preaching* at the individual and *only being an example*. Both are important, but as humans it is very easy to become unbalanced. Third, our friends should see Christ in us at all times to avoid turning them away by behavior that is not Christ-like.

I think my friend may be watching my life more than I realize and probably has been disappointed at times in how I have responded and acted in certain situations. I am thankful that God still loves me and wants to use me despite my failures.

I have not done well at all in being a witness for Christ, but with His help, I want to grow in this very important aspect of Kingdom building.

Jared Mast, Mountain View, AR



There are people whose life demands that you follow Christ, and it makes those around them feel guilty if they don't. There are others whose

life draws you to pursue Christ. The water of life overflows into your life and your thirsty soul gets a taste of the real thirst quencher.

Like Mary in John 12—look at her act of worship to Christ. People hated her for it. Yet the aroma “filled the house.” Her act of worship was offensive to those who hadn’t experienced forgiveness. It exposed them.

But this is the kind of worship/passion which will expose the lukewarm person’s heart. We as Christians need to be motivated because of grace, not because of having to do something.

And then in turn, be an instrument to show the world around us of the light within and the opportunity that is being offered to everyone.

Renita Friesen, Grandview, TX

• • • • •

I think that we should always live so that people can tell by our actions that we are believers. Colossians 3:17 says, “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” We should be so full of the love of God in our life that when we relate with unbelievers they just can’t stand to not have this joy in their lives as well. I believe that unbelievers watch how we respond to people around us and that can often make a big difference in help-

ing them turn to God. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.”

Randall Mast, Nappanee, IN

• • • • •

I believe that we need to deeply care for their souls if we expect to make a difference in the lives of those who are struggling. We need to pray and fast fervently, and then talk with them when the Spirit urges us to do so. Though we need to be honest with them, we will not likely win them by condemning them or preaching to them. It will take gentle reminders, sometimes in notes, occasionally in person, to tell them that we still care about them and that we are concerned about their eternal destination. Take time to talk about their lives; be interested in them.

If we are filled with the joy following obedience to Christ, it will serve as a reminding twinge of the void they are experiencing. Live a consistent life! Make Christianity attractive by considering Christ’s call to obedience a privilege.

Leona Beiler, Gap, PA

• • • • •

In Revelation 3:14-22, we read about the lukewarm church in Laodicea. Jesus confronted them by

saying to the angel of their church that they were not hot or cold.

I believe that sometimes Jesus wants us to confront spiritually indifferent people and warn them.

It would be a hindrance if we would confront such people while we have a plank in our own eye. (Matthew 7:3-5)

Rudy Koop, Spanish Lookout, Belize

Next Month's
QUESTION

Do you ever wish you could say something to the parents and grandparents of your generation but don't know how to do it? This is your opportunity. If you have a request, plea, or some expression of thanks to make to all the adults who read *Calvary Messenger*, please send it to me by October 20.



*Happiness is . . .
a healthy mental attitude,
a grateful spirit,
a clear conscience,
and a heart full of love.*

THOUGHT GEMS

Advertising often tells us what luxuries we can do without.

• • • • •

Children are natural mimics; they act like their parents in spite of every effort to teach them good manners.

• • • • •

He was so mean he sent a hypochondriac a get-well card.

• • • • •

The high cost of being sick is enough to make you sick.

• • • • •

The human mind was intended to be a storehouse, not a wastebasket.

• • • • •

The narrower the mind, the broader the statement.

• • • • •

Temptation seldom breaks your door down; it quietly and cunningly enters the open portals of your mind.

• • • • •

For every noble act of kindness there seems to be an opposing word of criticism.

• • • • •

You can't have everything; where would you put it?

• • • • •

God made mankind. Sin made him evil.

(USPS 767-160)
Calvary Messenger
2673 Township Rd. 421
Sugarcreek, OH 44681

Periodicals