



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

Galatians 6:14

MARCH 2016

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March 2016

Purpose of Calvary Messenger is:

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

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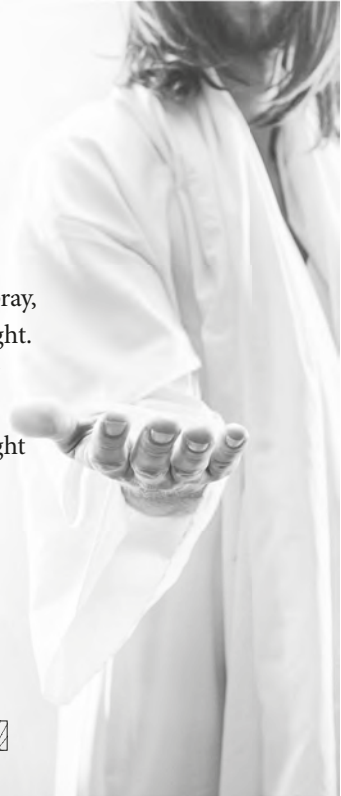
Rising After I Fall

Jordana Graber, age 15, Bastrop, TX

Upon my face, I've fallen in the sand.
 My heart and spirit lay in shattered cuts.
 My garb of pride is rent—a broken band.
 And I am scared to get back up and stand.
 For fear I'll fall back in the ruts.
 I'm needy, at the mercy of Your hand.

Please wash and cleanse me white as snow, I pray,
 And make my broken bones rejoice this night.
 Oh, leave me not; but by my side come stay
 For to salvation You're the only way.
 Then blot my falls and failures; give me might
 And pluck to rise when in the dust I lay.

I know that You don't highly prize my all
 Of worldly wealth or time or fighting force.
 You want my broken spirit without pall.
 So God, I humbly bring it at Your call
 And fully trust that You shall now endorse
 My gift and help me *rise after I fall.* 



Easter

Daniel Kauffman (1865-1944)

Editorial in Gospel, Herald, April 9, 1914.

We are not deceived with the idea that the celebration of Easter is a custom handed down to us by the apostles. There is no record that the apostles kept any festivals outside of those authorized by Jesus Christ. In the language of Chrysostom, the early church fathers were inclined to think that “the whole of time is a festival unto Christians because of the excellency of the good things which they have been given.” In the language of another, “The apostles had no thought of appointing festival days, but of promoting a life of blamelessness and piety.” The fact is fairly well established that this great festival was of heathen origin, but that the Christian Church early seized the opportunity of turning it to good account by keeping the day in memory of the resurrection of Jesus.

But we do not condemn the keeping of the day in sacred memory of the risen Christ. In fact, we are glad that Christendom arose and changed this event from a heathen festival to a day of thanksgiving and joy because our Savior rose again, and opened the way out of the dismal grave. It is a most opportune time to impress the mind with the importance of an event

which should never be forgotten. Meditating upon that eventful time when apparent defeat was turned into glorious victory, our minds are carried forward to that still more glorious time when grave and sea will give up their dead and all the blood-bought sons and daughters of God will meet the Lord to be forever with Him.

Our only regret is that Christendom did not make a complete conquest when the day was claimed for God. Like the children of Israel we have left some Amalekites and Philistines alive, and these seem to be gaining ground on us. Why these “Easter rabbits” and colored eggs and dress displays and “social functions” and other follies? Pleasure, do you say? Why more pleasure in these things at this time when all the world should be rejoicing over the Lord’s triumph over death and hell than at other times? Is it not a fact that as these things are given prominence, the real joys arising from the fact of the resurrection are dimmed and the great lesson of Easter is lost?


There lies before us a series of opportunities which we should be glad to improve. “Passion week”

should not be remembered at all unless it is remembered in a way that God is thereby glorified and the souls of people enriched with His grace. It is a most excellent time to meditate upon Jesus as the model Man, upon Christ as the anointed of the Lord, upon the crucifixion as the means for our deliverance, upon the resurrection as the glorious triumph of Christ in behalf of the Church. How opportune the time, then, when “Good Friday” comes, to walk reverently to the house of the Lord and there worship Him, in loving sympathy with Him who suffered so much for our sakes, in grateful remembrance of Him who lifted the shadow of death and purchased us with His own precious blood. That was a time of inexpressible sadness—and we fear that many who profess the name of Jesus are not in close enough sympathy with that phase of the Christian life to share in the triumph that is to follow. It has well been said that there is no way to the throne except by way of the cross. A general turning out to the house of the Lord on Good Friday to worship God “in spirit and in truth” would mean an enriched experience for the Christian Church. Another opportunity that none should miss, if possible, is the spiritual uplift afforded by the services at the house of the Lord on Easter Sunday. The more we enter into the spirit of triumph in Christ as we meditate upon this event of surpassing interest and importance, the more fully we are prepared to live the overcoming life.

We understand that we should not make too much of the **day** [itself]. Each day is alike sacred before God. There is no heaven-approved sanctity to surround such days with a halo of glory (making idols of them) while the rest of the time may be spent in sinful indulgence. One of the important facts that we should never forget is that religion is not superstition. All that we claim for such days as Christmas, Easter, etc., is that circumstances have made them times of great opportunity which Christian people will be wise to use to the glory of God and the strengthening of His cause among men. With a prayer to God that He may so direct that we will at all times make the best possible use of our opportunities, with hearts filled to overflowing joy and gratefulness that Christ made it possible for us to look with hope beyond the grave, let our praises ring out to the bountiful Giver of all good and the coming Easter day, marked by a real, spiritual, soul-refreshing service in all our churches.

“As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

[It is gratifying to find this 1914 writing from Stalwart Daniel Kauffman, We realize that things do change in 102 years. Not all change brings spiritual progress. Only faithfulness to Him who is the Truth that brings real life to those who embrace His abundant life.

-PLMJ 

Announcements

The Amish Mennonite Historical Association is seeking original hard copy newsletters of significance to our history. We would like to scan and bind complete sets of newsletters and make them available at the archive. If you have even a partial collection of any of the following, please consider donating it or leaving it for photocopying to AMHA. We have many recent issues, the issues sought are in parentheses.

- Amish-Mennonite Aid (pre-July 2004)
- Australian Christian Brotherhood (pre-summer 2004)
- Beside the Still Waters (Vol. 1 only)
- Christian Mission Charities/Jesus to the Iron Curtain [David Bontrager] (pre-June 2013)
- Christian Printing Mission periodicals [William McGrath] (all)
- Faith Mission Home (pre-Jan. 2009)
- Harvesting, of the PA and neighboring Beachy churches.
- Hillcrest Home (pre-Apr. 2005)
- Master's International Ministries (pre-Apr. 2008)
- Mountain View Nursing Home (pre-Nov. 2004)
- Penn Valley Christian Retreat (1992-93)
- Plain Talk, of the Kansas Beachy churches

Contact AMHA archivist Cory Anderson at cory@beachyam.org / 717-330-1766



Lord willing, the Beachy Amish Ministers Meetings are to be held in Lancaster County at Ridgeview Mennonite Church, 3723 Ridge Road, Gordonville, PA 17529, on April 5-7, 2016.

Our theme is taken from Psalm 78, "That the Generations to Come Might Know."

Lodging and Transportation: Dave Yoder, 717-682-0351

Business Session Slot: Nathan Fisher, 717-734-2489, natruthfisher@gmail.com

Registration: Floyd Miller, 620-640-1068, baministers@gmail.com

Three simple steps to the registration process that we would like to make you aware of:

Step 1. Personal information update:

In the first part of February, you will have received an email with our personal information. Please respond promptly with our confirmation or corrections.

Step 2. Bishop Committee Nomination:

By the middle of February, you will have received an email requesting your nomination for the Bishop Committee. Your prompt reply is appreciated.

Step 3. Registration for Attendance:

In the first part of March, you will receive an email that includes the meetings brochure as well as requesting information regarding lodging, shuttle service, child care, dietary needs, and attendance at meals.

Requests for other needs, such as display tables, committee meeting rooms, etc., can be arranged at any time in the process.

Matthew Peachey
717-242-1165



11th Annual Anabaptist Identity Conference

Who are we?

To be held in Holmes County, Ohio March 10, 11, 12, 2016, Lord Willing at the Heritage Community Center (3558 US 62, between Berlin & Winesburg) Thursday afternoon & evening, Friday all day, Saturday forenoon).

Speakers: David Bercot (PA), David Bontrager (IN), John D. Martin (PA), Dean Taylor (MN), Chester Weaver (IN), and others.

Coordinators: Nathan and Matthias Overholt with The Christian Hymnary Publishers, P.O. Box 7159, Sarasota, FL 34278.

Telephone: 941-373-9351 or 941-954-2399

Email: hsofgrace6550@yahoo.com



Re: The Law: Holy, Just and Good, Jan., 2016

I was blessed and encouraged by this editorial. It was like a breath of fresh air. There is so much emphasis today on the New Testament with the Old Testament almost relegated to the trash heap.

In many, many circles the Ten Commandments are no longer ten but nine commandments. The keeping of the Sabbath (the Lord's Day) is no longer convenient and therefore excuses are made for not keeping it.

We have an expression today if something is unchangeable that it is "set in concrete" or "set in stone." Is that why God wrote the Ten Commandments in stone with His own finger? They are set in stone and are for all time and all people.

God bless,
Perry Beachy
Winfield, PA

• • • • •

This made reference to observing the Sabbath and I am in full agreement with [Harold Martin]

on observing The Lord's Day. The application of the Sabbath principle by the early church is also instructive.

The foundation for the Sabbath principle is important. Bro. Martin is quoted: "The fourth commandment is just as binding today as it ever was in the mind of God." A better way of saying that might be that the fourth commandment pointed to the Sabbath principle, but was a specific application for the Israelites before Christ fulfilled the law. If we were to follow the fourth commandment rather than the principle it was based on, should we not celebrate a day of rest on Saturday? I suggest that the OT law (including the Decalogue) was good but incomplete, directing the Israelites forward to the full essence of the character of God as exemplified and taught by Christ Jesus.

I propose that it would be better to look throughout Scripture, especially in the New Testament, for principles related to the Sabbath rather than basing it

primarily on the Decalogue. We will be well served if we correctly understand the basis for our Lord's Day observance.

Luke Nisly
Oswego, KS

• • • • •

Re: The Elephant Called Sports, Dec., 2015.

I appreciate what Gideon Yutzky writes about mixed-gender sports. I observed more than once among the Kekchi people of Guatemala that the neighborhood boys play soccer and have never seen the girls help them. This is one of a number of behavioral customs that help preserve a civilization for many centuries. Appropriate propriety in this matter can help maintain a proper reserve and respect.

Clayton Weaver
Bastrop, TX

• • • • •

Re: "It's Complicated," Jan., 2016.

As parents and grandparents of the present day generation, it is easy for us to focus on the positive changes we see in dating and courting relationships, especially in contrast to that which we experienced in the 70's.

For one thing, giving more long-term thought and prayer before entering a dating relationship. Secondly, asking the father of the girl first (many of us did not), which we need to hand to our young men.

However, I believe Bro. Doug Kauffman is onto something that warrants our attention. *Over-correction* generally brings less than desirable results also when driving on the highway!

A few questions for us to consider:

- Have we raised the bar so high that some of our young men see a relationship as unattainable, or at best as "complicated"?
- Rather than being critical, should we hear this young man's heart and possibly assume some of the responsibility?
- Are we doing our young men of upper 20's and lower 30's a disservice by reminding them that it's time for them to get moving and find a potential marriage partner?
- Would another method of mentoring and encouragement be a more acceptable remedy?

Delmar Bontrager
Wellman, IA



Do Dogs Go To Heaven?

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

We always thought the way to heaven is open and who goes there at death is clear. Now it seems as though the broad road leads to the place of bliss and the narrow road leads to hell, according to some major religious bodies. Confusion can lead to spiritual blindness.

A few months ago the Catholic pope declared himself in support of gays, unmarried couples living together, same-sex marriage, and evolution. Previously, the popes had affirmed themselves as being infallible in their papal pronouncements and were clearly against all of the above. Now what?

Pope Francis is also reported to have cited biblical passages to say that animals can go to heaven. This was indicated when he met a little boy in St. Peter's Square whose dog had died. Pope Francis tried to console the boy saying, "One day we will see our animals again in the eternity of Christ. Paradise is open to all of God's creatures."

Immediately the question came up whether dogs have souls. Charles

Camosy, author and professor of Christian ethics at Fordham University said it re-opens the debate whether or not animals have souls, suffer, and go to heaven. To this he said, "Absolutely."

There are some one billion Catholics worldwide. Their current pope has no shortage of comments that shock his people with extremely liberal views, whether one looks at them from a theological standpoint, or on a moral basis, or even from a political perspective. With such unorthodox views, why be a Catholic? Will it cause Catholics to leave their church? Or will it be easier than ever for people to move over to an ever larger Catholic tent?

These issues can take away time and energy from God's Word and its plain doctrine in defending error outside the parameters of Divine Truth. The focus turns to spinning wheels in the mire of doctrines of devils.

If dogs have souls, would they then be obliged to make moral choices? Moral choices range from good to bad. Do dogs go to hell because of wrong moral choices? Will Catholic priests be paid to pray bad Catholic

dogs out of purgatory?

God had designated clean and unclean categories for animals. Dogs are unclean. So it is not determined by those criteria as to which animals go to heaven. If animals go to heaven, what about birds and insects? The whole concept is preposterous and beyond vanity.

In the new heaven and the new earth, would God have need of animals there as representations of the past earth? We know it will be a new place of peace and righteousness. It will be filled with the glory of God. The newness of our personhood will match the personhood of God and Jesus Christ with a recognizable identity and presence.

We can comprehend by Scriptural allowance for representations of earth being there, but in no way do we see animals going to heaven. Nor can we allow the desire by some again to see their favorite family dog or cat or parrot or monkey in heaven. Biblical silence on the matter should not be taken as allowance for any man to open such speculation—whether he be slave or pope.

Back to basics—in the divine record of Cod's creation before God created man, the Bible states nine times in Genesis 1, "And God said." Upon that spoken word the origin of all things occurred—instantly. Then for the eighth time, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and 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, in the image of God created he them; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:26,27). Beautiful isn't it? Superbly marvelous!

Genesis 2 adds detail to the creation of man. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground..." The specifics even here are not detailed about the origin of man. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground..." By God's own formation, He gave man a physical body, and created him in His own image. Man is in a distinct and separate class, very much apart from animals— dogs, cats and chimpanzees—you name it. The distinctions are clear—without any crossovers.

God breathed into man's physical, lifeless body the distinctive "breath of life." That breath of life constitutes a part *from God Himself*, with the very element of eternity in it. That breath is passed to all mankind, first of all in the blood of the fetus. Man became a living soul, along with moral choices of right and wrong and accountability for the same.

Dr. M. R. Dehaan says, in *The Chemistry of the Blood*, that there is no blood passed from the mother to the fetus. The blood's origin comes from the male sperm. This amazing fact is foundational to Jesus being born

of a virgin, conceived in her womb by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. Thus our Lord is truly the Son of God, born with the full range of human characteristics, and is God's only begotten Son.

In all of mankind, this breath of life has as its source in none other than God Himself. That in itself is an amazing fact, both by its design and also by its implications. When a baby is born, that breath of life is immediately needed, from its being sustained by the mother through the umbilical cord, to the lungs gasping for air—for life-giving oxygen. No wonder newborns cry.

At death, the lungs cease to process air and the body dies. Then the soul passes on to God who gave it. Our text says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

The word "became" is of interest. It means that this body, now endued with breath and hence, life, constitutes a living soul, both in its origin and its duration eternally. This newly-created entity is distinct from all animals, for it bears the image of God *and* the very breath of God. The physical form *and* the breath are two components given only to man.

The Bible says very pointedly, "Then shall the dust (body) return to the earth as it was (originally); and the spirit shall return unto God who gave

it" (Ecc. 12:7). The spirit and soul are inseparable. This cannot be said for dogs or any other animals. This verse dovetails with numerous Bible passages to affirm the eternal aspect of life endued by *breath from God*. When breath ceases in the body, the body dies. But the soul and spirit of man appears before God, being given a new body conducive to eternal habitation and destination—either in heaven or hell. It is there, then, where accountability is required.

To this earth life God added moral choices. First of all, there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eating that forbidden fruit was a clear trespass of God's prohibition. Eating of it only once was too much and too late. Thus sin entered into the world and death by sin. Adam and Eve died in their personal consciousness to God and their spirit was cut off from God. God didn't die and they knew it. Therefore they tried to hide from God. Animals have no such consciousness.

Nor do dogs have a conscience, although they do have instincts. Instincts and conscience are vastly different from each other. Moral choices relate to conscience, but do not relate to instinct native to animals.

Moral choices have to do with courts of law and the final court before God after death. Imagine a dog in court being interrogated. The judge asks the dog a question, prods him a little, and the dog says, "Arf." Is that a yes or no? No one knows.

Some vain and sinful men have said at life's end they will "die like a dog," meaning, "no life after death," no court appearances before God, no heaven or hell. Nothing. A total obliteration of life into nothingness. Not true. All men will awaken in eternal realities of either heaven or hell. God has put eternity into the hearts of humans.

The Bottom Line is to once again consider the words of the Bible given in simple, understandable terms. In Matthew 7, Jesus comes to the close of His Sermon on the Mount—the most profound sermon ever given. In verses 13 and 14, He speaks of two ways, In verses 15-20, there are two trees. In verses 21 to 23, He highlights two professions. In the conclusion, Jesus states two foundations (v. 24-27). All of these are based on human choices—

only two. It comes down to one choice with only two possibilities. It is directed to every man, woman and child who ever lived on the earth. Animals, birds, and insects are excluded from making moral choices and from eternal habitation. They were created for the earth and return to earth's dust at death.

"Enter ye in at the strait (narrow) gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13,14).

"And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22).



God is Still on the Throne!

Nat Yoder, Santiago, Costa Rica

Some time ago the brethren in Santiago, Costa Rica, acted on a vision to distribute 101 Favorite Bible Stories in schools in southern Costa Rica. Christian Aid Ministries donated the books and Mt. Zion Literature facilitated the shipping to Costa Rica. This article is reprinted from the December, 2015, MZL Newsletter, by permission.

Let me start by telling everyone I have a new respect for Jesus feeding the five thousand. When 125 cartons of *101 Favorite Bible Stories* arrived on two pallets, it

didn't look like a big deal. But loading over 500 books at a time into your car and going from classroom to classroom giving little speeches and personally handing books to 5,000

children is a lot of work.

We began by dividing the youth girls of our church into two groups which alternated each week. Leaving our place at 7 A.M., we could pass out around 600 books per day. At first everything went smoothly. I would tell the guard at the school gate what we were doing, and he would take us to the school director's office.

On our second week of distribution we met the first school director who wouldn't let us in without a permit from the regional school director (her superior). I was pretty sure this was an excuse. The director claimed she could lose her job by letting us in without a permit, and she wasn't about to have that happen.

On our third week we met another director who would not let us in. He was adamant that what we were doing was illegal and that we would get into trouble for it. I felt a little troubled, but at the same time I couldn't understand why a dozen or more schools had already allowed us in if it is that serious.

I have a good friend who is a district director, so I decided to consult him about our "illegal book distribution." He responded, "Yes, Nat, what you are doing isn't right. You really need a special permit from the regional director."

A month passed. Phone calls yielded no permit. Every now and then I would remember those stacks

of books in the warehouse and my stomach would ball up at the thought of not getting anywhere. Two months of precious time passed. I remember crying out a couple of times, "God, what is Costa Rica coming to that we have so much difficulty even giving your Word away?"

I decided to try a different contact. Through a friend of a friend I found out about another director at a larger school who was willing to help me. Olivier agreed to arrange a meeting with the regional director. The regional director told us he could not give us a written permit, but neither would he deny us the privilege of visiting individual schools. If the school director gave us permission, he would respect their decision.

Thank You, Jesus! While it wasn't the permit we were hoping for, at least we could continue our operation!

We had started distribution in our local communities, but since Olivier was anxious for us to visit his school, I decided to deliver to his school next. We visited his school on a Friday before a midterm vacation for all public schools in Costa Rica. It took a couple of hours to distribute the books to everybody in his school since there were over 200 children.

When we were ready to leave, I returned to Olivier's office to thank him again. As I shook hands and wished him a happy school vacation, he asked if I had a minute for him.

He pulled out a chair for me and said, “You wished me a happy vacation but I am not happy. I don’t know what I am going to do. I am expecting my wife to divorce me any day, and I would like to talk to you about it.” Since we needed to get to another school, I arranged to meet him at a coffee shop the next day.

The next morning, we met at 7 o’clock and talked until after noon. The poor man cried and shared his terrible problems with anger. He was fearful he might kill himself, or someone else in an angry moment.

I said, “Olivier, what I am about to say is intense and to the point, but it’s what I sense God laying on my heart. The type of anger you are describing is often a symptom of a deeper problem that stems from a heart of iniquity. Are you free from immorality?”

There was a very quiet moment and I was not sure what would happen next. Either a dam was going to break, or he was going to clam up and deny. Then he began shaking and the tears began to flow. “Nat,” he said, “I am a big time failure. I have been bound by immorality for as long as I can remember.”

He continued, “I don’t know why I am sharing this. In the last few months I have considered asking for a meeting with some pastors in town, but I never did. For some reason I sensed they are living just

like me! I felt like they had nothing to offer me!”

By then I was crying too as I began to understand that God had ordained the delays and difficulties we had been through to get the books distributed. God had arranged the circumstances and the timing to the perfect day and hour for me to meet with Olivier.

After that meeting with Olivier, the distribution went like a breeze. Several large schools contacted me to ask us to come to their school next. Several schools were excited to the point of wanting to serve us lunch! It appears doors are opening up to distribute 101’s to all the public schools in southern Costa Rica.

As for Olivier, I have mentored him for several months. He has repented from his immoral life and has cut ties with lascivious groups. He is taking responsibility in his home and school. He now understands that he is the spiritual covering and protection of his family and the school. He used to spend hours during the night calming his four-year-old daughter from her bad dreams, but now he reads a chapter to her each evening from *101 Favorite Bible Stories*. She brings the book to him at bedtime and says, “Daddy, every night that you read from this little book, I don’t have to worry about having nightmares!”

Friends, God is still on the throne!



marriages

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


Hershberger-Miller

Bro. Randy Joel, Harrison, AR, son of Lyndon and Lenora Hershberger, and Sis. Diana Pauline, daughter of Marvin and Neva Miller, Grove City, MN, at Evangelical Free Church for Believers Fellowship Church, on January 2, 2016, by Melvin Beiler.

Jantzi-Jantzi

Correction: **Bro. Dean Jantzi**, Wellesley, ON and Sis. **Heidi Charlene Jantzi**, Brunner, ON, were married on July 4, 2015.

Yoder-Kensinger

Bro. Calvin, Jr., son of Calvin and Naomi Yoder, Moulton, AL, and Sis. Abigail, daughter of Daniel and Louise Kensinger, Minerva, OH, on August 15, 2015, at First Christian Church for Minerva Christian Fellowship by Raymond Yoder. 



cradle roll

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

Beiler, Marvin and Lydianne (Stoltzfus), Dundee, NY, third child, second daughter, Abigail Joyce, Dec. 9, 2015.

Byler, Daniel and Julia (Erb), Monkton, ON, sixth child, fourth son, Michael Lavon, Jan. 16, 2016.

Byler, Joel and Veronica (Weaver), Ripley, OH, third child, first daughter, Chloe Aleah, Jan. 5, 2016.

Byler, Kenneth and Katie (Knepp), Whiteville, TN, third child and daughter, Ashlyn Danielle, Nov. 23, 2015.

Chupp, Daniel and Jana (Miller), Paynesville, MN, second child and son, Daniel Jeremiah, Jan. 15, 2016.

Gerber, Glen and Karen (Wagler), Gadshill, ON, seventh child, fourth daughter, Brooklyn Joy, Jan. 2, 2016.

Gingerich, Keith and Janelle (Schrock), Bloomfield, MO, first child and daughter, Kayla Marie, Jan. 6, 2016.

Hunsberger, Conrad and Julia (Miller), Newcomerstown, OH, third child, first son, Carson James, Dec. 25, 2015.

Kauffman, Arlyn and Sue (Wagler), Leon, IA, third and fourth children (twins), third son, first daughter, Elijah Simon and Eden Joy, Dec. 17, 2015.

Kauffman, Daryl and Marlene (Yoder), Belleville, PA, second child, first daughter, Anya Danelle, Jan. 11, 2016.

Knepp, Jerald and Jennifer (Stoltzfus), Whiteville, TN, third child, first son, Tanner Layne, Dec. 6, 2015.

Knepp, Jeremy and Krista (Stoltzfus), Whiteville, TN, first child and son, Andre Ivan, Dec. 26, 2015.

Lengacher, Sheldon and Alisa (Miller), Lexington, IN, third child and daughter, Autumn Joy, Dec. 3, 2015.

Martin, Jonathan and Lavonna (Yoder), Free Union, VA, fifth child, second daughter, Natalia Grace, Dec. 30, 2015.

Miller, Dale and Myra (Hershberger), Uniontown, OH, fourth child, second son, Brandon Reece, Oct. 28, 2015.

Mullet, Jeff and Denise (Swartzentruber), Newcomerstown, OH, sixth child, fourth daughter, Krista Sue, Nov. 25, 2015.

Overholt, Stephen and Jairia (Miller), Abbeville, SC, fourth child, second daughter, Lauren Faith, Nov. 14, 2015

Reynolds, David and Rhoda (Beachy), Oskaloosa, KS, first child and daughter, Malena Faith, Dec. 14, 2015.

Showalter, Weston and Heidi (Miller), Baltic, OH, third child and daughter, Elena Damaris, Jan. 14, 2016.

Spratt, Brian and Mia (Thompson), Plain City, OH, first child and daughter, Hannah Lynette, Jan. 6, 2016.

Stoltzfus, Justin and Kendra (Beachy), Laurelville, OH, third child, first son, Theodore Steele, Jan. 28, 2016.


Swartzentruber, Nolan and Heidi (Barkman), Abbeville, SC, first child and son, Liam Cole, Nov. 13, 2015.

Swarey, Maynard and Cynthia (Yoder), Free Union, VA, fifth child, third son, Caleb Andrew, Jan. 4, 2016.

Troyer, Luke and Mary Ellen (Swarey), Auburn, KY, second child and son, Nicolas John, Oct. 27, 2015.

Troyer, John Jr. and Lois (Whitt), Russellville, OH, second child, first daughter, Olivia Noelle, Dec. 21, 2015.

Yoder, Matthew and Laura Marie (Schlabach), Mogadgore, OH, second child, first daughter, Hadiya Shae, Oct. 15, 2015.

Yutzy, Douglas and Elizabeth (Nissley), Haven, KS, second child, first daughter, Amber Brooke, Dec. 15, 2015. 


ordinations

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

Bro. Joel Gingerich, 43, (wife, Dorcas Sommers), of Minerva, OH, was called by God through the voice of the church and ordained as bishop of Minerva Christian Fellowship, on Oct. 11, 2015. Pre-ordination messages were given by Bobby Miller, Newcomerstown, OH. The charge was given by Perry Troyer, assisted by Paul Weaver, Bobby Miller, and Johnny Miller.

Bro. Allen Graber, 26, (wife

Rosa Yoder), of Bloomfield, IN, was ordained as deacon at Believers Fellowship Church, Worthington, IN, on Dec. 15, 2015. Preordination messages were given by Mark Miller, Unionville, MO. The charge was given by David Nissley, assisted by Marvin Yoder and Paul Chupp. David Yoder was also in the lot.

Bro. Nathan Zook, 26, (wife Karida Stoltzfus), was ordained as minister at Cornerstone Mennonite Church, Burgettstown, PA, on Oct. 4, 2015. The charge was given by Wayne Lapp, following preordination messages by Ben Stoltzfus. Adin Stoltzfoos was also in the lot. 

obituaries

Beachy, Barbara Ellen (Yoder), 73, died, after a bout of a few weeks with cancer, on Jan. 13, 2016, at Leon, Iowa. She was born at Thomas, OK, on Jan. 27, 1942, daughter of the late Tobe J. and Millie N. (Yoder) Yoder.

She was a member of Leon Salem Mennonite Church.

On April 20, 1961, she was married to David Beachy. He survives. Also surviving are four daughters: Luane (Don) Yoder, Hutchinson, KS; Lanita (Aaron) Yoder, Hutchinson, KS; Loretta (Brian) Stutzman, Leon; and Diane (Brandon) VanLaar, Decatur, IA., and nine grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a brother, Calvin.

The funeral was held at Leon Salem Mennonite, on Jan. 16, with Monroe Gingerich and Truman Yoder serving. The graveside service and burial were on Jan. 17 in the Amish Cemetery, in Anderson County, at Mont Ida, KS.

Erb, Allan, 94, of Wellesley, ON, died Jan. 22, 2016. He was born in Wellesley Twp, August 22, 1921, son of the late Daniel S. and Nancy (Gerber) Erb.

Daniel was a faithful member of Cedar Grove Amish Mennonite Church. His faithful example will be greatly missed.

On Oct. 22, 1947, he was married to Norma Zehr. He leaves to mourn his departure three sons, David and wife Eva, Wellesley; John and wife Shelley, Blyth; Allan and wife Linda, Wellesley; two daughters, Darlene and husband Louis Byler, Milverton; and Mary Ellen and husband James Ropp, Monkton; 32 grandchildren and 43 great grandchildren. Allan was predeceased by a daughter, Deborah in 2010, and one grandson Nathaniel Erb, who died in infancy.

Allan was the last surviving member of his family, being predeceased by his siblings: Elmer and wife Vera, John and wife Frieda, Cornelius and wives Emma and Katie, Laura and husband Harvey Nafziger, Norman and wife Amanda, Dan and wife Doris, and brother-in-law, Mervin Kropf. Others preceding him in death were sisters-in-law, Laurene and husband Norman Jantzi and Mary Zehr in infancy.

The funeral was held on Jan. 25, with Larry Ropp, Tim Gerber, and John Gerber serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.


Jantzi, Katie (Jantzi), 92, of New Hamburg, ON, died Dec. 30, 2015. She was born in Mornington Twp, May 18, 1923, daughter of the late Menno and Susan (Nafziger) Jantzi.

She was a faithful member of Cedar Grove Amish Mennonite church.

On May 30, 1951, she was married to Aaron Jantzi. He died Jan. 4, 2015. Survivors include two sons: Bruce (and

wife Ruthann), Ukraine, Russia; Robert (and wife Anne), Wellesley; and four daughters: Marilyn (and husband David) Gerber, Millbank; Kathy (and husband Murray) Gerber, Wellesley; Sandra, Wellesley; and Susan and (husband) Larry Ropp, Lucknow; 25 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren, her sister, Laurene (and husband, Floyd Kuepfer); sisters-in-law, Elmina (the late Elmer N. Jantzi), Katie Wagler (the late Aaron N. Jantzi and the late Solomon Wagler); Mary (the late Leonard N. Jantzi), Nancy, and husband Amos Martin, and Emma, and husband Nick Gerber.

She was predeceased by brothers, sister, and sisters-in-law: Samuel N. and Katie Jantzi, Claytus N. and Fanny Jantzi, Ezra N. and Katie Jantzi, Nicholas N. and Mary Jantzi, Norman N. and Laurene Jantzi, Amanda and Emmanuel Gerber, Harvey N. and Katie Jantzi, and also by one great granddaughter, Morgan Jantzi.

The funeral was held on Jan. 3, 2016, with Charles Jantzi and John Gerber serving. Burial was in the church cemetery. 



The January 17, 2016, meditation in *Beside the Still Waters*, was written by Melvin L. Yoder, from Gambier, Ohio. I called Brother Melvin to express my appreciation for his interesting and thoughtful contribution.

As long-time acquaintances, we exchanged a bit of catch-up information. This included his mention of preparing a section within a larger building as living quarters for Melvin and Dena in their senior years.

Melvin told me that the township in which they live has detailed zoning regulations that could not be ignored as they prepared their living area. Melvin did not complain but we know that legal regulations can sometimes seem overdone and burdensome.

The adjoining township, just a few miles from Melvin's house, has no regulations. People are free to do their own thing without legal intervention. The appearance of many properties in the second township is sometimes unkempt and trashy. It seems that the population lacks not only legal oversight, but also personal incentive to keep things orderly. As we know, some people do not do well without the benefit of oversight.

Reno County, Kansas, does not have county-wide zoning. Some people outside of the zoned area try very hard to respect principles of safety

and soundness. They seem to do well without oversight and inspection.

The church also has a justified interest in safety and soundness. It would seem ideal if this could be realized without guidance and regulation. Ideally, no regulation would be needed. But idealism should be tempered with realism.

Observation teaches us that balance is needed in this area. If regulation is needed it does not mean that more is always better. Neither does it mean that observance of regulations can substitute for a vital relationship with the Lord.

The Christian who desires a good balance of the ideal and the real would seem to be entitled to the following features of church life:

- Acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the final Judge to whom we will all give account.
- God's Word of inspiration and authority as the essential guidebook for life.
- Pastoral leadership to teach and shepherd the body of believers.
- Members who take their Christian lives seriously, recognizing the importance of fellow members.
- A church that welcomes the energy and idealism of youth.
- A church that seeks to provide a climate of stability and safety for peer-sensitive young Christians.

- A church whose leaders are careful not to sacrifice biblical authority for present expediency.

- A church that sees the value of unity for its own welfare and a watching world.

• • • • •

It is assumed that a Sunday morning offering is fairly standard throughout the network of conservative Anabaptist churches. Our Lord reminds us of the importance of giving in secret so that our giving does not become a display for human admiration. But we should not forget that God who sees in secret is very aware of how much we give and why. What may be even more important is how much we keep and why. It was a blessing to Center Church when a local bishop, Arlen Mast, recently preached a very candid message on Christian stewardship.

• • • • •

Recently a Bible school student group gave a program at Fairland, OK. A local couple, whose grandson was in the singing group, and who have an appreciation for good music and some formal training attended that event. They cite several reasons for their sincere appreciation of the program. The singing was of very good quality and clear enunciation with appropriate variation of tempo and volume. There was a sprinkling of familiar hymns. No extremely difficult numbers with words difficult to understand detracted from meaningful reflection. It occurs to me that this may have been an event

worthy of wider notice and imitation.

Sterling, Kansas, is the county seat of Rice County, the county that adjoins Reno on the north. It is about 20 miles from Partridge. The public high school there offered four showings on January 28, 29, and 30, of the Nickle Mines tragedy of 2006. While it showed no actual violence, it depicted aspects of possible outcomes of the event. It was remarkably insightful and very dramatic.

I continue to be amazed at how this example of Christian forgiveness is being noticed by many people in many places.

-DLM

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Laverne Townsend is a very personable president of one of the banks of our small town of Oswego, Kansas. One day last fall, my wife, Brenda, and I were in his office inquiring about the logistics of opening some accounts. As we were winding up our discussion, he asked if we had any more questions. Brenda did; she asked, "Why do you have a copy of *The Budget* on your desk?"

He chuckled and said he had seen *The Budget* at a local Amish home and liked it so well he decided to subscribe. I asked him how he'd feel if his name would show up in a national paper when he was missing from church on Sunday morning. He chuckled again and reported that he reads the local Amish sections and then those submissions from places

where the local Amish moved from. His summary comment was, "It's my favorite paper." Maybe I should give him a copy of *Calvary Messenger*.

• • • • •

The Thessalonian writer's comments about those that will be lost includes the phrase, "...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." I've often thought about the importance of knowing truth and of understanding truth. Somehow, I don't think I've thought as much about the importance of loving the truth. Love is a decision. We choose what we love. Our emotions may or may not always align themselves neatly with our love. But, they generally follow our directions. Hence we determine our love by the choices we make.

But what about receiving the love of the truth? When we demonstrate our love by our choices, in a sense we determine what we love. But when we receive something the initiative originates somewhere else. God certainly desires that we walk in love for the truth and He wants to produce that in each of us. I think I've not given enough thought to the idea that "accepting" the love of the truth comes from God doing what He wants in me. I've started praying that God will continue to grow in me the love of the truth and a readiness to recognize and receive that work.

Truth is found in God's settled revelation—the Scriptures. They reveal Him who said, "I am the way, the TRUTH

and the life." A loving relationship with Jesus Christ is a priceless treasure for those who are saved.

• • • • •

As the presidential campaign lurches toward its inevitable November election, I take comfort in several ideas. I am very thankful that my peace isn't tied to the results of this election.. I am thankful that my citizenship is in heaven. I'm not sure who of those vying for the position as president of the United States of America is best suited to govern. I'm not even sure if the best qualified is the one God will choose to "set up." But I'm pretty sure that in 100 years or so, the results of the election this fall won't register as being very important. May that reality stir us to a desire to pray for those in authority, commending them to God, so that His eternal purposes (which might differ from our fiscal preferences) would be accomplished.

• • • • •

The Zika virus has been garnering attention in the press these days. I hadn't heard of it until a week or so ago. It used to be pretty well confined to the tropical Americas. But health officials are concerned about its spread northward and southward. Only one to five persons infected becomes ill, and the illness isn't usually very severe. This mosquito-borne virus is seldom fatal, but there is no known cure nor effective treatment.

It is particularly troubling because of a suspected link between pregnant

women who contract the virus and subsequent birth defects for the children they bear. Health officials are also concerned about a possible link between the Zika virus and Guillian Barre syndrome. As of this writing, the Zika virus has been

reported mostly in South American and Central American countries and Mexico. Currently there are no known cases confirmed in the United States mainland, but is isn't likely to stay that way for very long.

-RJM



The Sin of Sodom

Pete Lewis, Halsey, OR

Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness...neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:49).

The destruction of Sodom is usually considered the result of gross moral decadence through a perversion that has gained widespread acceptance today. However, the verse above indicates that this moral depravity was simply a natural outcome of other sins that are often considered less despicable.

Pride is essentially the exaltation of self. It caused the downfall of Lucifer, King Saul, Nebuchadnezzar, and a host of other Bible characters. How does pride affect us? Are we *thankful* for our material blessings, our families, or knowledge of Scripture, our position in the church? Or are we *proud* of these? There is a big difference, depending on where our focus is.

Fullness of bread is something that nearly all Americans can identify with, since most suffer no lack of food. How is it with us personally in a nation where

obesity is rampant? Do we *eat to live* or *live to eat*? Temperance in appetite is a virtue, but overindulgence easily leads to the sin of gluttony.

Abundance of idleness is common among those who view food, shelter, clothing as inalienable rights, whether or not they work. This entitlement mentality is a national disgrace. Leisure and recreation are right in their proper place, but too often they become a substitute for a work ethic of honest productivity.

Are luxuries justifiable simply because we can afford them, or would a more frugal lifestyle allow us to be more generous with our natural blessings? While the surface sin of Sodom is certainly repulsive, let us beware lest the foundation of that sin is established in our own hearts through these more insidious sins.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves...”
(2 Corinthians 13:5).

[From *Beside the Still Waters*, Dec. 26, 2015. Used by permission of the writer.]



What Parents wish Teachers Knew, but Probably Never Told You

Gerald Miller, Guys Mills, PA

The past two articles in this column have been an effort to increase understanding between the teachers in our communities and the parents who send their children to our schools. This time, I want to offer perspective from a parent's perspective in an effort to come "full circle." Teachers and parents alike have things to learn from each other, and my hope is that this can facilitate win-win conversations in hopes that we can hear each other better in our working together for the good of our children.

1. Sending a child to school is one of the more personal things a parent will do in their parenting.

As parents we have worked hard in training our children. Truthfully, we often feel like we have failed, and wonder if our children will actually turn out to be who we envision them to be. We recognize that the strengths we as parents bring are likely evident at school. It is disconcerting, though, how our weaknesses are even more acutely evident and noticed. We

know that this puts a burden on teachers, and we regret that. We also fight the knee jerk reaction of being embarrassed by some of the antics that children pull off. At the same time, we really do want to know how our children relate to their teachers, to each other, where they are a blessing, and where they desperately need to work on their personal character issues.

2. Not all children work at the same speed or have the same aptitude.

As parents, we constantly experience the beauty of the uniqueness of our children. What worked with our first child, didn't for the second child. What one child is gifted at, the next one can hardly manage. What one child is interested in, the next may have no interest in, whatsoever. We love it when teachers recognize the unique gifts, abilities, and interests a child has. This makes us feel cared for as parents.

It also does us a lot of good when teachers recognize that along with unique gifts and callings in life, the

rate at which work is accomplished varies greatly. If this can be considered in the work load it keeps the slower child in good spirits. We know that the classroom has as many unique features as there are students, and we don't expect miracles or an exorbitant amount of time spent individualizing school work. A recognition of these dynamics and adequate communication goes a long way.

Oh, and one other thing: Projects that you assign (including group work) often allows our children to express some of their creativity. Some children are more academic, and others are more hands on. Appropriately planned projects address some of the diversity, and our children love talking about what they learn as they create posters, give a report, or do a lab.

3. Because a sibling is a certain kind of student doesn't mean the child in your classroom will be a duplicate.

This is, of course, related to the previous idea. As parents, we don't mind references to siblings at all. As husbands and wives, we talk about this as well. But it feels frustrating if a child is put in the same box as a sibling who is very different. It makes us wonder if the current student will actually have what they need that is best for them. Some of our children (especially younger children) have to live in the shadows of the

accomplishments, positive character, and model behavior of their older brother or sister. The same shadows can be cast on younger siblings when the older child is not a model of good behavior or character. Children keenly feel even the unspoken comparisons.

4. We love communication with teachers.

We think sometimes teachers are a bit afraid to talk with us about our children. We know it has to be difficult to talk with us, but we really do like to know what is happening with our children at school. We prefer maintenance over crisis management, and when things get to a point of great difficulty we sometimes wish we would have known about what was going on earlier in order to work at solving smaller problems rather than larger problems that look overwhelming.

We don't always respond very well when you come to us about something negative, but don't let that stop you. We like it when there is a larger problem if you come to the fathers first. Don't ignore the mothers, but allow fathers to step up and take responsibility.

And finally, when there is a difficulty, make sure you remember the positive aspects of our children. It helps us cope better with the negative things. Acknowledging specifically good things about a child does a lot for a parent's heart, and particularly a mother's heart.

5. Remember that our children are our most precious assets.


As parents, we are heavily invested in our children. And yes, the cares of life do tend to bring complacency in our lives and it might seem like we don't care about our children. Could we just remind you that we do care a lot? This is one of the reasons that if the school has a culture of mockery among students, or cynicism from teachers, or harsh words expressed in communication that parents hackles are raised. We know that "stuff happens." But it does us a lot of good to realize that you care about the spirit and heart of a child, and not just their mind. Our children are way more sensitive to these things than most have any idea about. And yes, there are times when our children are in tears over what other classmates or a teacher has said. We know that this is part of life, but we also want our children to be in a safe environment. The words that are spoken have much to do with how our children feel about school. And as you well know, it is a lie that "sticks and stones may break our bones, but words can never hurt us." We want to stay committed to speaking well of the school and making sure that our words as a family are words of life and not of death.

6. We really desire the input and assistance of the community in the training of our children. That is why we send our children to school.

We know that we don't know as

much about the school as we ought. And we aren't necessarily educators and we don't live in the school room as you seemingly do (God bless you, every one of you!). In other words, we sometimes appear clueless because we are. Don't forget, though, we also care deeply about our children and their education. A good education is an amazing gift for the future of our children, one that many in the world are unable to experience. We so much appreciate the sacrifices you make on behalf of our children, and know you could do other things vocationally. We are thrilled when our children experience competent teachers who love what they do.

You see, we send our children to school precisely because we need the input, direction, and assistance that can come from school life in our community. We desire that our children are brought up and trained in the values of the Kingdom of God as expressed in a local body of believers, and not the values of the world. Individualism, anonymity, materialism and many other worldly values are pushed against day after day as our children are trained in the classroom.

Let us be partners, not competitors. We value your work and desire camaraderie as we together train our children for the church, the ultimate goal and aim of the Christian School as we seek to love Jesus with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. 

Jesus, Lamb of God, Tested on Earth for 33 Years

A. W. Tozer

I think there is a good answer to the question of why Jesus remained on earth during the 33 years of his earthly life and ministry.

I refer back to the picture in the book of Exodus where the instructions are given for choosing the Passover lamb.

“Your lamb shall be without blemish...and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.”

Jesus Christ was here upon earth, God’s Lamb being tested.

You see, they were told they could not take a lamb without testing. They could not simply take a lamb at random and bring it in and slay it—because they could not be sure it was a perfect lamb.

They must choose a lamb without blemish. They had to test those lambs, and keep them around and observe them for four days.

That’s what Jesus was doing on earth those 33 years. He was being observed by God, men, and devils,

that He might be shown to be the perfect lamb, that there was no fault in Him, so that even Pilate could say, “I find no fault in this man.”

Notice that the instructions were: “You shall kill it in the evening.”

Jesus always talked about having the “day” while He was on earth, but that when He left the earth, it would be night.

He warned that “the night cometh, when no man can work.”

It was “evening” when Jesus was slain, and the sun went into darkness as a kind of symbolic and poetic proof that the night had fallen, when the Lamb of God was slain.

All the protection Israel had was this lamb. “They shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side door posts and on the upper door posts of the houses wherein they shall eat it...and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.”

Here are the grass roots of redemption, the fountainhead from which the stream of Christianity flowed. Here we stand beside the great pillar that upholds the Church

and we will not be argued away. We do believe in the blood.

There seem to be many Christians now who are so squeamish that they only want to talk about “pleasant” things in religion, and they do not want to talk about the blood.

I still believe in the power of the blood of the Lamb. And I still believe in its power—not only to protect—but to cleanse.

You ask, “How can it be?” and I must answer, “I know not how it can be.” How can it be that you must

draw oxygen into your lungs and it is absorbed into the bloodstream to purify and give life?

Certainly I am not going to stop breathing because I cannot explain the mystery of how oxygen nourishes my life. Neither will I turn away from faith in this paschal Lamb. God cannot break His Word—and no other lamb needs now to be slain!

(From The Tozer Pulpit, compiled by Gerald B. Smith, Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, PA, 1967, pages 123-125.)



The Life of a Refugee

Kevin Byers, Amman, Jordan

The refugee’s life is a very difficult one. For those of us who have never experienced the trauma that a refugee has been subjected to, it is an experience that we cannot truly relate to.

What if you were living a quiet, peaceful life and suddenly it was shattered by the horrors of war? What if you had to listen to bombs exploding in your neighborhood? What if you had to run for your life when you went to the store for groceries hoping you wouldn’t get shot by a sniper? What if you went

to bed at night not knowing if your house would be the next one hit by a bomb? What if your house was raided in the middle of the night and you had to watch your husband and sons being killed in front of you? We have heard these real life experiences directly from refugees we’ve visited.

And then, what if you were forced to leave your home, community, friends, business, and your country and go to another country where you had nothing but what you could carry with you? You would have no citizenship, no equal rights, no place

to call your own. You might live in a tent or a concrete structure and depend on the goodwill of humanity through government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, or churches. And that would be your life, waiting, waiting, and hoping for a better future.

It is impossible to truly understand what these refugees have lived through and are coping with. But when we sit with them, drink coffee with them, and listen to their stories, we get a small glimpse of the suffering and

terrors they have lived through.

We [at Christian Aid Ministries] can give them some food and a mattress and pillow to sleep on, but we cannot erase the trauma they have experienced. Only God can heal the deep pain in their hearts, and hopefully, as we look them in the eye and offer His love to them they will be drawn to the One who can bring healing to their souls.

[Excerpted from The Budget, Dec. 9, 2015. Used by permission of the writer.]



An Awesome God

Violet Rhodes, Newberry, IN

I'm so amazed
At our great Lord.
I'm sure that He
Is never bored!

So many things
To take care of,
Us people here
And planets above.

There's Mars and Venus
And Jupiter, too.
And all the stars
Keep shining like new!

SO MANY PEOPLE
He knows them all,

Whether big and strong
Or weak and small.

He knows the names
The problems we face
And He's right there
To give us grace.

Even in small stuff
He is right there;
The "little" blessings
Show us His care!

It baffles me
How He does it all;

When I think of God
I feel quite small!



Victory in Liberia – Part Two

Kendra Good

A few months later James again went to Schweh, this time taking Pastor Akim, Brother Steve, and Brother Marvin from the CAM office along with him. Many people again were eager to hear the Word of God. But those who were not ready to surrender their devil worship were trying their powers to sabotage the meeting.

On the second day of the crusade, while Marvin was preaching, two bats flew into the pavilion where the meeting was held. As if on cue, all the people rose to their feet and began crying out to God and rebuking the power of the devil. Steve took the book in his hand and knocked the one bat out of the air. Someone from the village stomped on the bat and killed it. The other bat flew straight out of the building. The people sat back down on the benches and the preaching continued. The powers of darkness were again defeated by our God.

More and more people confessed their sins and gave their lives to

Christ. Steve felt the Lord asking him to tell the people to surrender their “juju” property (tools they used in witchcraft). So that evening he addressed those gathered together, “If you have decided to follow God it is time to surrender the devil’s property. Bring your items tomorrow and surrender them.” Almost before Steve finished speaking, a woman stood up and cut the rope that was tied around her waist, and brought it forward to be destroyed.

The next day many people brought things forward to surrender. Others had destroyed things of their own accord earlier. One man had a question, “If I used this horn to do good and bad things to people, Can I keep it and continue to use it for good?” The evangelists answered with, “No.” If it had been a tool of Satan, it had to go.

From there the workshop continued with more teaching and praying. Most of the teaching was on salvation and deliverance from Satan. This was the first time the village

had seen this powerful presence of God—a power that compelled them to surrender their previously most prized possessions. The power of the Holy Spirit was clearly evident.

A drunkard, deeply involved in witchcraft, stood up during the question-and-answer period. “Suppose I have been living wickedly before I decide to live for God. Will He hear me if I pray?”

“Yes,” the evangelists assured him. “God will hear you if you pray.”

“Right now?” he asked.

“Yes, you can pray right now and He will hear you.”

So the man stood up and began praying aloud in his dialect. He prayed long and earnestly and the angels started rejoicing.

After the meeting a woman whom we will call Sarah, came secretly to meet with the evangelists. She told the men her story. “I am pregnant but my baby is not moving or growing. I have been pregnant for one year and six months. My aunty got her daughter to tie my baby in witchcraft because she got angry at me one day for not plaiting her hair. Since that time I have been sickly and my baby is not moving.”

The evangelists asked Sarah if she is involved in witchcraft. She admitted that when she was a small girl she was deeply involved, but since then someone had removed her from this dark world and she had no part in it

since then.

“Do you believe God is able to deliver you?” James asked Sarah.

“Yes, I know God can save me.” she replied. The men prayed over Sarah, calling in faith upon the name of Jesus and resisting the devil and his spirits.

Meanwhile, the woman whose daughter had tied the baby was informed of what was happening in the church. “Go untie the baby,” she told her daughter, “there is nothing we can do now. Sarah is receiving the power of God.”

From that time Sarah’s baby started growing and moving. Sarah’s sickness left her.

In a few weeks, she was ready to deliver. But all the midwives in the town were terrified and refused to help her. They knew what had happened to this baby previously and they were convinced in their minds that Sarah would die. A woman offered to take Sarah to a nearby village where a different midwife could help her. On the way there, Sarah delivered a perfect baby girl. The two women eagerly took the baby back to Schweh. Everyone was astonished. The midwives begged Sarah’s forgiveness. She told them what was obvious, “I am free now. No power of the devil is on me. Jesus saved me!” Sarah named her baby girl, Final, because God is the FINAL authority for all.

Many were converted, but not all. Some of those in the highest ranks of devil worship were not ready to forfeit their power and position. Their guilt and fear drove them to inflicting trouble on those who were converted. They demanded money from the Christians for the things they claimed they still owed in the dark world. They ordered poor people to cook large amounts of food for them.

The new converts felt overwhelmed. They had come to the light—but now this? They begged the CAM team to come back and help with these problems.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Revelation 12:11).

So another visit to Schweh was arranged. The welcome the team received was overwhelming. The people had erected seven bowers of palm fronds and hibiscus flowers. They danced around the cars singing and shouting. “We were in bondage but you set us free.”

Even though there was little time left in the day, Pastor Akin felt God telling him to go ahead and begin preaching because it would be a night of spiritual warfare. The church was packed and Akin preached into the evening by the light of a single bulb strung above the table. That

night the man who was involved in putting in election votes in the dark world came forward and surrendered all his tools.

The next day the workshop continued. Most of the villagers were present but a few of those in high rank in the devil’s work were not there. At the time the workshop closed and the distribution began these men showed up. The story leaked out. Ever since the CAM people had arrived the night before, these men had tried feverishly to cause rain to fall. There was no building large enough for the workshop, so the people were under the thatch huts made for this very purpose. But no rain fell. A few times clouds gathered and rain looked imminent. But it never fell. That night shortly after everyone had retired for the night, God opened the heavens and let the rain fall in torrents.

These men admitted openly, “We are not able to overcome you. The power of your God is not something to play with. It was like you people were surrounded by fire. We eventually gave up and came out to see for ourselves.”

Schweh is now on fire for God. The church that has been established is packed every Sunday. The way of life has changed for many people. Instead of living in the torment of fear, they are living in joyous freedom.

(Used by permission.)



A New Mindset for Christian Women

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

The Bible says in Romans 12:2, that we are to be renewed by transforming of the mind. I believe Paul is simply saying our minds need to be changed; we need a new mindset. In Christ, we have fresh thinking. As we concentrate on the fact that God loves us, He redeemed us and we belong to Him; we will not listen to the lies Satan wants to put in our minds. Remember, the devil is a thief and he would steal peaceful, God-honoring thoughts and replace them with self-seeking thoughts.

Christian women today are bombarded with obsession of the body. We read magazines, listen to news, watch clips on Facebook and see new ideas on Pinterest telling us what we can do to appear beautiful, young and healthy. Even our “plain” papers have many ads for all kinds of pills, creams, and therapies to keep us in good physical shape. I hasten to say that I believe Christians ought to be concerned about their physical and mental well-being. We must eat healthfully, stay active physically and

mentally and try to be as neat and clean as possible.

We all desire to feel well and free of pain. However, we must remember that as we grow older, our bodies do wear out. Our physician son likes to tell me, “Mom, you need a new body.” He sometimes says this to his patients and he likes to watch the smiles on their faces as they grasp the meaning of his words.

Heaven is our hope—no pain, no sorrow ever again. God desires a mindset that focuses first on the spiritual dimension rather than the physical. We are made up of spirit, soul and body and our spiritual welfare must have top priority.

Satan would have us believe we are no good, that no one loves us or understands us. He wants us to believe that not only do we fail but that we are failures—period. This mindset is not from God. If we wallow in these lies, we become bitter, whiny, grumbling, and joyless women. God desires for us to accept who we are in Him. He yearns


for us to be the person He has created us to be, to find true happiness in fulfilling His plan for us. He would give us a mindset filled with thoughts of love, forgiveness, gentleness, and peace which brings a glow to a Christian woman. The face will radiate an inner glow that surpasses any outward physical beauty.

Another mindset that causes havoc in Christian women today is the attention on entitlement—the idea that I have **my rights**. Worldly advertising plays on our emotions. Many times advertisements make us believe we really need the advertised product and will be miserable without it. We forget that most times the advertisers are looking out for their own financial gain. We are told that we are entitled to the best of everything. We deserve whatever feels good. Mothers are encouraged not to be tied down to their families and, furthermore, that they deserve time and money to do as they please.

But is it **our right** to be healthy, wealthy and happy? Have we worked so hard that we earned a life of ease and carefree living? We hear the right of entitlement so often that we may actually begin to believe it. However, the Bible, especially the New Testament, does not promise a life free from suffering and hardship. In fact, it states that all who live godly lives will suffer and that suffering will have a purifying

impact on our lives. Also we are told we are to lose our lives for the sake of Christ. Christian women, you are called to give up **your rights** and portray a gentle and quiet spirit, which pleases God very much. If you want to be contented, make a list of all your benefits and compare them to the majority of the world's population and you will discover how very rich you are!

A competitive mindset is another of Satan's tricks for women. I mention women because I am writing to women. I realize that competition may be stronger in men, however, I know that women also deal with it. In our insecurities, we want to be the best and have the best. We compare our families, our homes, clothes, and perhaps even our giftings and talents with those of others. We want to be successful, to reach the goals we have set for ourselves. We need to ask ourselves, "Where does success really come from?" Jesus answers this question by telling us, "The person who serves others will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." What a beautiful thought it is to know that we will be the happiest by serving our families or whoever God brings into our lives! No competition is involved in that.

God's design for a godly woman is setting our affection on things above—a mindset that will honor and glorify our Heavenly Father. 

Helping in Haiti

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Just why would doctors and nurses from America go to poverty-stricken Haiti to help those in need? Why would they be willing to stay in a Haitian house with much less comfort than their own homes?

Instead of nice, hot water from a faucet at home, their Haitian shower consisted of a spigot on the end of a pipe; their toilet flushed by pouring water in the bowl with a pan filled from a barrel. The food, too, was different from what was available at home.

They thought the house, the shower, and everything else was quite luxurious when they compared it to the facilities of an earlier trip to the island nation. When they returned home they were more grateful for all they had. They were more thankful than before they went.

One morning, they especially

remembered the words of Jesus, "Suffer (allow) the little children to come unto me. Don't forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus loves all children. He is pleased when we notice and love small ones, too. On their last morning there, an old grandpa and a girl brought a baby to their clinic. The man was sure this small child he loved had swallowed something. Although the baby was breathing with some difficulty, its airway did not seem to be totally closed.

The nurse bent to check the child's mouth and throat but could see nothing amiss. The doctors decided that the baby was starting with a disease and began to act accordingly. But something just didn't seem right. The grandpa insisted the baby had not been sick that morning. He had put the baby down to crawl and was

certain the child had swallowed something.

The nurse and doctor decided to look again in the child's mouth. The baby struggled, crying loudly. He fought as they began to examine him and shone a light into his mouth. This time, they saw a sliver of something gray in his throat.


With a needle driver in hand, the struggle to extract the object began. Still fighting, the baby wailed in relief when Dr. Dassow finally pulled a strange object out of his throat. About the width of a quarter, it was a cone-shaped reflector from a flashlight.

Grandpa cried in gratitude. Baby fell asleep. Older Sister just stood and stared in amazement. The doctors and nurses were all

inexpressibly happy and thankful that God had helped them save the baby!

The people who came to the clinic were required to pay a small fee based on the fact that people seem to value something more if they have to pay for it.

Why do doctors and nurses from a wealthy land go to poor countries to help others? One nurse said it this way, "I want to use my skills to bless people. I love to travel and make new friends. We are so rich, I always come back feeling more grateful. When traveling, I prefer to be a blessing to others and not just seek pleasure."

Do you want joy and fulfillment in life? Ask God to show you what to do. Then reach out and help those in need. 

***It is Christ that died, yea rather,
that is risen again, who is even
at the right hand of God,
who also maketh intercession
for us.*** ROMANS 8:34



Conservative Anabaptists Talk about Their Work #2: John D. Martin, Hymnal Compiler

Gideon Yutzy, Hutchinson, KS

In this month's column I will continue last month's discussion on music by publishing an interview I did recently. Read on.

First, I personally want to thank you for compiling *Hymns of the Church*. How long has it been a work in progress?

We started to work on the hymnal about 2001. It began as a request by our congregation for a supplement to the 1927 *Church Hymnal* since we had mastered all the songs in the *Church Hymnal*. It was a case of a project outgrowing its original goal.

Why did you feel it was necessary to compile another hymnal?

It was time for a hymnal update. Evangelical churches believe a hymnal should be updated every 20 years. The *Christian Hymnal* was far too light to be a worthy update for the *Church Hymnal*, and the *Mennonite Hymnal*, in my opinion, was too heavy and elitist,

although I would have chosen it as a hymnal for our church if the *Church Hymnal* had not been available. Since the *Mennonite Hymnal* was too heavy for most of our churches, they (unfortunately) supplemented it with a lighter hymnal before long.

I like to consider *Hymns of the Church* (HOTC) as an update of the *Church Hymnal* but that seems a bit presumptuous, and the verdict on HOTC needs to come from others—years from now. Incidentally, it has the same mix of hymns (80%) and gospel songs (20%) found in the *Church Hymnal*.

Can we expect a *Hymns of the Church*, Volume II?

No! The project was demanding beyond my imagination. Had I known how much work would be involved, I likely would not have done *Hymns of the Church*, Volume I. I proposed

to our production manager that he publish a supplement to the hymnal in 15 or 20 years but he didn't exude visible enthusiasm at the prospect!

While I'm very pleased with *Hymns of the Church*, I did find several baffling omissions (you included two tunes of *O, Thou in Whose Presence* but left out my favorite one). That said, I'm sure the elimination process was grueling. What guided you?

I simply wasn't aware of another tune for "O Thou in Whose Presence." The process was guided musically by my own taste for the types of songs that sing well congregationally. I tend to favor lilting tunes over the somber ones favored by the *Mennonite Hymnal*. Of course I included somber tunes where the text called for them. As far as choosing texts, I kept an eye out for expressions of deep spiritual insight. Also, I needed to find hymns to cover a full range of Christian teaching.

***Hymns of the Church* is the only hymnal used at our church here in Kansas and people seem enthused about it. Has the general interest in your hymnal been as strong as you'd hoped?**

We have distributed 43,000 hymnals, and the book is in its 9th printing. We thought it would take this long to sell the first printing of 5000 copies. So yes, the reception of the hymnal has far exceeded our

expectations. Many conservative Mennonite churches are now using HOTC (though I haven't heard of any non-Mennonite churches that use it) and we haven't done any publicity to speak of; the hymnal has sold itself.

I assume a hymnal compiler would be for a cappella singing in church. Now that many of our churches use musical instruments at home, will instruments in church be next? Would that be good or bad?

It would be unspeakably tragic. The conservative Mennonite churches in my community have had musical instruments in their homes for 250 years, and we would be as opposed to the use of instruments in public worship as churches that ban them altogether. Our argument isn't necessarily a biblical argument but one of practical wisdom. The use of instruments in public worship divides the responsibility for the sound between the instrument and the singers (Alice Parker's observation). The result is ALWAYS a lower quality of congregational participation. I saw it happen in the Brethren in Christ churches, whose four-part singing used to match that of the Mennonites. Now almost all Brethren in Christ members sing melody, and full participation in part singing is a thing of the past.

Of course I don't know what our posterity will do, but I will

oppose tooth and nail any attempt to introduce instruments into our public worship. My belief is they have a place only in the home for education and wholesome recreation. The Wesleys, who also had instruments in their homes, were adamant opponents against their use in the church. I think it was John Wesley who said, “You may have an organ in your church if its pipes are filled with concrete!” Our community has always understood that instruments detract rather than add to public worship.

Talk about the role hymns play in the spiritual formation that we Christians of North America so desperately need.

I have seen an impressive correlation between the church and its hymnal. Sometimes even the most serious members of a church can't get past a narrow “save me” gospel, partly because their church uses hymnals dominated by cheap gospel songs. The spiritual declension in some conservative Mennonite churches has been accompanied by shallow hymnals appearing in the hymnal racks. This was part of the reason for HOTC. I wanted to woo our people to a greater depth of worship in song.


I wish now I could eliminate about 30 of the very lightest gospel songs from HOTC and replace them with hymns or better gospel songs. Alas, once a hymnal is

completed, it cannot be edited from printing to printing. I think HOTC will serve well, but we should encourage the use of its lightest songs very occasionally and *only* when they uniquely fit the subject under consideration. I also encourage that every congregation determine to learn all the songs in the hymnal as our congregation did with the *Church Hymnal*. It was a great experience that changed the song taste of our people forever.

Final question: Now that the hymnal is completed, are there other dreams you would like to have fulfilled before you die?

I have some things I would like to say on the Kingdom of God in book form, a few concepts of the Kingdom that I haven't seen articulated well elsewhere. But alas, I'm afraid I don't have the discipline required to write a book.

Of course if God would bless the book as he blessed the hymnal, the discipline would be worth it.

Yes, I realize that, but writing has always been a much more difficult discipline for me than speaking. Even in speaking, the organization of my thoughts comes at the cost of great effort. It took me the better part of a day to write the two-page introduction to HOTC. Thinking of the effort required to organize my thoughts for a whole book induces permanent procrastination! 

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A thing done right today will mean less trouble tomorrow.

• • • • •

Too often when a danger is past, we forget God who helped us.

• • • • •

Short visits make long friends.

• • • • •

Regardless of our past, we are invited to a spotless future.

• • • • •

Gambling is stealing by mutual consent.

• • • • •

God delights in using minute means to perform mighty miracles.

• • • • •

God's promises are bigger than our problems.

• • • • •

The will of the majority is not necessarily the will of God.

• • • • •

Gossip might be called "the bad breath of conversation."

• • • • •

A rejoicing Christian is a good advertisement for Jesus Christ.

• • • • •

Good humor is health to the soul.

• • • • •

If we are on our way to heaven, we will be busy finding others to take along.

• • • • •

If our living means *grace*, our dying means *glory*.

• • • • •

The beauty of holiness is companionship with God.

• • • • •

A family *altar* would *alter* many a family.