



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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2016

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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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Where is Jesus?

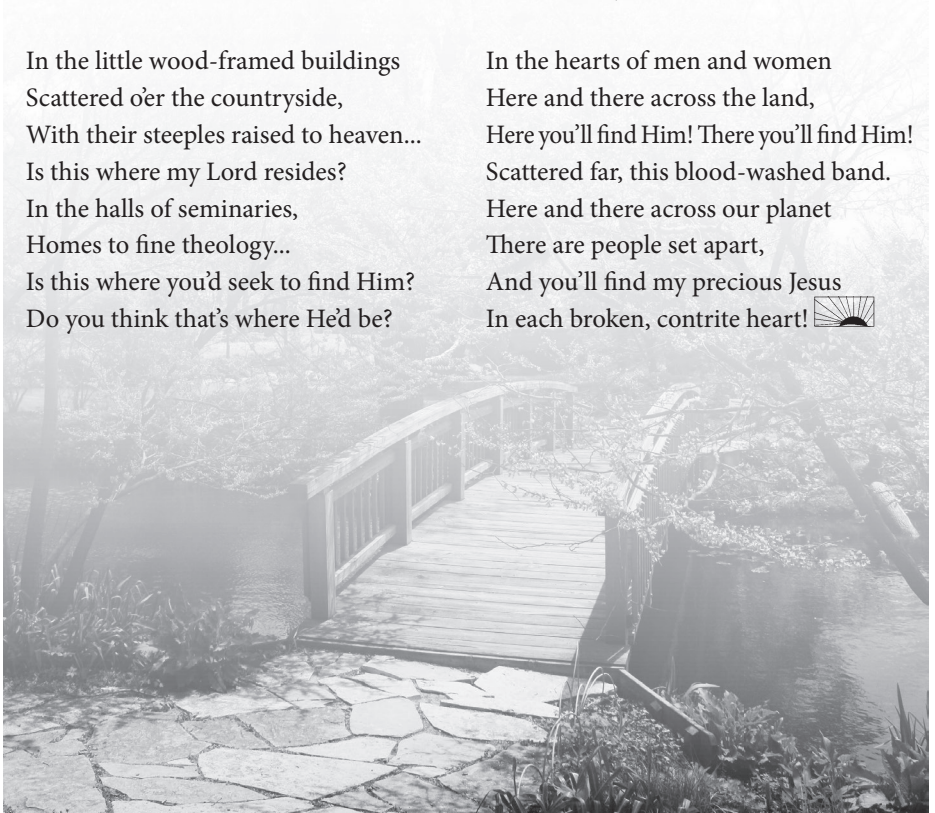
Darlene Miller, Linn, MO

In majestic, great cathedrals
In their paintings rich and rare,
In their shining, stained-glass windows,
Will you find my Jesus there?
In their gold and silver trappings,
In the piping organ's sound;
In the coffers full—o'er flowing...
Is that where He can be found?

In the little wood-framed buildings
Scattered o'er the countryside,
With their steeples raised to heaven...
Is this where my Lord resides?
In the halls of seminaries,
Homes to fine theology...
Is this where you'd seek to find Him?
Do you think that's where He'd be?

In the gatherings of the pious
Clad in humblest of array,
Faithful still to old traditions...
Will you find Christ there today?
In the midst of great emotion,
Shouting, rolling on the floor,
In the midst of all the "doing"
Where's the Jesus I adore?

In the hearts of men and women
Here and there across the land,
Here you'll find Him! There you'll find Him!
Scattered far, this blood-washed band.
Here and there across our planet
There are people set apart,
And you'll find my precious Jesus
In each broken, contrite heart! 



“Bring The Books”

When the aged Apostle Paul asked for his books in what must have been the last epistle he penned, he was hardly referring to what I’m writing about. (See 2 Timothy 4:13) Nevertheless, I use his words for the title of what I see as a common, practical problem.

We love books—and so we should! Authors take inspiration God gives them and produce good reading material. We eagerly read their books. But strangely, some of us don’t even read all the books we have. These neglected books that looked so good to us that we bought them—only to lay them aside before finishing them. Worse yet, sometimes we didn’t even seriously peruse them. How absurd!

When visiting in a Christian brothers’ and sisters’ homes, we may pay special attention to a book of theirs. They see our interest and offer us the book to be returned later. We hesitate but decide to respond to their encouragement. So we borrow the book. It seems so simple to return it when we’ve finished reading it.

With firm resolve to return it as soon as we’ve read it, we take it. But who has not found his or her good resolutions faltering through forgetfulness?

Later, we are shocked and duly horrified to find a strange book on our shelves or elsewhere in some seldom-visited place. Such a situation is bad, but if the book has the owner’s name in it, we can still remedy the situation. This book must be returned at once. It is, however, much worse to find a book that has no name in it and to realize that we have forgotten from whom we borrowed it!

Now I know that wholesome brotherliness is enhanced by book interchange. And I’m not asking that we stop, but I propose a solution to the problems that go with it: Here’s my plan: *Let’s keep a record of books we borrow or lend out. Let’s each devise a library lending procedure.*

Surely no one will feel bad when we ask them if they’re finished with the book they borrowed. We realize that they were not planning

to keep the borrowed book. So you may wonder what makes me get so interested in the simple matter of book borrowing and lending?

Well, today I tilled a neighbor's garden and when I returned to my pickup, I found a book we had lost track of. Then I remembered! Some months ago, we had invited this young family for Sunday lunch. In that visit, we got to talking about a book they seemed interested in. We wanted them to have more time with it and offered it to them for a while. They took us up on it, but guess what! We're past 80 years old and after a while we completely forgot to whom we had lent it. Once in a while, we actually thought about that lost book and even fretted about it. Fortunately for us, the borrowers did not forget. And now our precious book is back!

As I thought about this, I came up with a better plan to keep track of books. I shall call it: **An Every-Home Book Plan**. This plan also addresses a second nagging fear of mine: When I consider borrowing a book from someone else, I commonly agonize "Should I or shouldn't I?" But even agonizing over it doesn't keep me from keeping a book too long. So let's also put the book we borrow on our library record! **We shall write**

down every book that goes out or comes in!

That should work well, shouldn't it? In this way,

- We balding and graying seniors could still lend and borrow books.
- We high-mileage seniors don't need to fear that books (lent or borrowed) will permanently disappear or get parked on the wrong shelves.

This is exciting! Is there, after all, "something new under the sun?" There just might be—at least new for these octogenarians whose memory lapses are getting more unpredictable and frustrating!

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Today (March 29) the April issue of *Calvary Messenger* arrived in the mail. Because I see the proofs only on my computer screen, I cannot tell how well the coloration of the cover I chose stands out until it is delivered in our mail boxes. When I saw the April cover, I was aghast! I didn't even try to read the Thought Gems on the back cover, but am running them again in May. To those who have expressed your disappointment for this, I am using this way to respond to you. I am very sorry! The Publication Board and I are making some changes which I think you will all welcome. God bless you!

-PLM 

Re: The Bottom Line, p. 5, and School Matters, p. 22, Feb., 2016.

I found the articles mentioning homework interesting. It may be of interest to know that there was a big push in the late 90's to increase the amount of homework given to children as well as giving homework to those who are in kindergarten or first grade. The feeble logic behind this push was to keep children off the street and out of trouble since fewer households had parents at home to care for them. Because of this, there is greater responsibility given to the school to raise and care for the child instead of the parents. It was surprising as I taught school how much of this push was adopted in our schools, even though the backgrounds were different. In conservative settings, there were times when parents came to me asking me to load their child with homework since they were being idle, not being on the farm anymore. While I was teaching in old order settings, homework meant that the child was struggling or

wasting time in school. These homes had clear "family vs. school" times. Is the push for homework imitating a shift in our view of family in line with the public school, where the school is to raise the child, or is the value of home life changing?

Also, students who are having difficulty in school, may need extra time to work through things at home. They also need mental breaks from studies. As we load students with homework, struggling students "get more," which also means more time away from family or away from more hands-on projects that they are better at and should be developing if studies are not their forte. As they get older, do they then tend to be more on the social periphery? Just a thought—

Jennifer Anderson
Millersburg, Ohio

• • • • •

Re: Guest editorial by Daniel Kauffman, March, 2016, p. 2.

I want to express my appreciation for this article. I am wondering if the loss of the true meaning of

Easter as it is taught in our day, may be in part because the Christian church is not enthusiastically teaching the resurrection of Christ and what it means in the life of the believer. The Calvary suffering of Christ, His shed blood, His death and the grave were necessary to open the way for the sinner to be reconciled to God. But that is the negative side of the cross. The cross deals with sin and death. Christ won the victory over sin, death, and hell. “He came to save His people from their sins.”

The resurrection of Christ is the positive (life-giving) side of the Gospel message. And it’s the resurrection power (the Holy Spirit) that give victory in daily living. My thinking is that we may be a bit unbalanced when we put more emphasis on the Calvary sufferings of Christ than on His resurrection victory and its meaning in daily life.

Reuben J. Kaufman
Sugarcreek, OH

• • • • •

**Re: “Do Dogs Go To Heaven?”,
March, 2016, p. 8.**

I appreciate Aaron Lapp’s article, but was disappointed to see the paragraph about Dr. DeHaan’s statement stating “The blood’s

origin comes from the male sperm.” This concept was false when Dr. DeHaan wrote the book in 1943 and it remains false. Dr. DeHaan used his book to deluge the reader with facts from several reputable medical texts, and then inserted an unfounded theory regarding the blood’s origin, The theory was illogical (how could a child’s blood type differ from the father’s if the blood’s origin is solely from the male?) and an abuse of his readership’s trust (he used a string of reasoning to “cover up” an unfounded theory, and then used that theory to “prove” his point.)

The fetus is an amazing combination of both the father and the mother’s genetic information (the DNA), and both the blood and the body show this combination of the characteristics of the parents. Dr. DeHaan claimed that the blood was from the father and the body from the mother. We don’t need modern medical science to debunk that myth. As one writer put it when pointing out Dr. DeHaan’s error, “we have higher ground for the foundation of Christ’s impeccability.”

Dr. Gabriel Jantzi
Wellesley, Ontario



Accepting Jesus

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Splitting hairs is for preachers or writers. Anything a bit controversial is soon said by some people to be splitting hairs. Splitting hairs carries the idea of being a matter of no concern for thinking people—when the facts should simply be taken to be facts. We realize that concepts given without forethought usually aren't worthy of serious afterthought.

The Sunday morning sermon comes through with the benefits of accepting Christ. The Sunday School teacher also emphasizes everyone's need to accept Jesus. The evangelist has it straight from the Bible, putting out the call to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. This is often declared to be of primary importance.

What do we mean when we declare the Gospel's invitation to all people everywhere to be saved by accepting the Lord Jesus? Can we assume that those who hear it for

the first time or even for the fourth time surely are clear as to what is meant by the invitation? Accepting Christ is said to be the means of being assured of heaven. It is the answer to our fears, our experiences of defeat, or our persistent struggle against sin.

A form of the word "believe" is used more often in the Gospel of John than in any other New Testament book. Jesus used it many times in His teaching.

The crisis element in Jesus' preaching (and consequently then the Apostles later) was on whether or not people would believe on Christ. We appreciate the apostles' frequent use of *believing on the name of Jesus Christ*, as recorded in the book of Acts. It is spiritually uplifting, even exciting, to see how freely and how often they mention *the name* of our Lord Jesus Christ. "And his name through faith in his name, hath made this man strong,

whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all” (Acts. 316).

Between Acts 2:21 and Acts 9:29, Jesus’ name is specified 20 times! All four Gospel writers record Jesus’ use of His own name. Jesus spoke about Himself, giving instructions how to exercise our sonship, saying we shall do “in his name” for seven straight times in John 14:13 to John 16: 23! We could use the name of Jesus Christ more often—myself included.

We started out with noting that the emphasis by our Lord and the Apostles was largely a proposition to believe on Jesus Christ the Lord.

It can also be discovered that the words “receive” and “received” with the root receive are akin to accept or accepting. There are several verses that indicate the possibility of receiving Christ Jesus as Savior. But the word “receive” as a root word most often has its use limited largely to receiving the Holy Spirit, or receiving our inheritance, or receiving each other as brothers in Christ, or receiving some benefit from God.

But it came as a surprise to me that the word accept as a root word along with derivatives does not

have one verse saying that we can or should accept Jesus as our Savior. In most cases, it is *God accepting us* in Christ and not, as we affirm by standard preaching and teaching, having us accept Christ as our Savior.

We may, sure enough, be clear in our minds when we thus invite the saints and sinners to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We know what we mean, and how it is supposed to come about. However, there likely have been persons in our audience who had no idea what we have in mind when we speak in such terms. Unsaved people could assume that since they aren’t rejecting Jesus they then must have accepted Him quite long ago.

Could it be that we have borrowed the “easy believism” from non-Anabaptists who themselves have for a long time called on people “to come forward and accept Jesus as their Savior”? Big meetings report how many people were “saved,” ranging from hundreds to thousands, who have accepted Christ. This is not to conclude that none of those are truly saved from sin and have qualified for Jesus’ invitation to be born again and bear new fruit.

No. Our point is that “accepting

Jesus” may be more falling in line with popular movements than it is with New Testament emphasis. New Testament emphasis is about *believing* on Jesus concerning His death and resurrection, that He is Lord. Jesus Himself has stated clearly the timeless call to *believing* Him and His words as synonymous. Our Lord also linked *believing* on Him with doing what He commands. It is integrally connected with Lordship.


John writes that “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him. To them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:11, 12). Not receiving Jesus meant rejecting Him, whereas the receiving intended by the writer was to receive with the intent to follow through with life change and standard discipleship.

Maybe it is more or less what we have in mind when we speak of accepting Jesus. Modern Christianity makes broad use of the term and beyond that, whatever you do with it is largely up to the individual. One’s options after “accepting Jesus” can depend on who your pastor is, or what church you happen to be attending,

or what occurs in the mind of the individual who says he accepts Christ.

Some churches do not have membership. The pastor in one church where we visited, said, “If you are here most Sundays, then you should consider this as your church and do your part in helping us meet the church’s budget.” Oh, bother! Some people may say to themselves, “*I thought If I accept Jesus then I can do as I please about whatever.*”

“Accepting Jesus” can be largely about *me*. *I* do it when *I* want to do so, how it suits *me*, without being put upon by others. Whereas believing in Jesus becomes more of His proposition for our personal life, linking us to the Lord Jesus and at the same time joining us to others who believe in Him for salvation.

The Bottom Line is that a renewed biblical use of believing in God is to likewise believe on His Son Jesus Christ. The Bible has it that God *accepts* us in Christ. As we have believed God, so we also are called on to *believe* in Jesus for salvation. He then *accepts* us. The Bible puts it where it clearly belongs, without splitting hairs. 

Ken Miller Reports to Prison

On Tuesday, March 22, 2016, Ken Miller reported to prison in Petersburg, VA. He was heartened to find out that he's on the roll in the low security facility instead of the medium security facility, which is the one he was expecting to report to. That will mean more privileges. He is not yet able to tell what visiting privileges will be given to him. (From Plain People News, Prayer Needs and Requests)

Here's Ken's testimony, used with his permission:

I'm going to prison today because a woman's faith and modern society collided.

About 12 years ago Lisa Miller discovered that Jesus of Nazareth is powerful enough to take away her sins. He transformed her life and her lifestyle.

In the long, winding journey since then, Lisa has sought to remain true to her Savior and her conscience.

By the fall of 2009, due to the ruling of the Vermont courts, the reluctance of the Virginia courts, and a strangely impotent Defense of Marriage Act (Virginia law at the time), Lisa was about to lose custody of her own biological daughter.

She saw two choices: capitulate to the New Social Order, or stay true

to the Moral Order established by God. She chose the latter.

In September of 2009, Lisa left the United States and fled to Nicaragua in search of religious freedom—the freedom to raise her daughter under God's order as her faith and conscience compelled her to do. She remains in hiding to this day.

Here at FCC Petersburg, I am greatly privileged to stand with Lisa in her quest for Truth and Freedom.

Some things can never be locked up inside prison walls. Truth. Conscience. Moral righteousness. And the saving Gospel of Jesus.

Fellow believer, we are in a war against Satan's tyranny. But remember, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal [not human and not political] but mighty through God to the pulling down

of strongholds” (2 Cor. 10:4).

Our weapons are the cross of Christ, joyful suffering and loving our enemies. “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18).

Jesus reigns; His Kingdom is forever. He is coming back soon!

An unworthy servant,
-Ken

• • • • •

Here’s Ken’s mailing address:
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Petersburg, VA 23804

The family’s mailing address is :
3301 Stuarts Draft Hwy
Waynesboro, VA 22980
email: millfam8@gmail.com

[Brothers and Sisters, let us support Ken, Linda, and their family in this time of testing that is expected to last 27 months. One of the early church’s most valiant soldiers of the cross, Paul, spent lots of time behind bars, but these human injustices resulted in great blessing to Christendom. Paul also refused to pity himself and simply accepted God’s hand in it. Who knows what good will come out of this if we don’t resort to harsh responses, but prayerfully stand with Ken and Linda as they draw on God’s resources?

-PLM]



Christianity: A Personal Thing

Lance Beachy, Plain City, OH

How does one explain his faith in Jesus? Lance Beachy was given a writing assignment in a secular college. Lance went beyond a safe discussion of some other topic and chose to give a ready answer of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear. “God bless you, Bro. Lance!” -PLM

Having grown up in a conservative Mennonite home, I have always been around Christianity. As a toddler,

I was read Bible stories before my nap. As I grew older, that practice became family devotions and prayer before bed. Later, I started reading

the Bible for myself and having personal devotions. During this entire period I attended Canaan Fellowship Church, and I currently lead our church's youth group planning committee. Although I was constantly around other Christians, it took me quite a long time until I asked myself the question, "What does Christianity mean to me, and why do I believe it?"

I think it best to begin with how I believe the world began. I cannot prove this scientifically, but I believe what the Bible says in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This simple statement is the basis for how I believe the world came into existence. When was the beginning? There is no specific date, but most Christian scientists tend to place it close to six thousand years ago.

I believe that God not only created the earth but also all life forms that inhabit the earth. However, human beings are unique because they were made in His image, and they were made to have dominion over the earth and everything in it (Genesis 1:26). Mankind is also unique because of the gift God has given to us, called free will. Free will is our ability to make our own decisions in our lives. This ensures that people worship Him out of love and not

because they literally have no choice. Unfortunately, free will does not come by itself. It is accompanied by a fallen nature.

Fallen nature is the tendency within everyone to turn away from God. By turning away from God, I do not necessarily mean that they are terrible people, for atheists can be extremely nice and moral people. But fallen nature does have the possibility of turning someone into a bad person. While good behavior is important, it is not the crux of Christianity. A relationship with God is. How do we have a good relationship with God? Through His son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is an anomaly because He was 100% God in heaven, but then became 100% human when He came to earth. He is also the only perfect human ever to have existed. He is the core of the Christian belief of life after death, and he is the namesake of the word, Christian (meaning "little Christ").

Jesus' birth was also miraculous for He had no earthly father. Mary was a virgin impregnated by the Holy Spirit (spirit form of God). And although He was the most important person to have ever lived, He was born in a simple stable.

Jesus was perfect, but He died

one of the most agonizing deaths possible. Crucifixion was normally reserved for the worst of criminals, nevertheless, Jesus was still crucified. But Jesus did not deserve to die according to Romans 6:23, which says, "The wages of sin is death." Jesus never sinned, and therefore never deserved to die. But all the sins of the world were laid on Jesus as He died, and He became the sacrificial lamb for us.

Had Jesus been buried and stayed there, sin would have conquered the world. However, on the third day after His death, Jesus arose from the grave, thereby conquering sin. Through His resurrection we can put off the fallen nature and "put on the new man;" that is, have the nature of Christ in us. Jesus was on the earth for forty more days after his resurrection, but then ascended into heaven.

I believe all this happened and my core beliefs are based on this history, but I still think Christianity is relevant two thousand years later. I find that Christianity gives meaning to life and that it explains most problems in our world.

The Bible is unique, for it was written over a period of about 1500 years, yet it still has unity and practical instructions for us today. I was largely influenced by my

conservative upbringing, so it is easy for me to think that. But what is my theology behind it?

First of all, I believe in an absolutely sovereign God. I believe He sees everything and is everywhere, and can influence situations and people according to His will. He created the universe in six days, yet He cares about each and everyone of us in a special way and wants to have a personal relationship with each one of us. He is merciful and He gives us grace when we least deserve it. I also believe He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, down to earth to die for our sins, thereby allowing us to have a personal relationship by covering our sins through Jesus' death.

Secondly, I believe that Jesus is the perfect Son of God. He was born to a virgin and lived a sinless life. He was crucified for my sins and His blood washes away my sin. This is important because it allows me to become a Christian in the first place and God forgives my sin through cleansing of His blood.

Love is important as well, for it is the greatest commandment. In Luke 10:27, Jesus responded to a lawyer asking how to inherit eternal life with the following, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with

all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.” This sums up a lot of what being a Christian is, for if we love God, we will do what He commands. As if we love our neighbor as our own self, relationships will never be a problem. Unfortunately, nobody is perfect and therefore, love is not always the highest priority.

Lastly, I believe in the power of prayer. Prayer is communication from the Christian to God. It is a way of expressing gratitude and requesting help in our own lives or in the lives of others. It is an essential practice in the Christian walk of life because it provides a proper perspective on life. I find it rather difficult to be proud and also much easier to not worry when I communicate with the God of the universe.

Oswald Chambers, a World War I chaplain and writer of theology, had these thoughts about prayer, “To say that ‘prayer changes things’ is not as close to the truth as saying, ‘Prayer changes me and then I change things.’ God has established things so that prayer, on the basis of redemption, changes the way a person looks at things. Prayer is not a matter of changing things externally, but one of working miracles in a persons’ inner nature.”

This explains partially why we need prayer, but I would add that prayer can also influence certain situations, especially during times of illness or danger.

Why do bad things happen to good people, and how could God let terrible things happen? These are two of the most common arguments against Christianity and I can understand why. The latter is easier to answer, for free will and the fallen nature can sometimes result in people doing horrible things to other people. The Crusades are an example of people killing thousands even though the Crusaders were “religious.” However, the former I do not know how to answer. Why does my aunt have breast cancer, and why did all those people in Paris have to die? I just do not know. But God is my way of dealing with struggles like those. For I can talk to Him at any moment. I can always have faith in Him, for Romans 8:28 says, “All things work together for good to them that love God.” The thought of a Higher Being comforts me and I do not need be in control all the time. If God created the world, it makes sense that He knows what is best for me. I just need to submit to His will and trust Him, and in the end, I will be with Him forever.



marriages

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

Eash-Beiler

Bro. Anthony Devon, son of Wanda and the late Dennis Eash, Romney, WV, and Sis. Esta Jean, daughter of J. Omar and Naomi Beiler, Sabina, OH, on Nov. 14, 2015, at First Baptist church for Faith and Light Mennonite Church of Leesburg, OH, by Duane Troyer.

Heft-Vendley

Bro. Matthew, son of Daniel and Lena Heft, Western Grove, AR, and Sis. Meri, daughter of David and Elizabeth Vendley, Harrison, AR, at Northside Church of Christ for Little Flock Christian Fellowship, on Jan. 30, 2016, by Charles Hamilton.

Helmuth-Wengerd

Bro. Ryan, son of Raymond and Esther Helmuth, Whiteville, TN, and Sis. Catherine, daughter of Simon and Clara Wengerd, Whiteville, TN, at Estes Church of Christ for Whiteville Mennonite Church on August 1, 2015, by Kevin Yoder.

Hershberger-Yoder

Bro. Brian Devon, son of Lyndon and Lenora Hershberger, Russelville, OH, and Sis. Charity Beth, daughter of Sam and Esther Yoder, Ripley, OH, on Sept.

4, 2015, at Georgetown Church of Christ for Still Waters Mennonite Church by Dave Yoder.

Miller-Helmuth

Bro. Marvin Gabriel, son of Jerry and Sarah Miller, Partridge, KS, and Sis. Marisa Brooke, daughter of Eldon and Shana Helmuth, Kalona, IA, on Oct. 17, 2015, Gospel Light Church, Kalona, IA, by Delbert Schrock.

Troyer-Kauffman

Bro. Eric, son of Lowell and Esther Troyer, Halsey, OR, and Sis. Angie, daughter of Roman and Ruth Kauffman, Chuckey, TN, at First Baptist in Greeneville, TN, for Greene Co. Mennonite Church on March 19, 2016, by Raymond Fisher.

Wagler-Graber

Bro. Robert, son of Galen and Mary Ellen Wagler, Oskaloosa, KS, and Sis. Jenna, daughter of Mervin and Betty Graber, Oskaloosa, KS, at Town and Country Christian Church for Ebenezer A.M. Church, Oskaloosa, KS, on March 11, 2016, by the bride's father, Mervin Graber.



cradle roll

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

Beachy, Ellis and Kimberly (Zelaya), Scotland Halfmoon, Belize, fourth child, third daughter, Irissa Gabrielli, Feb. 26, 2016.

Bear, Gail and Michelle (Smallfoot), Harrison, AR, eighth child, fifth daughter, Michaiiah Danae, March 1, 2016.

Byers, Phil and Mary Ann (Weaver), Pulaski, TN, second child and daughter, La Rhea Beth, March 13, 2016.

Byler, Joseph and Melissa (Mast), Whiteville, TN, first child and son, Peyton Lee, March 26, 2016.

Byler, Linnford and Amber (Martin), Whiteville, TN, fourth child, third daughter, Genevieve Anya, August 10, 2015.

Byler, Marvin and Arlene (Miller), Jackson, OH, fourth child, second daughter, Annekah Jayne, Nov. 10, 2015.

Chupp, Ivan and Carol (Mast), Holmesville, OH, fourth child, third son, Kaleb Ivan, Feb. 18, 2016.

Coblentz, Michael and Joanne (Stoltzfus), Woodstown, NY, first child and son, Miguel Andre, March 9, 2016.

Esh, Al and Sue (Helmuth), Aroda, VA, second child and son, Weston Eric, Jan. 27, 2016.

Frost, Myron and Hannah (Yoder), Bermudian Landing, Belize, first child and son, Morgan Elam, Dec. 15, 2015.

Hershberger, Darrell and Alison (Funk), Stuarts Draft, VA, fourth child, first daughter, Claudia Jade, April 4, 2016.

Hershberger, Mark and Emily (Miller), Sugarcreek, OH, second child and son, Jase Andrew, March 16, 2016.

Hochstedler, Morris and Anna (Mast), Summersville, KY, tenth child, sixth daughter, Janelle Rose, March 3, 2016.

Hochstetler, Lonnie and Ruth (Lapp), Huntsville, AR, third child, first daughter, Makayla Erin, March 1, 2016.

Hostetler, Andrew and Joanne (Mast), Owenton, KY, fifth child, first daughter, Abigail Dawn, March 3, 2016.

Knepp, Josh and Kaylene (Byler), Whiteville, TN, first child and daughter, Reagan Ashley, August 7, 2015.

Knepp, Norman and Debora (Schmidt), Jackson, OH, third child, second daughter, Heidi Lynette, Nov. 6, 2015.

Lehman, Clifton and Denizli (Kratzer), Woodward, PA, first child and daughter, Ivy Gem, March 21, 2016.

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

Miller, Gerald and Ruth (Stoltzfus), Limestone, TN, second child, first son, Gabriel Dawson, Feb. 16, 2016.

Miller, Justin and Michelle (Yoder), Leon, IA, third child and son, Brice Jaxon, March 25, 2016.

Miller, Matthew and Gina (Troyer), Conneautville, PA, first child and daughter, Kaylee Jade, Feb. 24, 2016.

Miller, Verlin and Sharon (Byler), Decatur City, IA, third child, first daughter, Alexa Kay, March 19, 2016.

Nisley, Jacob and Anna (Byler), Meadville, PA, first child and daughter, Danica Raine, Dec. 9, 2015.

Peachey, Jason and Nancy (Yoder), McVeytown, PA, fourth child, third daughter, Emma Kate, March 14, 2016.

Peachey, Mike and Gina (Miller), Centerville, PA, fifth child, second daughter, Lana Estelle, Feb. 24, 2016.

Ramos, Patrick and Rhoda (Fisher), Mifflin, PA, second child and son, Joaquin Oliver, March 1, 2016.

Schmucker, Nelson and Janice (Martin), Ozawkie, KS, fifth child (one deceased), second daughter, Miranda Faith, Feb. 23, 2016.

Schwartz, Dan and April (Yoder), Jackson, OH, fourth child and daughter, Katelyn Jo, Nov. 30, 2015.

Sensenig, Wesley and Karen (Schrock), County, Waterford, Ireland, third child, second son, Declan Andrew, Jan. 20, 2016.

Stoltzfus, Travis and Heather (Lehman), Middleburg, PA, first child and daughter, Jasmine Pearl, March 2, 2016.

Swarey, Josh and Miriam (Wengerd), Cottage Grove, TN, first child and son, Carlos Andre, Feb. 21, 2016.

Wagler, LaWayne and Dorcas (King), Gonvick, MN, fourth child, second son, Devin Paul, March 16, 2016.

Wagler, Milan and Grace (Beachy), Cottage Grove, TN, seventh child, fourth daughter, Mikayla Dawn, Jan. 12, 2016.

Wengerd, James and Gail (Mast), Summersville, KY, third child, second daughter, Jade Sunshine, March 9, 2016.

Yoder, Aaron and Karla (Miller), Jackson, OH, eighth child, fourth daughter, Charity, Feb. 8, 2016.

Yoder, Jeremy and Lois (Beachy), McVeytown, PA, fifth child (one deceased), third son, Blake Jeremiah, Feb. 26, 2016.

Yoder, Justin and Melissa (Good), Munnsville, NY, second child, first son, Benson Kyrell, Oct. 10, 2015.

Yoder, Kevin and Malinda (Byler), Whiteville, TN, seventh child, second daughter, Kezia Jane, Feb. 22, 2106.

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

Yoder, Steven and Daisy (Beiler), Aroda, VA, sixth child, second son, Benjamin Josiah, Feb. 4, 2016.

Yoder, Timothy and Clara (Kuhns), Auburn, KY, second child and son, Trace Lawrence, March 8, 2016.

Yutzy, Alvin, Jr., and Rhoda (Hochstetler), Huntsville, AR, second child, first daughter, Ashley Kate, Feb. 24, 2016.

Yutzy, Leroy and Lori (Troyer), Winchester, OH, second child and daughter, Lindsey Emmalee, March 19, 2016.

Zimmerman, Javan and Matina (Overholt), Oswego, KS, eighth child, second daughter, Charis Anne, March 11, 2016.

Zook, Darvin and Rosina (Fisher), Mifflin, PA, second child, first daughter, Sara Adelle, Feb. 7, 2016.

Zook, Randall and Mary (Yoder), Rural Retreat, VA, first child and daughter, McKenzie Dawn, Feb. 12, 2016.




ordinations

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

Bro. Andre Weaver, 26, (wife Sharon Miller) was ordained as minister at Still Waters Mennonite Church, Jackson, Ohio, on March 6, 2016. Preordination messages were given by Charles Hamilton, Harrison, AR. The charge was given by Paul Weaver, assisted by Charles Hamilton. Sharing the lot was Norman Knepp.

Bro. Andrew Yoder, 47, (wife Edna Yoder) of Russellville, OH, was

ordained as minister at Still Waters Mennonite Church, Georgetown, OH, on March 13, 2106. The charge was given by Dave Miller, following preordination messages by Mel Beiler. Lyndon Yoder was also in the lot.

Bro. Roy Hershberger, 42, (wife Ruth Wengerd) was ordained as bishop, March 20, 2016, at Plainview Gospel Mennonite Church, Guys Mills, PA. Preordination messages were given by James Mullet, Sugarcreek, OH. The charge was given by Homer Zook, assisted by Ervin Miller, James Mullet, and John Wengerd. John Yoder and John Nisley were also in the lot. 

obituaries

Kinsinger, Menno Joseph, 79, of Stuarts Draft, VA, died Jan. 28, 2016, at his home, due to congestive heart failure. He was born in Meyersdale, PA, August 26, 1936, son of the late Milton and Katie (Hochstetler) Kinsinger.

Menno committed his life to the Lord in his youth. He was a member of Pilgrim Christian Fellowship, Stuarts Draft.

On April 4, 1957, he was married to Sadie Barbara Yoder.. She survives.

Other survivors include six daughters: Linda (Allen) Beiler, Stuarts Draft, VA; Kathy (Phil) Yoder, Goshen, IN; Treva (Tim) Yoder, Vanleer, TN; Brenda (Bill) Schrock, Amherst, VA; Joanna (Lamar) Bontrager, Topeka, IN; and Barb (Jason) Beachy, Broadway, VA; 26 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, a sister-in-law, Sarah Beachy, Broadway, VA; a brother-in-law, Leroy Nissley; and two step sisters, Mary Nisly and Emma Masters.

He was preceded in death by his son, Menno Joseph, II, a great grandson, Trevor Yoder; two sisters, Bertha Zook Yoder and Orpha Nissley; one brother, Herman and his step mother, Martha (Wengerd).

Menno spent most of his life as a logger (Kinsinger's Logging Service) and in restoration of log homes and buildings. He also learned blacksmithing and stone laying. One of his local projects included the American Farm at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton. He loved nature, often describing its beauty to others. Menno loved people and dropped whatever he was doing for a chat. He entertained many guests with a well-loved story. He was fond of his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Due to health challenges after his bout with spinal meningitis in 1997, he was forced to retire from his business. He spoke often of his deep longing to be with Jesus.

The funeral was held on Jan. 31, with Simon Schrock, Bennie Byler, and Ken Miller serving. Burial was in the church cemetery, officiated by Darrell Hershberger and Tim Yoder.

Miller, Seth Elliot, was stillborn on Feb. 29, 2016, at Pomerene Hospital in Millersburg, Ohio. He was the son of Brandon W. and Rosanna (Stoltzfus) Miller, of Dundee.

Surviving in addition to his parents are paternal Grandparents, Paul Leroy

and Miriam Miller, Sugarcreek, and maternal grandparents, Mahlon and Abigail Stoltzfus, Killbuck.

Private family memorial and burial services were held March 1 at the Paul Leroy Miller residence.

Petersheim, Miriam (Lapp), 93, died Jan. 27, 2016. She was born July 29, 1922, daughter of the late Samuel F. and Susie (Lantz) Lapp.

She was a member of West Haven A. M. Church, New Holland.

On Nov. 24, 1942, she was married to Christian S. Petersheim. He died Jan. 27, 1976. Surviving are six children: Susanna, wife of Samuel Stoltzfus, Ronks; Samuel, husband of Sally (Beiler), Gap; Alvin, husband of Esther (Fisher), Gap; Edna, wife of Gideon K. Stoltzfus, Gordonville; John husband of Lena (Smucker), Coatesville; Christian, husband of Lydia Ruth "Ruthie" (King), Gap; 48 grandchildren; 76 great grandchildren and one great great granddaughter.

She was preceded in death by a daughter, Betty Louise, on June 27, 2000.

The funeral was held at Pequea A.M. Church for West Haven Church, Lee Stoltzfus, Samuel Stoltzfus, and Floyd King serving. Burial was in the Buena Vista Cemetery.

Stoltzfus, John Omar, 79, of Narvon, PA, died March 16, 2016. He was born Dec. 19, 1936, son of the late Gideon E.

and Katie (Stoltzfoos) Stoltzfus.

He was a member of West Haven Amish Mennonite Church.

On Nov. 21, 1957, he was married to Naomi (King) Stoltzfus. She survives. Children surviving are Sadie Mae, wife of Reuben Stoltzfus; J. Omar, husband of Nancy Stoltzfus; Samuel, husband of Susanna Stoltzfoos; Anna Mae, wife of Jason Stoltzfus; Nathan Jay, husband of Vivian Stoltzfus; Ruth Ann, wife of J. Ivan Stoltzfus; Naomi, wife of J. Omar Stoltzfus; and Norma, wife of Alvin Jay Stoltzfus. Also surviving are 67 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren, and seven siblings.

He was preceded in death by a stillborn son.

The funeral was held at West Haven on March 20, with Lee Stoltzfus, George Stoltzfus, Ray Stoltzfus, and Ben Stoltzfus serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Yoder, Lydia (Nisly), 99, died at her home in rural Partridge, KS, on March 17, 2016. She was born in rural Hutchinson, KS, on August 24, 1916, daughter of the of the late Noah and Rosa (Schrock) Nisly.


She was a member of Center A.M. Church, Hutchinson.

On June 27, 1937, she was married to Melvin M. Yoder. He died on Jan. 6, 2005. Eleven children were born to them. Surviving are Calvin Yoder, Kalona, Iowa; daughter-in-law, Lucy (Shetler), wife of William Yoder,

who died in 1996, of Casper, WY; Rosa Yoder, Partridge, KS; Menno (Tobie) Yoder, Merriam, KS; Abe (Laura) Yoder, Paynesville, MN; Anna (Clayton) Weaver, Bastrop, TX; Wilma (Paul) Beachy, Bastrop, TX; Judy (Calvin) King, Harrison, AR; David (Susanna) Yoder, Partridge, KS; and Joseph (Twila) Yoder, Partridge; 39 grandchildren, 90 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. Siblings surviving are Amanda Funk, Millersburg, IN; Amos Nisly, Hutchinson, KS; Mose Nisly, Shreve, OH; Becky Miller, Partridge; and Ella Nisly, Millersburg, IN.

Lydia was preceded in death by two children: William in Feb., 1996 and Marian in Oct., 2013, and three daughters-in law: Mary Edna (Stutzman), wife of Menno; Erma (Miller) and Ada (Bontrager), wives of Calvin, who is now again widowed. .

Lydia's contributions to her family and the church were many. She is remembered fondly for her concern for those less fortunate, her emphasis on clean speech, her love of singing praises to God, and her positive outlook on life, to name a few. Her daughter Rosa's care for her in the last decade especially, is credited with contributing to Lydia's long and full life.

The funeral was held on March 20, with Gary Miller, Arlyn Nisly and Oren Yoder serving. LaVerne Miller conducted the committal at West Center Cemetery. 

Adolph Hitler is remembered for his misguided obsession for German/white and European supremacy. Because he thought Jews, Gypsies, and various other classes of people were inferior he made them targets and victims of the heartless murder of approximately 8,000,000 people.

Hitler's cleansing pogroms were not only racial but also ideological. Persons who were vocal in their opposition for religious or other reasons, were potential candidates of the Nazi death list. It is sobering to remember that most Mennonites in Germany gave Hitler unjustified moral support, for they were apparently not aware of his uncivilized cruelty. Perhaps because of this, the Mennonites were spared from Nazi attack as enemies of Hitler. The senseless slaughter by Naziism is now referred to as "The Holocaust." In post-World War I disillusionment, Germans seemed to see Hitler as a leader who could make Germany great again.

The above lines are offered as

introductory to a lesser known fact of this terrible blot on human history.

Local columnist Sheila Lisman writes in *The Hutchinson News*. She says that in 1933 and following, as Germany was conquering nations in Europe, these countries were purged of "un-German" reading material. It is estimated that by the end of World War II, Germany had burned 100,000 books. This includes all the works by Jewish German authors. *New York Times* called it a "literary holocaust." By 1938, Nazis had banned 18 categories of books, 4,175 titles, and the complete works of 565 authors.

I am impressed that this evil genius knew the importance of the content of what his subjects would read. May it remind us that we also need to be aware of this fact for entirely different reasons. Let us be reminded that truth is never obsolete. In Hitler's day, the printed page did not need to compete with present-day methods of communication. The access we now have to unfiltered

communication has never been greater. It is doubtful that the need for discernment has ever been greater than it is today. Parents, church leaders, and Christian peers can be very helpful in “proving all things and holding fast to that which is good.” Honest hearts coupled with the grace of God are a winning combination in these perilous times.

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According to a telephone news line, over \$60 billion was spent on pets last year in the United States.

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Eight school terms in the classroom covers subjects that are considered useful and perhaps even essential for life. Generally, a job seeker without a high school diploma may find himself at a serious disadvantage. College and graduate school training is necessary for certain vocations, for example, medical services require accreditation.

I recently came across a fresh reminder that learning beyond eighth grade outside of the classroom can be advanced and very useful. A young man on his family produce farm was faced with a serious pest problem.

Conventional pesticides failed to overcome the problem. The situation motivated this young man to seek solutions to their very serious pest problems. Having only an eighth-grade education did not keep him from pursuing diligent study of soil and plant health that creates a natural solution to pests.

A decade or so later, their company is offering a product line to farmers and produce growers who want to produce crops without chemical contamination. Let us not discredit the value of good schools and good teachers. But a love of learning can last a lifetime and sometimes can have very significant ongoing results.

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Christians should always remember the sufferings of Christ as the price of our redemption. In our area, Good Friday is generally considered another work day. I assume that most Amish churches still consider it a holiday. I was surprised recently to learn from a local columnist, Phil Wood, that in 12 U. S. states, Good Friday is a legal holiday. Our three local sister congregations typically each have a one-hour service on Good

Friday morning.

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Conservative Anabaptists generally are not actively involved in the political process. We believe God provides governments to help keep order in unruly society. Christians are under obligation to obey them unless doing so would directly violate God's Word. We are specifically instructed to pray for leaders that we may lead lives that are quiet and peaceable in all godliness and honesty. Some current circumstances are powerful reminders of our need for fervent prayer.

A leading presidential candidate says he is a Christian. But he also is quoted to have said that he has never asked God for forgiveness. Thrice married, he seems proud of his exploits with women. His speaking manner is self-centered, containing elements of vulgarity. The possibility of such a person becoming president seems incredible. His present level of support is not encouraging.

Leadership from Liberty University with Southern Baptist ties has endorsed this candidate. We are not called to judge, but do have access to the life and

teaching of the Righteous Judge of all the earth to whom we shall give account. The Scriptures are clear that we are responsible to pray for our leaders.

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"Evangelical" is such a good word. It is regrettable that it has become a label used by persons whose life does not correspond to its meaning. Pollsters find that there are many who describe themselves as evangelical who may not even be actively involved with a church. Therefore, the polls showing a lot of evangelical support for a presidential candidate may be misleading.

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Extremely high winds from the south fanned fires in Oklahoma and Kansas in March, especially on March 23 and 24. At one time smoke from fires upwind obscured the sunlight (locally) to the point the sun appeared as a red sphere in mid-afternoon. The Anderson Creek fire started in Oklahoma and spread north into Kansas, burning more than 620 square miles, close to 400,000 acres, much of it tinder dry pasture. Also lost in that fire were 600 cattle, at least 16 residences and 25 other

structures, and countless miles of fence and bales of hay. By March 31, the fire was mostly contained. Closer home, another fire began in Harvey County, Kansas, and spread into our Reno County. Officials estimated that that fire covered 14,000 acres. Fire crews, national guardsmen, and a blanket of snow on Easter morning helped fight the fires. Though there was much monetary and property loss, we are grateful that no one was killed or seriously injured due to these fires.

-DLM

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When Madeline Stuart was born in 1996, her mother was shocked to learn that she was the mother of a baby girl that carried a Downs Syndrome diagnosis. She had never heard of that condition before. She began looking for ways to give her daughter the best life possible. She knew her daughter would likely never excel scholastically, but she carried a sturdy conviction that her daughter still had an important role to play in her world. Young Madeline expressed a desire to work as a model. While that may have

seemed far fetched, it seemed realistic to Madeline. When she participated in a fashion show recently, *Cosmopolitan* magazine picked up the amazing story about this young lady with Downs. The article celebrated the accomplishments of this disadvantaged individual, who overcame huge obstacles. At the same time that this magazine ran this article it also ran a piece lambasting a state law in Indiana that sought to outlaw abortions solely on the basis of gender, ethnicity or handicap.

Now, a few disclaimers might be in order here. I don't think modeling makes much of a contribution to humanity and I wouldn't recommend *Cosmopolitan* as very worthwhile reading material. But, we can and should rejoice when our fellow-man sees persons with handicaps as being intrinsically valuable. Many persons see a physical or mental handicap as justifiable reason to snuff out the life of an unborn person.

Furthermore, let's not miss this rich irony. This magazine simultaneously touted the accomplishments of a young

lady with Downs and vigorously defended the “rights” of a mother to choose to end the life of a child with the same diagnosis provided the baby hadn’t been born yet.

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A look at the current USA drought monitor shows about 35% of California gripped in an exceptional drought. The good news is that this drought seems to be regressing. Rains this winter have been very helpful, particularly in some parts of the state. Many of the lakes have returned to normal or above normal levels and the snow pack in the mountains is better than it has been in a number of years. This is very welcome news for that state’s residents. However, El Nino is getting most of the credit for the abundant moisture and there is concern that these rains represent a favorable blip, rather than the beginning of a new trend. Time will tell.

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Ours is a superbly privileged time in history in which we enjoy almost limitless access to the Bible. Many of us use books and/or electronic tools to help us better understand the Holy Scriptures. But, I’ve often

pondered this question, “Has the explosion of accessibility to Scripture and study aids, led to a revival and greater faithfulness among us?”

I’d like to go on record as saying that careful study is very important. Those of us who are called to teach need to be particularly sensitive that what we teach is accurate and trustworthy. (James 3:1) However, let’s not lay aside faithfulness to what we already understand in our pursuit of some “new and better understanding”. Somewhere there has to be a balance, or at least a healthy tension, that encourages us to grow in our understanding of God and His will for us but also to rest in the fact that in Christ we have all we need. A sincere desire to grow in our understanding of God and His will for us, will not lead us wrong. The problem occurs when other motives prompt us and lead us awry. Sometimes we don’t understand our own hearts as well as we thought. Mark Twain supposedly once said, “It’s not the parts of the Bible that I don’t understand that worry me. It’s the parts I do understand.”

-RJM 

Battles for Supremacy

Elmer M. Yoder, Montezuma, GA

Life is filled with battles. I see three types of battles fought by individuals and groups of adults:

- Defensive battles
- Offensive battles
- Battles for supremacy and conquest.

Christians fight defensive battles when they are attacked by the enemy, Satan. They fight offensive battles to combat the evil that threatens their security in Christ. In Ephesians we read, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.” So we live our Christian lives in a constant battle. It is to be expected. But, praise God, we can have victory through Christ.

Battles for supremacy and conquest are in a totally different realm. The child of God is not to fight battles of supremacy and conquest. Supremacy denotes the act or process of winning over an opponent. These are battles that

are fought in the world to lift up and glorify the individual, instead of God. These battles are highly esteemed among men, but are an abomination to God.

God said in Isaiah 42:8, “My glory will I not give to another.” In fact, this was the first battle ever fought in history, when Lucifer tried to rise above God. It is very sad that many organized churches officially sanction the same type of battle that caused Lucifer to be banished from heaven—forever. It should not come as a surprise that Satan is using the same battle plan today. It seems to be firmly entrenched and avidly defended in churches! The battle is being fought in church ball games and in fund-raising tournaments that are supposedly for a good cause.

Great excitement prevails and adulation is given to the winner[s] who earn a trophy. Worse yet, it is being taught to our precious children that it is important to participate and excel in these battles for supremacy.

1 Corinthians 10:31, “Whether therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

The battle for supremacy is being fought in the sports arena and in the cow show, the car show, the dog show, the race track, the drag strip, and in huge stadiums around the globe.

There is tremendous self-glorification in winning –in conquering! That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God is not the cow or the dog that’s in the ring, or the skill with which the football or basketball, baseball, hockey puck is manipulated, or the speed and power of the car—it is the final score, followed by adulation, admiration, and glory that is heaped on the winner, and his receiving it.

Eliminate the score and the winner from the activity and the activity quickly loses its appeal! If the winner professes Christ, he may shout, “Give God the glory!” but he cannot control the way people glorify him.

This is no place for the Christian! Paul and Barnabas were horrified when they perceived that people


looked upon them as gods. For centuries wars between nations have been fought for conquest and supremacy. Battles for supremacy are also fought by thousands who avidly cheer the winner. This type of battle is fought in the sport hunting activity, the hunt and the eventual, all-important kill. The telling and retelling in minute detail of the hunt leading up to the kill lifts up and glorifies the killer. Even the kill is not the problem, for killing is necessary if we are to get rid of pests or eat the meat taken in the hunt. Glorifying the hunter above God is an abomination to God along with the thrill of supremacy over animals. Millions are spent in the pursuit of these battles.

The battle for supremacy is not in the organism called the Church of Jesus Christ. Members of the body of Christ are aware that God will not permit anyone who is involved in battles for conquest and supremacy in heaven, realizing full well that the enemy of their souls got cast out of heaven because of it.

Unfortunately, many organized churches sanction these battles, the seeds of which can often be

found in church ball games. God's Word does not support battles of supremacy but rather forbids them in that they glorify the individual instead of God.

In summary, our Lord gave us many examples and much teaching on this subject. He fought offensive and defensive battles. His life was the perfect example. He taught that the way up is down.

His greatest condemnation was for those who fought the battle for supremacy. He pointedly warned the sons of Zebedee about this. We dare not indulge in the battle for supremacy. It is diametrically opposed to all Jesus taught and lived. It takes a heart after God to engage in the right kind of battles—and a heart that is not after supremacy. 

A MOTHER'S DAY MEDITATION

An Open Letter From Mother

By Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

My son,
I love you very deeply and am concerned for both your earthly and eternal future. I realize we live in a sinfully fallen and morally depraved world. Therefore, today I want to give you some motherly advice.

First of all, please do not squander your virility on physically beautiful women

who only want to use you for their own sensual benefit. Furthermore, I beg you to stay clear of any type of activities that will corrupt your mind and lead you into a sexually promiscuous lifestyle. For this reason, I plead with you to diligently guard your heart so that you will allow nothing to defile your spirit, soul and body. My desire is for you to be able to properly love

and respect women, whether you marry or remain single. Remember, your masculine strength is best proven by how well you can control your human passions and re-direct your manly energies into serving Jesus Christ and His body. Do not let your eyes direct your heart.

Secondly, I counsel you to never sell yourself out to materialism. This is a god that will rob you of the true joy of living. Believe me, you will never be happy if you set your heart on worldly wealth. Let me remind you that your self-worth is not contingent upon how many material possessions you accumulate while on this earth, but rather upon having a rich relationship with God. Moreover, a contented spirit will allow you to freely spend your worldly resources to aid the needy and expand the Kingdom of God.

Thirdly, I urge you to keep your life completely free of resentment. Never allow yourself the pleasure of nursing a grudge toward anyone. Resentment

is bottled up anger that, if left unchecked, will turn to bitterness which will slowly eat you! Trust me, you do not want to waste precious years being a prisoner to bitterness.

Now I know you probably can look at me and see my glaring imperfections and inconsistencies. However, please promise me you will overlook them, otherwise, you will be tempted to use them as an excuse for your personal failures. This would truly grieve my heart, because I honestly did the best I could with what I knew at the time. As the woman whose body shared such an intimately symbiotic connection with you for months before you entered this world, my greatest pleasure is derived from seeing you fulfill your God-intended purposes as a full-grown man. My prayer is that you will become a better person than me. This is why I am giving you this advice as your mother as I sense my responsibility toward God and care for you.

Your loving mother



A Parable of Childish Creativity

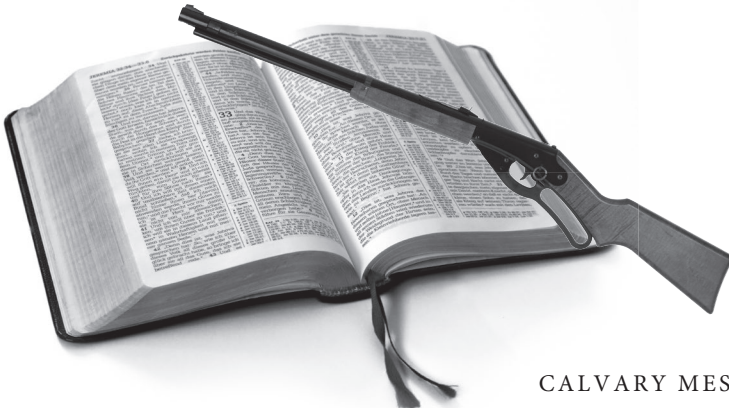
Stephen Miller, Belle Center, OH

Come here, my friend, come sit a spell
While I to you this story tell.
About two boys just having fun
While playing with their B-B gun.
How very careful they would be,
For guns are meant to kill you see,
To halt and maim and to destroy,
What awful powers they employ.
For bullets sent upon their track
Are sent away to not come back.
But bullets also cost a sum,
And sometimes hinder having fun.
And so these boys did find some seed
That would provide their very need.
But seeds, my friend, are meant to grow
Wherever we may chance to sow.
And bring forth fruit for food and raiment,
Things to eat—or maybe flowers, all so neat.
Yes, seeds are meant to grow and bless
In many ways of usefulness.

But then, my friend, alas, 'tis true
It all depends on me and you.
The choice is ours the seed to use,

For purpose true or to abuse.
For a seed can be a bullet too,
Just like these boys did choose to do.
When seed within a gun is placed
T'will halt and maim and so disgrace.
And so a boy did learn too late
And suffer then an awful fate.

And so, my friend, with you I plead
God's Word is also like a seed
And if indeed with love you sow,
Some day it then will surely grow.
And bring forth fruit some hundredfold
And spread its branches far untold
Because you planted lovingly
The Word of God will hearts set free.
But if, my friend, you then should choose
The Word of God to so misuse,
And place it now within your gun
And who can tell the awful sum.
For like a bullet, just the same,
This bullet, too, will halt and maim
Until too late, too late we cry,
Another soul is left to die!



Mom or Mother?

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

May, the month for mothers—the month which gives special recognition to the woman who gave you life. It is a time to celebrate our mothers or our moms. As an older mother, I enjoy the cards, telephone calls, flowers and notes of love and affirmation from my children. Younger mothers may feel unappreciated on Mother’s Day, but be assured you children will rise up and call you “blessed,” in the years to come. If your mom is still alive, be sure to honor her this Mother’s Day.

Some of you may never have known your mothers, perhaps because of death or some unfortunate reason, you were separated from your birth mother. Some of you may never have experienced the joys of motherhood in the natural sense. However, each of you **had** a birth mother and many of you have **mothered** children without giving birth to them.

Is there a difference between a mother and a mom? According to

the dictionary, *a mother is a woman who has given birth to a child.* Mom, according to the dictionary, is simply *a mother.* Most times a mother and a mom will be the same person. Allow me to make this distinction: A mother **gives life to the child** and mom **gives her life in nurturing and caring for the child.** She willingly and lovingly accepts the responsibility in good times or bad. It takes only nine months to become a mother but it takes a lifetime to be a mom. A mom gives up her own desires, her dreams, her time and schedule, even her own needs and wants. A mom is committed to hard work, to worries and disappointments. She shares in her child’s joy and happiness. A mom protects, provides, and loves. No matter how old the child is, she continues to carry that child in her heart.

There are many different kinds of moms among us. You may be a birth mom, or a mom by adoption.

Perhaps you are a step-mom, or a grandmother who has taken on the role of mom to a grandchild. You may be a foster mom. I used to say, “I could never be a foster mom, because I could not handle parting with the child.” Recently, however, a foster mom told me, “I do not do this for myself but I do it for the child.” Now my earlier comment seems selfish. I deeply admire foster moms; they are very unselfish moms. There are many women who have given of themselves to nurture children without the title of mom attached to their names, such as teachers, aunts, childcare workers, and simply women who love and care about children.

So what does a Mom do?

A mom recognizes her responsibility in teaching and promoting Christian values to her children. She prays with them, reads Bible stories and instills Christian principles and values at a young age.


A mom works from morning till night cheerfully providing the proper nourishment and a healthy environment for her family. She sends her children to school with clean clothes, after a hearty breakfast, and with happy faces.

A mom is also concerned about the emotional needs of her children.

She will listen to their questions and take time to laugh and cry with them. Every child should have the privilege of growing up with a mom who can laugh with them, but never at them.

A mom does not show partiality or favoritism. Each child will know she is loved and accepted for who she is and not for who her mom wants her to be. A mom values the differences in her children and helps them to become the person God created them to be.

A mom does not complain. She chooses to be a cheerful, joyous mom, accepting her responsibilities, not grudgingly or causing her family to feel like they are a bother. She gives herself willingly to the work at hand. She teaches her children to view work as a pleasure not as a burden. She develops a grateful and thankful spirit.

A mom understands that she cannot accomplish all these things in her own strength. She recognizes her strength is in Jesus Christ. She spends time alone with Him in Bible reading and prayer. She breathes a prayer to God asking Him for grace to finish one more task, and—guess what—her strength is renewed. God hears and answers her prayer, because He cares about Mom. 

The Blind Mother Elephant

Mary Ellen Beachy

Not only on Mother's Day, but all through the year, think of ways to be kind to your mother.

Deep in the forests of Burma, the blind mama elephant laid her trunk gently on the the back of her five-year-old calf. The calf took his mother about the clearing. It is an amazing sight, just like a small child holding his blind mother's hand and leading her down the path.

Elephant calves at that age tend to be lively and ornery. Sometimes they will wander off, away from their mother, or even tease and torment her. But this calf affectionately named Bo Lan Pya, or the Guide Man, sensed his responsibility and knew that his mother needed him. He did not tire of helping her or run away into the wild. He stayed by her side whenever she needed a guide to help her find food or water.

The mother elephant, Mahon Nee, could still work a regular shift. She would push large logs down into the river, guided by the rider on her back. In the afternoon when her work was completed, dutiful Guide Man would come to her. They had fun together splashing and bathing in the river. Next, with her trunk on his back, he led her to feed on kaing grass. Then he would lead her to forage on the bamboos for a few hours. After that, they were off again, to feed on creeper and crane brake jungle.

The pair spoke to each other in ways that people could not hear or understand. Their love and affection ran deep.

If the calf had not taken care of its mother, someone would have had to cut and give her six


hundred pounds of fodder which she needed each day!

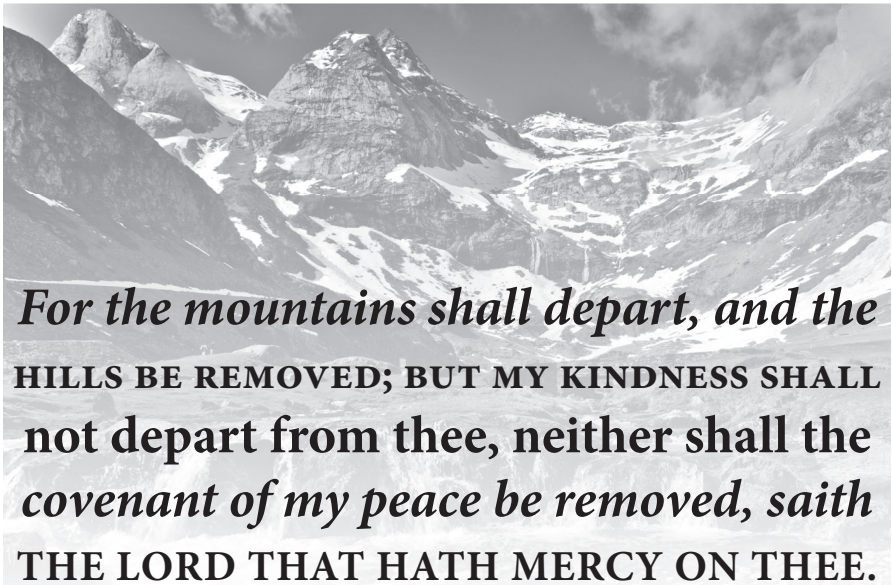
When their stomachs were full they would rest together under a shady tree and then Guide Man would lead his mother to the river to drink.

What a pleasure to see how the elephant mother and her doting calf enjoyed each other's company. The mother thrived physically—her life wrapped up in the life of the calf. Both were doing well.

Their overseer studied elephants and rejoiced that they were happy and was amazed how Guide Man care for his mother. Watching

them always cheered him. He learned many things from elephants and observed how even after years of separation elephants will recognize each other and seek to be reunited. Their family ties apparently run deep.

[It is amazing what nature teaches us. Note Job 12:7 and 9: "But ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee." and "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Resource:: Vicki Croke, Elephant Company, Random House, NY. -MEB] 



ISAIAH 54:10

Where Have All the Pioneers Gone?

Gideon Yutzy, Hutchinson, KS

It is possible to have a fulfilling career working in an RV factory. It is possible to live happily in a comfortable home with a backyard and an attached two-car garage. And it is possible to experience joy by devoting the prime of one's life to paying for a property, working from 8 to 5, and raising children.

But are we *all* supposed to do that?

Let me be clear: One could do much worse than devoting the prime of one's life to raising a family. Procreation—it's one of the fundamental responsibilities the Creator assigned to our race. My question is not whether raising a family in an established, safe community is an honorable vocation. My question is whether it should be our uncontested default. My question is whether we couldn't, at least occasionally, raise families in other contexts.

Exactly half a century ago, William McGrath, who was serving at Faith Mission Home in Virginia, wrote this: "The Amish and Mennonite people have had to move many times during their history because of persecution or to find new land for farming or better places to witness for their Lord. One cannot find any perfect place in this old world, but there are many reasons why it is not best to just live all huddled together in over-crowded communities when there are so many other places which need a simple, plain Christian witness."

Though he always made amends, William McGrath committed his share of mistakes during his illustrious life. Why hold him up as an example?

Because, like a soldier in the trenches, William faced more pitfalls than people who stay in their musty enclaves. Consider

what Aristotle said: “There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.” Make no mistake, even front line soldiers have access to abundant resources that can keep them from falling. Pioneers are not given license to sin. But could it be that they are more likely to do so than people who float downstream? And are those floating downstream especially antagonistic toward those who flounder while swimming upstream?

For all his shortcomings, William McGrath never shrank from obstacles. He was a visionary leader whose death last August could have marked the end of the pioneer era. It could have—I hope it didn’t. I hope you will carry on his baton. I hope I will. I hope we all will continue pondering what it means to live well, what it means to uproot ourselves from our enclaves.

Throughout his life, William McGrath played a major role in starting communities in Costa Rica, Ireland, and Virginia (Faith Mission Home). Most likely, our resumes won’t look like his when we die. But that won’t matter. It

will only matter that we kept our dreams alive. And if you think that sounds vacuous and New Age, remember that every person who ever made a contribution to our world started by having a dream.

Give the grave only bones, wrote Jon Acuff in his poem, *The End*. Only bones, nothing more. Only our bones, because we will have invested, used, and spent everything else in the Kingdom of the Heavens.

All people, with the possible exception of hermits, have two things in common. They have a sphere of interaction and they impact the people there. Based on these two things, profile and impact, we can further divide all people in to four general categories.

First, there are low-profile, low-impact people; video-game addicts are the classic example of this group. Second, there are high-profile, high-impact people; from recent times, specific examples include Dallas Willard and N.T. Wright. Third, some people are high-profile but low-impact (not to mention any names, but think

politicians in general). And last but not least, some people are low-profile but high-impact, such as caretakers of handicapped people.

Whether we have a low profile or—God forbid—a high one, we are all unified by one desire: to belong in a high-impact category. But how?—that is the question.

First, we must pray. Prayer involves listening—to God and to the challenges of our times. In praying we should ask one question with regularity: *What are the core issues we face today?* Prayer also includes meditation. By taking the words of other high-impact people, by both ruminating on them and practicing them, we ourselves can also make an impact.


Second, to reiterate an earlier point, we must have dreams. To stop dreaming about fresh ways of living in God's universe is to slap Him in the face. And even if our dreams should be quashed a thousand times, we must always rise, like Phoenix from the ashes, and embrace new ones.

Third, we must not abandon our dreams once we are living them. Ironically, the experiencing

of dreams can have a certain mundaneness about it, an ache that one does not foresee. But consider plants. The most crucial period of growth happens when they stay in one place. Later, the Husbandman can transplant His botanical prizes to serve even greater purposes elsewhere. But only when He sees the plants are up to it.

And now for the ending caveat: Being a pioneer will not always mean having a high profile. Nor does it always mean uprooting oneself to live abroad. Observing what takes place in a one-mile radius from home often teaches us more than does travelling the world. In fact, many effective pioneers never venture far from the area where they were born.

“You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” These words are from a popular children's book written by Dr. Seuss. They portray reality, but only partially so; once we have pointed ourselves in a noble direction, we must also walk the path before us.

May God's wisdom direct us to a good path and may His stamina help us walk to its fulfilling end. 

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THOUGHT GEMS

Always drive as if your family were in the approaching car.

• • • • •

The truest expression of Christianity is not a *sigh*, but a *song*.

• • • • •

When weighing the faults of others, keep your thumb off the scale.

• • • • •

God sometimes uses small matches to light great torches.

• • • • •

The heart of education is education of the heart.

• • • • •

We must keep in mind not so much *what* we are as *whose* we are.

• • • • •

The worst outcome of trying times comes when we stop trying.

• • • • •

If we keep our head and heart going in the right direction, our feet will stay on course.

• • • • •

The first screw to come loose in the head is usually the one that controls the tongue.

• • • • •

He who drinks to forget, too often forgets to stop.

• • • • •

Drive carefully; give your vehicle “fender-loving care.”

• • • • •

Let’s get moving; it’s hard to steer a parked car.

• • • • •

True freedom comes from bondage to Christ.

• • • • •

It’s hard to sell a product we do not use or a religion we do not live.