



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 2016

Meditation

The Importance of Rest1

Editorial

Too Complicated?.....2

The Bottom Line

Why Johnny Can't Read6

A Ministry of Inclusive Hospitality.....10

Where You Draw the Line.....13

Marriages.....14

Cradle Roll.....15

Ordinations.....16

Obituaries.....16

Observations.....19

School Matters

Maintaining A Vision for Christian Schools22

When God's Purposes Are Obscure.....24

Suffering Becomes a Blessing "Then I...".....25

And You Fathers.....26

Mission Awareness

Celebrating 50 Years of God's Faithfulness28

Helpers at Home

Love, Respect, and Acceptance.....31

Junior Messages

Longing for a Baby.....33

Thinking Generation

Making Big Decisions..... 35

Thought Gems back cover

June 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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The Importance of Rest


Kelsey Beachy, Plain City, OH

Exhausted and weary, she flopped into bed,
 All kinds of thoughts swimming in her head.
 She resigned herself to survival mode,
 But her feelings inside are about to explode.
 No time for herself, always something to be done,
 She works hard all day and takes no time for fun.
 She feels so lonely, yet struggles to confide
 The emptiness that continues to grow inside.
 Work is a chore; it seems there's no joy to be found,
 Her emotional roller coaster is spinning around.

She lay there, trying to wish the ache away,
 But it remained staunch, determined to stay.
 She cried to God, but He felt out of touch,
 To hear His voice, she longed for so much.
 Why wouldn't He answer? He promised He'd stay,
 This distance she feels makes it hard to pray.

Finally she slept, but with troubled thought,
 She struggled to rest, but so hard she fought.
 She woke in the morning with no desire to live,
 It seemed all she did was give and give and give.
 Always striving, yet never ahead,
 This is the kind of life that she led.
 She stifled her feelings till she could do it no longer,
 And gave up the game of pretending to be stronger.

Her restless strivings had taken their toll,
 It affected her body and spirit and soul.

She cried out to God, and prayed for release,
 And as she surrendered, He filled her with peace.
 Her eyes were opened; she saw a ray of light,
 It came when she chose to give up the fight.
 She began to live life with a new perspective in mind,
 It's okay to say "No," if you feel so inclined.
 God made you intricately, but still you are small,
 And He never intended for you to do it all.
 So do what you can, but don't wear yourself thin,
 And be sure to take care of your heart within.
 If you don't, you're sure to feel busy and stressed,
 But abiding in Jesus brings peace and rest.
 Bask in His Presence, let it fill your soul,
 It's only in Him that you'll be made whole.
 Spend time in silence; find a place of retreat,
 Give yourself a facial, and soak your feet.
 Read His Word, and take time to hear,
 Draw close to God, and He will draw near.
 Do things you love; take time for you,
 Call up a friend; a new hobby pursue.
 And remember you're made to do more than just give,
 You must receive from Jesus truly to live. 



Too Complicated?

After we published the guest youth message of January, 2016, “It’s Complicated,” by Douglas Kauffman, several readers expressed concern. At the April 5, 2016, publication board meeting these concerns were considered. In that meeting, the Calvary Publications board decided that I should address these concerns and, on the basis of their ensuing discussion, make a helpful response. I shall try.

Times have changed since the middle of the 20th century. There’s more travel than there was a generation ago. For example, Voluntary Service and Bible School bring experiences that provide more opportunity than our generation had to evaluate possibilities for friendship leading to marriage.

We realize that courtship is sometimes undertaken with too little idealism. This can result in casual dating that fails to give enough thought as to whether or not a lifetime relationship can be seriously considered. When I was young I

was told, “Be careful when handling a girl’s heart. It is easily broken.” Christian courtship and marriage rest on the premise that marriage is an ordinance instituted of God and confirmed and sanctioned by Jesus Christ and we must therefore ponder it in the fear of God.

A second misunderstanding that could come from these questions is, “Shall the parents not be considered in this important step?” I believe that parents are rightly part of this decision. We realize that when emotional attachments are formed then terminated, it is hard. A valid question, however, remains, “Must the young man’s mind be fully made up before he indicates a romantic interest?”

A third issue that Douglas addressed is that we must continue to hold the bar high regarding the sanctity of marriage and purity in courtship. To these observations let me add this: Do we hear of people lamenting that they were too reserved in their conduct before marriage? Have we not more often heard of married

couples lamenting that in courtship they allowed themselves too much liberty by stroking, prolonged touching, and kissing? The latter confession is much more common, is it not? Furthermore, the time of engagement heightens the struggle for purity, because it may seem that only the lack of a public ceremony forbids the couple from expressing the full extent of their love for each other. But true love can wait. Much like gravity pulling things to earth, so the pull of the flesh toward license pulls us toward too much freedom of tender expression—too soon.

I believe Bro. Douglas Kauffman's concern was that young men face a situation that presumes too much seriousness right away and does not allow for enough thought like, "I wish I could get to know this girl better, without giving the impression that I have fully made up my mind."

Perhaps Delmar Bontrager in Reader Response, (March, page 7) caught Douglas' concern when he gave us these four questions to consider. Here again are Delmar's questions:

"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?"

I am hearing that when the essence of "I've made up my mind and I'm going to her father to make my choice known" stance was brought forward by Bill Gothard, it was welcomed as a great improvement over what has been called the era of casual dating. The new teaching certainly was an improvement, but was it taken to an over-correction? Both Douglas Kauffman and Delmar Bontrager think, in some cases, it may have. However we interpret things now, the purpose of Douglas or Delmar was not to call for a pendulum-swinging over-correction. Thoughtful, prayerful examination of what God wants for His people marks out the path of faithfulness.

After Douglas wrote "It's Complicated" in his personal blog, he got some feedback that called for further explanation. Here are statements Douglas then wrote to clarify his intended meaning: "I should make it abundantly clear that I'm not advocating a return to the casual dating of the past. I'm simply saying that we've swung too

far in the opposite direction. Dating should be taken seriously. I think we can make dating less daunting without becoming flippant about it. I'm not sure many people realize the pain, uncertainty, disappointment, and confusion that has been caused by the present over-emphasis on the seriousness of dating. Guys and girls both spend unnecessary time agonizing over choosing The One. The pain of rejection and disappointment is magnified by the finality and seriousness of the ordeal. Breakups are all the more painful because of the high expectations placed on courtship."

I am informed that one topic of vigorous discussion among the students at Calvary Bible School this past winter was "It's Complicated." I have little information as to what this discussion did for them, but I understand that students gathered with teaching staff to express themselves. I am grateful that the teachers did not dismiss these discussions as trivial. Surely we can do better than brushing aside honest questions. Questions directed to older folks to see what experience has taught them are very valuable. It is my impression that students at CBS were asking such questions.

Naturally, the topic of courtship and marriage holds intrinsic interest for young people and it is reassuring that it does. May God bless young people

who want to learn from the generation that preceded theirs, even though no generation can claim perfection.

I believe young people growing up in homes of neglect, abuse, or unresolved tension tend to be very, very cautious about marriage. Due caution need not cancel courage to embark on a journey leading to marriage.

God delights in giving marriage the unique blessings that follow when His people build good foundations for marriage by paying careful attention to God's Word in courtship. **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word"** (Psalm 119:9).

.....

You will note that Gideon Yutzy's youth column is in the same place, but that it has a new name: "Thinking Generation." I am also grateful that two of our contributing editors, Aaron Lapp and Simon Schrock are starting a series of articles. Bro. Aaron has submitted an article, entitled: "Why Johnny Can't Read." This is the first of five articles on various topics asking, "Why?" Bro. Simon, then, is embarking on a series of 13 short devotional meditations on Revelation 10, which he had formerly published through Baker Book House. May God bless these efforts for His glory!


-PLM



Nominate? Volunteer?

The Publication Board is looking for a candidate to assist me as an assistant editor of *Calvary Messenger*. I am 82. The thinking is that if someone could come on as an apprentice to me, I could still keep on doing the work for perhaps a few years. The work of editor has been assigned in times past by nomination, but also by having someone volunteer.

Please let Nathan Yoder know (434-985-2533), or ndyoder@outlook.com with any helpful information on this matter. Thank you.

Paul L. Miller
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Youth Christian Fellowship Meetings—July 29-31, 2016

North Central—Faith and Light Mennonite, Leesburg, OH

Northeast—Valley View Amish Mennonite, Belleville, PA

Northwest—Clay Street Amish Mennonite and Maple Lawn Amish Mennonite, Nappanee, IN

Southwest—Lighthouse of Faith, Huntsville, AR

Southeast—Montezuma Amish Mennonite, Montezuma, GA

Submitted by
Ken Kanagy
803-671-0484 

Why Johnny Can't Read

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Years ago, *Reader's Digest* printed an article, "Why Johnny Can't Read." As I recall, the schools were faulted. I failed to save that article but it would have been worth saving. From what I glean, the years since have added various layers of research and academic experimentation, finding little or no appreciable improvement. The public schools have usually used one remedy—that of getting more money to hire better teachers and build better facilities. Recent news articles continue to report low average achievement for most public schools in our own "enlightened" country. On a world scale, public schools in the United States routinely score embarrassingly below many other countries—even some "second world" countries.

Something other than more money is needed. A recent letter to the editor of a local newspaper says the fault lies with too many single parent homes. So whose fault is that? If the

larger "Christian" church cannot remedy divorces within their own membership, how can a government who keeps making less room for God, conduct its schools in any other way than by more godlessness?

The use of phonics has helped. I was not taught that in my school years, but where it has been taught, it has improved student reading. My personal reading lay dormant for some 21 years. When Marian and I were married, she kindly asked me (in "new-bride style"), if we could subscribe to *Reader's Digest*. That secular magazine opened my eyes and mind to literary works. Fortunately, my interest in the Bible was kindled at an early age, but never with any significant blocks of time spent reading the Bible or any other literature—biblical or secular—until I took up broader reading.

I didn't know reading can be fun, as well as enlightening. I didn't know I would soon thereafter begin writing bits and pieces. I don't remember one

thing from my English class at school, and to this day, I could not tell you the structure of a sentence. Having read widely has somehow made up for this ignorance. Now you know why we have editors!

Back to reading—reading is education’s foundation. A child in school who cannot read well also cannot perform well in his other studies. It is all dependent on reading well. In this respect, first grade teachers are vitally important.

Reading and writing go hand in hand. The early colonists in America had a long-standing arrangement of the 3 R’s in school—Reading, ‘Riting, and ‘Rithmetic. (Pardon the spelling!) The point is clear about the basics as they saw it. Reading improves writing immeasurably. If both are exercised in tandem with each other, both will improve together. Neglect reading, neglect life.

Can Johnny get it if he missed it in school? Surely. This “Johnny“ did. All credit to God. Farming would also be boringly dull if one learned nothing after the first year’s efforts. We learn in part by doing, including reading and writing. Here a little, there a little. As someone has said, “Little is much when God is in it.”

As writing is enhanced by reading,

even so is spelling promoted by reading and writing. Correct spelling could be improved by our people. Some of the homework from Bible School students gives evidence of mastering phonics over other efforts at correct spelling.

Correct spelling is largely an application of memory. Vocabulary drills ahead of reading assignments are important in school. That could also be useful sometimes in our Bible schools—pronunciation, spelling, and the meaning of words that will be used in a given class. Public speaking class includes an exercise in public reading. Even preachers could brush up on their reading in public: correct pronunciation, good inflection of voice, proper observance of punctuation marks—all of which pave the way forward toward excellence.

Good reading in school can carry over into one’s job or business. Being able to read directions on product labels, owner’s manuals and warranties profits those who read well. Low aptitude does not offer sufficient excuse not to try. There is still something like being self-taught in these modern times.

Many good, worthwhile character-building books keep being published.

All of us could read more. Books are now quite expensive. They could be passed around more. Our church libraries are sometimes the best kept secret of any of our church programs. These libraries usually have many good books. Check them out. Getting books free of charge takes away the expense aspect—and the excuses—for not reading more.

My mother lived to be 92. After her years of making rugs and sewing during her retirement, she additionally learned to read many good books recommended by her daughter-in-law. It broadened her outlook on life, improved her interest in people outside her long-time acquaintances, and quickened her conversationally. It put a sparkle in her eyes and a spark in her spirit. Sometimes we just have to find a way between being too busy and too lazy and make some space for personal enrichment. The time slot between being too busy and too lazy is only 30 minutes: the time at the table during supper. Or it can be a mere three minutes, the time needed to get up from the supper table, stretch, groan and flop on the nearest Lazy Boy recliner!

There you have it. We can at times

be too lazy to read, and during the rest of our waking hours, too lazy to read. Any space between those two masters needs to come under the discipline of Master Priority. Reading is a discipline and a good one. Nothing is easy to the unwilling.

Someone will say, “I so soon forget what I read.” Perhaps so. Reading is a bit like eating. I forgot what I had for dinner last Thursday. I shall not argue that it did me no good. The benefit is immediate, and also for a longer period of time than what I remember. Everything we see and hear and feel goes into our subconscious mind and can be quickened with the Holy Spirit’s help. The Holy Spirit cannot bring things to our remembrance if it was not there in the first place.

Books and magazines are our friends. Choose them with care. Let their wholesome influence lead you into that which is noble and right and virtuous.

Reading is a lifetime quest. Therefore, develop it for the long term by doing it regularly, discreetly, and expectantly. Life is 90% expectation and 10% happenstance. If you want to raise life’s joy, beauty, and enrichment, then raise your expectations in life. The donation to

life is more than its duration. Reading will help you rise.

Paul wrote to Timothy, “Give attendance to reading” (1 Timothy 4:13).

Boring other people in conversations is partly caused by people who don’t read very much. Their talk is mostly about themselves, their relatives, their work, their neighbors, their church, their business, or sometimes their children’s travel, work, accomplishments and plans. It is, in that way, basically about themselves. Why? Those are the parameters of their knowledge. Reading broadens those parameters beyond ourselves.

Students in school make book reports. Adults could do that by their own choice at home, using up time on the recliner, but better yet, at a comfortable office chair at a well-lit desk.


Keep the best of what you read in periodicals. Place it in a file. A file can become your most valuable resource for study material. Education is not only learning for the sake of memory. Practical education is knowing where to look for desired information. Books are cumbersome places to store

information. Files are ready at a moment’s notice.

Read with purpose. Read by habit. Read with expectation. Read to be delighted. Read to fill your mind. Read to be informed. Read to enrich conversation. Yes, Brother, read. Readers are leaders. Readers are conversationalists to whom people pay attention.

Be balanced in reading: The Bible. Church history. Secular history. Missionary reports and stories. Books of Bible doctrine. Local and world news. Biographies. Research according to interest. Science. Church periodicals. Health and nutrition and....

Reading builds one’s vocabulary and sharpens communication. Reading expands our world view. Readers spend less time alone. Readers use time wisely. Readers can better contribute wherever conversations occurs.

The Bottom Line is that Christians should seek to be goal oriented. Let’s make reading a goal. Let’s get started and keep going. Life is too short to be mere spectators, blobs on the bench, and bland in conversation. Let reading turn on inner lights in your life. 

A Ministry of Inclusive Hospitality

Ricardo Esquivia Ballestas, Colombia, South America

A Scripture: “**Now this was the sin of Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy**” (Ezekiel 16: 49 NIV).

A story: A refugee complained bitterly to God because they had not let him into a church and God responded: “Don’t feel bad. They don’t let Me in either.”

Using this biblical passage and short story as reference points, I write this simple note from my own personal testimony to contrast these texts.

Colombia, where I currently live, is a country with an internal war for the last 60 years and has the last internal armed conflict remaining in the Western Hemisphere. With more than five million internally displaced people, it has the second largest rate of internally displaced people in the world, according to the United Nations, plus another million external refugees in other countries. Twenty-five thousand violent deaths occur each year, thousands of persons disappear or are kidnapped, and the Colombian government recognizes more than six million refugees in general.

If there were oil or any other

economic interest of the multinationals in our conflict, this impressive social scenario would have appeared in the mainstream news in the U. S., Canada, and Europe. The Anabaptist churches of the North would have heard about it.

Threats and uncertainty

After living for many years in Bogota, in 1986, my wife, our children and I moved to a small town called San Jacinto, in the northern part of the country in the Caribbean region.

There we acquired a farm, house, agricultural machinery and vehicles, and with my law practice, agriculture and journalism. We supported the social and grassroots work of the peasants in the region.

Due to my work with the *campesinos* (local peasant farmers), I was accused of being an ideologue of the guerrilla movement. The local police commander, and later a paramilitary group called “Death to Kidnappers” (referring to the guerillas), began to persecute me and threaten me on a regular basis.

In March 1988, the Colombian National Army and the police joined forces to raid our home. The death threats increased. Our friends avoided us. Living there became unbearable.

Because of the death threats, we found ourselves forced to move to the nearby city of Cartagena, losing everything we had acquired with our labor.

There in Cartagena, we received hospitality from one of my uncles, who opened his home to us. In his patio, with support from the Mennonite church, we built a dwelling to reside in while the storm passed.

But the situation of a displaced person, whether displaced internally or internationally, is quite difficult. You are leaving behind your territory, friends, family members, job, belongings, culture, contacts and good name. Additionally, you enter an unknown territory, which is threatening and inhospitable; a world full of prejudice and stigmas.

From being considered an upright person, suddenly, you are suspected of terrorism and criminality which creates great fear among your neighbors. You enter into an environment of fear, not only due to your displacement, but because all the people surrounding you—your friends, relatives, and churches—all fear that they may be mistaken for or pointed out as the enemy and declared “military objectives,” threatened and hurt.

The fear impregnated in others is what most affects the person who is displaced as it paralyzes those people and hinders hospitality and solidarity. Many church people want to be hospitable, but they have families,

small children, debts, and mortgages, and are afraid of endangering their lives and threatening the stability of those who depend on them. They say that if they were alone, they would give their lives to help, but in these conditions, it would be irresponsible of them and unfair to their children.

In July, 1989, we arrived once again in Bogota, beaten down, but not defeated, a displaced and threatened couple with four children. We arrived in a city affected by terrorism, full of the living dead begging at every intersection, boys and girls abandoned in the streets, the threat of crime, surrounded by areas of racist and discriminatory poverty.

The central government had used the excuse of war to suppress most civil liberties and ordered raids and arbitrary detentions each day in the city and in the country. Distrust and fear reigned in the city. The ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu said, “War is the art of deceit,” to which American politician Hiram Johnson famously added, “where truth is the first victim.” This makes it difficult to believe in someone and even to believe in God.

Shelter and welcome

However, today my family and I are alive thanks to the decisive action by a group of people belonging to the Teusaquillo (Bogota) Mennonite Church, headed by pastor Peter Stucky. Although they had young children and people under their

responsibility, they overcame fear of stigmatization and of being declared supporters of the guerrillas, and organized themselves to offer inclusive hospitality that sheltered us and gave us enough energy to awaken our power of resilience and to recover.

It is when we practice these acts of hospitality that the damnation of Sodom is broken and the beautiful phrase of Jesus becomes reality; **“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it for me”** (From Matthew 25: 35-40 NRSV).

But it did not end there with the assistance to one family who were members of the church. The concept of inclusive hospitality expanded. No one was excluded and there was always a place for the stranger, the traveler and those who suffer. Inclusive hospitality opened the doors of the church and created an entire ecclesiastical ministry to support hundreds of displaced people who arrived fleeing their lands after losing their belongings and their hope. “The refugee [or displaced person] is the living messenger of misfortune, bringing with him the image, smell and taste of the tragedy of war, genocide, slaughter, and abandonment of their home because of violence.” (Javier Jurado, member

of the Arjal Association, and initiative of philosophy students).

For many years, this ministry of the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church has functioned in Bogota. Hundreds of people have been assisted and comforted. From there, dozens of displaced people have been sponsored by the Canadian Mennonite church and today enjoy a new and tranquil life in that country. This ministry also expanded to the city of Quito, Ecuador, which receives hundreds of Colombians who flee the country seeking refuge.

It involves great risk to create, initiate, and maintain a ministry such as this, open to any person regardless of where they come from, what they believe, what political ideology they have, whether their persecutors are guerrillas or paramilitaries. Sometimes, members of the congregation stop attending. However, we are convinced of the coherence between the mandate of Jesus and the right of asylum. The community is strengthened and new leaders emerge open to hospitality.

It is gratifying to be a historic, Anabaptist peace church where no refugees will protest to God for being denied entry, and like Job we can say, **“I have never turned away a stranger but have opened my doors to everyone”** Job 31:32, NLT).

[Ricardo Esquivia Ballestas is a member of the Colombian Mennonite Church, with more than 45 years

of experience in peacebuilding from a community and ecclesial base. He directs Sembrandopaz (Planting Seeds of Hope) and works with returned communities in the

Colombian Caribbean. This was first published in Courier/Correo/ Courier; the magazine of Mennonite World Conference, April, 2016. Used by permission.]



Where You Draw the Line

Melvin L. Yoder, Gambier, OH

Where you draw the line, that is where the battle is going to be. When the speed limit is 55, many people have a real battle keeping their speed under 65. When they drive where the speed limit is faster, the battle still rages. The only difference is another five or ten miles per hour.

For some the problem may be material possessions. Their first farm is bought with only one thing in mind—to make a living by farming. Then the chance arises to buy a neighboring farm. The investment seems quite large, but it seems to be a real opportunity. They decide to redraw the line: Two farms are enough. But when a third farm comes up for sale, it is such a good deal that they decide to move the line once more. The battle goes on.

In the book, *The Amish in Their Own Words*, the account is given of a couple who struggled with the changes they felt they needed to make it to keep on farming. They slowly

kept moving the line, but the battle continued. First they changed church districts, then church fellowships. By then, the man was doing long-distance trucking. Finally, they felt they could serve the Lord better by joining a fellowship where he would be permitted to do trucking on Sundays.

Churches, like individuals, lower their standards, but the battle goes on. Nonresistance, nonconformity, moral purity, and a host of other issues have been abandoned, but the battle goes on. The issues now concern gays, same-sex marriages, and whether or not to install women into the ministry. The battle definitely does not get any easier.

As we confront the issues we are faced with, let us face the facts. Lowering our standards does not help. It only moves the battle lines to another area.

Let us find the line and face the battle.



marriages

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

Graber-Stoltzfoos

Bro. Randall David, son of Raymond and Laura Graber, Gordonville, PA, and Sis. Althea Ruth, daughter of Roman and Lucy Stoltzfoos, Kinzers, PA, at Ridgeview Mennonite for Mine Road A.M. Church on April 16, 2016, by Alvin Stoltzfus.

Lambright-Byler

Bro. Jonathan, son of Arlene and the late Gerald Lambright, Huntsville, AR, and Sis. Lois, daughter of Wally and Creta Byler, Huntsville, AR, on April 9, 2016, at Robinson Avenue Church of Christ for Lighthouse of Faith, Huntsville, AR, by Dannie Diener.

Martin-Bontrager

Bro. Paul Rene, son of Simon and Rebecca Martin, Pink Hill, NC, and Sis. Dolores Ruth, daughter of Jason and Rosie Bontrager, El Zapote, Guatemala, at Grace Mennonite Fellowship, Bastrop, TX, April 16, 2016, by Clayton Weaver.

Miller-Graber

Bro. Ronnie, son of Kevin and Christina Miller, Lyndon, KS, and Sis. Beulah, daughter of Dave and Mary Jane Graber, Summersville, KY, at First Baptist Church for Summersville

Mennonite Church on April 15, 2016, by James Hershberger.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. Matthew, son of Roger and Debra Miller, Oskaloosa, KS, and Sis. Emily, daughter of Edward and Lois Yoder, Wesley, AR, on April 2, 2016, at Robinson Avenue Church of Christ, for Lighthouse of Faith, Huntsville, AR, by Dan Byler.

Schrock-Beiler

Bro. Brent, son of Millard and Diane Schrock, Grantsville, MD, and Sis. Annette, daughter of Dan and Sil Beiler, Mill Hall, PA, at Great Island Presbyterian Church for a Mennonite Church, on Nov. 7, 2015, by Dan Beiler.

Stoltzfus-Lapp


Bro. Matthew Evan, son of Melvin and Mary Ellen Stoltzfus, Cochranville, PA, and Sis. Arianna Jewel, daughter of David L. and Mary Stoltzfus, Gap, PA, at Ridgeview Mennonite on March 19, 2016, by Ben A. Stoltzfus.

Swartzentruber-Kauffman

Bro. Jason, son of Abner and Miriam Swartzentruber, Oakland, MD, and Sis. Rachel, daughter of Danny and Regina Kauffman, Swanton, MD, at New Hope Christian Fellowship, for Mountain View Mennonite Church, on March 19, 2016, by Jerry Yoder.

Yutzy-Byler

Bro. Daniel, son of Alvin and Naomi

Yutzy, Huntsville, AR, and Sis. Sherilyn, daughter of Nolan and Clara Byler, Mount Eaton, OH, on March 26, 2016, at Sharon Conservative Mennonite Church for Light of Truth Conservative Mennonite Church, Wilmot, OH, by Nolan Byler. 

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Peter, Jr., and Melody (Sommers), Salisbury, PA, fifth child, fourth daughter, Annette Brielle, April 21, 2016.

Beachy, Wendell and Judith (Overholt), Stoutsville, OH, fourth child, second son, Elliott Montgomery, March 29, 2016.

Gingerich, Joe and Rhoda (Stoltzfus), Dyke, VA, fifth child, third son, Damian Joseph, April 26, 2016.

Hershberger, Aaron and Lisa (Lengacher), Centerville, PA, second child, first daughter, Alivia Jade, April 7, 2016.

Hostetler, Dannie and Sarah Ann (Yoder), Centerville, PA, fourth child and son, Tristan Drew, March 23, 2016.

Hostetler, Kenyon and Josie (Hostetler), Green Forest, AR, fourth and fifth children (two deceased), second and third daughter, Kamri Jolynn and Kaidynce Joy, born Dec. 2, 2012, adopted Jan. 20, 2016.

Jantzi, Gabriel and Jennifer (Willey), Wellesley, ON, fourth child, third son, Theodore Jack, April 12, 2016.

King, Mahlon and Marlene (Beachy), New Holland, PA, fifth child, third daughter, Linsey Kate, Feb. 16, 2016.


Miller, James and Robin (Mast), Pulaski, TN, fourth child, first son, Zachary James, April 4, 2016.

Miller, LaVon and Twila (Yoder), Partridge, KS, sixth child, fifth son, Terrence Irving, April 8, 2016.

Stoltzfoos, Clifford and Katrina (Zook), Gap, PA, third child, first daughter, Arielle Grace, March 21, 2016.

Stoltzfus, Daryl and Megan (Troyer), Advance, MO, third child, first daughter, Madalyn Kate, April 10, 2016.

Weaver, Daniel and Ayse (Nix), Laclede, MO, second child, first son, Travis Daniel, April 16, 2016.


Yoder, Shadd and Karin (Gingerich), Bloomfield, MO, third child and son, Ashton Blythe, March 21, 2016. 

ordinations

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

Bro. Timothy Mast, 42, (wife: Anna Joyce Troyer), was ordained as minister at Mount Moriah Mennonite Church, Crossville, TN, on April 3, 2016. Preordination messages were given by Tim Yoder, Vanleer, TN. The charge was

given by his father, John Mast, assisted by Perry Miller and Raymond Fisher. Sharing the lot were John Farmwald and Elias Mast.

Bro. Lowell Miller, 33, (wife: Martha Miller), Greensburg, KY, was ordained as deacon at Summersville Mennonite Church on April 10, 2016. Preordination messages were given by Lonnie Yoder, Lexington, IN. The charge was given by James Hershberger, assisted by Floyd Lengacher and Dean Farmwald. 

obituaries

Beechy, Beulah Mae (Mast), 91, died on March 31, 2016, at Goshen, IN. She was born at Nappanee, IN, Dec. 9, 1924, daughter of the late Uriah and Elizabeth (Slabaugh) Mast.

She was a faithful member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen.

On March 9, 1944, she was married to Elva Beechy in LaGrange County. He survives. Also surviving are seven children: Esther Yoder, Millersburg, IN; Frieda (Mike) Katsaros, Sarasota, FL; Robert Lavern, Shreveport, LA; Harley (Jennifer) Beechy, Millersburg, IN; Bill (Kim) Beechy, Middlebury, IN; Edwin (Carolyn) Beechy, Millersburg, IN; and Floyd (Michelle) Beechy, Millersburg, IN; 15 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, seven step grandchildren and eight step great grandchildren. Other survivors include

brothers, Ottis and Elmer of Mississippi; Robert Mast, Osceola, IN; Wilbur Mast, Etna Green, IN; Uriah Mast, Jr., Nappanee, IN; two sisters: Nancy Chupp, Paynesville, MN; and Elizabeth (Marvin) Miller, Nappanee, IN.

Preceding her in death were a granddaughter and her husband (Carol Ann and Eldon Miller), six brothers: Omar, Joe, Glenn, William, Samuel, and Roman; three sisters-in-law, and one brother-in-law.

The funeral was held on April 4, with Wilbur Yoder and Dale Hochstetler serving. Burial was in the Thomas Cemetery, Goshen.

Kinsinger, Noah D., 80, died April 4, 2016, at his home. He was born May 13, 1935, at Meyersdale, PA, son of the late Dan S. and Lydia (Kinsinger) Kinsinger.

He was a member of Mountain View Mennonite Church.

On August 11, 1955, Noah was married to Thelma Petersheim. She died June 15, 2012. Survivors include two sons: Paul N. Kinsinger, Oakland; Henry N. (Rhoda) Kinsinger, Oakland; four daughters: Naomi, Oakland; Miriam, Oakland; Lydia Irene (Merlin) Slabaugh, Union Grove, NC; Marie (William) Slabaugh, Worthington, IN; a brother, Jonas D. (Dorothy) Kinsinger, Oakland; two sisters: Sarah (Noah) Summy, Mt. Vernon, MO; Fannie (Yost) Beachy, Oakland; 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Noah repaired tractors in his shop before he started Central Tractor in 1974. He was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease in August, 2015. He was still able to work in the tractor shop until the first of 2016. He remained alert until the day before his death.

The funeral was held on April 4 at Mountain View Church, Salisbury, PA. Serving were Merlin Beachy, David Kauffman and Jerry Yoder. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Marner, John, 66, of Montgomery, IN, died of cancer Oct. 24, 2015. He was born May 7, 1949, in Daviess County, IN, to Ralph and Katie (Eicher) Marner

He was a member of Mt. Olive Mennonite Church. He was a lifelong truck driver who knew the roads of America.

On April 6, 1969, he was married to Betty Lengacher. She survives. Other survivors include three sons:

Ronald (Gloria) Marner, Raymond (Mary) Marner, and Perry Marner; two daughters: Renee (Travis) Wagler, Norma (Marvin) Graber; his mother, Katie Marner; four brothers: Lester (Sylvia) Marner, Wilbur (Mary Kathryn) Marner, Daniel (Lou Ella) Marner, Marvin (Mattie) Marner; one sister-in-law, Barbara (Eugene) Marner; three sisters: Rosann (Jake) Knepp, Lorene (the late Alvin Jay Swatzentruber), Carolyn (Marvin) Graber; and 18 grandchildren.

Preceding him in death were his father and one brother, Eugene.

The funeral was held on Oct. 27, with the local ministry team serving. Burial was in the Mt. Olive cemetery.

Nisly, Willis A., 80, died at his home on April 24, 2016. He was born Feb. 4, 1936, in rural Nowata, OK, son of the late Eli F. and Alma (Miller) Nisly.

He was a member and minister with clear spiritual vision at Arlington A. M. Church, Arlington, KS.

On May 10, 1957, he was married to Rebecca "Becky" Yoder. She died March 9, 2015. Four children survive: Gerald Nisly, Wichita, Ken (Luana) Nisly, Langdon, KS; Twila Nisly of the home, and Rhoda (Mark) Kretzer, Hutchinson., and 12 grandchildren.

Willis excelled in training horses. He was employed for 40 years at Quality Body Shop, working for his brothers-in-law, Henry and Ernest Yoder.

The funeral was held at Arlington Church on April 27, with Arlen Mast, Freeman Yoder and Conrad Miller serving. The committal was conducted by

a nephew, Terry Yoder. Burial was beside his wife, Becky, in the recently begun Arlington church cemetery. The first two graves are those of Willis and Becky.

Troyer, Edward N., 66, of Bloomfield, MO, died unexpectedly on Oct. 26, 2015. He was born Nov. 26, 1948, son of the late Noah B. and Ina (Lapp) Troyer.

He was a dedicated Christian and member of Crowley's Ridge Mennonite Church. He is fondly remembered for his concern for his children and grandchildren's spiritual well being. He shared his interests in farming, gardening, hunting, and fishing with his children and also later with his grandchildren.

On August 23, 1968, he was married to Katie Ellen Zook. She survives. Children surviving are Kenneth (Sharon Byler) Troyer, Waynesboro, VA; Wayne (Joyce Martin), Staunton, VA; Vernon (Mary Ann Coblentz) Troyer, Advance, MO; Nelson (Marie Summy) Troyer, Farmington, MO; Rosanna (Philip) Beachy, Fredonia, KY; Katura Troyer, Bloomfield, MO; Jonathan (Andrea Miller) Troyer, Stuarts Draft, VA; and Henry Troyer, Concord, AR, and 27 grandchildren.

Other survivors include brothers: Lloyd (Esther) Troyer, Sterling, AK; Norman (Ruth) Troyer, Perry, NY; William (Edna) Troyer, Crossville, TN; sisters: Lydia Ann (Philip) Schrock, Gap Mills, WV; Lena Mae (the late Eli) Nissley, Cisne, IL; and sister-in-law, Elsie (Yoder) Troyer, Texico, IL.


The funeral was held on Oct. 29, with Jim Gingerich and Bennie Byler serving. Loren Troyer conducted the committal

at Crowley's Ridge Mennonite Cemetery.

Wagler, Elizabeth (Miller), 91, died from congestive heart failure at her home in rural Partridge, KS, April 20, 2016. She was born in rural Hutchinson, KS, July 21, 1924, daughter of the late Levi D. and Clara (Nisly) Miller.

She was a devoted member of Cedar Crest A.M. Church. She left an inspiring testimony of active friendship for all and of caring for children, teaching for many years the youngest class in Sunday school. Newcomers to the community found her welcome active and genuine.

On August 20, 1961, she was married to widower Raymond Wagler. He died on July 9, 1980. Survivors include sons: Paul (Ellen) Wagler, Wichita; Harley Wagler, Nizhnii Novogorod, Russia; Philip Wagler, Partridge; Eldon (Jane) Wagler, Partridge; Duane, Colorado Springs, CO; a daughter, Ruth (Mrs. Roman) Miller, Partridge; brothers: Willis (Susie) Miller, Hutchinson; Perry (Judy) Miller, Hutchinson; David L. Miller, Partridge; Mahlon (Fannie) Miller, Hutchinson; Paul (Martha) Miller, Partridge; Fred Miller, Hutchinson; sisters: Mary (Joe) Beachy, Kalona, IA; Emma (Oliver) Troyer, Partridge; 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by brothers, Edwin, Harry, and Daniel Miller and a daughter-in-law, Rose Ella Wagler. The funeral was held on April 24 at Cedar Crest Church with Don Miller, Dwight Miller, and Lee Nisly serving. Paul Miller conducted the committal at the West Center Cemetery. 

Recently there were two funerals in our church community, only three days apart (see this month's obituaries). Such events are common, at the same time special—special in the sense that the departed person was an individual whom God created without using the pattern twice. This could be called Creator Genius.

The funeral for my 91-year-old sister, Elizabeth Wagler, was first of the two funerals. My parents' family originally included three daughters and nine sons. As the family gathered to share memories of character traits and personality virtues of a dear sister, it was a reminder that she was not exactly like any of her siblings in a large family. Our Creator is certainly creative. My sister was gifted in various ways in which I have serious lack. To follow her as she followed Christ is a worthy ideal. But to be a faithful steward of the gifts that God gives us is perhaps even more basic.

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The second funeral was for Willis Nisly, 80. He was also from a large family—15 children. During his childhood, he made an early response of faith in the Lord. He took his Christian commitment seriously and was ordained to the ministry at age 23. He leaves a significant Christian

influence. But he also had manual skills useful to support the family. His love of horses and his ability to train them could hardly be called a spiritual gift. But this God-given attribute was part of God's creation that made him a person distinct from his peers.

It seems right to appreciate the distinctiveness of every person, but more importantly, to draw attention to our Creator who loves us and to whom we will give account.

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I find it impressive that death in our circles brings together combinations of people that would otherwise not get together in the same way. It is pleasant to meet people that we may not have met for decades. It is a reminder that we are on God's time line and are moving toward the finish line. The Psalmist (Psalm 90) reminds us that life is brief and eternity is endless. Because of this we are admonished to be wise.

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The current issue of *Mennonite World Review* gives major space to nine different Anabaptist colleges. It is only realistic to notice that higher learning has become a very significant influence in the larger Anabaptist circles. It is also true that some of the more conservative groups consider

close contact with the academic community an unacceptable risk to sound doctrine and practice.

I cannot address this issue as one with a college degree, but as one who has had a lifetime in which to observe how some things seem to work out.

To assume that formal training is always wrong would be to assume that our people should not become nurses or doctors, because these do require formal training. But this does not mean that higher learning deserves an unqualified endorsement. There are good reasons to be guarded about the overall effect of higher learning on the population, including many church people.

- The importance of formal training seems to be seriously over-rated. Most specialized skills can be learned outside of a college classroom.

- Accreditation is generally not sensitive to Christian priorities. It makes requirements that contradict truth. It is disheartening to notice that an institution founded to promote inter-generational stability and biblical soundness, has now, after nearly a century succumbed to its cultural surroundings.

I recognize the danger of over-generalizing about accredited institutions, but awareness of this danger is important. The notion that final authority rests on whatever we decide, is misguided if it fails to prioritize God's definition of truth.

Diligent work habits and manual

skills are not obsolete. These do not require formal training. Usually persons willing to work are not numbered among the unemployed and are able to earn a respectable wage.

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Reno County Health Council recently met to identify local health concerns. It is not surprising that the list includes alcohol and drug abuse. I was startled to notice their report on obesity and overweight. Apparently 30 pounds or more overweight is considered "obese." Twenty-five pounds, but less than 30, pounds is considered "over weight." The council reports that in Reno County, 33.5% are obese, while 35.5% are considered overweight. The combined total percentage is an astounding 69%. Question: Does this study remind us of an area of health care in which conscientious Christians have a justifiable interest?

-DLM

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North Carolina governor, Pat McCrory, recently signed a piece of legislation that has garnered the state a lot of attention. Among other details, this new law prohibits cities and other municipalities within the state from enacting a policy that allows people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) to use restroom facilities different from the gender indicated on his or her

birth certificate. This language is pretty confusing. The implication is clear that anybody who uses a public restroom must use the facility that coincides with the gender indicated on his or her birth certificate.

This is one stark example of today's world where a person is free, and even encouraged to define his own reality based on his own feelings or perceptions. It reminds me of a story entitled "The Emperor's New Clothes," where the townspeople earnestly and eagerly admired the new wardrobe the emperor was wearing. The problem was that the emperor didn't actually have any clothes on, but the people acted like he did, until a child finally blurted out the truth, "The emperor has no clothes on!"

One of the reasons that entertainment media, including movies and video games are so objectionable is the tremendous ability to manipulate the production beyond what is actually possible in real life. Repeated exposure to this diet warps the sense of reality of the consumer. Last week during a Hunter's Education class that our sons are attending the instructor asked the class if they think they could shoot a running deer with a rifle. An 11-year-old lad eagerly raised his hand and affirmed that he could because he can in video games. God is the ultimate reality. It is incumbent on us to discover and

embrace reality, not to decide it.

We need to cultivate activities and thought processes where reality and our perceptions of reality are on the same page. That means we will earnestly seek God's perspective on these issues.

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When I was growing up soft drinks were a rare treat to be savored whenever I had the opportunity to imbibe. Somehow, when my wife and I got married, that never really took hold at our house either. I suspect that cost had something to do with it. An acquaintance of mine once drawled with reference to refreshing beverages, "Water is the best, but we don't always have to have the best." It sounded better in his Pennsylvania German. Drinking water is widely regarded as vital to good body function and health. Recommendations for adult daily water consumption vary, but most fall into the range of 64 ounces daily, and on up to ½ ounce per pound of body weight daily.

How much of other beverages do today's Americans consume? The following numbers are not taken from data in the last five years, and are generalizations, so they won't be fully accurate.

Americans drink about 24 ounces of coffee daily which comes to about 69 gallons a year. These numbers have been pretty constant for the last 15-20 years.

The average person in the U.S. drinks about 14 ounces of soda per day which comes to 41 gallons annually. This represents a significant decline since 1999 when it was reported that we drank about 60 gallons per year. Soft drinks have gotten a lot of bad press in recent years since they are not considered healthful by almost any way we might

figure it. A sugar content of 9 to 10 teaspoons per 12-ounce serving is a useful starting point for those wishing to understand its negative punch.

Interestingly, milk and beer are consumed in similar quantities—about seven ounces per day, which comes to approximately 20 gallons per year.

-RJM



School Matters

Maintaining A Vision for Christian Schools

Gerald Miller, Guys Mills, PA

As I have had the privilege and opportunity to get to know many of our schools, it has caused me to be very grateful for the way our schools have played an important role in the ongoing work of the Kingdom through the work of our churches. I believe our schools have been instrumental in the passing on of our faith to our children.

It might be helpful to take a few moments to reflect on our history as schools. As our people saw the devastation of the 60's, the loose and promiscuous lifestyle derived from the morality and values that ran directly counter to the Scriptures, and the shift in the social center from church and family to the public school, brothers

in our churches saw the necessity of starting church schools. The Christian school movement was an entirely appropriate and needful move to help our children follow Jesus in daily life.

The founders of our schools saw the implications of a public school education beginning to infiltrate our churches and were intent on it not being a part of the story of their congregation. And so with great effort and sacrifice, they pulled out of the comfortable, normal, easy, and free (!) in order to offer something better for the sake of their children. I grant that it is fair to admit that at least some of the energy for the Christian school movement was a reaction to the current morass of the culture.

We wanted out of the public schools quickly, but didn't have curriculum, trained staff, adequate funding, and prior experience to begin our Christian schools. What we did have was practical wherewithal, we had heart, and we knew we didn't want to have the world in our churches. At the time, we primarily knew what we did *not* want, more than what we *did* want.

The vision and foresight of the founders of our schools has indisputably been a great gift and blessing, saving us from an almost sure apostatizing at the worst, and losing our identity as close followers of Jesus, Anabaptists, at best. But as history shows repeatedly, movements grow up and mature. The impetus for the beginning of a movement is not necessarily adequate for the long term. A healthy organization needs to evaluate itself occasionally and consider its mission, vision, and values that drive it in the present day, and work not only from the initial vision but also current realities.

As many of our schools have been operating for some time, it might be helpful to consider organizational life cycles of businesses, schools, and other organizations. While many models of organization life cycles have been created, the stages of life cycles broadly fall into the following categories: birth, growth, maturity, decline, and then one of two options, renewal or death.

When you think of where your school is functioning, in which part

of the life cycle does your school find itself? I feel that many of our schools are in the far end of the maturity stage and leaning into the decline stage. When a school reaches the decline stage of organizational life cycle, it is imperative that we work at renewal to bring us back to the growth stage. Growth, though, is far more than the number of students in the school. Growth is about evaluating the tool of our curriculum (is it effective?), about teachers developing (are they growing?), about board members leading (are they carrying the vision of the school?), and about pastoral leadership having a heart and passion and focus for the rising generation.

Simply put, growth is really about the growth of vision. Vision always calls us to action. What should our vision include? What is the basis for our vision? I have come to the conclusion that our vision has become clouded because of the distance in many of our schools from where its authority is derived. Essentially, I am calling for a return to the connection of the church and the school. But we will look at this in next month's column. In the meantime, whether you are a parent, student, teacher, administrator, board member, church member, grandparent, or pastor, what is your vision for your school? How has it changed from when your school started? What is your place in the school? And how can your school help to disciple the rising generation to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength?



When God's Purposes Are Obscure

Paul W. Brubaker

After high school in the 1880's, Annie Johnson Flint spent a year in teacher training and then had a position offered to her. In her second year of teaching, arthritis became Annie's constant companion. Her condition grew steadily worse until it became difficult for her to walk at all. In her state of increasing helplessness, she was forced to give up her teaching position.

Annie was only three when her mother died while giving birth to her younger sister. The Johnson sisters' father died young as well. By the time she had turned six, Annie and her younger sister were adopted by a childless couple, but 17 years later, Annie and her sister found themselves orphaned again. By this time, Annie had received the verdict from the doctors—she'd be a helpless invalid for the rest of her life. She lived a total of 66 years, from 1866 to 1932.

At an early age Annie discovered her ability to write poetry. Many of her poems grew out of her intense suffering. How she held a pen in those poor twisted fingers is uncertain, but Annie wrote incessantly. Whether by nature or through her early Christian experience, Annie was generally disposed to be cheerful and optimistic. She looked on the bright side of life and was able to get much enjoyment

out of life, despite her circumstances. It was 2 Corinthians 12:9, "**My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness,**" that inspired Annie to write one of her most-loved poems, "**He Giveth More Grace,**" which was later set to music.

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,

He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;

To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,

To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,

When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,

When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,

Our Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,

His power has no boundary known unto men;

For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,

He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.

[From BRF Witness, Vol 51, No. 2, Used by permission.]



Suffering Becomes a Blessing

“Then I...”

Simon Schrock, Catlett, VA

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire;” (Revelation 10:1).

“I” who? John, the apostle of Jesus, was chosen to write a book in which the reader is promised a blessing for reading and hearing its words. “Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy” (Rev. 1:3). John was an old man and a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. He had witnessed and experienced suffering and tribulations for the cause of Christ. While others were martyred for their faith, John was spared.

However, it appears that the Roman emperor Domitian continued to be irritated with John’s life. He banished John to the Isle of Patmos. At that point, the Kings of kings stepped in. The Lord overruled human intentions. As with Joseph and his

brothers, God used evil actions of one party to advance his good plans in the life of one of His servants. On Patmos, God used John to reveal and to write down a message that would bless its readers for all generations to come. This message gives courage and hope to people.

Believers still experience disappointments and apparent failures. It is encouraging to know that John’s God is still in control. He can take what seems to us a failure and turn it into gold to bless others. That is what he did with John. You can trust him to turn your disappointments into blessings.

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

[From pages 127-138 of Revelation Day by Day, by R. Leslie Holmes and Richard A Bodey, Eds. Published in 2001 by Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group. Used by permission.]



And You Fathers

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

[I was moved by the Reader Response in Sept., 2015, from a sister who was appealing for more teaching on the importance of father-child relationships. As men we need to honestly deal with problems of personal, spiritual, and emotional aspects of resentment and bitterness toward fathers for their speech and behavior that was harsh. If we do not, we will project these attitudes and behaviors onto our posterity. Let us never forget that children are emotionally sensitive in reading their parents. I sincerely hope this writing in honor of Father's Day, will be used of God to promote real, man-of-God repentance. A. M.]

He drops to his knees beside the bed again,
As he has habitually done every night to pray.
Tonight though his heart is heavy with pain,
thinking of his son who is on the Broad Way.

In anguish of soul he intercedes for his boy,
That God would save him before it is too late.
He fears his rebellious son will soon destroy
himself, and while in sin, seal his eternal fate.


Moreover, as he drenches his pillow with tears,
he does an in-depth, soul-searching evaluation.
“What blame do I bear as a father through the years,
that prompted him to take an errant life-direction?”

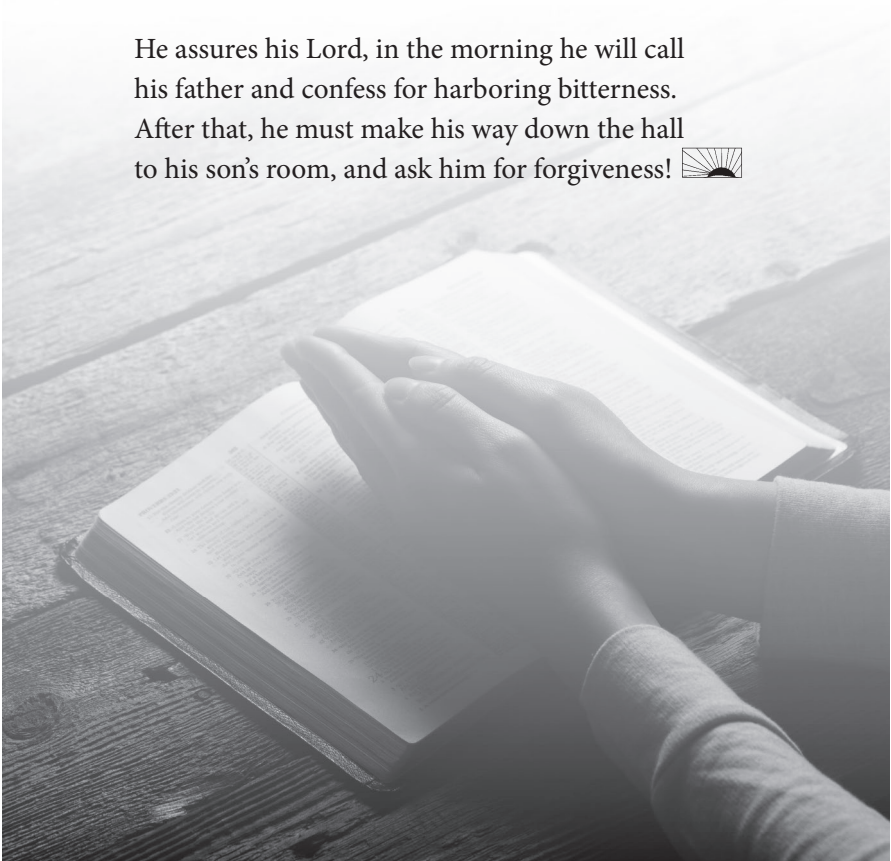
The Holy Spirit forthrightly speaks to his heart,
reminding him of the grudge toward his father.
The thought of reliving the abuse tears him apart,
for he hoped that with time the hurt would be over.

In youth, he committed himself to be a better man, promising not to hurt his children as his father had. Surely, with some sheer determination a person can overcome generational failure by being a good dad!

However, since attitudes cannot remain hidden, because they permeate through one's humanity, in one way or another they always affect children, thus, they become an integral part of one's posterity.

Now, he begins to weep mournful tears again, as he recognizes his own unforgiving attitude. His heart and soul is wracked with a deep pain, and he purposes to repent and do as he should.

He assures his Lord, in the morning he will call his father and confess for harboring bitterness. After that, he must make his way down the hall to his son's room, and ask him for forgiveness! 



Celebrating 50 Years of God's Faithfulness

Verda Glick, Zacamil, El Salvador

I can still picture these happy newlyweds leaving for their honeymoon in a black, modest Ford car from the Crist and Suvilla Kauffman residence near Bird-in-Hand, PA. My wife and I were there to say "Good-bye" and watch them pull out of Verda's parents' driveway. They traveled through Texas, Mexico, and on into Central America, ultimately coming to El Salvador. Eli and I have been close friends from our youth. I believe there are two key things in Brother Eli's ministry that contributed to God's blessing their planting of churches. One is Eli's faithfulness in prayer and secondly, his diligence in personal evangelism and visitation. -FS

Fifty years ago, Eli and I packed our wedding gifts in our car and headed for El Salvador. God blessed us with a good trip, and we arrived here on April 25, 1966, three weeks after our April 2 wedding. Some of our wedding gifts were stolen in Mexico, but we were glad for the ones we still had. God used that theft to prepare us for future incidents when robbers would steal our things.

God is faithful and God is good!

Soon after we got to our new home in Ayutica, people learned that I'm a nurse. They came to our house

in increasing numbers for first aid, injections, and other health needs. Eli and I prayed that if God wanted us to start a tiny clinic in our backyard, He'd send us \$50.00.

How quickly our prayer was answered! A \$50 check came almost immediately. It had been written and mailed before we had prayed. Our faithful God was not limited to our small request. Enough money poured in to build a nice clinic plus a sewing room for sewing classes and embroidery classes. We also used that building to start Sunday school and church services. Several young

people received Christ as their Savior in the services at Ayutica.

Besides the church work, Eli helped ten farmers start small chicken projects. He also taught several neighbors to read and write.

In 1969, we bought our own five-acre place at Zacamil, four miles from Ayutica. Eli built a chicken house for 1,200 chickens with which he hoped to support our family. When our expenses increased, he built a second one.

Soon after our move to Zacamil, we found it necessary to move the clinic because of vandalism. We didn't know where the money would come from when we started building, but we believed that just as God had provided the funds for the little frame clinic in Ayutica, he would provide the money for a larger brick building.

And He really did! Without needing to tell anyone about our needs, the money came just as it was needed. Funds were very low sometimes, but we never suffered want. We became so used to God's miraculous provisions that we stopped wondering if needed funds would arrive on time. We just waited eagerly to see how and through whom God would work things out.

Eli started conducting church services in Zacamil when we moved

here in 1970. At first we gathered for worship in the clinic waiting room, but as the church grew, we sensed the need for a chapel and a small adjoining school. Our faithful God provided much of the money for the construction through the chickens. They laid eggs and more eggs that year! It was the most productive year we ever had. It seemed like God made the chickens produce exceptionally well to provide the funds for the new building.

As the years passed and more congregations were established, God provided chapels at five other places.

Our family grew, and so did the clinic work. God saw my need for help before I did. Without even being asked, two nurses volunteered to come, and Amish Mennonite Aid sent them to work in the clinic. In the years that followed, they sent more clinic workers.

God also supplied our need for teachers. At first, Amish Mennonite Aid sent teachers for our schools. Now our teachers at all three schools are Salvadoran Christians, members of our local churches. God has always been faithful to supply their monthly salaries. At this time, nine of our 12 teachers are former students who studied in our Christian schools when they were children.

Years ago, my mother-in-law had

a deep concern. “Who will your children marry?” she asked. Eli and I felt confident that just as God had always met all our other needs, He would provide for that need, too. And He did it in marvelous ways.

When our oldest children were in their teens, the David Yoder family moved to El Salvador. Our oldest son, Ernest (Neto) married their oldest daughter, Bonnie. Philip, our second son, married their daughter, Judy. Our third son, Timothy married Sonia Castaneda, a sweet Christian girl who grew up near here and had attended one of our schools. Our fourth son, Paul, met his future wife, Geneva Beachy, in Kenya, when we spent several months there. Our daughter’s husband, Merle Yoder, met Karen when we sent her to Pennsylvania for a while after we heard that someone intended to kidnap her. God, always faithful and good, can be trusted with the needs of our children.

Not only did God faithfully provide everything we needed, He also protected us from harm. El Salvador wasn’t the safest place on earth 59 years ago, and it has become steadily more dangerous. It now has the highest murder rate in the world. God kept us safe through armed robberies, home invasions, highway robberies, extortions, and

Eli’s kidnapping. We thank our faithful Father.

He also gave us and our family exceptionally good health over the years. For this, too, we are very grateful to God.

We are also thankful for the good choices our children have made. Our sons are church leaders in El Salvador. Two of our children are active in churches in the United States. We have 29 grandchildren and one great grandchild. It is pure joy to see our grandchildren choose God’s way, too.

Last week all of our children and their families gathered at a cluster of cabins on a mountain in northern El Salvador to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our marriage and of our arrival in El Salvador. What a treasure to have our whole family together!

Just days later, we had a grand gathering of friends and our church family at the Zacamil School. More than 300 people celebrated with us. Most memorable to me was joining that group singing with deep feeling, “Great is Thy Faithfulness” and “To God be the Glory.” He truly deserves all the glory for He is faithful.

We thank all of you who have supported us in prayer and in countless other ways. God bless you!

[Used by permission.]



Love, Respect, and Acceptance

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

June is the month for Father's Day. Each of us has had an earthly father. Hopefully, for most of us the word "father" invokes happy memories. Our emotions of love and security with our earthly father help enable us to trust our Heavenly Father. Sadly, we have people among us who find it difficult to trust God as their Heavenly Father because they did not experience much love and acceptance from their earthly father. Perhaps they were actually afraid of their father. How sad! I hope this has not been your experience, and if it has, remember God loves you. He cares deeply about you and he understands your pain. He desires to have a close father/daughter (or son) relationship with you.

Father's Day is a time to express your love and appreciation to your dad. Let him know you value the things he taught you by word or example. Give him a card, a visit—or a telephone call, if you live some

distance away. I'm sure Dad would appreciate spending time with you. You could offer to help with yard work, take him out to lunch or do something you know he would enjoy. My dad enjoyed flowers, even after Mom was gone. You know something your dad enjoys. Honor him while you have the opportunity to do so.

How can I teach my children to love and respect their dad?

Accept your husband's role of leadership in the home.

The Bible teaches us God's order in 1 Corinthians 11:3, *Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman.* "Head" does not mean male dominance, where a man rules over a woman and demands her total obedience and submission to his every wish and command. God never viewed women as less than men. We also read in Ephesians 5, where a man is commanded to love his wife as Christ loved the church.

A woman is to honor and respect

her husband. I believe this simply shows us that the man has ultimate responsibility and is the leader in the home “The buck stops with him.” A woman is to respect his position. It does not mean we cannot express our opinion or even appeal to our husband, but we do accept his final decision. Our acceptance of our husband’s authority will enable our children to accept authority in their own lives, especially as they grow into adulthood.

Love your husband

I know the Bible teaches husbands to love their wives, however, Titus 2:4, also instructs the older women to teach the younger women to love their husbands. I believe that will include teaching our children by example in our homes how to love Daddy, and of course, how to love their spouse in the future. We love by words; we love more by actions. I believe men need actions more than words. We love our husband by overlooking faults and by concentrating on strong points. We love by cheering him on, not criticizing, but encouraging him.


We show love by preparing food he enjoys and making a special effort to keep a happy atmosphere in the home. I recently read an article quoting one husband who

would choose coming home to a happy wife above anything else in the world. Never allow your children to speak disrespectfully of their father. (One caution here: Should a child come to you with a story of abuse by his or her father, listen to him or her and seek help.) Speak words of love to your husband in front of your children. Every child needs the assurance in today’s world that their parents love each other and that they in turn are loved by their parents.

Do not look to your husband for your happiness.

If I expect my husband to fill my emotional cup at all times, I will be disappointed. I will also pass on to the children an attitude of discontent and a sense that Dad does not meet our expectations. I may cultivate a disrespect in their minds for Dad’s job, his income, even his abilities. Rather help them to realize that happiness and fulfillment come from Jesus Christ.

Jesus alone can fill my cup. Free your husband from your expectations of meeting all your needs. As you do this, your children will feel the difference in your home.

A home filled with love, respect, and acceptance will be a foretaste of heaven for your family. 

Longing for a Baby

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Twenty-year-old Mary* was tall and strong. She was an energetic girl and happy for the attention that a handsome young African man was giving her. He did not pay a dowry for her to her parents, but as is very common, they just shackled up. *Just maybe I could bear his sons, then he would pay dowry for me*, Mary dreamed.

Paying dowry in Africa is a cultural tradition. It is an agreement with the girl's parents to give them a cow or two, or cash from the sale of a cow. It is the African way of recognizing a marriage.

Mary was the second woman. The first wife did not like this intrusion on their *dalla*. She hated Mary, and as time went on, their quarrels grew worse and worse. The man Mary was living with loved her. In the evening he took time to teach her to read and write. He was a tailor and even taught her how to sew.

The big sadness in their lives was that Mary was not conceiving. The husband was wealthy. They decided

they should visit the witch doctor. Surely he would have power to help them be able to have children. Mary was happy to go, for above all else, she wanted to please the man she lived with. She longed for a baby.

Early one morning they visited the witch doctor. They took him gifts of sugar and bread. Mary was given herbal medicines to drink. Days and weeks went by, still there was no sign of a baby.

Back to the witch doctor they went. He told them they must bring him a black sheep. This they did. He killed the sheep; Mary drank some of its blood and was told to bury the head of sheep. The witch doctor kept the rest to cook and eat.

Mary's mother was desperate for Mary to have a baby. The witch doctor suggested they sell a cow and give him the money. He said that is what they must do if they want a baby. Mother sold a cow, and so the witch doctor got richer as Mary's mother got poorer. And time went on.

Anxiously they waited and waited;

still there was no baby. Mary's mother said they will try another witch doctor. This doctor told Mary and her mother to sit in his house. It was dark and eerie. They sat very quietly and soon something happened. They could feel an evil presence come into the hut. Mary believes that demons spoke to them. She was very frightened. She cried for the witch doctor to open the door. Mary said she fought with that short, wicked man. He told her to keep quiet and go home.

Mary told her mother that she would never go to a witch doctor again. Three months later Mary's mother died. Mary believes the witch doctor had cast a spell on her. When she was telling me about her mother's death, she sobbed even though it happened some 30 years ago.

The first wife hated Mary more and more. The two women fought like cats, biting and scratching each other. Life became more and more difficult and miserable. Finally, Mary had enough. She walked away from that house, never to return.

Later Mary met up with another man, a polygamist. She became his third wife. Mary and her sister were two of those wives. Mary never had her own babies to love, but her sister did.

Later her husband and the other

two wives all died of HIV. Mary got sick too. A friend told her to go to the hospital; and because she went and got medicine, Mary is alive today. She is raising three children from their *dalla*. She loves her sisters' children, even though she works hard to have enough to eat and money to pay the school fees for the children. Life is truly not easy for them.

Today Mary attends church regularly. She made a confession one morning that she has a problem with anger. At Bible study one day, she shared Proverbs 15:1 in the Luo language. We were pleasantly surprised that she shared that verse. Morris interpreted it this way, "**A polite response cools down wrath.**" We asked Mary how she knows that verse. She said she took the Bible, opened it and found it.

She is a poor widow who has been mistreated, looked down on, and despised because she is barren. Thankfully, she can read.

One Sunday Mary sang a solo in church. I asked her if she is having victory over anger. She told me, "Yes, I am having victory or I would not have been able to sing."

Although Mary did not get her heart's desire for a baby, she is not alone. She has Jesus and she loves the children she cares for.

(*Not her name)



Making Big Decisions

Chris Miller, Sugarcreek, OH

You're not as insightful as you think, and yet you make lots of them, hundreds every day, millions over a lifetime--you make decisions. They come in all shapes and sizes, but it's the big ones, the lumpy ones, the ones that give us heartburn, that are the most fascinating to consider. How do you make big decisions? Important decisions are made when crucial influences drive us toward a tipping point.

Jared didn't want to teach. As he looked forward to his high school graduation, he dreamed of all the fascinating things he would do and become in the ensuing years. Every day when Jared walked the school grounds, a flock of adoring younger students mobbed him, jockeying for position to get attention from Jared.

In conversations with a motherly teacher's aide, Jared realized the life-changing truth that whatever his future held, it would include working with children. The other teachers around school would tell him, "Jared, you're going to be a teacher someday." He would shudder because he knew it was true.

One day three of his best friends said, "Jared, you should come help out at Kid's Club." So he went. Every Thursday, he made the forty-five minute trip to Canton where he played with, taught,

and prayed for children from the rough side of town. His heart was touched.

Jared became a teacher. For three years, he played with, taught, and prayed for children in a different setting—a Mennonite school. At the same time, his heart reached toward the children he knew from Kid's Club, so he moved to Canton to the rough side of town. Every morning, he drives south to the green rolling meadows of Sugarcreek and every evening he commutes north back to poverty, gang violence, and cracked sidewalks.

Crucial influences push and pull us toward major decisions. Some influences crash, boom, and shake our windows. Others quietly blow us bit by bit like a warm breeze slowly moving a Saharan sand dune. Crucial influences come in the shape of ideas. After being seeded inside our heads, these ideas sprout in our lives, and we are changed forever. Where do these crucial influences come from?

Crucial influences always flow from people. (I am writing from the perspective of a Christian. It is a given that we are seeking God's direction at all times.) People have conversations, make speeches, write books, record songs, and most importantly, do things. Every idea that arcs across your mind is

either borrowed from someone else or is massively influenced by someone else. Facebook currently has 1.6 billion active users. Donald Trump was mentioned 5.9 million times on Google News since April 2015¹. Seventy-nine percent of Pinterest-using Millennials say they use the site to “teach them how to do things.”²

Look around you. Why have you made the decisions you have made today? Why are you wearing that shirt? Why did you eat that cereal? Why did you listen to that music? Why do you drive that car? Why did you thumb through this magazine? After examining your motives, you will discover that all the little decisions that make up a day in your life are shaped by the people that surround you (literally and figuratively). You have picked up your cues from the crucial influencers around you.

When Ben was twelve, his horse bucked him off its back. Ben got back on because this unbroken horse was just another challenge to vanquish. Ben loves horses. He loves the great outdoors.

Ben's high school teacher attended the Institute for Global Opportunities (IGo) for several months. His teacher excitedly described his experiences traveling abroad. Later, the teacher invited acquaintances from a different Asian mission to speak at Ben's high

¹ (Rhodan, Maya. “By the numbers: How our influencers stack up.” Time 2 May 2016: 72. Print.)

² (Smith, Craig. “270 Amazing Pinterest Statistics.” DMR: 13 April 2016. Web. 30 April 2016.)

school. They spoke about God's present movements in Asia and presented opportunities for young people to spread Christ's gospel to people who have never seen a Bible or heard the name “Jesus.” These missionaries related story after story of prayer, smuggling, and hiking.

“I can serve Christ by praying, smuggling Bibles, and hiking?”

Ben is saving his money. The missionaries said it is expensive to do this, but Ben's class figured out it doesn't cost more than buying a nice car. Ben graduates in two years. He is eagerly waiting to blaze the Asian trails for Christ.

An ancient king once led his army on a daring conquest. Needing to cross a body of water, his army began constructing bridges. As the bridges neared completion, a powerful storm rose up and smashed the bridges to bits. What did the ancient king do? He beheaded each of his chief engineers. Not only that, he also had the body of water flogged with 400 lashes. That would teach it.

How did he think his decisions would solve his problems? I don't know. I'm sure the answer is complex. However, I am sure that this ancient king didn't wake up that morning and say, “Today I will make decisions that are exceedingly crazy.” No, to him his actions were perfectly reasonable.

How could he possibly have seen his actions this way? The ancient king's decisions that day were not made in a vacuum. Those decisions were part of

a long string of choices he had made over his lifetime. The influences he had accrued up to that point made his actions seem rational.

We are like that ancient king in that we are always on our way toward a tipping point. A tipping point is “the point at which a series of small changes or incidents becomes significant enough to cause a larger, more important change.”³ We are driven toward tipping points in two ways. Either crucial influences insert ideas into our lives until we “tip” or our circumstances require us to make a decision.

Major tipping points in our lives are questions like, “Where will I attend church? Who will I marry? What career path should I follow? Should I buy a house?” We tend to see these major tipping points as one-time decisions. We fail to see that we’ve been heading toward these tipping points for all our lives. The books and magazines we read, the blog posts we browse, the music we listen to, and the conversations we have are always pushing and pulling us toward our next tipping points.

When is your next tipping point? Will you be ready for it? Our lives are each a drop in the massive ocean of humanity. A conversation here, a text message there, a well-placed smile, a wink in the right direction, maybe a *Calvary Messenger* article - these influences create ripples that create waves that create floods that push and pull us and our fellow humans toward

³ (“Tipping Point.” Def. 1. Oxford Dictionaries. Oxford University, n.d. Web.)

tipping points that change the world.

If I close my eyes, I can see the beautiful blue earth spinning just outside my spacecraft window. I have wanted to be an astronaut since my parents took me to the Kennedy Space Center many years ago. One day, my high school teacher caught my elbow as I returned an encyclopedia to the shelf, “You should come back here to teach school in a few years.” I was floored! An earth-bound job? I had never thought of that.

After high school, I floated through various jobs. One day my dad said, “Chris, have you ever heard of Faith Builders?” I had not. “They train teachers there.” Interesting.

At a wedding, I ran into a friend of a friend who was then attending Faith Builders. “What’s it like?” I asked. He filled me in on the in’s and out’s.

That winter, I attended Calvary Bible School. I was chosen to help plan a chapel. One of our ideas was to get all the students who had received speeding tickets in the past year to come to the front to share a life goal. During chapel, I announced this activity from behind the pulpit and then realized two things: 1) I had gotten a speeding ticket in the past year. 2) I didn’t have a life goal to share. When it was my turn, I said, “I would like to attend Faith Builders.” After that, I decided I should probably follow through with that goal.

After graduating, I did just what my high school teacher said. I returned to the school I had attended for twelve years and became a teacher. That was six years ago. Space will have to wait.



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Home is where you hang your heart.

• • • • •

Our five senses are incomplete without the sixth sense—a sense of humor.

• • • • •

Be humble or stumble.

• • • • •

Laziness often partners with poverty.

• • • • •

Youth and beauty fade; integrity lasts a lifetime.

• • • • •

Vows made in storms must not be forgotten in times of calm.

• • • • •

Be kind to unkind people; they need it the most.

• • • • •

Some folks drink at the fountain of knowledge; others merely gargle.

• • • • •

Success is *sweet*, but its secret is *sweat*.

• • • • •

No law can keep a man from acting the fool.

• • • • •

He who follows the Leader has less need to follow the follower.

• • • • •

Truth is not always popular, but it is always right.

• • • • •

Looking for a solution without listening is like working in the dark.