



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

JANUARY 2017

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January 2017

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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Editor: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paullmiller@btsskynet.net

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 P.O. Box 400, Slanesville, WV 25444
 elmerg@frontiernet.net

Associate Editor: David L. Miller
 P O Box 73, Partridge, KS 67566
 620-567-2376

Contributing Editors:
 Simon Schrock, Enos D. Stutzman,
 Aaron Lapp, Ronald J. Miller

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

Youth Messages Editor: Gideon Yutzy
 4114 S. Herren Rd., Hutchinson, KS 67501
 gideonyutzy@gmail.com | 620-615-2967

Junior Messages Editor:
 Mrs. Mary Ellen Beachy
 PO Box 2102
 Kisumu, Kenya, East Africa
 maryellenbeachy@icloud.com

Helpers at Home Editor:
 Mrs. Mary June Glick
 1080 Return Church Rd., Seneca, SC 29678

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:
 Enos D. Stutzman
 7498 Woods West Ave.,
 London, OH 43140
 614-460-9222
 enosnmary@gmail.com

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Lord, We Wonder

Eldon Hooley, Grandview, TX

When the Prince of Peace came down,
Shown to us by the heavenly Dove.
In Bethlehem, a Savior born,
Lord, we wonder at your love.

Mary was a virgin mild,
With a child from heaven above.
Holy Ghost conceived God's Son,
Lord, we marvel at your love.

Joseph pondered what to do,
The angel spoke to her his love.
"Fear not, this Child is sent to save,"
Lord, we wonder at your love.

Jesus, born to man, yet we,
Sinful, so undeserving of
Any boon. Our Savior came.
Lord, we marvel at your love.

Oh, the wonder of this Man,
Suffered so, the price enough.
Pardon full, from sin I'm free.
Lord, we now accept your love.



“I am the Lord, I Change Not”

Dallas Witmer

The difference between a sunrise and a sunset is hard to distinguish in pictures, although they are exact opposites in nature. Both are changes: the one from darkness to light; the other from light to darkness. They are changes that our unchanging God has established for our well being. Because omnipotent God is always the same, He is able to maintain the rhythmic changes in nature, and vary those not so rhythmic, like storms and earthquakes.

Men, like nature, change. But unlike in nature, God has chosen to not control all our changes. Whether for better or worse, we may choose the most important changes of our life. When we choose to apostatize, darkness falls. As in a picture, one man's sunrise and another's sunset may for a moment look quite similar, but as in nature each passing moment reveals the difference more and more.

In Colombia's literature ministry, each good change represents growth

that God has chosen to produce working with the people. We are privileged to preach His Word, publish His message and live as His witnesses. These ministries, combined with the Holy Spirit's conviction are capable of changing a community's perceptions of truth and of producing growth in Christians. While that spiritual growth and those changing perceptions are at times hard to gauge, we may never doubt that they occur. God has said that His Word will not return void. It will accomplish what He pleases, and prosper in the things whereto He has sent it (Isaiah 55:11).

As He leads and we follow, God will continue to use this literature ministry to bring good changes to Colombia. Your prayers and support also help the spiritual sun to rise in many hearts touched by this literature.

Ministry Changes

Our literature ministry began in Colombia years before any of us had touched Colombian soil. In the years preceding 2004, some of our

publishers' literature had found its way to Colombia and caught the attention of a number of people. Some responded, prompting our first visit to Colombia in February, 2004.

In the years following we returned to man Mount Zion Literature (MZL) stands at book events, mostly in Bogota, but also in Barranquilla....

When we moved to Colombia in late 2009 MZL made us Colombia's national distributor...

Today bookstores in most major cities throughout Colombia handle some of our materials. We are beginning to establish a few trusted regional distributors as Colombia is too big for us to cover without their help.

[Editor's notes: This material is

*taken from The Colombian Vision, newsletter (fourth quarter, 2016) of Colombia Literature Ministry, with permission. My purpose for printing this material is three-fold. One, Bro. Dallas Witmer's excellent insights comparing and contrasting sunrise and sunset and making spiritual observations of that phenomenon in nature. Two, to call attention to the excellent work of CLM in cooperation with MZL's book ministry. Three, by CLM's request, we give contact information for this outreach. Here it is: **Colombia Literature Ministry**, Contact: Shawn Torkelson, 7340 Turtle Butte Rd., Beulah, Colorado, 81023. Tel" 719-214-7467; e-mail: shawntorkelson@gmail.com*

Dallas Witmer's e-mail address is: dallaswitmer@gmail.com

-PLM] 

Forty and Six Years

Paul L. Miller, Partridge, KS

With this issue, we print the last "Observations" material that my brother, Associate Editor David L. Miller, wrote. This month's contribution was found in his notebook after his death on November 22. As usual, it was

written in longhand. He probably wrote while holding his notebook on his lap. I suppose he would have written more later in the month if he had come across anything he considered having enough human interest to be worthy of "the column."

When *Calvary Messenger* was launched in January, 1970, David helped the late Ervin Hershberger (who also died at 89 years of age) and others “get it off the ground.” David was active and supportive of *Calvary Messenger* from the very beginning. So he had 46 years of active involvement with this periodical. For most of these years he wrote the column to which many readers would turn to first, which David named simply “Observations.”

Bro. Ervin Hershberger’s help to me during my first four years as editor (before his death in 2003) was a great help. This work requires the active involvement of a team of persons.

I have found David’s moral support of me as editor a great encouragement. I will definitely miss him!

David and Mary’s son, Ronald Miller, will continue writing “Observations.” Now that whole responsibility rests on Ronald. David’s willingness in recent years to have someone else write the column is really helpful now.

“Forty-six years!” That number is interesting. That’s how long it took for a major building project of ancient times. The conversation

that Jesus had with the Jews in John 2:20 makes reference to that. Jesus offered this to His critics, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” I think His questioners may have missed an important hand gesture, because I imagine Jesus pointing to Himself when He made that comment. The Jews were dubious and asked, “Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?” John explained it very simply, “But he [Jesus] spake of the temple of his body.” (v. 21)

Just as the magnificent temple in Jerusalem covered a 46-year building period, so did Bro. David’s writing contribution continue for 46 years. We believe his serious and sustained efforts made a significant contribution in building the church.

Furthermore, as God took over when Jesus was to rise from the dead, so He took over when it was time for David’s graduation, which apparently happened in a matter of seconds. Yes “in the twinkling of an eye” David was transported to glory!

Bro. David’s health had been slowly diminishing, but he was still doing well. He was up and about, taking a keen interest in life. We thank God that he was spared long-term care. May God be praised!



Announcement

Helping People in Need Seminar | January 17-19, 2017

Sponsored by Fresh Start Training Center and Deeper Life Ministries.
Hosted at Fresh Start Mennonite Chapel, 657 S 350 E, Washington, IN 47501

To register: Please contact Fresh Start Training Center by phone at 812-254-3399. Registration deadline is January 6, 2017.

Tuesday, January 17, 2017—Parenting the Christian Home

The Effects of a Christian Worldview in the Home—Virlin Yoder

Cultivating Interpersonal Relationships in the Home—Bryan Fleagle

Workshop: Never Stop Parenting—Dave Snyder

Godly Values in Faithful Parenting—Ben Waldner

Wednesday, January 18, 2017—Morality in Christianity

The Moral Crisis in Our Midst – Tim Weaver

The Heart of Moral Sin – Phil Helmuth

Men's Workshop: Common Moral Perversions – Ben Waldner

Ladies' Workshop: Common Moral Perversions – TBD

Biblical Solutions for Moral Issues – Virlin Yoder

Seven Points for Child Training – Dave Snyder

Thursday, January 19, 2017—Biblical Principles for Helping Troubled People

The Biblical Worldview of the Counselor – Tim Weaver

The Role and Responsibility of the Counselee – Bryan Fleagle

Reaching the Heart in Counseling – Ben Waldner

Encouraging the Heart of the Counselor – Dave Snyder

Rhoda Martin

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd.

Plain City, OH 43064

614-873-1199

www.dlmohio.org



*“But we have this treasure in **jars of clay**, to show that the all-surpassing power is of God, and not from us.” (2 Cor. 4:7)*

Announcement

CASP 2017 BULLETIN

As of December 1, 2016, we still are in need of a number of young men to fill the February, 2017, term in Hutchinson, KS. If you would like to go or know of someone who may be interested, please contact Dathan Stoltzfus at 585-259-2098 or dathan1971@gmail.com. 

the bottom line

Being Known and Read of all Men

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

When I was a boy going to school, I once sat down to write in a list all the people I knew. The list was really not very long.

Now as a grown man, I did the vanity of trying to make an estimate of how many people have known me as a business person, of my relatives and my wife's relatives, and people who heard me over the years in teaching, writing, and preaching.

My curiosity came up with twelve categories in which many of our youth are active. My "guesstimate" came up with an average total of 1200 per younger person by the time he is age 20. Doubling that total every fifteen years keeps adding quite a score. By the time one is 80 years old, the total

would possibly be 20,000 people!

Our young people are involved in many different churches and service ministries. They are involved in travel all over the world. Their occasions for fellowship are numerous and thus are known far and wide. What about that is important enough to attract a writer's attention? Our young people are truly ambassadors for Christ. They represent the church of Jesus Christ. They also are representatives of the congregation of which they are a member. They represent their own family. They are known as an individual in their own right.

The apostle Paul wrote two letters to the Corinthians. He said of the church in that worldly and immoral city, "Ye are our epistle written in our

hearts, known and read of all men” (II Corinthians 4:1). Being known, remembered, and appreciated is a general definition of significance. Significance is a serious draw for all of us. It is like a fence around us to keep us in the area of being desired and appreciated. Some vain persons have said they don’t care what people think of them. But stamped on each person’s heart is our Maker’s authorization, “I am important.” It is somewhat up to each individual to choose to whom he will matter and to whom he will be important.

The Bible says, “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Ephesians 5:29). “Nourisheth” means he feeds it. “Cherisheth” means he is protective of it. The suffix “eth” shows us that He protects it regularly and continually.

To say one doesn’t care what happens to himself is sadly perverted. We can be sure that at some point he does truly care what happens to himself, even to perhaps bringing a law suit against another who has violated his personhood in some way.

On the other extreme, there are some joyless folks who are overly protective of themselves. They can’t enjoy life and they can’t freely contribute to the church’s program and witness. They also likely will have

a shrinking list of friends. These two extremes of people will not be known, remembered, or appreciated by a growing number of people. Their list is shrinking rather than increasing.

Ordained men who have been active as evangelists, Bible teachers, conference speakers, and preachers could have been known by totals ranging from 40,000 to 50,000 people. Folks, fellow Christians, we all are ambassadors for Christ.

Why does Satan try to get Christians to fall into sin and disgrace? Because the effect is far-ranging, as far as one is known. For some of us, that is literally around the world! It is very important for all of us to be on our guard against the wiles of the devil. (Ephesians 6:11) One fling into sin could cancel a whole lifetime of service. One evil report of an individual can undo the good report of ten men.

We repeat the verse, “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church” (Ephesians 5:29). Our Lord nourishes us with His Word. That nourishment helps us to grow in grace, and makes us strong to resist Satan and life’s various temptations. All men should zealously and jealously guard themselves against the staining and deadly sin of immorality in the many available avenues in our day.

I don't know how to say this, but I am pressed in my spirit by the Lord, and so I must. The apostle Paul had written to his brothers in the churches with tears and heaviness of spirit. I also know about that, and this is one of those times. This was not in my mind to be included in this article prior to beginning to write. The burden on my heart just now is for Christian men who have fallen into the sin of sexually molesting young boys and girls. The law requires ministers and counselors to report such violations to the state. In fact, another family man has just recently been locked up in prison for such a violation. One is too many to be named among us. And there have been others like this.

One act of immoral conduct can stain a blot that is remembered whenever one sees the person or his name is mentioned. People remember King David thus. More important than trying to avoid what people will think of us if we become involved in sin, is the powerful example Joseph gave us. When he was tempted in faraway Egypt, so far that no one of his home folks would ever find it out, Joseph remembered God.

Potiphar's wife enticed Joseph to lie with her. He refused. She presented herself "day by day," so he could think it over. He could be fantasizing the possibility. The Bible says that on her

first proposition, Joseph said, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

That is it, men! That should be our first concern. That is our power line of defense. Immorality of any kind is a sin against God. Besides, it is a sin against another person, and it is a sin against one's own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18)

Satan takes advantage of using modern inventions.

Paul says, "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:10,11). The state does not forgive as readily as the church or Christian individuals do.

Satan is out to deceive and destroy the church of Jesus Christ. The Lord saves one person at a time.

Satan works likewise to steal, kill, and destroy one person at a time.

The Bottom Line is that we should not carnally seek to be known, remembered, and appreciated, but to faithfully do God's will in all purity, with the wisdom He gives, and the opportunities given into our hand. We are not just that which we were taught. Everyone of us is what we are by what we embrace from that which we were taught. 

What Saint Nicholas Stoltzfus Teaches Us About Kingdom Enterprise

Chris Stoltzfus, Lancaster, PA

“There’s a time for preaching, and a time for business,” the Amish landlord scolded as I pressed him to care for the tenants of his apartment and not just his own bottom line. He came to my neighborhood asking for help to dislodge an Iraqi tenant who had a tough time paying rent. “She signed a paper saying she will be out by the 15th,” he explained with a bit of smugness. It seemed he had caught her in a trap and was now going to do “business” and send her on her way.

Another Amish family several hundred years ago seems to have had a different approach to enterprise and the connection to preaching. This family hired a Lutheran named Nicholas to work on their farm and through the daily engagement of their vocation, Nicholas decided to join the Amish Church.

Nicholas Stoltzfus writes about his life in a request on January 14, 1744, to the local authorities in Zweibrucken in which he asked to marry an Amish woman whom he met through his employment. He writes

I was living with my mother in the land, but after my mother’s

death I very soon needed to go to strangers for employment... I had the opportunity to be among... Anabaptists. [I] got used to them and was among them, and was instructed in their religion, and convinced to remain among them...¹

Notice that it was while working among the Amish that he was “instructed in their religion and convinced to remain among them.” There was no missions strategy that brought the Stoltzfus name into the Anabaptist Church. Rather, it was a family living out their faith and sharing that within their vocation even during a time when such outsiders posed a threat to their existence.

Nicholas the Lutheran

The Amish family in Zweibrucken had every reason not to hire a Lutheran and especially one whose father had been a member of the clergy. Nicholas was from the “enemy” camp and the Anabaptists in this region had a history of mistreatment by Lutherans

¹ Ernest Drumm, *Revealed Life of Nicholas Stoltzfus*, researched and compiled by Levi L. Stoltzfus, (No Publisher Name: 1986), 4-5.

and Catholics alike.

Even though Anabaptists were invited into the Alsace and the Palatinate regions after the devastating 30 years war between Protestants and Catholics, they were not accorded equal status with the local population. "Anabaptism was not one of the options or one of the religions permissible, to either prince or commoner."² This tension meant that a change in a local leader could suddenly require them to be on the move again.

In Zweibrucken, the town where Nicholas lived and worked, there was strong bias against the Anabaptists. It was so strong that when Nicholas formally requested to marry an Amish girl, they refused to allow it. She was Amish, he was Lutheran. That was all the reason needed to prohibit such a marriage.

Interestingly, one year after Nicholas' mother died, the council changed their ruling and granted them permission to marry with one condition; they were to leave the area after the wedding³. Nicholas and Katharina married around 1744

² Elmer S. Yoder, *The Beachy Amish Mennonite Fellowship Churches* (Diakonia Ministries: Hartville, OH, 1987), 61.

³ Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, "Nicholas Stoltzfus," 2006, <http://www.nicholasstoltzfus.com/Nicholas.htm> (accessed May 5, 2010).

and some years later the family sailed to the New World with their two children Christian and Barbara and settled in Reading, PA⁴.

Thus despite the history of mistreatment and discrimination, this Amish family hired a Lutheran who became the father of all Anabaptist Stoltzfuses in America. Their commitment to Christ in vocation offers 21st Century Anabaptists some important lessons regarding enterprise and Kingdom building.

Lessons for Anabaptists Today

Many today complain that our traditional Anabaptist churches are not effective in bringing diverse people into Jesus' Kingdom. They say it is because the standards are too high, there are too many unwritten rules, and so on. While those concerns might be a point of discussion, how much more effective could we be if we used the platform that takes up most of our time to extend Christ's Kingdom to these diverse peoples?

Kingdom Enterprise Offers Space to Demonstrate the Life of Jesus

Most of us have already found out that after all the bills are paid and we keep the business running, there is little time left for intentional Kingdom focused activities. Sometimes we may live with a guilt complex, knowing we ought to do more to share the Good

⁴ Drumm, 8.

News with others but having little time to do so.

What might happen if Anabaptists today followed the example of the Amish family above? How much more effective could we be if we used our 40 to 50 vocational hours each week to demonstrate and explain the Kingdom to Muslims, Buddhists, pagans, atheists and other unchurched people working alongside us?

Incidentally, Anabaptists are known for their emphasis on the practical things of life. We tend to be less interested in witnessing with our words and more comfortable “speaking with our lives.” Kingdom Enterprise fits hand-in-hand with this strength (or weakness, depending on how one sees it).

Vocational Ministry Fits with Jesus’ Discipleship Model

This approach also follows closely the model of Jesus in mentoring his disciples. When Jesus chose his disciples, he did not put them through a weekly Bible study or discipleship class. It was three years of the daily interaction that turned them into vibrant disciples who changed the world. Similarly, when we spend forty hours each week working alongside a coworker from another background and our business truly exemplifies the generosity of Christ, they begin to see

the true beauty of Jesus and are drawn to embrace his Kingdom.

At E-Impact Marketing in Lancaster City we begin every Monday alongside our Muslim refugee colleagues with scripture and prayer. Many times our hearts have been warmed as God has answered very specific prayers. One of the toughest weeks in the history of the company was when we missed our regular prayer time. Interestingly, our Muslim employee pointed out the problem. “It’s because we didn’t pray!”⁵

Who is the Next Nicholas?

Imagine if many Amish and Mennonite business owners hired just one outsider and did it with a Kingdom centered goal. What if we paid them well from the beginning to give them an opportunity to learn a trade and support their families. How about sharing a piece of the company profit with them to demonstrate the generosity of Christ and his Kingdom? We could mentor them, welcome them into our businesses, families and even into our fellowships. How many more last names could be added to our churches if we hired with a mission?

⁵ E-Impact Marketing is based in Lancaster, PA and was started with the goal of hiring refugees from Muslim countries. The company provides internet marketing services primarily to Anabaptist owned companies. www.e-impactmarketing.com



Fix it or Trust Him

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

God delights in stretching our faith and our trust in Him. Recently I found myself being challenged anew with several verses in Proverbs which have been my life verses ever since my teenage years. Verses 5 and 6 in chapter 3, read like this, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.” I thought I understood, believed and practiced these verses. However, one night, I lay awake mulling over a situation, in fact there were several different circumstances on my mind causing worry and a sleepless night. Unexpectedly, I heard God speaking directly to me through these verses, “My daughter, do not lean on your own understanding, but trust me.” It was like He was saying, “Stop worrying, don’t try to fix it yourself but wait and trust Me.” I had even worked through many different scenarios to fix the problem. I played out conversations in my mind and planned out methods

of manipulation (which I hated to admit) to accomplish what I felt needed to be fixed. But God was saying to me, “Trust me, I am capable to take care of this situation”. Does any of this sound familiar to you?

Men are normally known as the fixers. We tell our children, wait until Daddy comes home and he will fix your toy. Our washer breaks down and who do we call; usually our husbands or another man to fix it. However, most times it is mommy who fixes the issues of the heart. We blow on the ouchy to heal the bruised knees. We dry the tears and mend the broken hearts. Even as the children grow older, we continue to hurt when they hurt. They come to us, desiring someone to listen to truly hear what they are saying. What is our reaction? We try to fix the problems and we make the situation worse by our interference. I believe women especially have this tendency to want to solve problems in our families and even in other relationships and circumstances,

which are often out of our control. What happens, we become frustrated and disillusioned when we can't fix the problems. But, God is saying, "Trust me, don't try to figure it out in your own strength but wait and I will work it out in my way and for your good."

We are entering a new year faced with many unknowns. Will we trust God in 2017 or will we worry and fret, trying to fix not only our own personal problem but also carry the weight of the world upon our shoulders? Please don't misunderstand me. There are many things which do and must concern us. We must have wisdom to raise a family in this day of technology and change. We must not bury our heads in the sand and hope it all goes away. We must be alert and informed. There is no excuse for ignorance. Yet, in all this, God says, "Trust me". Will I trust Him ?

To trust God, I must first of all develop an attitude of Faith and Prayer. My attitude has so much to do with living a worry-free life. There will always be situations that cause us concern, but with God's help, we can trust God and enjoy life. 1 Peter 5:7 tells us to cast our care on the Lord. Only as we cast our cares completely on Him, can we say, "God, I trust

You, and I'm going to enjoy the life You have given me." As we give our circumstances to God and allow Him to fix them; we must also be satisfied with his methods of dealing with our problem. We must stop trying to make things happen our way, but remove our hands and allow God to make it happen His way.

To trust God, I must allow Him to give me peace and rest. He invites me to come to Him and rest. We all want rest. However, we must be willing to say, "God, I rest in you. Take my life, my family, my reputation, my health, my future. It is all in your hands." I have struggled long enough and I want God to be in control. I am going to live in peace and rest. My mind and my emotions need rest. Our will needs to conform to God's Will, only then can I be at rest. I must humble myself and cry out to God in brokenness, saying not my will but thine be done.

To trust God, I must leave my fears and worries in God's Hands. I do not need to stress and fret about tomorrow. God knows what each day will hold. There are certain things I cannot change and I cannot fix, because God is ultimately in control. He will provide. My job is to trust.

May your new year be Blessed as you trust God.



marriages

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

Beiler-Lee

Bro. Jamien, son of Lloyd and Bethany Beiler, Greensburg, PA, and Sis. Rachel, daughter of Darrell and Gloria Lee, Goshen, IN, at Pleasant Grove Mennonite Church, on Aug. 13, 2016, by Randall Riegecker.

Derstine-Yoder

Bro. Chad, son of Clayton and Sandra Derstine, Alturas, CA, and Sis. Monica, daughter of Lynwood and Kathy Yoder, Oskaloosa, KS, at Grace Community Church for Ebenezer A. M. Church, by Mervin Graber.

McGrath-Yoder

Bro. Shawn, son of Manfred and Naomi McGrath, Taylorsville, NC, and Sis. Veronica, daughter of Paul and Carol Yoder, Montezuma, GA, on August 6, 2016, at Montezuma Mennonite Church by Donny Swartzentruber,

Mejia-Alfaro

Bro. Hector Joseph, son of Jose Inocente "Chente" and Mary Jane Mejia, Puerto Viejo, Heredia, Costa Rica, and Sis. Grace, daughter of Carlos Luis and Amalia Alfaro, Marsella, Alajuela, Costa Rica, on July 23, 2016, at Marsella, Costa Rica, by Dale Heisey.

Miller-Beiler

Bro. Travis, son of Paul Mark and Rosanna Miller, Martinsburg, OH, and Sis. Christina, daughter of Lloyd and Bethany

Beiler, Greensburg, PA, at Mt. Pleasant Church of God for Trauger Mennonite Church on Oct. 8, 2016, by Jonathan S. Stoltzfus.

Miller-Stoltzfus

Bro. Carl, son of Herbert and Alma Miller, Walhonding, OH, and Sis. Kayla, daughter of Marvin and Ruth Stoltzfus, Leola, PA, on June 25, 2016, at Ephrata Business Center for Summitview Christian Fellowship, by Dave Stoltzfus.

Profitt-Peachey

Bro. Jonathan, son of David and Susan Profitt, Earlysville, VA, and Sis. Abigail, daughter of Ivan and Kay Peachey, Dyke, VA, on July 9, 2016, at Bible Holiness Church, Elkton, VA, for Faith Mission Fellowship by Ivan Beachy.

Weaver-Borntrager

Bro. Jon Anthony, son of Paul and Orpha Weaver, Jackson, OH, and Sis. Jen, daughter of Willie and Carolyn Borntrager, on Aug. 13, 2016, at Christ Community Church for Still Waters Mennonite Church of Jackson, by Paul Weaver.

Yoder-Hershberger

Bro. Tristan, son of David and Dorothy Yoder, Oskaloosa, KS, and Sis. Lois, daughter of Gabriel and Rachel Hershberger, Oskaloosa, KS, on Oct. 28, 2016, at Town and County Church for Ebenezer A. M. Church, by Mervin Graber.

Yoder-Miller

Bro. Aaron, son of Marlin and Arie Yoder, Sugarcreek OH, and Sis. Rachel, daughter of Phil and Ruth Ann Miller, at Martins Creek Mennonite Church for Messiah AM Church, Millersburg, OH, on June 25, 2016, by the bride's father, Phil Miller. 

cradle roll

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

Albrecht, Leslie and Judith (Byler), Poole, ON, first child and son, Kendrick Leslie, July 12, 2016.

Bontrager, Darrel and Karen (Yoder), Abbyville, KS, second child and daughter, Zenia Joy, Nov. 30, 2016.

Chupp, Michael and Rosie (Diller), Paynesville, MN, first child and daughter, Carrie Marie, Nov. 5, 2016.

Detweiler, Aaron and Marilyn (Graber), Greensburg, KY, first child and daughter, Tiffany Jewel, Nov. 13, 2016

Eash, Brian and Kimberly (Yoder), Vanleer, TN, fourth child, third son, Denver Levi, Oct. 20, 2016.

Eash, Lyndon and Melody (Kurtz), Greensburg, KY, fourth child, third daughter, Audrey Rose, August 18, 2016.

Eash, Marvin and Dorothy (Yoder), Hutchinson, KS, ninth child, seventh daughter, Abigail Grace, Nov. 4, 2016.

Esh, Julian and Cathy (Wengerd), Charlotte, TN, first child and son, Kylan Zane, Oct. 30, 2016.

Garber, Jesse and Brenda (Miller), Paris, MO, third child, second daughter, Emily Janelle, Aug. 15, 2016.

Hershberger, Alvin and Verba (Mast), Greensburg, KY, second child and daughter, Opal Shalom, Nov. 10, 2016.

Hershberger, Chris and Rose (Miller), Jackson, OH, sixth child, fourth son, Trenton Seth, August 29, 2016.

Hostetler, Chris and Donna (Martin), Auburn, KY, third child, first daughter, Miranda Jo, Aug. 1, 2016.

King, Jason and Rosalie (Byler), Kinzers, PA, first child and daughter, Jasmine Grace, Sept. 9, 2016.

King, Christina (Mast) and the late Paul, Lexington, IN, sixth child, first daughter, Kaylene Paula, July 23, 2016.

Knepp, Jason and Janelle (Yoder), Whiteville, TN, first child and daughter, Janalyn Paige, July 21, 2016.

Kuhns, Vernon and Christina (Gingerich), Lovington, IL, sixth child, fourth daughter, Eden Leilani, Nov. 27, 2018.

Lapp, John and Jolene (Stoltzfus), New Holland, PA, second child, first son, Elliot John, Aug. 24, 2016.

Lapp, Kendall and Heather (Schrock), Greensburg, PA, first child and son, Milo Webster, Aug. 20, 2016.

Mast, Nate and Marylou (Jantzi), Monkton, ON, second child, first son, Austin David, Nov. 18, 2016.

Miller, Ezra and Martha Joy (Bates), Pulaski, TN, first child and daughter, Jade Shalom, July 27, 2016.

Miller, George and Evelyn (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, second child, first son, Bryson Tyrell, June 14, 2016.

Nissley, Steven and Edith (Yoder), Paris, TN, ninth child, second son, Denver Allen, Nov. 6, 2016.

Overholt, Benny and Beth (Yoder), Marshallville, GA, third child and son, Kyler Reese, Sept. 14, 2016.

Quevedo, Vinson and Amy (Byler), Huntsville, AR, first child and son, Nicholas Rafael, Oct. 23, 2016.

Ross, Nicholas and Lauren (Benne), Paris, MO, fourth child, second daughter, Emily Johanna, Sept. 2, 2016.

Schrock, Ellis and Daniela (Ciocan), Antrim, OH/Suceava, Romania, third child, second son, Thomas Evan, Nov. 14, 2016.

Sommers, Evan and Janean (Yoder), Hiddenite, NC, first child and son, Donovan Kade, Nov. 11, 2016.

Stoll, Marlin and Marietta (Miller), Greensburg, KY, fifth child, fourth son, Micah Darrel, August 5, 2016.

Swartzentruber, Dwight and Renita (Overholt), Vanleer, TN, first child and daughter, Joslyn Kate, Oct. 3, 2016.

Troyer, D.J. and Maria (Yoder), Harrison, AR, second child and son, Hudson David, July 8, 2016.

Troyer, Jonathan and Andrea (Miller), Stuarts Draft, VA, third child and son, Wyatt Edward, Nov. 22, 2016.

Weaver, Andre and Sharon (Miller), Jackson, OH, second child and daughter, Shana Rose, July 27, 2016.

Weaver, Duane and Ruth (Miller), Stuarts Draft, VA, ninth child, fifth son, Samuel Joseph, Sept. 24, 2016.

Weaver, Jeremy and Jennifer (Miller), Jackson, OH, fourth child, second daughter, Hanna Faith, July 18, 2016.

Weaver, Joseph and Melody (Miller), Lexington, IN, fourth child and son, Josiah Alex, July 12, 2016.

Whitt, Leroy and Teresa (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, second child, first daughter, Kelsie Nicole, July 14, 2016.

Wingard, Faron and Roselyn (Weaver), Montezuma, GA, ninth child, fourth daughter, Kaylin Alyse, August 4, 2016.

Yoder, Chris and Charla (Funk), Oskaloosa, KS, first child and daughter, Chloe Brynn, Sept. 30, 2016.

Yoder, Francis and Nealda (Swartzentruber) Montezuma, GA, first child and son, Landon Trey, Sept. 25, 2016.

Yoder, Keith and Julia (Stoll), Whiteville, TN, fourth child, first son, Weston Keith, May 8, 2016.

Yoder, Wesley and Abigail (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, third child, first daughter, Madelyn Grace, August 17, 2016. 



ordinations

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

Bro. Morris Yoder, 30, (wife, Beth Martin), Montezuma, GA, was ordained as minister at the Montezuma Mennonite Church, Montezuma, GA, on August 21, 2016. The charge was given by Donny Swartzentruber, assisted by Eli Kauffman and John Mast.

Bro. Robbie Yoder, 30 (wife, Linda Dienner), Silver Lake Mennonite Church, Perry, NY, was ordained as

minister on Nov. 13, 2016. Raymond King and Dwayne Glick shared the lot with him. The morning message was given by Ivan Beachy, Free Union, VA. The evening messages were by Jonathan Stoltzfus and Ivan Beachy. The charge was given by Ernest Stoltzfus, assisted by Jonathan Stoltzfus and Ivan Beachy.

Bro. Jesse M. Zook, 47, (wife, Laura Peachey), Mifflin, PA, was ordained as minister at Valley View A.M. Church, Belleville, PA. Preordination messages were given by Johnny Miller, Minerva, OH. The charge was given by Eli B. King, Jr., assisted by John U. Lapp and Bennie Byler. Mervin Peachey and Mark A. Peachey were also in the lot. 

obituaries

Kauffman, Eli, 79, of Montezuma, GA, died peacefully in his home August 22, 2016. He was born Feb. 10, 1937, son of the late Levi and Mary Kauffman.

He was a faithful member and minister of Montezuma Mennonite Church, where he served as bishop for many years.

On February 20, 1958, he was married to Naomi Yoder, who survives. Also surviving are six children: Simon Glen (Vonita), Tucker, GA; Marcus Leon (Susan), Chesapeake, VA; Melvern (Patricia), Montezuma, GA; Micah, Montezuma, GA; Deborah (Steve) Yoder, Nashville, OH; 28 grandchildren, one great grandchild, four brothers: Raymond (Malinda), Marvin (Alta), Richard; Larry (Linda), five sisters: Ruth (Melvin)

Yoder; Martha; Drusilla Beiler; Mary Lois (Robert) Yoder, Susan (Alva) Yoder.

He was preceded in death by two sisters, Rhoda Yoder and her husband Clarence, Laura (Melvin) Yoder.

The funeral was held at Montezuma Mennonite Church on August 25, with David Lee Yoder, Irvin Yoder, Donny Swartzentruber, Morris Yoder and Faron Wingard serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Kuepfer, Mervin L., 74, of Listowel, Ontario, died Nov. 5, 2016. He was born Jan. 19, 1942, youngest of six children of John and Katie (Lichty) Kuepfer. His father died when Mervin was only 10 years old.

As a teenager, Mervin rebelled against the Christian faith in which he had been raised. The story of how he was converted as a young adult through Jesus' transforming grace is told in the booklet, "A Brand Plucked From the Burning." Shortly thereafter, he married the love of his life, Norma Jantzi. And so, he gained a whole new close-knit (Jantzi) family: Uncle Lorne and Aunt Mary Steckly, Aunt Laurene Pentelbury, Frank and Jean Erb, and Norma's deceased brother, Ervin Jantzi. Mom and Dad's covenant love, their passionate and faithful love for each other, has been an inspiration for his children's marriages. On June 4, 2016, they celebrated their 50th anniversary. In 1970, Mervin was ordained to the pastoral ministry at Salem congregation. Six years after, they answered the call to serve in El Salvador for three years.

Mervin and Norma were blessed with five children: Anne, Timothy, Luke, Jason, and Margaret. After their return from the mission field, they raised their family on a farm near Millbank. But Mervin, a gregarious extrovert, loved to spend time with people. He started a concrete construction business, which gave him the opportunity to build relationships with hundreds of people.

The children remember him often saying things like: "We would love to have our grandchildren grow up near us, but it is far more important for you to go where Jesus is calling you. After all, we will get to spend eternity together. For now, we will come and visit you when we can."

Near retirement, Mervin and Norma moved to their new home near Listowel. Mervin was a member and pastor of Zion Mennonite Fellowship Church, Brussels.

He lived out his passion for the Gospel and his enthusiasm for missions through his participation on three mission boards: Global Tribes Outreach, Mennonite Air Missions, and Voice of the Martyrs.

After almost two years of battling pulmonary fibrosis, Mervin passed away peacefully at Listowel Memorial Hospital. His last days were spent in prayer. His last whispers, over and over, were "I love you." He said this to his family. He also said this to Jesus, in whose arms he is now safely awaiting with us the resurrection.

Miller, David L., 89, of Partridge, KS, died Nov. 22, 2016, in rural Hutchinson. He was born Oct. 18, 1927, son of the late Levi D. and Clara (Nisly) Miller.

He was a charter member and minister at Center A.M. Church, rural Hutchinson.

On August 12, 1950, he was married to Mary Elizabeth Beachy in Kalona, Iowa. She died Jan. 12, 2015. David is survived by 12 children: Linda Rose Miller, Miriam Iwashige (Hiromi), of Partridge, KS; Carol Hodgson (Roberto), Shawnee, KS; Myron Miller (Rhoda), Partridge; Caleb Miller (Kara), Mechanicsburg, PA; Lowell Miller (Judy), Lois Mast (Marvin), of Nickerson, KS; Dorcas Byler (Bill), Brevard, NC; Clara Schrock, Columbus, OH; Ronald Miller (Brenda), Oswego, KS; Anthony Miller and Marcus Miller of Partridge; 31 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and seven siblings: Willis Miller (Susie); Perry Miller, Mahlon Miller (Fannie), and Fred Miller, all of Hutchinson, KS; Mary Beachy (Joseph), Kalona, IA; Paul Miller (Martha), and Emma Troyer (Oliver), of Partridge.

He was preceded in death by a son-in-law, Matthew Schrock, infant grandson,

Friedrich Mast, and siblings, Edwin, Elizabeth Wagler, Harry, and Daniel.

David was a retired farmer and minister. For many years he wrote the column for this periodical, named "Observations." He served with Mission Interests Committee, Calvary Publications, Calvary Bible School board and Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP). He was ordained as minister in the Amish Church in October, 1954. For most of the years since he has served on the ministerial team of Center Amish Mennonite Church. David had a passion for the truth of God's Word and making decisions with an eye to the future.

The funeral was held at Center Church on Nov. 27, with Gary Miller, Dwight Miller, and David Yoder serving. Burial followed at the West Center Cemetery, with LaVerne Miller serving in the committal.

Miller, Salina "Lina" Elizabeth (Kanagy), 76, of Stuarts Draft, VA, died Oct. 2, 2016. She was born Oct. 14, 1939, in Belleville, PA, to the late Joseph and Leah Mae (Peachey) Kanagy.

She was a faithful member of Pilgrim Christian Fellowship. Lina was a faithful example of standing by her husband and investing many hours of service and prayer for her family and others in the community. Visits from her grandchildren were always a highlight for her and the candy dish and pretzel drawer were kept well-stocked. Because she trusted the Lord to complete the work He began in her life, she was able to commit the needs of the family to Him as well.

On Nov. 3, 1960, she was married to Willis Miller, who survives. To this union were born five children: Charlotte Rose

(Enos Miller), Belvidere, TN; Kenneth Lee (Linda) Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA; Salina Ruth (Duane Weaver), Stuarts Draft, VA; Joseph Eric (Crystal), South Boston, VA; and Willis Lavern (Ruth) Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA; 31 grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. A brother, Ben Kanagy, Guthrie, KY, also survives.

The funeral was held on Oct. 5 at Pilgrim Christian Fellowship with Simon Schrock and Bennie Byler serving. This included reading a meditation written by her son, Ken Miller, who was unable to attend. Elmer Schrock officiated at the burial in the church cemetery.

Swartzentruber, Viola (Yoder), 86, died Oct. 7, 2016, at her home. She was born March 12, 1930, daughter of the late Lloyd and Amelia (Tice) Yoder in Princess Anne County, Norfolk, VA.

She was a faithful member of Montezuma Mennonite Church.

On August 26, 1952, she was married to Lloyd J. Swartzentruber, in Norfolk, VA. They shared the joys and sorrows of life for over 55 years. He died March 27, 2008. Viola had a full and active life until the last several months when cancer was taking its toll on her body.

She is survived by two sons: Dennis Ray (Marlene), Montezuma; Lloyd Daniel "Donny" (Bertha), Montezuma; and one daughter, Brenda Kay, Montezuma; 10 grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren, and one sister, Elva Beiler, Virginia Beach, VA.

The funeral was held at Montezuma Mennonite Church on Oct. 10, with David Lee Yoder, Merl Beiler, Irvin Yoder, Morris Yoder, and Faron Wingard serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Wagler, Timothy Jason, 35, died peacefully November 14, 2016, at University Hospital, London, Ontario, with his family by his side. He was born August 5, 1981 in Listowel Memorial Hospital, beloved son of Elroy and Diane (Zehr) Wagler.

He was a faithful member of Fellowship Haven A.M. Church, Monkton, Ontario.

He was predeceased by his brother, Nathaniel, who shared his illness. Surviving are sisters, Anita (Joseph) Gerber, Brunner; Lynette (Ryan) Jantzi, Wellesley; Loretta (Dwight) Peachey, Atwood. He was a dear uncle of Kristalynn, Jalissalyn, Kimberlynn, Sierra, Kenton, Mason, and Ashlynn, and loving grandson of Jacob and Anna Zehr and Katie Wagler. He is remembered by his many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Preceding him in death were his grandparents, Solomon and Lavina Wagler.

The funeral was held on Nov. 16, 2016, at Faith Mennonite Church with ministers of Fellowship Haven officiating. Interment followed in Mornington A.M. Cemetery.

Tribute to Timothy: (Tribute submitted by Anita Gerber, Tim's sister.)

Courage is the inner strength to face insurmountable difficulties, to love without promise of tomorrow, to live holding tightly to God's hand with the assurance that you will soon see His face! Tim's strength of character has forever changed my view of life. Many people admired Tim for his amazing artistic talents. Tim's pictures came to life with his unique attention to detail. The paintings that glowed with light and the penciled, shaded trees covered with

leaves. Yes, Tim's artwork was beautiful! But what I admire most about Tim is his trust in God! Tim trusted God to take care of those whom he loved and poured out his heart to God on his sisters' behalf, requesting God's blessing on our lives. I can't thank God enough for sharing Tim with me! I praise God for the honor of calling Tim, this selfless, courageous man, my brother! And I'm grateful to You, oh God, for the promise that Tim is in heaven with YOU! Our loss is heaven's gain!

Yoder, Dorcas Amanda (Beachy), 61, of Grantsville, MD, died Sept. 20, 2016, at UPMC Shadyside Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA. She was born Oct. 4, 1954, daughter of the late Ernest N. and Elizabeth (Yoder) Beachy.

She was a member of Mountain View Mennonite Church, a former member of Mountain Anthems, a homemaker, and always a prayer warrior for family and missions.

On April 10, 1976, she was married to Joseph M. Yoder who survives. Other survivors are a daughter, Amanda Yoder (Larry), Grantsville, MD; two brothers, Daniel Beachy and wife Emma, Conestoga, PA; Philip Beachy and wife Ruth, Salisbury, PA; three sisters: Naomi Petersheim and husband Paul, Oakland, MD; Anna Tice and husband Dan, Jalmeria, Spain; Mary Jane Yoder and husband William, Asia; five grandchildren, Ekaterina, Brycena, Eathan, Emma Leigh, and Calista.

The funeral was held on Sept. 24, 2016, at Mountain View Mennonite Church with Merlin Beachy and Stuart Swartzentruber serving. Jerry Yoder conducted the committal at the church cemetery. 

This senior wonders if any previous generation witnessed as many changes as have occurred within the last eight or nine decades. The Lord of the Christian church is the same “yesterday, today, and forever.”

What does this mean to Christians who went to be solid and stable in their faith and walk of life?

One response is to resist any change that would affect any area of our lifestyle. Such an attitude may be missing the point that how to become a Christian is the same as it was when Nicodemus interviewed Jesus during the night, or when Peter’s sermon in Acts 4 brought conviction to many hearers. This conviction of repentance, faith and grace will never need to be updated. It will never become obsolete.

To assume that there is another way is to be misled. But this does not mean that change is always wrong. Some changes are harmless; they may even be necessary. To be closed to making needed changes can be self-centered and ingrown. It can also become hollow and stagnant.

To be without a pattern and standard is to be regulated by the path of least resistance. This does not give priority to God’s guide book that

after many centuries is still up to date.

Let us idealize a lifestyle that is stable and vibrant because of our commitment to the Author of abundant life.

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This is being written on November 15. The recent presidential election is a fresh reminder that earthly kingdoms are always temporary. Office holders on every level have one thing in common: They are human.

Our founding fathers have left a document called The Constitution to give guidance to succeeding generations. The courts, the lawmakers, and executive leadership were all to be subject to this basic document. “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” is an important part of this historic document. Had the Supreme Court adhered to The Constitution it would have saved the lives of millions of unborn babies. Supreme Court judges are human, too. (Roe vs. Wade, 1973)

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Freedom of speech is a gift that is not offered in many other national governments. National media can become manipulative in reporting news favorable to their desired outcome.

Some observers feel that most pre-election reporting was not neutral and objective, but favored a Democratic Party outcome. I believe all of us should remember that God is still sovereign in the affairs of the nations. Daniel 4:17 tells us that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will and setteth up over it the basest of men.”

Christians are instructed to pray for Donald Trump, not because of his character or personality, but because God has allowed him to be placed in the position of national leadership.

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What is far more serious than national deviation from God’s basic guidelines is when church leaders consider their judgment superior to the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. The following quote appeared in print recently, “We can’t go by a book that is 2,000 years old.” Another quote was brought to me orally, “We know what the Bible says, but we don’t go by that anymore.”

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Feminine Beauty is the title of a book written by Evelyn Miller, the mother of eight children.

The book is a well-written description of Christian modesty and the attractiveness of women whose outward appearance and personal demeanor are both modest.

A modest person will want to dress to soften the outlines of physical features. Immodesty is inclined to be self-centered about her manner of dress. Most likely this will be guided by popular practice rather than Christian priorities.

The Feminist movement and the Hippy movement have had a significant influence on popular practice. I assume that there are many respectable people who would not want to be identified with those groups. But churches whose women wear head coverings and long hair are clearly not mainstream. Author Miller says that this practice was common fairly recently in some non-Mennonite circles. She sees this practice as an important part of feminine beauty.

These brief comments do not do justice to the contents of this remarkable book. It includes significant historical data and many supporting quotes from various authors.

While not in the book, a congregational standard of a cape dress sewn by a conscientious sister would certainly support the principle of modesty and feminine beauty.

This book has 155 pages and 13 chapters. It is available from www.biblicalmennonite.com.

-DLM

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I got a phone call from an individual who offered to come to our church community and give a presentation regarding estate planning and related services. He represents a law firm in a distant state. In a follow-up email he indicated that he had visited a number of plain communities and that he is often hosted in the fellowship hall or a similar venue. The gentleman seemed friendly enough, but since we knew nothing about this man, we tried to learn what we could from independent sources. It turns out that he had spent some time in prison for a felony conviction from a problem that arose with an estate where his services were employed. The names listed as beneficiaries to the estate were altered in a manner that benefited him personally. We chose to decline his offer to come and share his presentation.

The disbursement of our material assets is a serious stewardship consideration. It behooves us to listen to advice from trusted brothers in our faith communities. Secondly, when we need legal help with these matters, wouldn't it be better to work with someone local whom we know and who will be there when their services are needed, rather than someone distant or unknown who

might not even be available when we need them?

We have a track record of being trusting, dare I say gullible people. This characteristic isn't lost on persons who have something to sell. The angle of familiarity with plain communities was one that this individual emphasized. I suspect that he is targeting plain people with his sales pitch because he has found success there.

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Life brings a continuous stream of change, of passing the baton. My father passed from this life three days before this writing. His funeral is scheduled two days from now. This morning, my wife Brenda and I became grandparents for the first time, when our oldest son and his wife had a little boy. Every day there are people who die and others are born. However, these two events so closely tied together in our family are a forceful reminder of the passing of time. It is also a sobering reminder that life goes on. God's program is bigger than any of us. Each of our contribution is important and we must do our best to cooperate with what God has for us to do while we're here. However, life is short and eternity is unending. None of us are indispensable and God will continue to provide for his

people as long as we are here.

• • • • •

Dad was widely known in this circle of readership. When I met people who learned that I am David L. Miller's son, I was often informed that the first thing they read in *Calvary Messenger* was his "Observations" column. I'd like to share a few personal reflections of his life, a few 'observations.'

Dad displayed a generous spirit. Many of you knew him as a person who was unapologetic, in word and life, about obedience to Christ and Scripture that led him to live out his faith squarely in the Beachy Constituency. But as I look back on his life, his role as a minister in our church is one detail alongside other areas of service and involvement. He served for decades on a local board for Offender Victim Ministries, an initiative that sought to foster reconciliation between those who committed crimes and those victimized by those crimes. He was a long-time promoter of another local prison ministry that paired an incarcerated individual with an interested party who visited the one in prison on a monthly basis. He was instrumental in introducing CASP and Interfaith Housing Services in Hutchinson, Kansas, to each other. Since he died I learned from some of my siblings that he received a

"Peacemaker of the Year" award in 2004 by the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, partly in recognition of some of these involvements. Each of these initiatives involved working closely with people outside our church fellowship in Kingdom building efforts. From my perspective, his commitment to conservative Anabaptism and involvement with others never seemed to be in competition or conflict with each other. This was facilitated by the fact that Dad was secure in his faith and didn't feel apologetic about it. Dad's willingness to partner with others was typified by a comment I heard him repeat more than once. "God doesn't really need my help to keep track of who belongs to Him."

Dad, like the rest of us, had strengths and weaknesses. He raised his family on the farm. The areas he seemed most skilled and gifted in were things that didn't generate much income. But, growing up, we always had plenty to eat and were adequately provided for in all the most important ways.

Until his final days Dad was still concerned about the important things in life, finishing well, the future of the church and his posterity. In his sunset years, he wasn't always sure what to do with his concerns and how to handle them. But those concerns

didn't sabotage his ability to enjoy life in important ways. His advancing age had eroded his mobility, but he still got around quite well for his years. The day before he died, he took in his brother-in-law Ollie Troyer's farm sale. He thoroughly enjoyed spending the day there visiting and mingling with the crowd of neighbors and community folk. When he was offered a chair from which he could observe the proceedings, he declined saying, "I'm not quite as decrepit as some people think I am."

We don't choose how we or others will depart from this life. Even though Dad was 89, the car crash was sudden. However, our family doesn't have to look far to see plenty of silver

around the clouds of grief and parting. Dad lived a good, full life. He doesn't leave a grieving widow. His injuries didn't require painful, lengthy convalescence. Nobody else was injured in the traffic accident. He still enjoyed life. We'll miss him terribly, but we can't wish him back.

One of his friends who attended the funeral recalled a phone conversation he and Dad had a couple of days before he died, in which Dad offered that as he ages he is becoming more difficult to live with. But he tries to reassure people with the thought that it won't be for long any more. Neither he nor we knew how accurate he was.

-RJM 

School Matters

Entitlement or Gratitude?

Gerald Miller, Guys Mills, PA

Having just come through the Thanksgiving season at the time of this writing, my thoughts have turned to gratitude and our Christian schools.

It seems to me that gratitude flies directly in the face of the entitlement mentality that has swept this country in the past decades. Many teachers in the public school decry the sense of

entitlement that students carry into the classroom culture every day. Many teachers feel this is the number one problem facing them. Interestingly enough, students admit to feeling like they deserve more than they receive.

A recent study on entitlement by researchers from Case Western Reserve University connected the sense of entitlement to all sorts of

negative emotions. (Entitlement was defined as exaggerated feelings of deservingness and superiority.) These researchers reported that “entitlement may lead to chronic disappointment and can throw people into a perpetual loop of distress.”

Time magazine summarized the data this way: “The authors reached these conclusions after analyzing more than 170 academic papers, and published their results in the journal *Psychological Bulletin*. They found that people who possess high levels of entitlement consistently fall victim to a three-part cycle:

First, they don’t always get everything they think they deserve, leaving them constantly vulnerable to unmet expectations.

Those unmet expectations are then perceived as injustices, leading to volatile emotions like anger and sadness.

Finally, to justify those emotions, entitled people reassure themselves of their own specialness. This helps them feel better temporarily, but ultimately starts the process all over again.”

The lead researcher, Joshua Grubbs, noted that “often times, life, health, aging, and the social world don’t treat us as well we’d like. Confronting these limitations is especially threatening to an entitled person because it violates their worldview of self-superiority.”

Additionally, the researchers noted that consequences of an entitled behavior include poor relationships, relational conflicts, and depression. Julie Exline told Health.com that “so much of entitlement is about competition-being better or more deserving than other people. It really pits you against society, and it can be very isolating.” In other words, it creates a false sense of “you vs. everyone else.”

The rates of entitlement have risen sharply in the United States in the last 50 years. At the same time, anxiety and depression rates have gone up, too. Entitlement is more pervasive in our society, but it isn’t making us any happier, and ultimately offers us perpetual disappointment.

So why might this research be noteworthy in a School Matters column?

I believe that the school can walk alongside families and churches in working against this scourge of our times. While we would all like to believe that the inflated sense of entitlement of the culture is only “out there,” an inward look in our churches and schools notes something different in our Anabaptist sub-culture in the last twenty years.

Of course, since the Fall in the Garden of Eden, we have been selfish at heart. Entitlement, however, takes

our natural selfishness to another level, and expresses itself in a variety of ways. The road from general selfishness to entitlement could be viewed as going from “necessity” to “rights.” Selfishness is the necessity of a smart phone, and entitlement is the right to smartphone at a very young age, even at 13, 14, and 15 years of age. The *need* for name brand clothing, to the *right* to having name brand clothing and wearing it wherever I want. The *need* for recreation to the *right* to organize all aspects of my life around my personal pleasure regardless of its effect on those around me. The *need* for a sleepover once or twice a year to the *right* of getting together several times a month (outside of youth functions) to play sports.

How can we facilitate and foster something other than entitlement? What habits and practices offer an alternative way for young people (and older people?) to live their lives with an alternative consciousness?

The habits and practices of a grateful life are a powerful antidote to entitlement. For instance, consider an alternative to a Christmas exchange at school. How about raising money for others less materially fortunate than we are and skip the Christmas exchange? On a hot lunch day, consider not including a dessert and encouraging proper gratitude for

the meal. Doing service projects in the community helps students see life outside of their usual sphere of relationships and people. Speaking well of other people helps students resist the urge to see themselves as the center of their small universe. Avoiding excessive competition in school assists in a good posture toward others. Schools should be intentional in their approach to fostering gratitude.

I am grateful for the opportunities of a Christian school that enable us to train and develop young people to love God and people, and foster a spirit of gratitude and humility as a lifestyle. Teachers, I encourage you to consider carefully how your classroom resists or succumbs to the spirit of the age. Parents, I plead with you to consider the type and frequency of activities you allow your children to participate in. Consider the “stuff” we purchase for our children. Are we actually helping them be grateful and content, or are we inadvertently contributing to an entitlement mentality?

The home, the church, and the school seeks to develop lovers of God rather than self. We do well to emphasize reaching out to those around us and not settle for an easy, comfortable life. Gratitude, humility, and focus on yielding to others will help us in our quest as Christ followers. 

Creator God

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

[My heart goes out to those who are personally struggling with terminal illness. I also feel for their families who stand with them and fight the disease alongside them. I dedicate this poem to those who are currently suffering the sickness and to those who may have already lost a loved one to it. I hope this will help to minister comfort as they seek the Lord to fulfill their needs of body, soul and spirit. -A.M.]

Creator God, as I am facing another day,
my mind seems to be in an awful turmoil.
Within my spirit I would really like to pray,
but my soul is wearied by its emotional toil.

Surely, you know how this dreaded sickness
has already taken its toll on me physically?
Yes, it exposes my strengths and weaknesses,
which often causes me to struggle spiritually.

On the one hand, I know your loving-kindness
pours out every good gift from heaven above.
On the other hand, why would your goodness
endorse this disease as an expression of love?

I usually heard the news of somebody else
who had developed this terminal infirmity.
But now, here I am with the diagnosis myself,
thinking, "How can this be happening to me?"

I once had dreams of living a long life down here,
enjoying the activities people my age normally do.
I envisioned good times with those I consider dear,
and growing old together with my companion too!

In my youth I received you as my Savior and Lord,
and dedicated myself for the good of your people.
I have diligently read and studied your Holy Word,
doing my utmost to practically live by its principles.

I do thank you for blessing me richly up to now;
I certainly feel I have received more than I need.
But when thinking of my Salvation I humbly bow,
for your divine mercy and grace satisfy me indeed!

Therefore, if you have more work for me to do,
then Lord, I plead with you to please heal me.
But if my time on earth is about to be through,
grant me the anticipation for my glorified body.

Now if it is your will to close life's final chapter,
I just ask that you spare me excessive suffering.
I admit, this petition may seem a selfish matter,
but to think of a painful end is very frightening!

In doing a forthright soul-searching evaluation,
at times I find myself filled with an aching regret.
I wish I had taken advantage of some situations,
that for fear of facing failure I opted to neglect.

However, I pray you will accept my sincerity,
for in my frail humanity I did the best I could.
I am grateful for your forgiveness toward me,
when I did not act as a good Christian should.

May I make one final request, my loving Savior,
concerning my precious family I will leave below?
I ask you to keep showering them with your favor,
and give me the necessary courage to let them go!

Now Lord, on the days when I am feeling good,
give me the will to delight in your omniscience.
So then, on the days when I awake in a bad mood,
my faith in you will be able to sense your presence.

I realize the Holy Spirit intimately understands
my dreaded fear at the thought of facing death.
Thus, I rest assured you will firmly grasp my hands,
whenever it is time to surrender my last breath! 

The Farmer and his Son

Katie Mast, Leon, IA

I see the farmer and his son
Working side by side till day is done.
The cows must be milked and fed,
At least, that's what is said.
The fence must be spliced and fixed,
The father teaches his son all those tricks.
Each day of spring, summer and fall
Has its own work that is shared by all.
After the sun goes down, it's wintry and dark
outside,
The evening is filled with family time.

But wait—that was long ago
When the farmer and his son worked so.
Today the farmer has buttons to push
And the chores are done in a rush.
His tractor runs with a GPS right on;
The combine cost 'most a million.
And the son—oh, how does the son fit into
The new way of farming to do?
The son, he might run the fence down
With a horrible gut-wrenching sound.
Oh, how the dollars fly out the door then
To fix the fence did scratch and bend.

What is the difference at the end of the day
When farming is done in this new way?
What difference is there in the bond
Between the farmer and his son?
All his big “toys” that ease his life,
Do they ever bring worry or strife?
Do they give him more time to spend
With his wife, his family and friends?
Do they free him to romp on the floor
With the children who want him some more?
Does he have more smiles for his wife
Who continues to be the love of his life?

It's true that the farming today
Is much improved in many a way.
But perhaps we have much to learn
As we God's will discern.
Oh God, show us how
We can use the things we have now.
To build strong families we desire
Whose hearts will burn with the fire
Of living for the Lord in our modern world.
Renewing the bond
Between the farmer and his son. 

[Widow Katie writes: “Raising our family on the farm has been a great experience for us. Dad (the late Albert Mast) was home for meals and there was time for family devotions after breakfast. The children spent lots of time riding with Dad on the tractor or combine. There were family picnics out in the hay field. When Dad took hogs to market what a treat it was to ride along, and there was free pop at the hog buying station!

“After hearing a young mother share, I realized that my experience is outdated. Larger farms mean Dad is not always on the home place. He may even be in town or some other place away from home.

“I also realize that farming is not the norm for families today. In most families now, Dad has a job that takes him away from home every day.

“I submit this with the thought that it might offer encouragement to someone.” -KM]

Life at Good News Clinic

*Rhoda Miller
El Resbaladero, El Salvador*

El Salvador is a densely populated country with more than 7,000,000 people. The crime rate is high and violent gangs are gaining more control. We do well to pray for the protection of our missionaries and the national church in this land, as the following article reveals.

Serving under the auspices of Amish Mennonite Aid in the Clinica de las Buenas Nuevas (Good News Clinic) provides many opportunities for listening to people's hurts and life experiences.

This article was published in the May/June Amish Mennonite Aid newsletter. Used by permission. -FS

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy” (Psalm 33:18).

Here at Resbaladero when I see a list of thirty people already at 7:00, waiting and impatient to be seen, I feel so inadequate. I am inadequate both to see Jesus' eye on me and to be Jesus' to them. How can I reflect Him as I give out the many medications for diabetes, for asthma, for hypertension, for coughs, and for wound infection? In cleaning their wounds, in giving advice, and begging them to make wise choices in caring for their health, we want them to sense Jesus through us.

As I pray and beg God for help, for courage, for compassion, and for wisdom, He changes my heart. Then the miracles start happening, first of all, in me. I feel love, compassion, and patience, even for those who don't deserve it. As I ask questions about their medical concerns, other stories of the heart come pouring forth.

This month a woman in her fifties who has always seemed so sad and negative every time I've cared for her over the last four years, finally was able to tell me about the pain of her past. She told of her mother who gave her away at nine months of age, of being raised by a sister who treated her more like a slave than a sister.

And then she married an alcoholic who threatened and beat her. Her husband quit drinking but still treats her very disrespectfully. She has so many wounds. What can I do but listen and assure her that there is a God who cares. And that He has His eye on her.

Another woman in her seventies cries heart-brokenly for her grandson. The mother left him with her at the age of several months to go to the U.S. to live. The grandmother has cared for him, raised him, trained him, and loved him as a son. Now he's 17 and the mother is sending for him to join her in the U.S. Grandmother finds it hard to think of life without him. But she smiles as we pray together for his safety and his future and for her pain. And I remind her that our God has his eye on her beloved grandson and on her lonely heart.

Several months ago, a mother told me an amazing story of God's protection. Her son is a mentally-challenged 40-year-old, with the mental capacity of a 10-year-old. He loves to play with the neighborhood children. One day his friends called to him and asked him to play with them. He ran out and they told him they were pretending to be policemen. As they put handcuffs on him with his hands behind his back, he suddenly realized that they had actually locked the handcuffs. He begged them to free

him. They laughed and told him that they had been told to do this to him by some young men. About then a car pulled up, some young gang members threw him into the car and roared off. He begged and pleaded with them to release him but they laughed and ignored him. He continued to beg and plead and said, "I haven't done anything wrong. Why are you doing this to me?"

Over the next two days they tormented him and finally took him to a place in the woods, beat him, and started a fire to burn him. Desperately, he began to cry out to Jesus, "Jesus, please help me; Jesus, please help me!" Over and over he cried and begged Jesus to save him. His tormentors finally became impatient with him. They unexpectedly took him close to his house and dropped him off at the side of the road.

His mother, who had been constantly praying for him, was ecstatic to see him come crawling home. One leg was badly burned to his knee, with the skin completely peeled off, and he was covered with bruises. But her son was alive! What a miracle! The other two young men who had been taken with him were later found, brutally cut in pieces. The mother couldn't stop praising God for His protection of her son. They still live in the same place, even if it is dangerous,.

Her son becomes afraid when he hears a car roaring past and she reminds him that he doesn't need to be afraid. God will care for him just as he has before. I marveled at their great faith. And I marveled at our God. He cared about this innocent,

handicapped man. He saw his simple faith. His eye was on him and He heard and delivered him.

Truly His eye is on us. And we can trust Him. Pray for us as we minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our patients. 

junior messages

Celebrating Memorization

Mary Ellen Beachy

Eleven-year-old Whinney, the crippled girl, memorized Psalm 23. This is the first scripture passage she has learned. It made my heart happy.

Rain was in the air, Mary, Whinney, and numerous other children were crowded on a reed mat inside Dickson's hut for Whinney's lessons, instead of outside under a tree.

I asked Whinney to lead a song. Mary prayed and then Whinney sweetly recited Psalm 23 in Luo. She was nervous, her hand was shaking. But she did recite the six verses very, very well.

She was pleased, so pleased with the prize, a gift bag filled with a color book, crayons, exercise book, pencil, a tiny purse with a plastic wristwatch and two sturdy metal cups.

Micah helped serve drinks. The

gallon of ice cold quencher, packages of biscuits and a loaf of bread disappeared rapidly. Whinney's grandma came over and joined the party.

I asked Dickson if he can recite Psalm 23? He laughed and said he cannot. I encouraged him and Janet to learn Psalm 23. It is a good thing for her family that Whinney has done so, even though they have not.

Joseph and Cynthia, Whinney's siblings, both tried to recite the verses, but needed to study more. Later, they both said it as well.

There is a lot of water in Dick's water tank. It was interesting to see numerous plants from our yard growing there. I took several more pretty flower plants, plus sweet potato vines along today.

Dickson planted banana trees

in front of his house by the ditch where water runs off when the tank is full. He said he will remember me with the growing plants. Better yet, I want them to remember that I encouraged them to learn the Word of God.

I like that family! They are hard-working country folk.

It rained on the way home. The dirt roads were getting slippery. I was glad Micah was at the wheel.

To all children who are reading this story. Are you happy to learn the Word of God?

Psalm 119:11, “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” 

thinking generation

2017—A Plan of Action

Gideon Yutzy, Hutchinson, KS

In and of itself, making New Year’s resolutions is not a bad thing. What Henry David Thoreau wrote in the 1840’s is still true today: “I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor.”

Paraphrased, Thoreau was saying people can change and nothing under the sun is more awesome than that. At the dawn of 2017, a year unimaginably far into the future for Mr. Thoreau, I could not agree more.

New Year’s is indeed an appropriate time to think of personal change. Many of us prefer the traditional New Year’s resolutions. *This year I*

will keep better track of my keys. This year I will floss. This year I will catch up on my resolutions from 2016. (And 2015. And 2014...)

But what would happen if, instead of only listing things we resolve to do, we would also focus on becoming a certain kind of people? More specifically, what if we would resolve to become people of action? People who seek out new knowledge and understanding. People who avoid the tired script of the rat race.

Passivity plagues far too many people from our time—perhaps more than at any other time in history. Before you marathon runners dispute that statement, I remind us

all that passiveness shows up in many personality types. Here are just a few.

Three groups of passive people

The victims. While Esther and I were living in Poland, Wiesiek, the Naturalist came down from Gdansk one weekend for a visit. At the time I was feeling a great deal of self-pity and injustice because of some relational difficulties. I decided to ask our friend for counsel.

If you've ever met Wiesiek the Naturalist, you know he cares for people. I had learned this, and that's why I was unburdening myself to him. Yet when I finished, he was silent for a while. When he finally did speak, it was only this one maddening phrase:

“Don't be a victim, Gideon.”

Wiesiek the Naturalist, a man in tune with the very plants. A man whose country is familiar with suffering and where people have the right, if anyone does, to a victim mentality. (The historian Norman Davies once described Poland, which is situated squarely between the superpowers of Germany and Russia, as “God's playground.”) I could take it from Wiesiek the Naturalist: I was being a victim.

Once his words sank in, once my immobilizing victim-mentality was identified and exorcised, I felt ready to take action over my problems.

The lemmings. Here I do not refer to squat rodents with short tails that follow each other off cliffs in the Arctic tundra. I refer instead to squat human beings with short attention spans who spend their waking hours taking in various forms of media.

Entertainment bombards us. No, it oppresses us. It *numbs* us. Granted, it can be harmless; it usually doesn't include blood baths in a Roman colosseum. Nor would it be accurate to say that today's entertainment is devoid of creativity or that all of its producers lack talent. In fact, in too many cases, that is precisely the problem: The makers of entertainment use creativity (substandard though it may be) but the masses of consumers do not.

Perhaps the greatest sin in today's gluttonous intake of entertainment is not that we violate Psalm 101:3—I will set no wicked thing before my eyes—but that we violate Genesis 1:28, where God tells us to co-create with Him.

If we expect to live actively, we must free ourselves of entertainment-ism. In the spirit of Genesis 1:28, we must learn skills, seek out new knowledge, and, in general, rediscover the enthrallment of using our God-given abilities to create. Lemmings will never be active, creative people.

The perfectionists. Finally, some

people tend to take action only when they think it possible to do so perfectly, which is never. They have ideas for creating things and engaging in life, yet the timing and feasibility are never quite right. The end of such people is identical to that of the lemmings: they pass through life without contributing.

Passive People Anonymous

What then is to be our strategy for becoming more active people in 2017? The answer is hardly to make Energizer Bunny-style resolution lists such as going to the gym three evenings per week or becoming fluent in Hungarian. Rather we should pray that the North American church would experience a renaissance in practicing St. Paul's words to the Ephesians: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16, ESV).

A major cause of passiveness is forgetting the importance of persistence. In his book *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell proposes that it takes 10,000 hours to achieve mastery (perfectionists shouldn't be allowed to read it). His emphasis on persistence aligns with many scriptural writings, such as Jude 1: 12 which instructs us to build ourselves up in the faith. For Christ's

beautiful nature to become our second nature, we must practice, not for 10,000 hours but for the rest of our lives. Practicing Christian virtues over carnal vices does not come automatically. "Character is formed by a thousand little choices," says N.T. Wright.

N.T. Wright holds up the now-famous Captain Chesley Sullenberger as an example. When Sullenberger landed a commercial airliner on the Hudson River in 2009, he was able to do so only because he had maximized his years as a pilot to learn and grow. On that chilly January day, 154 passengers and crew were thankful that their pilot had not, in any point of his career, become passive. Here is what Captain Sullenberger said about the incident: "One way of looking at this might be that for 42 years [more than 20,000 hours of flying and gliding instructing] I've been making small regular deposits in this bank of experience: education and training." Practicing the 10,000-hour rule allowed him to make a colossal emergency withdrawal.

The other major cause of passiveness is failing to get started. In a recent talk, a writer named Josh Kaufman responded to the 10,000-hour rule. He points out that, while Gladwell was onto something, some

people's downfall is that they never start. What is needed for them is the 20-hour rule: the amount of time needed for most people to learn the basics of a skill. For Kingdom Citizens, Kaufman's rule holds great promise. Consider this short list of what we could accomplish in 20 hours:

- Memorize the Sermon on the Mount.
- Learn a unique skill such as unicycling or stargazing (non-Hollywood ones) which will help us connect with more people, including people who don't know Christ.
- Read a formative book.
- Spend an hour and a half alone each month journaling and listing potential areas of trials and temptations, thereby gaining an edge with an early offensive position.

Zig Ziglar, one of the least passive people of our times, had a saying: "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." Whether our problem is getting started or sticking it out, we ought to consider Ziglar's words.

A caveat—being active does not equal constant activity

There are times in life when it best to pause and take stock. Sometimes we may feel as though our noble desire for action has us thrashing wildly and spinning our wheels. Then is the time for healthy introspection. After

making occasional adjustments, we should always gird up our loins and re-enter the fray.

Conclusion

Finally, 2017 should be a year for setting attainable, measurable goals as we continue serving our Lord in His Kingdom. But let us also use this year to *become* people of character—to become more like the Perfect Man, Jesus Christ.

As we follow Jesus, lemming-like behavior is for once entirely appropriate. The ancient Greek poets, although unlikely theologians, were right on target when they spoke of God as the One "in whom we live and move and have our being." If we allow God to saturate our lives in this way, passivity will quickly become a receding memory. A life of inaction will be replaced with a life of using each moment to lay up treasures in Heaven. This most wondrous of metamorphoses can be ours if we resolve to abide in Him.

And that would be a New Year's resolution worth keeping.

The writings in Thinking Generation are all previously unpublished. They seek to identify and address issues that today's Anabaptist young people ought to be engaging in. Submit your comments, as well as proposed material for the column, to gideonutzy@gmail.com.



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THOUGHT GEMS

With man as with horses, those who do the most prancing
don't get the most work done.

• • • • •

An evil gain, financially, equals a major loss.

• • • • •

It takes many a tumble to keep us humble.

• • • • •

A ready flow of words is no proof of wisdom.

• • • • •

Jacob did not wrestle until he overcame, but until he *was* overcome.

• • • • •

Some people ask questions to gain knowledge, others do
so simply to contradict what was said.

• • • • •

Our tendency is to do what we want to do then call it God's will.

• • • • •

A simple life is not a meager life; it is much too rich for trifles.

• • • • •

The man who trims himself to suit everybody, may whittle himself away.

• • • • •

Time spent in pitying oneself is a serious misuse of time.

• • • • •

The man who runs into debt, may come crawling back.

• • • • •

Speed isn't everything; direction also counts.

• • • • •

You must do your own growing no matter how tall your grandfather was.

• • • • •

God does not overpower us to make us like His Son; we make the choice.