



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

NOVEMBER 2018

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Calvary Messenger
November 2018

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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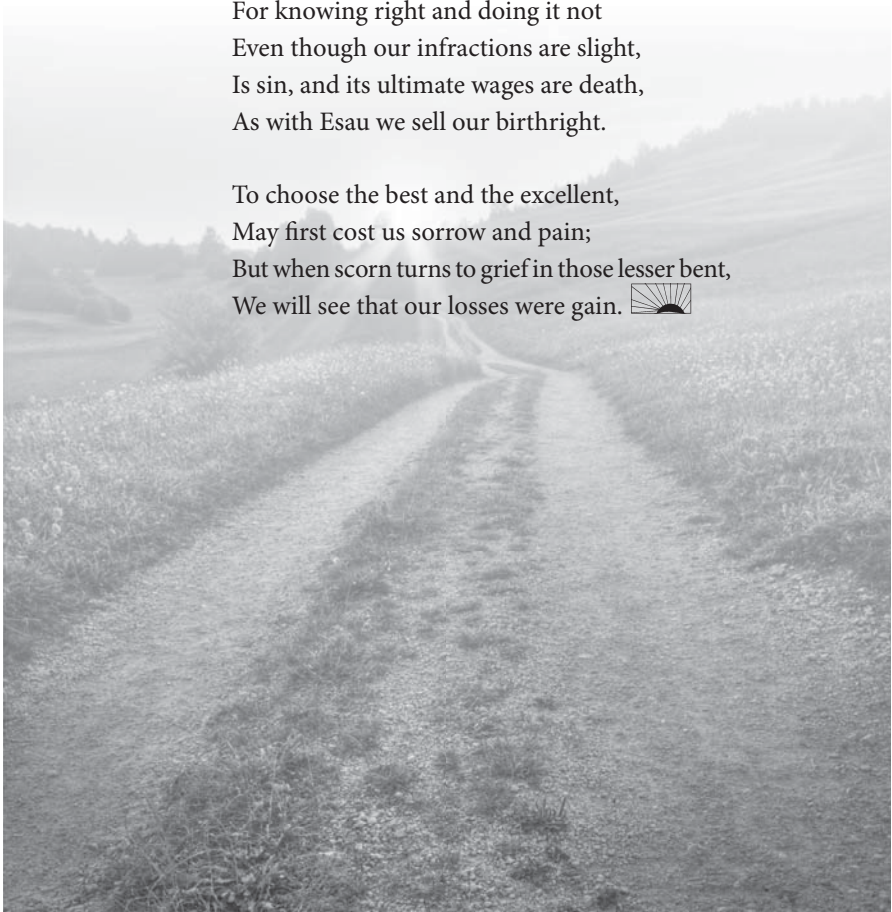
A Course Chosen

Valerie Knepp, Grandview, TX

To make a choice that is almost right,
But is not the best that we know,
Determines a course and a pattern for life
That pulls where we never would go.

For knowing right and doing it not
Even though our infractions are slight,
Is sin, and its ultimate wages are death,
As with Esau we sell our birthright.

To choose the best and the excellent,
May first cost us sorrow and pain;
But when scorn turns to grief in those lesser bent,
We will see that our losses were gain. 



Dealing With Discouragement

Harold S. Martin, Lititz, PA

Psalm 42

The writer of Psalm 42 expresses his yearning for God. The words in verse 5, and again in verse 11 are at the heart of the cry—“Why are you cast down, O my soul?” One translation says, “Why be so discouraged and sad?” The Psalm was written to encourage people who love the Lord, and who want to do right—to hope in God, to remember God’s goodness, to think of His faithfulness, and to simply trust Him for the future.

Discouragement speaks of a gloomy and dejected frame of mind that comes when one feels deprived of hope and confidence. Discouragement, if nurtured and fed, can grow into despair, even to the point of needing medication to survive.

1. Reasons for Discouragement

It is safe to say that all of us at some time or another have had to deal with some degree of discouragement. There are several reasons why we may feel discouraged.

a) A distorted, self-centered nature

By nature, all of us, [to a degree] are immature and self-centered. God is not finished with any of us yet. Even a small child is self-centered.

Small children are cute—but they are self-centered. If you deny a child what he wants, he often gets angry—and sometimes goes into temper tantrums—that make you wonder how he got that way. The child would be dangerous if he were not so small, and so helpless.

Because we are human, we find it easy to pity ourselves, and to give in to the pull of the flesh nature. Sometimes we feel that others have not treated us right, and so we pity ourselves because we’ve been mistreated. Or we sense that we don’t always have victory over bad habits, and so we brood over our lack of self-control.

Sometimes, after giving in to a bad habit—we say, “There I go again; I made a mistake one more time—and we get discouraged because of a lack of victory. In response—we must confess our wrongs and set new goals—and move on. The Christian life is a series of new beginnings! And so we must keep on fighting our sinful inner corruptions.

b) Failure to embrace the sovereignty of God

Some folks seem to believe that human beings are the mere playthings of fate. For them—life is just a sequence of good-and-bad-luck experiences.

But the genuine Christian can keep calm even when he goes through trials and difficulties—because he knows that the promises of God are true, and that our Heavenly Father is in supreme control, and allows only what is good for us.

Disappointment can be a traumatic experience:

- a beloved family member dies at an early age.
- a young husband learns that he must have serious surgery.
- finances decrease during hard times, such as job layoffs.

These things can be discouraging. The question all of us must ask at such times is this: *Can I trust God? Does He have it all together? Or, is He up there biting His nails wondering what is happening here on earth?*

c) Deliberate attacks by Satan himself

You can be sure that at some point along life's journey, the devil will do his best to plant in your mind such thoughts as that you've been a complete failure, and that you may as well give up in seeking to live the Christian life.

The young couple that has several children early in their marriage, born close together, may feel trapped by the heavy responsibilities of raising a family. They discover that little babies are not always "soft little bundles of love," but that small children can be noisy, fussy, and demanding creatures, and sometimes the parents think *they must be doing everything wrong*. And

sometimes when children get older, they become stubborn and demand their own way. At those times, Satan will try to get us to castigate ourselves, and become discouraged, because the family does not seem to be turning out well.

These are things that bring on discouragement—a distorted and self-centered nature, failure to embrace the sovereignty of God, and deliberate attempts by Satan to bring discouragement into our lives.

2. Bible Examples of Discouragement

There were several persons in Bible times who were deeply discouraged. We want to look at their experiences.

a) *Moses succumbed to discouragement*

We would think that Moses was a man who was above discouragement. Moses had observed the plagues that God brought upon Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. He saw the Nile River turn to blood; he was in Egypt when frogs covered the land—and Pharaoh begged to have the frogs removed.

Moses *had seen* God lead the Israelites out of Egypt on the dry land through the Red Sea. Moses had communicated with God on Mount Sinai when he received the Ten Commandments. If any person should have been above discouragement, it was Moses.

And yet, in Numbers 11, we discover that Moses was so defeated and so

discouraged that he cried out to God and said, “If you treat me like this, please kill me here and now...and do not let me see my wretchedness” (Numbers 11:15).

The thing that brought on this frame of mind was the mixed multitude of people, who had traveled along with the Israelites out of Egypt (Numbers 11:4-5). They longed for the fish and cucumbers and melons and onions of Egypt, and in their rebellion, they cried out against the Lord and against Moses (Numbers 11:10).

Moses became preoccupied with the criticism; he saw every complaint as a personal attack against him. He forgot about the faithfulness of God, and how God had promised that He would provide for Israel, and protect them on their wilderness journey.

And, as a matter of fact, God *did come* to the aid of Moses, described in Numbers 11:16-20. God provided seventy men to help Moses, and He sent food for the complaining people. There was no reason for Moses to refuse to go on.

b) Elijah fell victim to discouragement

God had called Elijah to be a prophet, but it seemed as if the entire nation had gone after Jezebel—and the idols that she brought with her from her pagan background.

Without apology, Elijah declared himself to be a messenger of the true and living God—and in a show-down with the false prophets of Baal on

Mount Carmel, Elijah set out to prove to Ahab and Jezebel that the God of Israel was the only true God! The prophets of Baal were defeated in a dramatic display of God’s power. They cried all morning to their pagan gods, and nothing happened—but when Elijah prayed, God immediately sent fire from heaven which consumed the sacrifice on the altar.

When Jezebel learned what happened, she was furious, and she retaliated by giving Elijah only 24 hours to live (1 Kings 19:2). She said to Elijah, “*Tomorrow at this time you’ll be a dead man.*” And Elijah was scared. He ran far into the wilderness and sat under a juniper tree, and prayed to God that he might die (1 Kings 19:4).

It may seem strange that this bold prophet was afraid, especially after the great victory on Mount Carmel, but Elijah was weary and exhausted, and the thought of one more battle (this time with the wicked queen), just overwhelmed him, and he was ready to quit. Elijah was a human being; he had emotions like we have (James 5:17), and he felt like giving up.

But we learn in 1 Kings 19 that God sent an angel to encourage Elijah, but the angel did not tell Elijah to get down on his knees and pray. Instead, the angel told Elijah to get up and eat food, *and then* he would be prepared to deal with the problem (1 Kings 19:5-7). Then God told Elijah to get busy in the work He had for him to do. It

included anointing Hazael to be king over Syria, anointing Jehu to be king over Israel—and calling Elisha to be another prophet.

Surely this was not time for Elijah to be lying around in a cave feeling sorry for himself, and thinking that he was the only one left in Israel who was faithful to God (1 Kings 19:9,18). It was then that the Lord assured him that He had seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

c) *Jonah was also enslaved by discouragement*

Jonah was the prophet who landed in the belly of a great fish. After the experience in the fish's belly, Jonah obeyed God and preached in the streets of Nineveh. The people of Nineveh repented and were delivered from judgment—but then Jonah complained to God (Jonah 4:1-3). The Bible says that Jonah was greatly displeased. He knew that because the people repented, God would bless their country (Assyria)—and that eventually Assyria *may even over-run his own nation Israel*.

Jonah lamented to God. He essentially said, *“That’s why I went in the opposite direction in the first place, instead of going to Nineveh. I knew you are a gracious and compassionate God, and that you would bless Assyria if the people repented; now, O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live”* (Jonah 4:2-3).

Jonah was discouraged because he saw things in terms of how they

affected *him*. He didn’t *seem to care much* about the judgment which could have fallen on the people of Nineveh. Thus we have seen that some of the noted men in Bible times were given to bouts with discouragement—just like we experience today.

3. Steps to Conquer

Discouragement

There are some steps to take that should help us overcome discouragement.

- Maybe you have been rejected by your parents.
- Maybe you have a deplorable job with no chance for advancement.
- Maybe you married a self-centered and insensitive partner.
- Maybe you have some serious physical impairment.
- Maybe you are scared by the current world situation.

To be delivered from discouragement there are some steps to keep in mind.

a) *Learn the art of being grateful in every situation*

It is important for us to recall God’s many blessings, and to remember God’s faithfulness to us day after day. We should thank Him for what He has done even in the midst of trials and hard places.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 believers are told to give thanks “in everything”—that is, in every circumstance. Murmuring and complaining are always condemned in the Scriptures; singing and praising God are always looked upon with favor. In Acts 16:25,

Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God at midnight, even though at that time they were fastened in stocks.

The Scriptures continually admonish us to be thankful, not only for happy families and decent jobs and strong bodies—but also, we are to be thankful in the midst of life’s circumstances, even for deep disappointments.

Thanksgiving is rooted in the belief that God is in control of everything that touches our lives. There is nothing that will quicken the step of a tired and discouraged person, like singing a hymn of thanks and of praise to God.

b) Do something that encourages others

One of the things many of us can do is to write letters of encouragement, or make a simple phone call to someone who is in the midst of discouragement.

J. B. Phillips was a man remembered for translating the New Testament into modern English by using a gripping style. He translated Romans 12:2 with these words: *“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold.”* But throughout Phillips’ adult life, he struggled with many dark periods of discouragement.

One day a letter came to Phillip’s home, from a woman who had used his translation in her daily devotional reading, and for many years she had found it to be of great help. She wrote, *“I can’t explain the compulsion I feel to write to you today, but I want so very much to thank you personally for the peace that your great effort has*

often brought to me, and for the way it challenged my commitment to keep on serving Christ and the church.”

Phillips answered with a few words of thanks for her encouraging letter, saying that, *though she* couldn’t explain her compulsion to write, *perhaps he could.* *“I am in the midst of a depressive illness” (he said), “and I have noticed that the good Lord seems to arrange matters so that I get a letter such as yours at a time when I am tempted to feel that my life has been pretty useless.”*

Perhaps there is a strange compulsion within one of you—to write a letter, or call someone on the phone, and offer a word of thanks for what a particular person means to you. If you sense that compulsion, do it as soon as possible. It will bless your life.

c) Remember that God uses our problems for good purposes

The Bible speaks of the unlimited power of God. He has sovereign control over the affairs of nature, and He works out His plan for each individual life.

In the Old Testament, Joseph was hated and betrayed by his brothers. They sold him into Egypt. Potiphar’s wife schemed against Joseph. He was unjustly locked up in prison, where he was ignored and forgotten. But God was in control! Eventually Joseph was freed, and became next in power to the king. And through God’s help, he was able to save Egypt, and the surrounding nations from starvation.

The famine in the Mideast finally

brought Joseph's brothers down to Egypt to buy food, and in time, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers. They remembered how they had hated him, and sold Joseph many years before—and they feared for their lives. But Joseph replied, "Don't be angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:5).

Joseph said in essence, "*You sold me, but God sent me.*" Joseph knew the cure for discouragement. He knew that the Lord only allows those things to happen to us which will eventually work together for good—as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 8:28—when he says that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." The Bible from beginning to end teaches that:

- God is completely sovereign;
- God is infinite in wisdom;
- God is perfect in love;
- God in His love always wills what is best for us;
- God in His wisdom always knows what is best for us;
- God's sovereignty enables Him to bring it about.

To have a simple trust in God, acknowledging that the circumstances of your life are under God's control—is the major cure for discouragement. The God who cares for sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31), is screening the experiences of your life, so that we are not the mere victims of fate.

Remember that adversity and difficult circumstances are not always an indication of *sin* in our lives. If we have sinned, the guilt can be removed by honest confession and genuine repentance (1 John 1:9). And we need to do that. We must repent, and confess our sins. We must not try to hide sin. But don't let Satan lead you to believe that there must be a link between some sin in your life—and the adversity you are facing.

God often uses trials and hard places to make good people even better. In my judgment, there is little doubt that Joseph's brothers needed punishment far more than Joseph did! *They* are the ones who *sold* him into Egypt, and *lied* to their father, and *smear*ed goat's blood on his garment to make it look like an animal had killed him. Yet, as far as the record goes, *none of the brothers* suffered like Joseph suffered.

God, in His infinite skill, blends together the events of life in order to make us the kind of person He wants us to be—and some day, by the grace of God, we shall say, "*It has been good.*"

Fanny Crosby, in one of her hymns, says: "*All the way my Savior leads me; what have I to ask beside? Can I doubt His tender mercy, who through life has been my Guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith, in Him to dwell! For I know what'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well!*"

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Announcement

Helping People in Need Seminar January 22-24, 2019

January 22, 2019: Biblical Thinking

God, His Will, and You –Ben Waldner

Fear, Worry, and You –Denver Yoder

Self-Worth, Self-Esteem, Self_____? –Ben Waldner

Forgiveness –Tim Weaver

January 23, 2019: Biblical Growth & Change

The Call to Discipleship –Dave Snyder

The Role of Scripture in Discipleship –Tim Weaver

Key Elements of Discipling, (Session 1 & 2) –Bryan Fleagle

Case Study Discussion –Tim Weaver

January 24, 2019: Solutions — Helpful or Harmful?

Discerning the Spirits –Dave Snyder

Theories of Helping People –Phil Helmuth

Practices in Helping People –Phil Helmuth

Lessons from the Ministry of Christ –Denver Yoder

Registration deadline: January 8, 2019. To register, or for more information regarding the seminar, please call 614-873-1199 or email info@dlmohio.org.

This seminar is sponsored and hosted by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse-Huff Rd.

Plain City, OH 43064

614-873-1199

www.dlmohio.org 

The Beginning of Repentance

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The University of Maryland had a rigid regimen of physical stamina and training for the young men preparing for the fall football season. The compulsion to win is always strong, but especially so in professional sports. August of this year had some exceptionally warm (hot) weather. During the days' strenuous exercises, one of the young men collapsed out in the field. He was despised by the men for his wimpy ways, and was carried off the field and left lying there for one half hour. Eventually, they decided to take him to the hospital, where he died from heat stroke.

The coach and the physical fitness man in charge and another responsible person or two on the training squad resigned. The higher up officials said they will see to it that it doesn't happen again. Really?

The month of August, 2018, had continuous reporting of Catholic priests sexually molesting young

boys. Pennsylvania state ordered a grand jury investigation with the state Attorney General involved. They documented "301 predator priests" or church officials over a span of 70 years. One of those was a cardinal archbishop. The attorney general said these kinds of rape and sexual abuse of children were known by the Vatican. New revelations were coming every several days with scathing front page reports of high-level cover up. One report said the total of sexually molested children was 1,000, but the actual number could be two to three times those documented in the report so far. One high-up man said he didn't report it because he felt the education of children comes first; his blowing the whistle would have made a shake-up in the schools. Really?

Here is my point; these high-up officials said they will see to it that it doesn't happen again. And I ask, Really?

A conservative Anabaptist helps himself to hunting for pheasants in the neighbor's standing cornfield, which had clearly visible "No Trespassing" signs around the field. The owner went out to talk to him about his trespass. The guilty hunter says he will see to it that it doesn't happen again. Okay?

A conservative Anabaptist woman is dying from cancer. A lady comes to visit her and asks her if she knows what it is to repent. The dying woman said, "Repentance is not doing it again." Is that all it is?

The Christian church (our own denomination included) is not very strong on the subject of repentance. Our message largely comprises the typical Protestant theme of believing on Jesus and by that being saved.

John the Baptist came on the scene down by the Jordan River in an "Elijah, the Tishbite" fashion, and cried, saying, "Repent" (Matthew 3:2).

Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent!" (Matthew 4:17).

On the day of Pentecost, Peter lifted up his voice and said, "Repent!" (Acts 2:38).

Later again, Peter was preaching, saying, "*Repent* ye therefore, and be *converted* [I fear an archaic word for the church, anymore], that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

Paul preached: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). That all was in an era of church growth through spiritual awakening and vibrancy.

Some people in our time who were guilty of not keeping covenant in the church, said, "Give me some slack" (space to be accepted with apparent short comings). The Bible says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). We need less slack and more repentance.

Let's say a policeman stops me for going through a red light. Then I would say that I won't do it again. Really? That would be the neatest and most handy and least costly way to try wiggling out of consequences. It would not be a needed lesson by getting off that easy and without cost, in which case I likely would do it again. Can the University of Maryland be trusted not to do it again? Can the Catholic priests be trusted not to do it again? Really? The Catholic hierarchy has set aside 250 million dollars as settlement for the anticipated lawsuits. There is a statute of limitations in the

law which legislators are looking at about opening law suits against the Catholic church back beyond those two years.

One liberal political writer recently wrote that Catholics are saying, “How can you be a Catholic?” and “How can you stay?” This writer is a strong Catholic himself, or at least was so in the past. The higher-up hierarchy has seemingly made a tepid, weak, lacking-in-public-repentance response. Earlier, they often changed the problem priest to another parish, and kept moving such men around in a cover up.

Repentance is lining up our lives with the word of God. Religion doesn't require it; true Christianity actually does. Really! But, yes, repentance is needed as much today as it was 100 years ago when most people had more limited knowledge of Bible truth. The Spirit of God is saying we need repentance now—more than ever because we are so conversant in Bible truth.

Catholicism has been classed as a branch of Christianity, which strokes it with a very wide brush. They now have the appearance of something less, like being merely another world religion. Dare anyone ask whether these horrendous episodes of men who were thought to protect children and be an advocate for them and a

worthy example to them—whether these widespread practices do not come more in line with what characterizes a cult?

We would be amiss to not warn all our own men of the dangers and the evil associated with being predators of innocent children. If it were only one man in violation, he would likely go to prison. What will the state do with a hundred or more at one time?

When John the Baptist came to the wilderness of Judea, he was an able preacher, and many people came to hear him. He saw those who were not sincere or ready to change by repentance. He cried, saying, “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and *begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father*” (Luke 3:8, emphasis added). He takes away their line of self-justification and tells them they need to repent for the justification, or forgiveness, that counts for God. This text gave rise to the title for this article.

The Bottom Line is that repentance is for all those who are tired of their own self-justification and are longing for justification that counts with God, and being at peace with Him. Forays into sin that begin with self-indulgence should end with heart-felt repentance.



marriages

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

Esh-Schlabach

Bro. John, son of Steve and Martha Esh, Charlotte, TN, and Sis. Kathleen, daughter of David and Esther Schlabach, Vanleer, TN, on August 10, 2018, at Walnut Street Church of Christ for Lighthouse Mennonite Church by LaVern Eash.

Fisher-Stoltzfus

Bro. Josiah, son of Lee and Sadie Fisher, Lott, TX, and Sis. Janelle, daughter of Ivan and Barbie Ann Stoltzfus, New Holland, PA, at Martindale Reception Center, for West Haven A.M. Church on Sept. 22, 2018, by Lee Fisher.

Glick-Riehl

Bro. Evan, son of Anna and the late Ben Glick, New Holland, PA, and Katrina, daughter of Sylvan and Rebecca Riehl, Gordonville, PA, on August 4, 2018, at Weavertown Mennonite Church by Dave Stoltzfoos.

Lantz-Stoltzfus

Bro. Keith, son of Melvin and Carolyn Lantz, Gap, PA, and Sis. Cheryl Renee, daughter of J. Omar and Carol Stoltzfus, Christiana, PA, at First Baptist Church of Pequea for Mine Road A.M. Church on Sept. 8, 2018, by Floyd King.

Miller-Miller

Bro. Andre, son of Steven and Melissa Miller, Auburn, KY, and Sis. Cynthia, daughter of Marion and Katie Miller, Auburn, Ky, at Plainview Mennonite Church on Sept 29, 2018, by Luke Troyer.

Miller-Miller

Bro. Nelson, son of Samuel and Wilma Miller, Owenton, KY, and Sis. Lydia, daughter of Ruben and Kathryn Miller, Fredonia, KY, on August 17, 2018, at Fredonia Mennonite Church, by Titus Troyer.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. Bradly Luke, son of Gerald and Rachel Miller, Millersburg, OH, and Sis. Charity, daughter of David and Rosanna Yoder, Dundee, OH, at Maranatha Fellowship Church for Grace Haven Fellowship, on August 25, 2018, by David Yoder.

Nisley-Smucker

Bro. Christopher, son of John and Mary Nisley, Guys Mills, PA, and Sis. Sharon, daughter of Dan and Anna Smucker, Narvon, PA, at Ridgeview Mennonite Church for Summitview Christian Fellowship, on Sept. 1, 2018, by Dave Stoltzfus.

Shetler-Yoder

Bro. Kevin, son of Lavern and Katie Shetler, Glenmont, OH, and Sis. Bethany, daughter of Marion and Lizzie Ann Yoder, Killbuck, OH, at Mennonite

Christian Assembly for Grace Haven Fellowship, on Sept. 15, 2018, by David Yoder.

Stoltzfus-Zook

Bro. Michael, son of Jay Ivan and Ruth Ann Stoltzfus, Narvon, PA, and Sis. Esther, daughter of Marvin and Rachel Zook, Gap, PA, at Ridegview Mennonite Church for Summitview Christian Fellowship on July 28, 2018, by Dave Stoltzfus.

Yoder-Eash

Bro. Jason, son of William and Naomi Yoder, Fredericksburg, OH, and Sis. Amy, daughter of LaVern and Carolyn Eash, Cumberland Furnace, TN, on June 23, 2018, at Walnut Street Church of Christ for Lighthouse Mennonite Church by LaVern Eash.

Yoder-Miller

Bro. Jared, son of Lonnie and Violet Yoder, Lexington, IN, and Sis. Rosie, daughter of Joseph and Hannah Miller, Melvern, KS, at Lyndon A.M. Church, on August 24, 2018, by Lawrence Overholt.



cradle roll

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

Beachy, Davon and Joanna (Yoder), Arlington, KS, second child and son, Danek Elijah, April 5, 2018.

Fehr, Jason and Janelle (Yoder), Cross Hill, SC, third child, second son, Denver Cole, August 30, 2018.

Helmuth, Titus and Felicia (Overholt), Culpeper, VA, second child, first daughter, Sophia Dawn, July 14, 2018.

King, Emmanuel and Phoebe (Raber), New Holland, PA, fourth child, second son, Evan Emmanuel, July 25, 2018.

King, Jason and Rosalie (Byler), Kinzers, PA, second child and daughter, Claudia Hope, July 12, 2018.

Kleiner, George and Melinda (Yoder), Aroda, VA, fourth child, first daughter, Avalyn Sue, August 22, 2018.

Knepp, Randall and Emily (Graber), Odon, IN, second child, first son, Damon Lee, August 22, 2018.

Miller, Ferman Daniel and Rosanna (Yoder), Dundee, OH, fourth child and son, Tristan Michael, June 26, 2018.

Miller, Javan and Sheila (Hershberger), Dundee, OH, fourth child, third son, Adam Cody, August 28, 2018.

Miller, Jeff and Laura (Miller), Holmesville, OH, third child, first son, Michael Shawn, Feb. 6, 2018.

Miller, Kevin and Rosa (Headings), Lincoln, MO, second child and son, Durant Clay, July 31, 2018.

Morinigo, Jonas and Kerri (Byler), Hutchinson, KS, first child and son, Landon Jose', Sept. 19, 2018.

Petersheim, Michael and Melissa (Sommers), Salisbury, PA, fourth child, third son, Levi Spencer, August 31, 2018.

Pichiya, Obed and Johanna (Kirkman), Odon, IN, third child, first son, Jesse Shawn, Sept. 13, 2018.

Rissler, Earl and Lisa (Weaver), Lewisburg, PA, sixth child, third son, Ellis, August 30, 2018.

Swartzentruber, Dwight and Renita (Overholt), Vanleer, TN, second child, first son, Dwayne Austin, August 21, 2018.

Swartzentruber, Shawn and Hannah (Stoll), Abbeville, SC, second child, first son, Reese Stevenson, Sept. 21, 2018.


Troyer, John, Jr. and Lois (Whitt), Free Union, VA, third child, second daughter, Evangeline Mercy, August 15, 2018.

Weaver, Ben and Sheryl (Stutzman), Auburn, KY, sixth child, fifth daughter, Dianna Faith, Sept. 14, 2018.

Yoder, James and Bethany (Stoltzfus), Narvon, PA, first child and daughter, Natalie Grace, August 18, 2018.

Yoder, Kevin and Martha (Miller), Lincoln, MO, second child, first son, Deklan Kade, August 15, 2018.

Yoder, Richard and Mary (Stoltzfus), Abbeville, SC, second child and son, Coleman Lee, August 20, 2018.

Yutzy, Gideon and Esther (Yoder), Dunmore East, County Waterford, Ireland, fourth child and daughter, Serena Esther, Sept. 16, 2018. 

ordinations

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

Bro. Greg Bontrager, 34, (wife, Trish Schlabach), of Arlington, KS, was ordained as minister for Arlington A.M. Church on Sept. 30, 2018. Preordination messages were brought by Laban Kaufman, Middlefield, OH. The charge was given by Arlen Mast, assisted by Lee Nisly and Laban Kaufman. Others in the lot were Davon Beachy and Jerry Yoder.

Bro. Curtis Kauffman, 35, (wife Kelly Shenk), and **Bro. Virgil G. Wagler**, 40, (wife Rebekah Petersheim), both of Leon, IA, were ordained as ministers for Leon Salem Mennonite Church in a double ordination Sept. 9, 2018. Preordination teaching was given by Stan Nisly, Altamont, KS. The charge was given by Monroe Gingerich, assisted by David Yoder and Stan Nisly. Others in the lot were Duane Troyer, Merlin Troyer, and Arlynn Kauffman.

Bro. Daniel Lee Stoltzfus, 47, (wife, Mary Jean Miller) of Lewisburg, PA, was ordained as deacon at Shady Grove Christian Fellowship, Mifflinburg, PA, on May 6, 2018. Preordination messages

were given by Kinley Coulter, Dave Lapp, and Dave Beiler. The charge was given by Simon Bender, assisted by Dave Beiler and David Fisher.



obituaries

Esh, Christ F., Jr., 72, of Honey Grove, PA, died from cancer at his home on Sept. 8, 2018. He was born at Narvon, PA, on June 11, 1946, son of the late Christ and Sara Fisher.

He was a member of Shade Mountain Christian Fellowship, Mifflin.

On Oct. 24, 1970, he was married to Lizzie Lapp; she resides at the home. He is also survived by their children: Steve (Loretta) Esh, Montezuma, GA; Lillian (Merle) Miller, Penrose, CO; Mary Ann (Marlin) Spicher, Dan (Amanda) Esh, Sara Lynn (Elvin) Fisher, all from Honey Grove; Marlin (Vonda) Esh, Cocolalla, ID; 25 grandchildren, a brother, Jake (Lorraine) Esh, Bennington, VT; a sister, Sylvia (Weaver) Hurst, Narvon; brother-in-law, John King, Quarryville.

He was preceded in death by a grandson, Arlin Spicher; a sister, Fannie King; and a brother, Sam Esh.

The funeral was held on Sept. 11, with Nathen Fisher, Leroy Yoder, and Kinley Coulter serving. Burial was in the church cemetery with the committal conducted by Daniel Fisher.

Nisly, Fannie (Yoder), 90, of Hutchinson, KS, died Sept. 1, 2018. She

was born Dec. 17, 1927, in Reno County, KS, daughter of the late Daniel M. and Barbara (Helmuth) Yoder.

She was a devoted member of Center A.M. Church, Hutchinson. She was a homemaker and farm wife.

On Oct. 23, 1949, she was married to Melvin S. Nisly. He survives. Also surviving are children: Judith and husband Perry Lee Stutzman, Hutchinson; Joyce and husband Steve Bontrager, Kokomo, IN; Cynthia and husband Dale Miller, Plain City, OH; Titus and Marijane of Hutchinson; and Janelle Nisly of Evansville, IN; a sister, Rebecca Miller, Mt. Gilead, OH; brothers, Levi and wife Colleen Yoder, Greeley, CO; Alfred and wife Linda Yoder, Phoenix, AZ; and Paul and wife Edith Yoder, Hutchinson; brother-in-law, Raymond Nisly, South Hutchinson; 11 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren.

Fannie was preceded in death by sisters: Mary Nisly; Bertha and husband Elvon Helmuth; brother, Vernon and wife Marilyn Yoder; brother-in-law, Lester Miller, and granddaughter, Julia Stutzman.

The funeral was held Sept. 4, with

David Yoder, LaVerne Miller, and Julian Nisly serving. Dwight Miller conducted the committal at West Center Cemetery.


Yoder, Catherine S.(Schlabach), 89, of Fredericksburg, OH, died on July 19, 2018. She was born on Nov. 21, 1928, to the late Samuel J. and Ada (Byler) Schlabach.

She was a member of Messiah A.M. Church, Millersburg, OH.

On Dec. 22, 1949, she was married to Jonas L. Yoder, who is now deceased. Children surviving are: Ada Yoder, Fredericksburg; Savannah (Paul) Miller and Wyman (Ruth) Yoder, both of

Shreve; David (Sara) Yoder, Leola, PA; Joseph (Linda) Yoder, Coshocton; Reuben (Martha) Yoder, Monterey, TN; Aaron (Nora) Yoder and Eunice Yoder, both of Fredericksburg; 39 grandchildren and 27 great grandchildren; and a sister, Naomi (William) Yoder.

She was preceded in death by brothers, Norman, Milo, David, and Johnny, a sister, Esther; step-mother, Katie, and two grandsons, Matthew and Timothy.

The funeral was held at Messiah A.M. Church on July 22 with Philip Miller officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery. 

observations

In 1972 the US Supreme Court ruled in the *Wisconsin vs. Yoder* case that the Amish are exempt from compulsory school attendance past the eighth grade. This decision was widely understood as a decision based on religious freedom.

Recently an organization was formed called the Amish Heritage Foundation by some people who self identify as Amish but are not practicing Amish. I'm not quite sure how that's supposed to work, but that's what they say. Elam Zook is the director of the development of Amish literature at the Amish Heritage Foundation. He believes that the well-intentioned *Wisconsin vs. Yoder* decision, "directly created

an embrace of ignorance and a poverty of literature among our Amish people, and in the process, ran roughshod over our legal rights as Amish children and adults."

If I understand the position of this organization correctly, it includes several assumptions that we do well to take note of and to avoid. The most obvious assumption is that, more formal academic education is better. Secondly, it appears as if there is an assumption that learning sort of stops when one quits going to school. Formal education is a wise choice for many of God's children in a variety of settings. But I have met quite a few persons who are quite articulate, thoughtful, hard-working

and successful in a wide variety of ways whose formal education ended when they completed grade school.

If the notion that more education is better represents one ditch, there is another ditch on the other side of the road that we should also be careful to avoid. This ditch sees education as being something of a nuisance that must be endured so that we can function normally in life. Furthermore we shouldn't do more than we need to in order to fulfill legal expectations. The result of this mindset is that we try to make this happen in the least expensive manner possible and finish as quickly as possible so that our children can move on to "productive" things.

Jesus said in Luke 10:27 "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." I consider some of the strengths of our faith heritage to be found in a strong work ethic born out of following the commands to love God with all our strength. We teach that God needs to be the focus of our heart and soul. But what does it mean to love God with all our mind? A healthy education teaches us about the world that God has created and the people and cultures of others who have been created in His image. It is one really beneficial way to love God with our mind and our neighbors as ourselves. It also should go beyond information

and facts, and teach us how to think and how to shape our attitudes and thoughts about what we've learned.

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Senator Ben Sasse from Nebraska wrote a book entitled, "The Vanishing American Adult: Our Coming-of-Age Crisis—and How to Rebuild a Culture of Self-Reliance". *Christianity Today's* May 2017 issue published an interview with the author about his book. I read the report of the interview but didn't read the book itself.

Mr. Sasse sees adolescence as a gift to young people who are transitioning from being children to adults. But if adolescence becomes a destination, it is a trap. Sadly many people today continue to function as adolescents for many years after they should have moved beyond that stage. Wise parents should look for ways to help their children develop mature attitudes and responses rather than coddling them.

Reading this interview reminded me of something that Shane Hipps wrote in his book "Flickering Pixels" about the role that parental guidance and structure plays in the development of our young people, particularly as it relates to technological gadgetry.

He said, "Establishing boundaries is of paramount importance to the development of young people. Boundaries are a powerful expression of parental love and protection. Without them, kids experience unconscious anxiety and insecurity.

Eventually they will go looking for boundaries. They will push, prod and test limits in search of love and protection. When they fail to experience boundaries, security begins to fade. When emotional security is compromised, development actually stalls. And if development stalls, we will begin to see adolescence extend well into adulthood, and in some cases indefinitely.

“Establishing technological boundaries is not easy. For one thing, our kids will always know more than we do. But the greatest challenge comes from parents’ best intentions. Parents may fear that their children will be left out, or left behind if they restrict access to technology. Parents want their children to become familiar with the digital world so they’ll be prepared to navigate it and succeed in this life. Parents realize that their kids connect with their friends increasingly through digital means, and they don’t want their kids to be left out of the tribe.

“I’m sympathetic to these concerns, but there is a flaw in this logic. In many ways, our kids don’t need our help with technology. They are digital natives; this is the air they breathe, it’s all around them. My two year old already knows how to use a mouse. Our kids will figure technology out intuitively, just like the rest of us did.

“On the issue of being left out socially, we should remember that digital space is the most anemic

form of social interaction available. It is severely truncated, unsupervised and easily addictive. During the most crucial stage of social and emotional development, maybe being left out of this is a good thing.

“Regardless of how people choose to set boundaries in their own families, one thing is clear: This unprecedented empowerment of youth, along with our image-fueled obsession of beauty, is a dangerous cocktail. In a culture that worships youth, what incentive do our kids have to ever grow up?”



Joshua Silver, an Oxford University physics professor pioneered an eyeglasses innovation that utilized liquid-filled and adjustable eyeglasses that could be put to use in areas that lacked sophisticated equipment. The results of the first efforts were too bulky to see widespread use. But Kevin White, a US Marine Corps major, continued working on streamlining and improving these ideas. The current model that is being distributed is called Usee. The progressive lenses are adjusted by a dial similar to how binoculars are adjusted.

Now Global Vision 2020 is the non-profit organization that has been formed to take these eyeglasses to the masses around the globe that don’t have access to corrective lenses. The eye exam they use can be administered without any equipment that requires electricity. Then the

lenses can be adjusted and snapped into a frame. The whole process usually takes less than 15 minutes from beginning to end and costs about \$5! This does not even need to be done by an optometrist, since it can be administered by almost anyone with very minimal training. They hope that they might be able to distribute 100,000 pairs of glasses overseas in 2018.

As one who has been very grateful for radically corrective eyeglasses since I was seven years old, I can readily identify with the relief and joy that those who get these eyeglasses must feel.

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In September my wife Brenda and I were privileged to attend a parents' appreciation weekend along with several dozen other parents of current volunteer staff at Faith Mission Home in Free Union, Virginia, a residential facility for intellectually challenged children and adults. Our daughter, Melissa, has served there for the past two years.

The event was very good in a variety of ways. Among other things we were treated to a tour of the campus and heard a brief history of Faith Mission Home. I was moved by the bouquet of the various ways that God's grace is being poured out in that place. The dedication of the staff and administration is inspiring. The unique contribution that each resident brings to the the daily grind,

adds to the rich tapestry of the Faith Mission experience. There are many things that God teaches us through these handicapped people who bear our Creator's image, if we aren't too arrogant to listen. And last but not least, I was inspired how the local congregation, Faith Mission Fellowship, reaches out to provide a nurturing church environment for the staff, administration and the residents.

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Our people have ample opportunities to serve as volunteers in a wide range of settings. I wonder what it says when places like Faith Mission Home, Hillcrest Home, as well as our foreign missions struggle with staff shortages. One thing it means is that it's been quite awhile since we have had a military draft that obligates our young men to serve a tour of duty somewhere. Were that to happen, and church sponsored options would qualify as alternative service, I suspect that the problem would not be finding staff, but rather having enough room for all those who wish to serve. May the Lord grant us wisdom to live Kingdom priorities that call us to a life of service wherever we are. Spending a term of voluntary service away from home is one way to reinforce the idea that our lives should be ordered around the invitation, as Christ-followers, to serve our brother and our neighbor as the hands and feet of Christ.

-RJM 

Gems for Husbands and Wives

(from I Corinthians 13)

Steve Rockhill, Bryan, TX

In this short passage the Apostle Paul is speaking of the centrality and importance of love in all things. It doesn't matter how good you look, how much you know, how prestigious your job is, how flashy your car and your clothes are, it doesn't matter how much money you have, how many good works you do, it actually doesn't even matter if you have enough faith to move mountains, if you do not have love, Paul says, you are nothing and you have nothing. This is especially true in marriage: If there is no love, there is nothing; all will vanish away—the relationship is worthless and empty. Love is an essential ingredient for a long, happy and God-honoring marriage. Paul seeks to emphasize this vital importance of love by describing the characteristics of love, not as a quickly passing feeling or emotion that you fall in and out of (as is sadly so common in our society today); but as a commitment to another which is demonstrated by action:

Love suffers long and is kind. This can also read “love is patient”—which

certainly helps us to understand what is meant—but I prefer the reading “suffers long.” Love doesn't guarantee that there will be no suffering. In fact, just the opposite is true: where there is love, there will be suffering, sorrow, and grief. This is true especially in marriage. Ask anyone who is married, whether it has been for 6 months or 60 years—it's not all a slice of strawberry pie. There will be times of pain, sorrow and suffering, but if you have love, true love, you will endure through that difficult time. Love in marriage means you need to be patient with one another (especially when mistakes are made) but it also means that when suffering comes calling, you will have the capacity to endure. And that you do not use the difficulty to take advantage of each other but are kind, sweet and considerate. Love suffers long and is kind.

Love does not envy. There's no place in marriage for greed or jealousy, what one has you both have: sharing together your good fortune, your joys, successes, honors

and accomplishments. Whether it's being the woman behind the man or the man behind the woman or the parents behind the children, it is no longer "mine" and "yours" but "ours." Love does not envy.

Love does not parade itself; is not puffed up. Self-exaltation, pride, and arrogance do not mix well with love and marriage. In marriage there are no winners or losers; no, "I told you so" or "you should have done it my way." There is no building up of oneself, only a building up of the other. The duty of a wife is to respect and lift up her husband and the duty of a husband is to love and praise his wife. Love does not parade itself; is not puffed up.

Love does not behave rudely. Partners in marriage who come together in love do not disrespect one another. They do not embarrass the other on purpose and do not ridicule. But they speak to one another with courtesy, sensitivity, and tenderness. Love does not behave rudely.

Love does not seek its own. There is no selfishness in love—only selflessness. When there is a wedding we celebrate. You will note that in the word "wedding" the "We" comes before the "I". God's design for marriage is that if you both seek to serve one another rather than yourself, your needs will be met. Love

does not seek its own.

Love is not easily provoked. Love does not burst into anger or rage instilling fear in the marriage. No short tempers. No violence. And anger, when it is present, should quickly pass as forgiveness is sought and granted before the setting of the sun. Love is being slow to speak and quick to listen and understand. Love is not easily provoked.

Love thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity; but rejoices in the truth. Love does not allow thoughts of physical or emotional harm, it does not say, "You got what you deserved" and it does not keep tallies of offenses or hold grudges. But love flourishes in open, honest communication, integrity, faithfulness and good counsel from family, friends, and the Word of God. Love thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.


Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. The word here for 'bears all things' comes from the word for 'roof.' Just as a roof covers and protects what is inside, so love protects others and acts as a shield, holding off threatening and damaging situations or rumors. Believing all things involves trust, commitment and faith even in the midst of the unknown that lies ahead. In hoping for all

things, love anticipates the future in positive ways: “we can overcome this” rather than “we’re sunk” or “we’ve lost”. Love remains through the good times and the bad times: in wealth and in poverty, in sickness and in health. Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things.

Finally, **Love never fails**—Gifts will be given and taken, possessions will be gained and lost, people will arrive and depart, time will pass and aging will come but love is the anchor of a marriage that will never fail to keep it secure in the storms of life. Love never fails.

We may ask: How is it that love can

have such strength? Because love is one of the perfect attributes of the Living God as John tells us in **1 John 4:8 “God is Love.”** We can only truly love one another this way because God first loved us and He showed us His great love by sending His Son Jesus Christ to pay for our sins and to bring peace and reconciliation with Him by way of the Cross. Love—true love—never fails, because God never fails.

May this true love of God and His Son Jesus Christ be the foundation of our marriages and may it be the anchor of those who covenant their lives together to the glory of God. 

Best Friends or Bitter Foes

H. Stephen Ebersole, Myerstown, PA

The greatest “project” or “venture” a married couple can embark on is bringing children into the world and raising them to maturity. All other ventures, whether it be in business or hobby, pale in comparison, both to the cost of investment and yield for time and eternity.

And the outcomes of how children turn out can be so drastically different. Young parents look at their church scene and wonder how there can be such different results. The outcome

doesn’t seem to parallel whether the home was on the conservative or the liberal edge of congregational life, but from something different.

In this little treatise we’d like to lay out a simple version of the Bible formula for raising children so the end relationship can be defined as “best friends for life”. This includes children who stand loyally by their parents in the thick and thin of the aging and dying process of life.

Treasure. The first stage of life sets the stage for the relationship,

and will naturally follow and define the relationship the rest of the way through. Some parents resent having children. Babies interrupt schedules, drain finances, and challenge marriage relationships. They bring untold worries even before they are born, endless squabbles and conflicts if they have siblings and are demanding in needing attention. Their care is 24/7 for years and years.

It has become acceptable to put off having children “until we are ready for them.” It is the thing to do to “space them” so we are not overwhelmed. All these are subtle ways of saying we look at children as an unwanted necessity. Let us not deceive ourselves into believing this is not caught.

When that platform is laid down in the home, then there are untold ways to communicate it all the way through life. “We didn’t really want you...” or “You were an unplanned interruption...” or however it is said becomes a subtle way of saying, “You are a bother to us, and our other goals are more important to us than you are. Because you came, we couldn’t afford that addition on our house or we had to give up our vacation.”

Parents! From the perspective of a million years, what is the most important treasure in God’s eyes? Why did He even bother to create the world and the human family? Isn’t it because He loves souls and craves

eternal fellowship with them? Why not ask God to send you the souls He knows you can raise for Him? Tell Him that you will accept each one with the assurance He is only giving you what He knows will bless Him in eternity.

A couple who truly treasures their children will have countless ways of communicating that attitude. Sure, it is inevitable that parents will show some frustration in the demands of parenting; we all are selfish at the core. The difference is in the baseline. For parents to raise best friends for life, they must treasure each child as one of God’s greatest gifts to them, treasure them from the beginning and all the way through.

Train. It isn’t long in an infant’s life until his depraved human nature begins to emerge. It is good for a parent to keep in mind that every child is both created in the image of God (and thus with an ability to connect with God) but also with a very selfish fallen nature. As you understand the importance of this season of personality and character development you will want to arm yourself with an attitude of patience and endurance. You certainly have a challenging task before you. It is not an easy task to discipline a child who talks back or does the opposite of what he is told.

The book of Proverbs outlines

characteristics of the miserable people who are fools, scoffers and scorners. Your child is born with those traits! Even the sweet-natured ones need someone to reach into their lives and train them to hearken to something outside their own will.

Modern philosophy says, children need to develop their own potential as they discover themselves. The Bible insists that “wisdom lieth without” and that a child that is left to himself will bring his mother to shame. It is up to you, mother and father, to train your child to accept direction outside his own impulses and thought patterns. Only by using corporal punishment can you train a child to hearken. Consistency is the word. Discipline him whether you feel like you are up to your task or not. Ask God for wisdom and strength to hang in there and be a benevolent dictator in training him to accept your direction.

Teach. From an early age children want to know “why.” It is impossible for you to answer every question. But it is essential that you impart some very basic foundational truths. Some of these are that we know Who created us. Our Creator had a purpose for each one of us. The Bible gives us answers for life.

Jesus loves us and wants a relationship with us. We mean to do what we are told.

Some teaching will be done in

formal ways. You will want to make time for family worship and regular attendance of all your congregation’s services. But many important lessons are communicated through informal sessions of teaching. As your child trails along behind you or rides beside you, his little mind is continually processing thoughts. If you sit daydreaming in your own world, figuring through your own problems, pining over your unfulfilled dreams, you may miss the valuable time to plant seeds of Truth in your child’s mind.

In these days your child is developing his conscience, that inner voice that guides him through his moral choices. You have limited opportunity to acknowledge that moral compass and to set its check points. This foundation will be laid throughout his days when he is in school and into his adolescence. He needs to know that you can speak with him about every relevant issue in his life. These conversations do not need to be long impressive speeches, but rather heartfelt truths and experiences that are communicated “by the way.”

Trust. As you see your child developing thought patterns and skills you will do him a great favor in communicating to him that you believe in him and respect his ability to make decisions in life. A child yearns to know his parent believes

in him. He longs to feel Dad's hand or arm on his shoulder and hear the words, "I believe you know what you are doing, I trust you with this project."

These words produce partnership from the heart. You may even ask your child advice on how he thinks some project or problem should be addressed. As you listen to his heart a bond will be created between you. The more you plan together, the more he instinctively wishes to please you.

You will also want to hear his dreams, what he feels his Creator wants from his life. As you lend your resources to his dreams, you become true yoke-fellows. Many a youth could not have stood the idea of disappointing their parents in breaking trust. Contrast that with youth who never felt their parents ever saw anything but failure in them. These two youth are sent in totally different directions.

Turn loose and turn over. You cannot control your adult children and you cannot keep forever what was once yours. It is right to begin the loosening process while you can still give advice and counsel. As you relinquish your responsibilities, your business ventures, your properties, you will find yourself fixing your eyes on other eternal realities. Your child needs to see your joy in this stage, and you need to find joy in

the journey. Your children or other youth you have mentored become stewards of that over which you once had responsibility. The natural inclination is to fear to turn loose lest you are not needed any longer. If you truly have a servant's heart there will always be something for you to do.

An overview: It is so tempting to mix these roles into the wrong seasons of life. If you treat your toddlers as best friends and do not rise to the challenge of confronting their will, yes even in controlling them, you will miss the opportunity to shape their wills. If you think you can control your youth, and manhandle them into doing what you want, you will lose their hearts and trust.

It is a tragedy to watch children reject the values and traditions of their parents, not because they have found a better way of life, but because they simply cannot tolerate the enmity they sense in their closest of all relationships.

Above all, let us depend upon the One who creates families. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to teach us and guide us in the way. We need His direction in the way so our adult children are our best friends and not our most bitter foes.

[From The Pilgrim Witness, August 2018. Used by permission.]



Procrastination

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

Procrastination is to put off intentionally and habitually the doing of something that should be done. It means to postpone or to put off until tomorrow what should be done today. Many times procrastination brings regret, and we feel a heavy burden of guilt.

Howard Goodhart lived on our premises near Morgantown, Pennsylvania during my childhood years and most of my teenage years. He was a road walker seeking his food as a beggar. Dad hired Howard as a daily laborer in the lime quarry. Dad fixed a room for him in the old blacksmith shop which was close to our house. Howard had a good heart, was kind, and welcomed our frequent visits. So he became very close to our family through the years.

In later years we cooked for him because he was on a special diet to lose weight. One Sunday morning I took Howard's breakfast to him in his apartment. On my walk back to our house, I clearly remember how the Holy Spirit spoke to me about

talking to Howard about his spiritual condition. I had spoken to him earlier about receiving Jesus as his Savior, but to my knowledge he never made a commitment. Well, it was soon time to go to church and I did not take time to go talk to him about Jesus. That afternoon a message came that Howard was found dead across the road. My heart smote me miserably. This spiritual neglect haunted me for months. God truly forgives the sin of negligence but it is a lost opportunity that might be gone forever.

Henry G. Bosch former writer of *Our Daily Bread* relates an account of early American history: "A bit of Americana that is little known by the average citizen had much to do with the birth of the United States. It is related that Colonel Rahl, the Hessian commander at Trenton, was playing cards when a courier brought a message stating that General George Washington was crossing the Delaware River. Rahl put the letter in his pocket and didn't bother to read it until the

game was finished. Then, realizing the seriousness of the situation, he hurriedly tried to rally his men to meet the coming attack, but his procrastination was his undoing. He and many of his men were killed, and the rest of the regiment was captured. Commenting on the British colonel's failure to read the communique immediately, Nolbert Quayle says, 'Only a few minutes delay, cost him his life, his honor, and the liberty of his soldiers. Earth's history is strewn with the wrecks of half-finished plans and unfulfilled resolutions. Tomorrow is the excuse of the lazy.'

The following article speaks so clearly of our modern-day rush and the haunting sin of lost opportunities.

One Hour and One Dollar

—by Ben Bergen

At 8:00 a.m. I drove out of my driveway with a green, 1992 Mazda van, headed south and focused my mind on one thing: I needed to write an article. It was due, way past due, and despite wrestling with it for days, all I had to show were two half-baked ideas in the wastebasket. And those sacked and blank ideas clouded my mind as I drove past lush meadows sprinkled with flowers and beneath birds playing in the morning sky.

But first, there was the green van. It needed a safety sticker. Two weeks ago the local mechanic slapped a pink

reject tag on the windshield, and it was time to show him the new tires and wiper blades. And I hoped he'd be quick, because I had an article to write. So ten minutes later I strode into the garage with my pink tag.

I should have noticed the two men in the parking lot, hands in their pockets, with nothing to do. Soon I realized their intention. They wanted inspection stickers too, and they were ahead of me. It's amazing how other people can influence our lives. Two men show up, and my schedule shifts one hour.

A minute later I leaned against the green van contemplating my situation. This just wasn't my day. I watched the mechanic, methodically checking a Ford pickup, oblivious to my urgency. I felt a pressure rising. *I've got to get to that article*, I fretted. Five minutes later I pulled a book from the green van. I might as well use my time. As I read, one of the gentlemen in the parking lot came towards me. We greeted each other. Then he wandered back to the shop.

One hour later I stood inside the garage. The mechanic inspected the green van. He checked the tires and the wipers, filled out the paperwork, wiped his hands and said, "That's one dollar." I pulled out my billfold and froze. It was empty. Definitely, this just wasn't my day.

“I’m sorry, I don’t have any money. But wait, I can write you a check.” I grabbed my briefcase.

“No sir, just forget it. Don’t write a check for one dollar,” he insisted. I felt embarrassed. I told him that I’d bring the money later. He nodded and I left.

I headed west towards the Blue Ridge Mountains, a sober and thoughtful man. That billfold was empty, and it was empty for a reason. It was time to find out why. Driving can be a good time to pray.

“Lord, you really reminded me of my frailness today. You have my attention now.” With each turn I felt drawn to the scenery. My eyes roved over the trees, flowers, rock formations, and animals. God is the Creator of all these wonderful things. Up I climbed. The light shone brighter and the air smelled fresher. And not only is God the Creator, He is in control of all His creation, I thought. In my mind, I pictured animals and rivers and trees and light— all controlled by Almighty God.

And not only does He control creation, he is in control of time. My thoughts continued, time? Whose time was that while you waited in the garage? Yes, it was God’s time. Really this was God’s day, not my day.

Over the next hour God continued to show me how I needed to trust.

But He also showed me something else. He reminded me of that man in the parking lot, how he’d wandered near my van, turned, and walked back. Suddenly it hit me. I think he wanted to chat, and it didn’t happen because I was stewing. For that I’m ashamed, more ashamed than not having the dollar.

Tomorrow I can return to that garage and pay that dollar, but I may never meet that man again. The opportunity is lost. When Jesus says, “The cares of this world choke the Word.” He is not only referring to Bible memory. He’s thinking about people. God wants us to love and engage with people. When anxiety chokes the Word as it did within me this morning, it affects the way I relate with people.

So I pray, if I wait somewhere, I will be like Jesus at the well in Samaria. I pray I will be free to engage, because it’s amazing how we can influence the lives of people, especially when we realize that it’s not our day.

Oh yes, later that day, at 8:06 p.m., I shut down my computer and rose from my desk. The article was written.

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Where are The Missionaries?

Mark Webb, Aroda, VA
(AMA Personnel Coordinator)

Several weeks ago, I sent a message out to all ministers on the Beachy Ministers' email group asking for names of potential missionaries to serve with Amish Mennonite Aid. I received the name of one couple from one of our board members and this couple was not in our constituency. This response caused me to wonder if we as a constituency have gone from being missionaries to becoming a mission field!

Shortly after this, I talked to a bishop brother who said that he and his co-ministers had discussed my request and did not feel like they had a lot to offer. He did then give me one family to contact. This was encouraging in the sense that I trust more of the minister teams discussed this need. It is discouraging if we do not have those among us that can go and serve.

AMA needs: four couples in Kisumu, Kenya; one couple for El Salvador; one sister as a social worker in Belize, and one sister in Nakuru, Kenya.

I know there are many other good works going on in the world staffed by many of our people. I am not trying to take workers from these projects. However, we are relying more and more on other church groups to staff our mission stations.

Because of this, should AMA perhaps move in administration from a Beachy Mission Board to a parachurch organization?

I am sending you another plea to send me names of those who could be possibilities from your congregation to fill the aforementioned needs. I would also welcome your suggestions of names from a neighboring church of a different constituency that you could recommend

Some additional suggestions:

- In your next ordination, instead of ordaining only one brother for the local church, ordain one for the church and one for the mission field.
- If your church is not able to start an outreach and your benches are filling up, send a family or two to the mission field.
- Present the need for workers to your congregation on a regular basis asking for prayer for these needs and their consideration to make themselves available.
- Invite former missionaries, board members, and other involved individuals to come and share with your church about what God is doing in other countries.

Sincerely,
Mark Webb
markwebb902@gmail.com



Babies for Heaven (Part 2)

Naomi Yoder, Leesburg, IN



(In last month's column Naomi shared their journey with grief as she related the account of multiple baby losses and the devastating grief and loss. This month she concludes with steps toward healing and tangible ways for others to accompany those who walk in grief.)

Yes, songs and Scripture were our lifeline. I still get teary sometimes when I sing "My Jesus, I Love Thee." My husband, Aaron, found comfort in the song "I Shall Come Forth as Gold." A book we recommend today is John Coblenz's *Journey into God*. Meditating on the sovereignty and righteousness of God is so healing! God will never allow anything that cannot be used for good. While He absorbs my stormy rant, He lovingly holds me close till the anger and sobs are spent. He's faithfully there in the next hour or tomorrow when it happens again.

The fact that God is good does not mean He will shield me from hard things. He does not scold me for honest questions but calls me to trust and faith when I do

not understand. I see the here and now; God has eternity in mind. The important thing is not to stay in the questions and doubt but to hang onto God's hand and let Him carry you through. Remember that God can handle those questions; they don't anger Him and He doesn't mind your asking. He longs to hear your heart, and He will not strike you down for your humanity.

How can I best work through heart-break? I'll share several things we learned. Our personal journey involved infant loss but these truths relate to other grief as well. This list is not exhaustive and there may be other ways that will bring more comfort to you.

1) Find your help and security in God. Grief stripped me of all my own supports and God was the

security I could trust. We don't get to choose our suffering, yet Jesus walks with us. While we would never ask to walk that way again, it is in the dark times when we find God most precious and His light brightest. Find your hope in Scripture, especially the Psalms. Find *lifesaver* verses for yourself and post them around your kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and on your vehicle's sun visor. God is your strength.

2) Pray. Especially pray for spiritual protection. The enemy is real. The Holy Spirit is the Great Comforter. Let Him speak to your heart as you spend time with Him. You have more time for Bible-reading and prayer during this time of emptiness.

3) Most certainly, God is the ultimate Friend but there are times when we need someone *with skin on*. Besides your husband, I wish for you a friend who will allow you to share your heart and hurt. We need our girlfriends. I had a friend with whom I could share my gut feelings, and sometimes I scraped bottom. You need not struggle alone. Find someone you trust - someone you can share and pray with, who will listen to you even when you don't make sense. Someone who can help bring your focus back to our loving Father. Grieving is hard work; we need the help of others.

4) Remember that you and your husband may grieve differently. He may not appear to be feeling any pain, yet he does. We found that often when I was down, he was up, and vice versa. Many times when I thought he wasn't feeling sad I'd discover that his heart was broken but he hid it from me because of how much I was struggling. Be there for him; he needs you.

5) Instead of asking "Why am I missing out?" ask: "Why have I been protected and taught structure and guidelines?" I might have been one of the unwed teen mothers. "Why do I have a godly husband? Why do I have a loving support group in my family and church? Why do I have a hopeful future? Why am I so blessed?"

6) Wanting and waiting can be so difficult. It can seem like everyone else either has a baby bump or holds a little one. Attending baby showers is hard. We may be consumed with wondering *if* and *when* it will ever be our turn. Will we ever be a little one's favorite? Will we ever hear the lisp of "mama and daddy"? Even while grieving, try to enter your expectant friend's world. No one enjoys a sour-spirited person and it's not your friend's fault that she has a gift and you don't.

7) It helps to invest in others. Hard as it may be, take the opportunity to

help your friend with her little ones. When I did, it took my mind off my struggles and filled in some of that “baby fix” I craved. True, reality always hit, but I was still comforted in knowing I had ministered to my friend. It reminded me to enjoy the many blessings I had.

8) Remember that even though your friends may make remarks that feel uncaring or insensitive, they do not mean to hurt you. Realize that your heart and emotions are super-sensitive and what you heard wasn't meant to inflict pain, but rather to help. Your friends may not know how to verbalize well how much they care. When I visit a grieving person, I pray specifically that God would take my words and filter them through His love so that my friend hears only words that minister to her heart. And I've prayed for God to anoint my ears in that way too when someone comes to comfort me. You also may not be the most pleasant company while you're grieving. Imagine how it would be if no one came to see you!

9) Give yourself time to heal. Be aware that memories can pop up unexpectedly. I was not prepared for the grief and tears the day that Katrina's peers were baptized. Don't run from the grief but process it in a healthy godly way.

10) Thank the Lord for healing!

I remember well the day I realized that our baby's death was not the first thing I thought of in the morning. I was delighted! We wouldn't be able to move on if healing didn't take place.

11) Reach out to others who are grieving. God uses our trials to teach us how to minister. He has opened a ministry to you; use it. We know how much it means to hear from someone who has experienced loss and *survived*. We are called to comfort with the comfort we've received. Send letters or cards, even if you've never met. Assure them of your prayers. What you share will minister in a way made possible only by your own journey with grief.

12) Remember that you have heaven and a reunion to look forward to! This separation isn't forever. It was special to our children to talk about their siblings waiting for them in heaven. We have a little bit of heaven in our home because a little bit of our home is in heaven.

For friends of the grieving:

1) Pray, and assure your friend of your prayers. Pray with her. You can pray with her on the phone if you're not together; that is so soothing. Text her your heartfelt prayer. Share your *lifesaver* verses. Do it again the next day. And the next. And the next. And the next month.

2) Working through grief is hard

and it can be awkward and scary to stand with your friend through such a difficult time. But be there! When the Holy Spirit gives you an idea, act on it. Make the contact. Send a card. Take her flowers or a meal. Be ready to help with food, childcare, cleaning. Check to see if your friend needs/wants company, and dare to be persistent. Give her your time; grief is lonely. After our first loss, my friend offered to come help me with weekly cleaning just so she could be with me.

3) Life goes on for the rest of the world but it can feel like it has stopped for your friend. Don't forget her. She will have lots of plans and dreams to re-route. It'll mean so much to her to know that she is not forgotten and that friends are aware of special dates and occasions. After

our first loss, a friend brought me a baby gift on my due date. We also received cards on the anniversaries of our babies' deaths. Even now, thirty years later, we have friends who will kindly mention Katrina's birthday when they mention mine. Talk about the baby and let her talk if she cares to. Share a book on grief and grieving.

All in all, stay focused on God. He will not let us down even when we question His goodness. I picture Him holding us gently, crying with us and tenderly caring for us. We don't know His plan but we can trust His heart. We know He is good. He is good all the time. We must believe that.

Bottom line—you will discover that God is enough. He really is ENOUGH.



*Life is like a mirror—
FROWN AT IT AND
it frowns back at you;
Smile and
it returns the greeting.*

Paper for the Secret Press

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

In the days when the Communists were ruling the Soviet Union, brave Christians would operate secret printing presses. They knew the churches needed Bibles, song books, and other Christian literature. Quietly, in secret places, in attics, in cellars, in rooms without windows and doors they would run the printing presses.

It was dangerous. Printing Christian literature could place them in prison where they could be tortured and even die, for doing this work for the Lord.

One day Pavel, who operated a secret printing press, needed paper. It was hard to find all the paper he wanted to print his church papers. He was told the only place to get paper was at a store who sold paper solely to the Communist party. He prayed, "God, please supply paper. This is your work Lord, you know I need paper."

This courageous man placed a phone call to the store that was only for the Communist party. When a man answered the phone Pavel politely said, "I would like to place an order for paper."

"Who are you?" The clerk responded.

The words just came to Pavel's lips, "I am your neighbor."

"Sure, come and get the paper you want." Pavel was told. He was amazed. God was certainly answering his prayer.

Later he learned that "your neighbor" was code words for the KGB. His heart welled up with thanksgiving to God who had given him the right words at just the right time.

God has amazing ways to provide for His children. Talk to Him today. Thank Him for all the blessings He has given you. Thank Him that you so freely have the Bible, songbooks and other Christian literature.

There is work to do for God wherever we live. You are not printing papers for Jesus. But, you can open your mouth and speak for the Lord. You can get Gospel tracts and hand them out when you travel or when you shop.

The world needs to hear about Jesus. No matter your age, there is something you can do.

Talk to God. Ask Him to show you how to be a witness. Pray for courage to share the Word of God.



Wanted: Honest People

Gideon Yutzy, County Waterford, Ireland

Sam is a father of six. His children don't know this, but he views pornography on his phone.

Sometimes Sam thinks about getting rid of his phone. No, it wouldn't solve all his problems, but it would be a major step in the right direction. He was porn free before getting a smartphone, after all.

In the end, though, Sam always reasons himself out of exchanging his smartphone for a dumbphone.¹ He uses it for business—never mind that he could easily retire today. He'll learn to master it—never mind that even secular researchers have concluded it to be part of the most invasive, manipulative technology ever.

At family gatherings, Sam plays with the grandchildren. Everyone thinks he's a solid dad and grandfather. But not Sam. He knows he's not solid. He views things online that, if projected onto the living room wall, would cause his descendants gathered around him to feel revulsion.

¹ Surely the ultimate misnomer. Getting a dumbphone a year ago was one of the smartest things I ever did.

We are all allowed grace, someone may say. None of us is perfect. We don't want to be guilty of muckraking, of castigating Sam beyond what's appropriate. But would it make any difference to know that Sam has been viewing pornography for five years? He has had plenty of chances to open his mouth and tell someone, even just one person, that he has a problem. He has free will. He's not a victim of his chemistry.

And Sam is glad for that. In most areas of life, he likes being a free moral agent. But in this area he has utterly failed in exercising his ability to choose. Things could be different. He could tell someone. But he won't.

Sam is a hypocrite.

Jane is a mom who writes books on raising children. Her books have sold well—well enough that Jane gets asked to speak at ladies' conferences and on podcasts. Her material really makes sense, and it connects well. It's lucid, witty, and sprinkled with clever anecdotes and illustrations.

But the reality in Jane's home is different from the reality portrayed in her books and talks. At home,

she neglects her children, spending that time scrolling through terabytes of virtual data. How many likes did her latest post get? Has anyone responded to her quip on Twitter?

We are all allowed grace, someone may say. Let's not put people on guilt trips by bringing up Gothic, sensational examples. But would it make any difference to know that Jane's oldest daughter cries herself to sleep sometimes? That she hasn't felt a deep connection with her mom in the past year or anytime in her memory, really?

Jane knows what she should do, perhaps better than anyone else. But instead of being, and becoming, a mom of character, she wallows deeper in her hidden vices. Like Sam she is a free moral agent who could change. But year after year, she doesn't. She too is a hypocrite.

Hypocrisy must be dealt with

The above examples are fictitious. They would have to be, if you think about it—if it's ongoing hypocrisy, how would I know about it?

In fact, I don't feel entirely confident that the examples are real to life. Sam could easily be real, I think. But whether or not Sam and Jane exist, my larger point is undeniable: in some form or another, we have hypocrites among us. I know this because I've seen hypocrisy in those around me.

I know this because I myself have

gotten caught in hypocrisy.

"Character is who you are when no one is watching," was one of the (many) pithy sayings my parents raised me and my seven siblings on. It was the kind of saying that, growing up, I assumed was in the Bible.

It may as well be. It's difficult to read the Gospels even for five minutes and not find Jesus talking about the importance of becoming people of character, about changing on the inside, about being free of hypocrisy.

And this is certainly in the Bible: "*There shall in no wise enter into it [God's New Jerusalem] anything that . . . maketh a lie*" (Revelation 21: 27, KJV). As is this: "*Wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the motives of hearts*" (1 Corinthians 4:5, NET).

I am not trying to be sensational. I am not trying to scaremonger. But hypocrisy is one of the most prevailing of our fallen tendencies, and it's time we address it. Let it be done in the proper way and in the proper setting, yes. Let it begin in the one place where our influence is assured, our own hearts. But above all, let it happen. Now.

Hypocrisy takes many forms

The oft-repeated saying of my parents hinted at one of our most common problems: what others see in public is not what is happening

in private. Always, no matter what form hypocrisy takes, this is the underlying problem. Consider the following examples.

Gossiping about fellow church members during the week, and then greeting them with a holy kiss in church as if nothing were amiss.

Delivering pious sermons wearing the plainest of suits and using the oldest of all English Bible versions, but being a cruel, distant tyrant at home.

Being altruistic when there are high-profile, highly public donation opportunities, but a slumlord and obsessed with money in everyday life.

Speaking civilly to almost everyone except those who need our civility the most: our family at home.

Hiding our doubts and questions about God when mature, capable Christians would gladly give us input.

Praying sonorous, well-crafted prayers in public even while our closet prayer is, for all practical purposes, nonexistent.

The antidote to hypocrisy


Often we choose one of two: cover up our sin and try to get on with life as best as we can, or openly and unapologetically indulge in our sin. But neither of these extremes is a good course of action. Exposing our darkness so that we can experience light, finding healing for what is sick, making public what is private—this is what Jesus calls us to.

We have been discussing hypocrites. Consider for a moment now the non-hypocrites, the authentic ones, the person least likely to be hiding something.

I am not a wizard, but I can confidently predict certain attributes about the person who comes to your mind; first, an open countenance that is not afraid to make eye contact; second, an all-consuming desire to be transformed despite any lingering rough edges (rough edges he or she freely acknowledges); third, an engagement with God, people, and the mysteries of life that is unmistakably higher than competing engagements.

Identifying an authentic Christian is easy; becoming one is quite another matter. But according to Peter, we are without excuse: *“His divine power has bestowed on us **everything necessary** for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us”* (2 Peter 1:3, NET, emphasis added).

It is a calling we must embrace—both in private and in public. As even a five-minute reading of Jesus’ words makes clear, anything less is spiritual suicide.

Writers for Thinking Generation wish above all to generate involvement in God’s Kingdom—especially among today’s generation of thoughtful young Anabaptists. Address correspondence  gideoniyutzy@gmail.com.

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Both sugar and vinegar are preservatives, so life might seem to be a choice of whether you want to be in a pickle or in a jam.

• • • • •

Compassion offers what is needed to heal the hurts of others.

• • • • •

Depending on what comes to visit, campers may end up with “tents” nerves.

• • • • •

Why do shipments go by car and cargo by ship?

• • • • •

It's easier to prevent bad habits than to break them.

• • • • •

Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

• • • • •

We should not expect to antagonize and persuade at the same time.

• • • • •

To do nothing is tiresome because we cannot stop to take a rest.

• • • • •

Action: The true test of ability.

• • • • •

Our life is God's gift to us; what we do with life, is our gift to God.

• • • • •

Love does not keep a list of the failures of others.

• • • • •

Those who deserve love least, need it most.

• • • • •

Many marriage problems are caused by the marriage of two people in love with themselves.