



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 2020

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Calvary Messenger

June 2020

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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I Do Not Walk Alone

Sasha Krause (1992-2020)

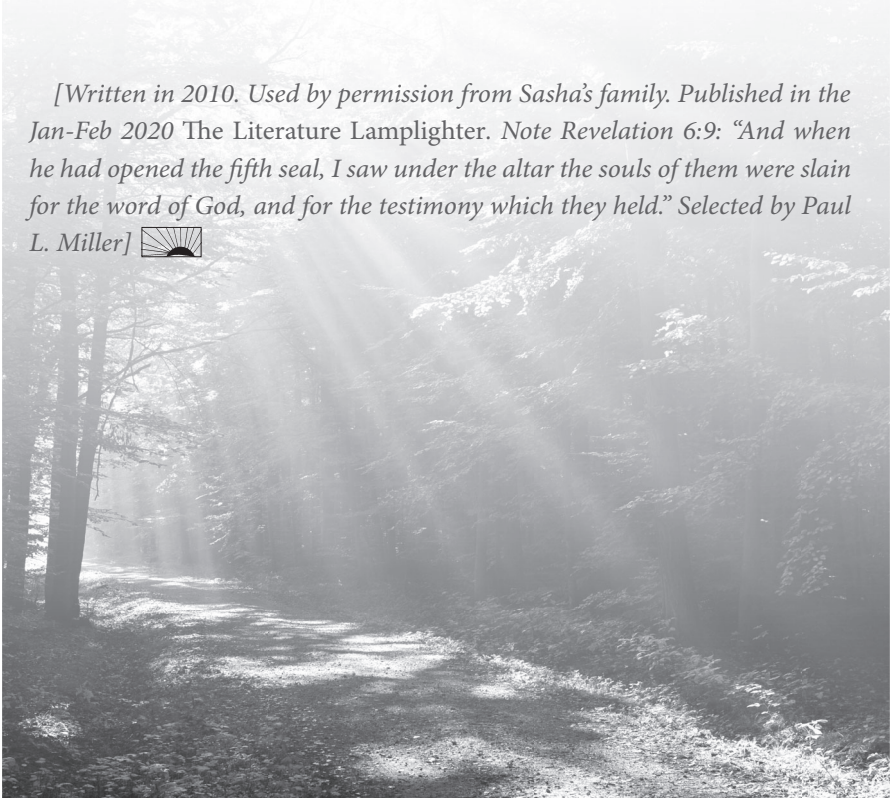
I joyful take the upward way,
And press on to that glorious day,
Yet loneliness asserts its sway,
O, must I walk alone?

In quietness God's voice I hear,
"Art thou alone while I am near?
O, foolish child, shake off thy fear!"
I do not walk alone.

How rough and dangerous my street!
I'd love to run on nimble feet,
But snares are laid with such deceit,
I cannot walk alone!

When stress and fear shall take their toll,
When cruel tyrants grasp my soul,
When death and all its horrors roll,
I shall not walk alone!

[Written in 2010. Used by permission from Sasha's family. Published in the Jan-Feb 2020 The Literature Lamplighter. Note Revelation 6:9: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." Selected by Paul L. Miller]



Under the Circumstances

“And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm” (Matthew 8:26).

A common question we hear currently is “How are you doing these days, in this situation, during these trying times, or *under the circumstances*.” Indeed, when times are abnormal, we wonder how other people are coping with the variation. If we answer, “I’m doing as well as can be expected *under the circumstances*,” a friend of mine would say, “What are you doing down there *under the circumstances*?”

That begs the question, “How do we respond when life brings us difficult situations?” How are you doing during these unusual *circumstances* that we are going through?

While there are many quotes that tell us that we can achieve anything in life if we set our mind to it, that is not really the case. There are many things that are impossible to do. I cannot jump off the ground, wave my arms, and soar like a bird. I cannot decide that I will grow to be eight feet tall.

When Jesus challenged us to trust our heavenly Father, He said, “*Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*” (Matthew 6:27). So, what should we do if we are faced with seemingly impossible *circumstances*? Do we just give up and do nothing? Do we just sit down and die?

We find many examples of responses to difficult *circumstances* in the Bible. Many times, they came through no fault of the person experiencing them. Sometimes, however, they came because of mistakes that the person had made in his life. Let’s explore and learn from some of these examples.

Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, faced exceedingly difficult *circumstances*. Regardless if he could have done things to decrease the jealousy of his brethren, most of the things he faced were not because of his own fault. After encountering

the hatred of his brothers and the resulting slavery in Egypt, he refused to go down *under the circumstances*. He was faithful to his master, Potiphar, and encountered even more difficult *circumstances*. He continued in faithfulness to his captors and to His God. While God gave him great insights into the future, it seems unlikely that he saw the outcome when he was thrown into the empty pit. He was a man with normal emotions as we can see at various times when he broke down and wept at his brothers' actions. His secret must have been his confidence in God. *"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"* (Genesis 50:19-20). His faithful service to God and others carried him through his whole life.

Joshua was a faithful man of God who followed the voice of God throughout his life. After the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River, they had a great victory over Jericho. But as they continued in battles, there was the great failure with the relatively small city of Ai. Joshua was smitten. He fell on his face and chided God, expecting that the

Israelites' name would be cut off from the earth and wondering what would happen to God's great name? He was definitely way down there *under the circumstances*.

God challenged him with these important words, *"Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff"* (Joshua 7:10b-11). Joshua followed the word of the Lord the next morning and took care of the sin in the camp. He continued to follow the word of the Lord in Joshua 8:1, *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land,"* and the outcome was victorious.

David faced many challenges in his life. As a young shepherd, he trusted God when he faced literal lions and bears. The same trust gave him confidence when he challenged Goliath and won the battle for the Lord. After being anointed by the prophet Samuel, he faithfully waited until God established him as king. He

refused to kill the current king even though he had various opportunities and encouragement to do so.

Now, David often found himself *under the circumstances*. Unlike Joseph, who found himself in a pit and trusted God, David often burrowed deeper. The Psalms are full of writings of discouragement and despair, beseeching God to destroy his enemies. Yet even when his writings begin at the bottom of the pit, *under the circumstances*, he always ends in victory and praise. Even when David faced *circumstances* that were results of his own faults and sins, he turned to God in repentance and praise. “*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*” (Psalm 139:23).

We could talk about Daniel and his three companions. Indeed, they were faced with terrible *circumstances*, but they trusted God despite the unsure outcome of a fiery furnace or a den of lions.

The New Testament gives us more examples. We see Paul and Silas in jail after being beaten with many stripes. They refused to dig deeper *under the circumstances* but prayed and sang praises to God in the middle of the night. The resulting freedom was not

only physical, but spiritual as well, for the jailer and his household.

We note the difference between the outcome of Judas and Peter who both rejected their Master. Peter found forgiveness and victory in true repentance and led the church of the new covenant.

The whole world has faced unusual *circumstances* with the COVID-19 pandemic. There have been varied responses to these challenges. We don't always know the outcome to life's challenges and definitely don't at the present time. But, as in solving algebraic equations, while it seems there is not enough information at hand to solve the problem, there is always a next step that we can do. As we take each step we arrive at the solution. What is the next step that is obvious to us in these *circumstances*? We can always find one obvious thing to do, and God will lead us on to an outcome that brings glory to His Name!

“*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*” (Matthew 6:33-34).

–AY 

Single Ladies Seminar

August 7-9, 2020

T.H.R.I.V.E.

The Will of God—Sharon Bange, Narvon, PA

Handling Finances—Karla Good, Logan, OH

Relating to the Church—Amy Byler, Seymour, MO

Indignities with Dignity—Kelly Kauffman, Thomaston, GA

Victorious Amidst Desires—Vicki Kauffman, Thomaston, GA

Excellent in Spirit—Naomi Diller, Summersville, KY

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the bottom line

Being Neutral is Not New

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Lesal came upon a new idea the other day since he was bothered by the responsibility/accountability syndrome. He decided there is a slick way to avoid its web; he

would just be neutral. After all, it was deciding one way or the other that time after time got him into trouble.

Lesal was a farm worker and was very capable with today's

tractors, combines, and all kinds of equipment. Several hours later, his employer called Lesal to ask why he wasn't out in the back-forty preparing land for planting soybeans. Lesal told him about his newfound faith and taking the gearshift out of neutral and putting it in gear would be hypocritical for him. Lesal had the tractor engine running for several hours now and would sit there and run it wide open occasionally.

Sunday came, and Lesal was invited to a friend's house for dinner. Salad was the first dish that was passed, but he took none. They asked him if he doesn't like salad, and he replied that, in fact, he loves it. He then explained his newfound faith about being neutral. He didn't take any food at the table that day because he was neutral.

Being neutral in response to the Word of God is seen by some to be a safe, no risk, and guilt-free way to live. In a living room conversation, someone asked Lesal what he thinks about the coronavirus flap this past spring. He said he has no opinion because he is neutral now. They asked him what he thinks about the future. He responded by saying he thinks it will pan out alright, and that even the late Billy Graham said he read the whole book of Revelation and found that there is nothing to worry about.

Then someone pointed out to Lesal

that believing everything will pan out alright is, after all, having an opinion. And that not eating salad was also a decision he made, despite claiming it helps him to be neutral. Someone else told him that even atheists, who claim they do not believe there is a God, are really professing a faith of their own, based on themselves. Their claim of a non-faith breaks open a faith of sorts, as a faith of its own kind.

Someone should have told Lesal what Jesus had said. The Pharisees were against Christ and were at risk of blaspheming the Holy Spirit by their accusations. Then Jesus said, *"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad"* (Matthew 12:30). The thrust of the reply by Jesus was that their seeming neutrality was a sure indication that they were against Him.

Webster says being neutral is not taking a position either for or against an issue; "it is indefinite, indifferent, and middling." The dictionary goes on to say that in electricity, being neutral is being "neither negative nor positive, it is uncharged." We ministers would say it is like preaching without passion. Webster also says it is like "not getting anywhere because it is not put in gear."


One day, Pilate had before him the privilege of a lifetime and the opportunity of peace for an eternity. Pilate was both a ruler and a judge which is never a good combination. But he loved his position, he loved the power, and the honor that went with it, until that crisis-day when he needed to decide what to do with Jesus. He, in his heart, did not follow the advice of his wife, or the clamor of the Jewish rulers. He chose to be neutral, whereupon he washed his hands in a basin of water, and claimed innocence. His non-decision was nonetheless a personal decision of his own, and it was a decision against Jesus. His claimed neutral position put him on the side of being against Christ.

The principle of nothingness in the pre-creation era was overcome by our Creator-God in that He created everything out of nothing, for the pre-existence condition was said to be without form and void, without substance, essence, or matter. Into this nothingness God created the something of all things in great multitude. It is hard to describe nothing, because nothing does not exist, and because being neutral is a declaration of being against whatever is in focus.

God calls on all people to declare their position and personal decision about being saved from sin. Our holy

Lord God cannot be separated from His revealed Word. One cannot be pro-God and anti-Bible, even as one cannot claim to be on the narrow way to life and yet walk and live on the broad road to destruction.

Our witness to our children and young people is affected by the positions we take and the decisions we make. They soon will be an extension of our witness to the world, and in some respects are that already, and help carry on the work of the church. An adult claim of being neutral toward any part or doctrine of the Word of God is counter-productive to godliness. Worldly churches seem to do this in not a few instances, and we are not exempt from doing a bit of that ourselves.

The Bottom Line is that we can neither be neutral toward God, nor His Word. Some people might claim to be or attempt to be neutral in some way. The creation of God has done away with the pre-creation condition of nothingness. Trying to be neutral is not new. Children, and even some adults, have made claims of being too weak to do what was right, or claimed to be too ignorant of certain facts, as a way to claim being neutral. Therefore, they claim to not be personally responsible. We should learn as we can and do what we ought as true disciples of Christ. 

Dear Dad

Frank Reed, Manheim, PA

Dear Dad,
Where are you? For many years now, I have taught your daughters and sons. It has been an amazing experience. I would not have missed it for anything. What I want to tell you is what you have missed.

You have been so busy, and it is understandable that your time has been precious with all the things you have needed to be and do: braces for teeth, shoes for little feet, food for the table, clothes, and rent. Business to sustain all of that took enormous amounts of your energy.

But in too many cases you have missed some things that you could not afford to miss. Your children have also missed some things. All too often, they have missed you.

Because you were so busy providing, your wife had to pick up the slack at home and be Mom and Dad to your family. She over-extended herself to keep the family together, keep peace at home, and keep the home fires burning while you were busy working and being a good provider. Sometimes Mom had to be tough and strong because you were not there for her either. Sometimes her control conditioned

your children to fall prey to more control.

During this time, I have listened to the hearts of your children and their concerns in life: church issues, moral temptations, depression, loneliness, and so many other things. I have listened to hearts that were yours to listen to. I have cried tears that were yours to cry. I have felt rejection that was yours to feel. I have received hugs that were yours to receive. I have opened my heart to the hearts of your children. When they needed to lash out, I took the displaced lashing that was yours. When they needed to express affection, I accepted their displaced affection that belonged to you. They wrote notes to me thanking me for taking time for them. Those notes were yours, not mine.

My task was to listen and then try to turn the hearts of your children back to you. That is nearly impossible when you have not turned your heart to them first. I know that you care, but so many times they do not feel your care, and so often you do not feel your need to care.

My attempts to turn their hearts back to you were often met with their anger or disappointment. They took those attempts as abandonment.

It was painful for them because so many times they felt abandoned by you, and then, when it was time to turn their hearts to you, they felt abandoned by me and lashed out at me. I willingly took those rejections. They were/are not my children, but I endured their rejection in hopes that that would encourage them to run back to you. I was there when you were not, so they had a safe place until your hearts could knit together.

Where were you when they cried themselves to sleep at night? You provided an impressive house with a beautiful room and lots of nice clothes and fun things to enjoy, but they needed you. Where were you? Did it occur to you that maybe you should kneel beside their bed, tuck them in, and pray for them after listening to the joys and pains of their hearts?

Your children are such amazing people. They love you and I know that you love them, but where were you? That love was often displaced. It should not have been displaced. It was yours.

I know you have your own hurts and pain, but can you set that aside and find room for their young lives in your heart and not pass on your problems to their generation?

Some of them are deeply wounded, and not every person they encounter is safe. Some of them are turning to unsafe people, places, and practices. It

is sad to see but sadder to experience. Sometimes they panic. Sometimes they run—feeling like they have no place anywhere in life.

Some of them clam up and refuse to open their hearts to anyone. Some of them tell their story so many places to so many people. Some of them feel like they were an inconvenience all of their lives. How could that happen? How can they rise above that? I have inconvenienced myself for them so that they could see that they have value.

You wonder why they listen to the music they do? Sometimes they find their value in hearing words like, “You are a treasure” and “You matter.” That value should be coming from you, so they do not have to seek it from other sources.

Dad, they need you. Where are you?

To all the committed and engaged dads out there, God bless you! You are raising a generation of children prepared to face life.

To all the young dads just getting started, God bless you! The wonder of fathering is awaiting you. Bless your children, no matter the cost.

From Malachi 4:5-6, God sends prophets to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest God come and smite the earth with a curse.

*[From Biblical Brethren Fellowship,
November 26, 2019]*



Morning Comes

Anita Yoder, *Guys Mills, PA*

I was teaching English in Poland in 2013, the year my health spiraled down and down, and I needed major surgery. That year was a saga in itself, and not one to tell here except to say that God and His people took care of me in ways that still choke me up.

The day of the surgery, December 4, was easily the worst day of my life. They'd planned for the surgery to be one hour, but it lasted three hours, and my body went into shock in the recovery room where I stopped breathing twice. I was so annoyed at the nurse who shook my shoulder roughly each time and said, "Breathe, breathe!" because I'd finally been comfortable and resting, and it took too much effort to breathe.

Later, they trundled me into the room closest to the nurses' station so they could keep a close eye on me, and they clunked a brick of ice onto my stomach, over the incision, and I was out of my mind with pain and freezing cold and anesthesia. Lolita hovered above me and asked what I wanted, and I said, "Music." She found a few choral hymns that I always loved, but when she turned them on, they were terrible. Tinny and chintzy and awful. I forgot about music in the long, terrible evening as

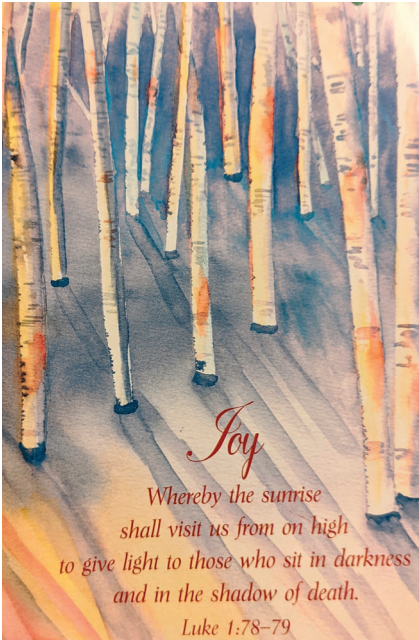
the nurses and doctor tried to get me warm and the pain under control.

My sister came too, with chocolate, and called my family several times to keep them updated. Before she left, she helped me think about what I'd need for the night and put the stuff in a little tray within arm's reach. I was confused, and didn't know what I needed, but she was patient. Tiny water vials. Lemon swabs. Call button. MP3 player and earbuds.

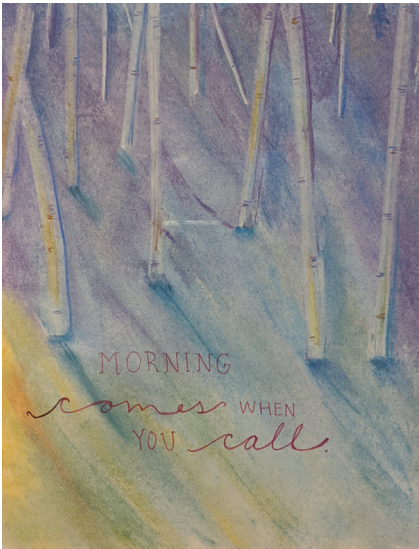
The next morning, I already felt better. Still lots of pain and achy and awful, but better, and the sun was shining, and it was snowing! I found "Morning Comes When You Call" on my player and listened to it with one earbud on the quietest setting because two earbuds made it too loud. It was exactly right.

In the next days, the cloud of pain and anesthesia cleared and the only music that connected with me was that one song and an album by Voices of Praise. I forget the title of that album, but I especially loved "I'm in His Care—Oh", and I always skipped "America the Beautiful."

Two years later, I saw this picture in a little booklet, and I knew what to do with the latent memories of that worst day of my life. On a wintry Sunday evening, I took my chalk



pastels and card stock to a well-lit table, and made this:



My favorite feature is the yellow of the sunshine edging into the scene and bouncing off some trees. I asked a friend to do the lettering because I

wasn't confident enough to do that, and she said it was an honor.

The picture shows the crisp, snowy sunlight the day Ria came to see me in the hospital. She didn't want to hurt me, so she hugged me gingerly, after walking in from the bus, and her black wool coat was still cold with drops of melted snowflakes.

The picture shows the contrast of light and shadow, the night and morning, the clouds and stunning light I experienced in that terrible, wonderful week. The day after the surgery, the surgeon checked in on me, and as she left, she said, "You were a very sick girl. Now work on getting better!"

I didn't get all better that day. Recovery took a long time, and mild PTSD has stayed with me, but it's improving. I don't have enough words to say how wondrous the ongoing gift of healing has been.

To be accurate to my experience, the shadows in the picture should be darker; the night more visible on the horizon. But I like that that's how it is with healed memory—it mostly sifts out the terrible, and the predominant memory, arching over everything, is light and joy and deep peace.

[Used with permission. This is a reprint from a blog post on January 25, 2020 at [http://lifeisforlivingbook.com/2020%125/morning-comes/.](http://lifeisforlivingbook.com/2020%125/morning-comes/)]



Epiphany of Manhood

Peter Kauffman, Burkesville, KY

I was a lad once, and enjoyed it thoroughly. But as the arbitrary brute of time would have it, I grew up, and was apprised of the world at large in its complexity. Ignorance is bliss, they say, and it is, or perhaps it was. The large world that once beckoned to be changed now held a small town that was too big.

As lads we grow to come to this estuary where the river of youth flows into the formidable seas of future. This wide sea with its endless horizon, the pitching waves, and changing tides, now does not beckon but demands our energies. We find ourselves captain of this insubstantial craft of eternal value, and it is scary. But unless we turn out to this sea that defines us and take it on, we'll never discover the new land of gold.

It comes by the law of progressing knowledge—always learning and never forgetting, never less responsible, thus to the demise of ignorance—and one day we realize we can no longer descry shapes into the clouds for imagination's sake. There are too many superior thoughts meritorious of space in

the brain. The time to be a man has arrived and the pure ignorance and carefreeness of boyhood will not be reality again.

In this place, life is serious. Actions have consequences. While humor is healthy, flippancy is the father of failure. Becoming a man involves work, and venerable purpose makes men out of boys by its very presence. We forget, only to discover, that the inherent desires of a soul work to the abdication of innocence. To appeal to adventure is to subscribe to homesickness, to desire friends is to request heartbreak, to open business is to get frustration, and in a quest for love we clamor for responsibility. Didn't Jesus ask us to consider the cost? It is but the ramification of responsibility, the trade-off of the quest of our dreams.

Dreams, dreams. It usually takes several years to recognize we have what we wanted. Why must glory be so dismal? The problem lies in utopian preconceptions of the future that when achieved are seldom recognized for the reality. Like Alexander the Great—who reportedly sat down for a good cry


when there was no more known world left to conquer—we go around and around, always conquering and never inhabiting, never realizing that our hunger for the quest is sated and leaves us wondering about the end. All reality destroys ideals.

If reality inside our goals is gritty, then it is but a choice. The present is the fulcrum upon which yesterday and tomorrow pivot, and the moment demands a responsibility we choose to thwart or accept. If we want to leave a legacy of love behind, we know of a higher cause, not to merely accept this austere reality, but to embrace it without querulousness as a result of responsibility. It is unsettling to be a green colt forced into useful labor, but a green colt is only a liability and of little use.

So what should we do? Are we forever to pine away in the harness, losing our youthful humor in the process? Will you become nostalgic and page through the sunlit photo albums or will you look into the foggy future and place your foot into the mud in faith? What if sacrifice, abandon of self, faith, work, and tears were the key to the best life?

Contrary to first glance, a life of

self-abandon produces its version of enjoyment, like a runner's high. This occurs when endorphins in the brain literally block pain, giving free reign to dopamine—a pleasure inducing chemical—allowing the runner to enjoy a moment of euphoria. This transient high can be addicting. By sacrifice for others on our parts, we experience pain, but it is a non-factor for the enjoyment that it causes. This is what it means to be a man—to give sacrificially, and then allow the small benefit of someone else's gain to be your reward. The pains of service are non-factors because of the transcendent results of work, and the rewards can be addicting.

Boyhood may be wonderful but far from sustainable, and by abandoning comfort for a cause, we discover fulfillment. Maturity is a different stage of life, complete with different desires, responsibilities, and joys. The rewards of a true man's work is a life of virtue, of fulfillment found outside himself. It is far more than personal enjoyment, acquired in unselfishness, and ultimately observed in others. It stands to reason, that the more there is to lose, the more there is to gain. 

FEAR MAKES MAN BELIEVE THE WORST.


marriages

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

Kauffman-Miller

Bro. Jeremy, son of Joseph and Ruth Kauffman, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Carolyn, daughter of Tim and Vivian Miller, McKenney, VA, on December 14, 2019, at RZUA Conference Center, La Crosse, VA, for McKenney Mennonite Church by Tim Miller.

Mast-Burns

Bro. Jordan, son of Jay and Sarah Mast, Goodspring, TN, and Sis. Alisa, daughter of Scott and Sharon Burns, Laclede, MO, on April 3, 2020, at the Burns residence for Locust Creek Amish Mennonite Church by Titus Hostetler. 

cradle roll

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

Beiler, Marcus and Joanna (Kurtz), Paradise, PA, seventh child, fifth son, Hudson Emmanuel, April 9, 2020.

Bontrager, Anthony and Jessica (Byers), Earlysville, VA, third child, second daughter, Skylar Jade, April 13, 2020.

Bowser, Justin and Clarisa (Musser), Harrison, AR, sixth child, fourth daughter, Crystal Hope, April 25, 2020.

Coulter, Jason and Katrina (Peight), Honey Grove, PA, first child and daughter, Jael Zipporah, April 6, 2020.

Eash, Donnie and Marlene (Wengerd), Vanleer, TN, fifth child, second daughter, Alexa Brielle, March 19, 2020.

Hershberger, Nevin and Veronica (Hochstetler), LaGrange, IN, first child and son, Hudson Rainn, March 30, 2020.

Lantz, Keith and Cheryl (Stoltzfus), Honeybrook, PA, first child and daughter, Ellianna Gracelyn, April 30, 2020.

Mast, Lyle and Donna (Bechtel), Concord, AR, third child, first daughter, Isabella Ruth, April 30, 2020.

Miller, Brandon and Yvette (Otto), LaGrange, IN, seventh child, fourth son, Josiah Cyril, April 7, 2020.

Overholt, Josiah and Hannah (King), Charlotte, TN, first child and daughter, Hadassah Joy, January 4, 2020.

Schrock, Galen and Carrie (Herschberger), Tuscola, IL, first child and son, Colson Grant, March 21, 2020.

Swartzentruber, Wendell and Mary (Beachy), Montezuma, GA, sixth child, fifth daughter, Lillyana Faith, March 16, 2020.


Wengerd, Chris and Sharla (Peachey), Greensburg, KY, second child and daughter, Stacy Harper, March 18, 2020.

Yoder, David and Audrey (Overholt), Montezuma, GA, fourth child, third daughter, Katriona Bree, February 29, 2020.

Yoder, Derek and LaNita (Wingard), Montezuma, GA, first child and son, Dawson Lane, March 24, 2020.

Yoder, Mark and Ellen (Helmuth), Cumberland Furnace, TN, third child (one deceased), first daughter, Chloe Elena, March 6, 2020.

Yoder, Ray and Rosa (Yoder), Advance, MO, third child, second son, Tristan Jon, December 27, 2019.

Yoder, Titus and Mary (Miller), Fredericksburg, OH, first child and son, Grant Titus, born January 27, 2020. Received for adoption February 1, 2020. 

o b i t u a r i e s

Herschberger, Dennis L., 31, died in a truck accident on February 27, 2020, at Kokomo, IN. He was born to Lloyd and Darlene (Miller) Herschberger on May 17, 1988.

He was a member of Bethany Fellowship Church and worked as a foreman at Premier Pallet Shop.

On September 4, 2009, he married Susie Mae Herschberger, and she survives. Other survivors are his children: Esther Darlene, Steven Dennis, Keturah Kay, David Michael; his parents, siblings: Eldon, Mervin, and Lovina (Quentin) Miller, Montezuma, GA; grandmother, Viola Miller, and one niece.

He was preceded in death by grandparents: Alvin S. Miller, and Andy and Rosa Herschberger.

The funeral was held at Bethany

School on March 3, 2020, with Darlton Bontrager, Arlin Beachy, and Paul Plank serving. Delbert Hostetler conducted the committal at Christner Cemetery, Kokomo, IN.

Nisly, Esther Pauline (Nisly), 88, died April 10, 2020, at her home in Abbyville, KS. She was born February 1, 1932, in Hutchinson, the daughter of Abraham and Sarah Miller Nisly.

Esther was a career homemaker. She was very involved in prison ministry, serving both in sponsoring inmates and volunteering in the Hutchinson Correctional Facility mailroom for many years.

Esther was a charter member at Center Amish Mennonite Church, Hutchinson. She was also a member of Gideons International Auxiliary,

and sang frequently with Reno Choral Society.

On May 22, 1955, Esther married Samuel D. Nisly in Partridge. They shared 64 years of marriage. For the first 29 years of their marriage, she provided care for her parents in the home she and Sam shared with her parents, dividing time between care of parents, young children, and extended family.

Survivors include children: Sheryl Nisly-Nagele (Ken), Monticello, IL; Jana Nisly, El Salvador; Melody Nisly, Abbyville; Arlyn Nisly (Brenda), Partridge; Wendell Nisly (Jeanene) Harrisonburg, VA; brother, Paul Nisly, Grantham, PA; sister, Viola Nisly Miller, Flint, MI; grandchildren: Elizabeth Ross (Tyler), Daniel, and Douglas Nisly-Nagele; Braden, Chalonna, Clarisa, and Jeriah Nisly; one great-grandchild, numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, brother, Ora, sisters: Matilda Nisly, Mary Miller, Alma Wagler, and Dorothy Beachy.

Her life was characterized by gentle and selfless service, a deep dedication to her Lord, and fervent love to her husband, children, and many needy persons she befriended.


The private graveside service and burial were on April 11 at West Center Cemetery, Hutchinson, with Esther's nephew, LaVerne Miller, officiating.

Troyer, Abe N., 90, left this world for a home of eternal glory on March 7, 2020. He was born May 26, 1926, to the late Noah and Tena (Farmwald) Troyer.

Abe was a member of Canaan Fellowship Church, Plain City, OH, which he loved.

Left to grieve are his wife of 68 years, Fanny (Miller) Troyer, and children: Erma (Ron) Hoover, John (Linda) Troyer, Steven (Rodalyn) Troyer, Carol (Rick) Yutzy, and Linda (Dale) Beachy; 13 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by three brothers: Jonas (Elma) Troyer, Andy (Emma) Troyer, Alvin (Sara Mae) Troyer; and three sisters: Ada Yoder, Mary Hershberger, and Esther Troyer.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Nelson, a brother, Eli N. Troyer, and two sisters: Katie (infant), and Sarah Troyer.

The funeral was held March 10, 2020 at United Bethel Church. Services were conducted by the Canaan ministry team. Burial was at the Canaan Fellowship Cemetery. 

IF YOU PUT HEART INTO
WHAT YOU DO, IT WILL
PUT HEART INTO YOU.

Webster's Dictionary defines the word exceptionalism this way: "The condition of being exceptional or unique. The theory or belief that something, especially a nation, does not conform to a pattern or norm." When one views himself or herself as the exception to what is expected of, and experienced by, others this comes across as exceptionalism. Exceptionalism manifests itself in many ways.

Sometimes parents are tempted to focus on the ways in which their children are exceptional. It's true that children should learn that God and their parents hold them in high esteem. After all, their intrinsic value as God's creation is both unique and universal. But sometimes healthy parental affirmation can morph into stoking the exceptionalism that is so firmly rooted in our native selfishness and carnality. Children are well-served when they learn that it is important to wait in line "like everyone else should," to eat their vegetables "like everyone else should," that we should listen to our parents, teachers, ministers, and civil authorities "like everyone else." It is not only our children that are well-

served when they learn those things but also anybody else with whom they have occasion to interact. Our children's ability to develop healthy friendships with others is often inversely proportionate to their sense of exceptionalism.

In many places in the international community, the citizens of the USA are seen as nursing an exceptionalistic mindset. My wife and I were privileged to live in another culture for about six years. I wish I could say that I have no idea what I'm talking about from personal experience. But I can't say that. In retrospect, my impressions of local economic challenges, inefficiencies, health, linguistic, and education limitations are just a few of the ways that I felt exceptional as a guest in a foreign culture. Our ability to build meaningful bridges to others in another cultural setting is often inversely proportional to our sense of exceptionalism. It is really troublesome when these disparities are viewed as evidence of superiority or inferiority. A more mature perspective recognizes that those who have been blessed in ways that don't seem equitable, see those differences as gifts to be

stewarded and are primarily the result of more or less opportunity. Our attitude should also be coupled with a posture of humility and curiosity that seeks to understand how we can learn from our host culture, rather than the paternalistic attitude that assumes a superiority that comes from our exceptionalistic perspective.

It's kind of easy to spot exceptionalism in children. It's relatively easy to understand how it can be problematic for Americans in foreign settings. Is it also possible that conservative Anabaptist people are vulnerable to the pitfalls of exceptionalism as a sub-culture? We like to be seen as hardworking, economically self-sufficient, law-abiding, and contributing members of society. Sometimes we might think, without even realizing it, that because we're such good people, the rules apply to others and aren't intended for us.

A collage of thoughts from a wide variety of experiences and sources has gotten me thinking along these lines the last several months. I offer a few thoughts and questions to stimulate our thinking together.

When we understand that our primary loyalty must be directed toward our heavenly citizenship, we might be tempted to regard

directives from civil authorities as illegitimate and unnecessary for us to follow. We are aware that the civil government doesn't operate on Christian principles. This brings an appropriate awareness that we must be loyal to Christ's Kingdom when it conflicts with civil authority. This is legitimate. However, is it possible that we don't always notice when we take the small step of avoiding civil directives for "conscientious sake" to avoiding them for the sake of preference, expediency, or convenience? Is it possible we see ourselves as the exception to seat belt laws, speed limits, tax laws, etc? Do we view the civil government as a legitimate entity ordained by God with which we cooperate in all areas we are able without compromising our primary loyalty to Christ and His Kingdom? Or do we view civil government as a necessary evil whose directives should be avoided if possible?

We are generally successful people. We have become successful because we are diligent, and we work hard. We don't need an education or experts in order for us to be successful. So, we tend to feel suspicious of educated experts like doctors, lawyers, scientists, bankers, educators, etc. We know that the world's system of education is often hostile toward

kingdom priorities. So, is it easy for us to be dismissive toward the experts, because they are biased by improper or unnecessary education and operate with a hidden agenda? We might even get to the place where we see many experts as being part of some conspiracy.

Besides that, most of the experts spend their energies in ways that don't seem to many of us like manual labor. People who see their personal success as a result of their hard work sometimes might be tempted to look down on people who contribute to society in ways that don't look like "hard work." I've puzzled just a bit too as I try to understand the way some of us have responded to the inconveniences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Is it possible that our approach and response to these situations have their roots in a flavor of exceptionalism that isn't very Christlike?

I hope you noted that I framed these thoughts as questions rather than conclusions. However, it is OK to admit that by asking the questions, I am open to the possibility that I might have a cultural blind spot rooted in exceptionalism that deserves closer examination. Is it fair to say that our ability to build fruitful redeeming bridges to our neighbors is inversely proportionate to our sense

of exceptionalism? Is it possible that the triple-whammy of our carnality, our privileged American lifestyle, and our rich Anabaptist subculture make us particularly susceptible to the dangers of exceptionalism? I propose that it's worth considering.

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The current pandemic is a totally new experience for many of us. But plagues, epidemics, and pandemics have visited the people who inhabit this globe many times before.

Those with an interest in church history recall that Martin Luther nailed his "95 Theses" to the door of the Wittenberg chapel in October of 1517. It was almost ten years later in August of 1527 that the bubonic plague arrived in Wittenberg. This plague was a horrific, swift, and fatal reality for many. It is difficult to establish statistics, but some estimates put the death toll at 50 million people world-wide, and 60% of the population of Europe in that time.

Martin Luther and his wife Katharina were expecting a child at the time. Concerned acquaintances urged them to flee the plague and seek safety elsewhere. Dr. Jim Denison writes about the Luther family on the Denison Forum:

"When asked by Christians in another city for advice, Luther wrote

a pamphlet that is as remarkable today as when he produced it. Titled *Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague*, it combines realism and faith in a way that is powerfully relevant to our crisis.

Luther counseled his readers to utilize medicine and intelligence ‘to guard and to take good care of the body so that we can live in good health.’ As a result, he stated, ‘I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it.’ He also practiced what we call social distancing: ‘I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence.’

With this caveat: ‘If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely.’ He understood the urgency of sharing the gospel so as to lead the sick to saving faith before they died and to minister to believers in their final days.

As it turned out, Martin and Katharina Luther were spared from the plague. But they guaranteed this outcome when they chose to stay behind to care for the sick of their community.” (The Denison Forum, March 17, 2020)

Now, we might identify certain differences with Martin Luther, but the things he said are hauntingly contemporary even though it happened almost 500 years ago. Furthermore, I admire how he wove several very important things together in his response to the difficulty of those times.

1. He didn’t regard his family’s safety as his highest priority.

2. He respected and followed broadly understood cautions in order to minimize the risk of becoming ill or making others ill.

3. Serving others was more important than making sure he avoided danger. This meant that there were situations and times when those cautions became less important than a present need.

About two years later Luther wrote, “A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing. A shelter He amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.” It makes me wonder if Luther wasn’t making a veiled reference to how God delivered them from the bubonic plague just a couple of years prior.

He talked a lot like some Anabaptists talk today. Do we talk it? Do I live it?

Thanks to Brother Lee Fisher for pointing this article out to me.

–RJM 

Godly Men

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

The Church of Jesus Christ today is in dire need of men:

- Who are shepherds but do not oppress the flock.
- Who can administer discipline without being abusive.
- Who have a commanding presence but are not bossy.
- Who are spiritually mature but not self-righteous.
- Who can submit to authority without being pushovers.
- Who love with affectionate fervor but are not morbid.
- Who are psychologically strong but not intimidating.
- Who can elucidate their faith but without arrogance.
- Who warrant respect without demanding admiration.
- Who exercise authority but do not abuse their position.
- Who are emotionally vulnerable without falling apart.
- Who are secure in their masculinity but not macho.
- Who enjoy life on earth but never neglect the eternal.

- Who care for themselves without being self-centered.
- Who minister to the destitute without condescension.
- Who admit their failings without prepositional excuses.

Now, you may look at this list and say, “Wow, what a tall order for a man to fulfill!” Yes, and so it is. Contrary to what our religious culture may have taught us, these character qualities are not simply for a few men (officially ordained pastors) to pursue but for all men who profess to be disciples of Christ Jesus our Lord. In practical terms, this is how a Christ-like man thinks, looks, and acts.

Then there are those of you who truly want to become godly men in all respects, but you may see so many deficiencies in yourself that perhaps you despair of ever attaining to such lofty behavior. Instead of giving up, however, choose the area of greatest weakness and sincerely set out to diligently work on overcoming it. In the process you will discover, to your amazement, that other areas of need will begin to incrementally change for the better!



Protection of Angels

Joseph Kuepfer, Newton, ON

With the coronavirus pandemic in the forefront and real and imagined sickness becoming the main concern of human beings on planet Earth, the amount of fear and anxiety is soaring to high proportions. In the face of this pandemic the Spirit of God prompted me at 2:00 A.M. on March 17, 2020, to look at certain scriptures with the definite promise of protecting angels. It is clear as we look at the following scriptures that this is God's design! *"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them"* (Psalm 34:7). Herein is the promise of deliverance, not the fear of the epidemic but the fear of the Lord.

It is thus a step of faith to believe in holy angels that can take charge in providing their presence and protection.

Let us strive to understand what the Bible says about their design and purpose! *"Who maketh his angels spirits"* (Psalm 104:4a). Hebrews 1:14 gives this description: *"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"*

Let's be convinced that our omnipotent God was the designer of angels. *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made"* (John 1:3). *"Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee"* (Nehemiah 9:6). *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist"* (Colossians 1:16-17). Take note of the invisible things mentioned in these verses. According to Genesis 1:31 all God's creation was deemed as "very" good.

The question that often surfaces is where the fallen angels originated? Jude 1:6 explains that there were angels who kept not their first estate. Matthew 25:41 explains that there is a place prepared for the devil and his

angels. We would understand this place is specifically prepared for the fallen angels.

In Luke 20:34-36, Jesus explained the reality of the resurrection to the religious leaders of His day. He explained that resurrected human beings will be immortal creatures as the angels.

Hebrews 2:7 tells us that when Jesus came to earth in a human body, He came in a position that was lower than the angels.

David mentioned in Psalm 103:20 that angels are beings that excel in strength. And in the New Testament, the Apostle Peter described angels in II Peter 2:11 as beings that are greater in power and might.

We conclude from these verses that angels are vastly inferior to God, but they are superior to men. Can we take courage and look to these created spirits in times of adversity?

Let us take note of a few Bible examples. In Genesis 32:1-3, we find Jacob's meeting with his embittered brother, Esau. We would understand that Jacob was frantic with fear. But God in His mercy sent His ministering spirits (angels) to comfort him and be by his side. Jacob then took new courage and proceeded with this meeting.

In II Kings 6:13-17 is the account of the huge Syrian army coming to

attack a man of God by the name of Elisha. Of course, Elisha's servant cried out in fear, "How shall we do?" But Elisha prayed that this young man's eyes could be opened to the spiritual realm, and when this came to pass he could see that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire to provide protection for them. How comforting to know that again these ministering spirits were available to protect this man of God.


When the multitude of people came to arrest Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane as recorded in Matthew 26:47-53, Peter felt he had to take his sword for the protection of his Lord. This was definitely not necessary. In verse 53 Jesus said, "*Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*" Do we understand the reality of that statement? A legion was a large regiment of soldiers in the Roman army. It consisted of approximately 3000-6000 men. Taking the smaller number of 3000 and multiplying it by 12 implies that there were more than 36,000 angels available for His protection.

In Hebrews 12:21 we get the picture of the fear that Moses had as he approached Mount Sinai to come into the presence of God. But Hebrews 12:22 shows us the

difference that Jesus made when we come into His presence. *“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”*

How many angels will be in the heavenly Jerusalem? *“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number*

of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Revelation 21:11).

Yes, angels are created spiritual beings designed by God for our protection, guidance, and to bring encouragement to Christians. They are designed to help carry out God’s work here on earth. We can be ever so thankful for these ministering spirits, especially in our day. 

Book Report: A Tale of Three Kings

Hannah Nisly, Altamont, KS

What is a king? What qualifies a man to rule? And what does power reveal? Gene Edwards explores these questions in a slim, unprepossessing volume; a small book, but not one to lightly skim through and move on. What first appears to be a look backward at Biblical history turns out to be a look inward as well.

Like Edwards’s other books, *A Tale of Three Kings* is set as a story within a story (the introduction invites us to join the audience of a play), but the meat of the book is divided into two

parts. The first deals with Saul and David: the relationship of a tyrant and his divinely appointed successor. The second part brings in a prince who aspires to be king, and a king who refuses to defend his right to the throne. Far from being separate stories, the two parts show us two sides of one man, a man after God’s own heart.

Saul, the king of the first chapter, is a truly magnificent and regal figure. He knows his power and wields it purposefully. He is equal to any threat of challenge. Such a

strong leader compels our trust. Yet that unyielding grip on position is his weakest point as becomes clear when David is anointed at God's command. Suddenly Saul's heart is revealed, and we see his concern for the kingdom dwarfed by his love for the kingship. Full of his own role, he cannot graciously give room to the one God is calling to take on the work. Threatened, he threatens.

And how does David respond? He evades Saul's murderous intent. He refuses to enter a power struggle, knowing that if God chooses to give him the kingship, it's up to God, not David, to see it through.

The second half of the book finds David as the old king and his son Absalom as the ambitious heir to the throne. Absalom, seeing power within reach, seizes it. David, who has carried the authority of God's anointing for years, never let his heart

wrap around it. He could do so at this juncture, but instead he says, "It is not my responsibility to take, or keep, authority." (pg. 74) What God gives, God has the right to "Take." David responds to Absalom's greed just as he had to Saul's possessiveness, for the tyrant and the usurper are really one at heart.

Sooner or later each Christian finds himself facing a Saul or an Absalom—perhaps even caught between the two. In such straits it is essential to remember the authority belongs to God. God chooses on whom it will rest and for how long. A true leader can say with David, "I will leave the destiny of the kingdom in God's hands alone. Perhaps He is finished with me..." (pg. 93)

[This report was written for a Calvary Bible School class, "Prophets and Kings."]



THANK GOD FOR FATHERS
WHO NOT ONLY
GAVE US LIFE, BUT ALSO
TAUGHT US HOW TO LIVE.

Mission Interests Committee's Beginnings

Paul L. Miller, Partridge, KS

Today again, I wish I could talk with MIC pioneers Mahlon Wagler (1921-2009) and David L. Miller (1927-2018). They would have been in a better position to review the beginnings of MIC.

Where do I start? We could start in 1883 with Reno County, Kansas. That's when 35-year-old widower Daniel E. Mast (1848-1930) moved his young family from Holmes County, Ohio, to Reno County, Kansas. His Christian influence and enthusiastic presence in the Hutchinson community for the next decades left a very positive influence on the Amish community west of Hutchinson, KS.

Let us, nevertheless, go on past World War I (1914-1918) to World War II (1939-1945) when Civilian Public Service assigned young conscientious objectors to conservation projects of national interest for several years. New ways of looking at life opened up for

these men as they lived and worked with other men who could not conscientiously give military service.

World War II, a **man-made disaster**, left the world in deep distress. Parts of Europe were virtually destroyed from the ravages of war. After that, some ex-CPSers accompanied horses and heifers on ships to Italy, to Germany, and to other European countries where livestock numbers were nearly wiped out. Italy and Germany had been led into that war by fascist leaders, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. When World War II ended in 1945, their leaders were gone. But the people who survived were reduced to extreme poverty. Their financial future was understandably bleak.

Before that, going back to 1929 and for most of the decade following, America was hit hard by **an economic disaster**, known as The Great Depression.

From 1932 to 1937, south central

Kansas experienced a **natural disaster** known as The Dust Bowl. The actual Dust Bowl lay just west of them and stretched south into Texas. Even though it lay west of Hutchinson, these people were deeply affected by the Dust Bowl. Hardship is an effective teacher. People in need seem to see much better when others are in need. Selfless compassion does not so readily come during prosperity. So it was that these difficult times caused people to think of what God might be saying to the Amish whose faith forebears, the Anabaptists with beginnings in the 16th century. Their forebears had endured great hardship for their faith. Persecution continued off and on till they came to America in the early 1800s.

New questions for those in CPS were being asked: *Is there more to life than making a living and being “the quiet in the land”?* *Does the Great Commission apply only to Jesus’ apostles, or does it apply also to those of us who follow Jesus, who gave the assignment in Matthew 28: 18-20?*

In 1948, a group of Amish families in the Hutchinson community withdrew and made changes like driving cars and conducting church services in English. They affiliated with the Conservative Mennonite Conference. That same year, other

Amish families who were not ready to make so many changes started midweek Bible studies. In the next decade, however, these Amish joined the Beachy Amish Mennonites of the eastern United States and southern Ontario.

Going back now to 1950, a mission-interested meeting of several days convened in Kalona, Iowa. This meeting was attended by some Kansas Bible-study folks. Then in 1953, the Kansas Bible-study group were informed about a county-operated retirement home in Harrison, Arkansas. The Arkansas folks were open to having a conservative Anabaptist group operate Hillcrest Home, Boone County’s retirement home.

So it was that in 1952 Mission Interests Committee (MIC) was formed.

Support for and participation in MIC was brisk in other communities—Goshen, IN; Kalona, IA; Holmes County, OH; Lancaster County, PA; and others. Earlier, Eli and Katie Helmuth, a middle-aged, childless couple from Hutchinson, had volunteered and served for several years at Brook Lane Farm, a Mennonite mental health treatment facility at Hagerstown, Maryland. When the call came from Harrison, Arkansas, the Helmuths were asked

to consider leading that project. Fortunately, they consented. Eli served as director for that work for a number of years. Years later, Brother Eli Helmuth would die on his knees before the Lord, whom he had served so ardently.

In 1955, MIC faced a new service opportunity in Red Lake, Ontario. Red Lake district is an old gold-mining area, 110 miles north of Highway 17, a trans-Canada highway linking the east to the west across southern parts of Canada.

Irwin Schantz, director of Northern Light Gospel Mission (NLGM), invited MIC to come and open a grade school for Indian children living in and around Red Lake. These Indian children were not attending school. NLGM had opened up a number of outreaches in the “bush” (hinterland) beyond Red Lake. Those new ministry points required air travel, whereas the Red Lake district was connected by paved roads

Thus it was that the Moses and Ada Beachy family and the Harvey and Miriam Graber family moved from Goshen, Indiana, to Red Lake in the mid-50s. The Beachys and Grabers opened Red Lake Indian School in 1956. This enabled local boys and girls to get a basic education. After a few years, the Beachy and Graber families left the work and settled back

in Goshen, Indiana. Also in the late 50s, Ezra and Nannie Peachey joined the work. Then in 1961, the Paul and Martha Miller family joined the work at Red Lake Indian School until its closing in 1963. After that, Paul taught for two years at Round Lake. From there, this family moved to Poplar Hill. There they served for 10 years at NLGM’s residential school. In 1975 they moved to Partridge, KS.

Many other MIC workers served in the North:

The David and Esther Herschberger family, Indiana, served for many years in Hudson, Ontario. In recent times, Galen (and Edith) Miller has assumed the book ministry that David began.

The Wayne and Edna Schrock family, Virginia, also served for many years, mostly in Sioux Lookout, Ontario. Merle (and Edith) Burkholder now carries pastoral duties there.

The Nate and Jan Hochstetler family, Indiana, have been serving in Sioux Lookout for many years.

The Darrell and Kathy Nisly family, Kansas, have been serving for many years in Sioux Narrows.

The Gerald and Marian Yoder family, Indiana, have been serving at Kenora for many years.

There were many others who served, and perhaps it seems unfair

to not mention all their names, especially those who served their two-year 1-W stint with MIC. But perhaps this sketchy mention of some families who have lived there will suffice for this report.

The work of MIC church planting in northern Ontario began in the late 50s. Outreaches include Ft. Severn, Bearskin Lake, Hudson, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, Sioux Narrows; and other places. For 45 years this work was led by Ezra Peachey and his fellow workers.


Then in 2015, Ezra and Nannie Peachey moved (due to health reasons) to Belleville, PA, their home community. (Ezra died in 2019.) Their move left the work in charge of the Kevin and Linda Miller family, originally from Virginia. In recent years, the MIC work at Red Lake has joined what was once Northern Light Gospel Mission, but is now named, Living Hope Native

Ministries (LHNM). In recent years, the headquarters of LHNM has moved from Red Lake to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Several years ago, Robert Stauffer, MN, wrote a history that adds considerable detail to MIC's church-planting efforts in NW Ontario. His book is entitled, *God Gave The Increase*. It is published by:

TGS International
P. O. Box 355
Berlin, Ohio 44610.

This brief historical sketch does not include MIC's involvement in very effective work with disabled persons at Faith Mission Home at Free Union, VA. Nor does it include the newer, most fruitful camping ministry and outreach in Waterford, Ireland.

(The invitation to give historical aspects of Mission Interests Committee's beginnings came from our Missions Editor, Floyd Stoltzfus. To God be the glory! -PLM) 

GATHER THE CRUMBS OF
happiness,
AND THEY WILL MAKE YOU A LOAF OF
contentment.

Jochebed

Susan Garcete, Harley, DE



Jochebed; an intriguing name and an inspiring life! Her life beautifully illustrates the meaning: *Jehovah is glorious*.

Imagine with me that she was born to faithful parents who clung to God's promises. She was taught to trust and hope, so she looked beyond the difficult circumstances of the day. She married a man of like faith.

Their land of Goshen, in Egypt, was becoming more and more crowded. Many folks were impatient and bitter and chafing under the bondage. It was bondage! Their freedom and rights were being taken away. They worked insufferably hard. They cried out to God—the God Who seemed so silent, so unheeding of their plight.

And then one terrible day the hard-hearted ruler issued a new command. Fear struck hard. Kill all the baby boys? Their bodies and spirits were already stressed, and this was an inhuman and deadly blow on their future—their pride and joy. On one hand, why raise more boys to simply be slaves with no hope in sight? But it was so wrong! How long and how extreme could this slavery become?

Possibly some faint-hearted or depressed persons would have quietly let themselves be hurt further in that way, but the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, were heroines of the faith. And mothers like Jochebed took it on. All that lay in their power would work toward life of the little ones.

The doubts and fears that Jochebed battled are left to our imagination, but a mother's heart can feel it. Her past experiences had already taught her acceptance of what she couldn't change, strength to trust in the One in control of it all, and wisdom to step out and do what she could. At any rate, it appears that her calm and courageous spirit blessed her home and gave her daughter Miriam confidence to fill her place in the day's work.

Feel with me the daily stress and strain of keeping a baby quiet and hidden, and the pain and heart-cries when another little one was discovered and taken. Can you imagine hearing the deadly splash when an innocent infant landed in the river? Maybe they didn't stay

to hear it. Silent tears fell onto the weaving of Jochebed's basket.

If we look ahead and consider the leaders that this home produced, we see that there was a rock-solid foundation of trust with these parents, Amram and Jochebed. They did not doubt the promises of God. Jehovah is glorious, and He would deliver His people. After the Red Sea crossing, both the songs of Moses and Miriam speak of triumphing gloriously. But that was still in the unseen future.

For now, let us walk with Jochebed and her daughter in the predawn darkness to a spot in the river where the many rushes would anchor the little basket boat. Maybe Jochebed could hardly let go of the precious basket. Then again, maybe she pushed it quickly and gently into its wonderful new position in life. This was the only hope of life. Holding onto her little boy was certainly not life. A quiet moment of prayer, a quick and whispered word to her daughter, and her feet turned homeward. She was needed there. Miriam knew and understood her mission, and Jochebed trusted her capable daughter.

Time passed slowly and yet too fast for Jochebed, I presume. Mercifully, there was work to be done. So, while her hands were busy, her heart and her mind were filled with her children and her people's dilemma

and prayer to God. Was her baby hungry by now? Who would find him? How soon? Every thought turned into a prayer.


You know the story. God orchestrated it all just as He does for us so many times. What deep joy and praise to Jehovah God welled up in that home when the baby boy they had all but given up was returned to them! He was returned to them with a name, an adopted identity, and with orders from the royal princess. No more need for hiding!

Amid the joyful thanksgiving in Jochebed's life remained a pain; the knowledge that in a few years her son would go to live and learn in a pagan home—a king's palace. Maybe she simply trusted, but I rather think there was a constant little ache that spurred her on to do her ultimate best to ensure that her son would be able to retain his true identity and his knowledge of God and His people. She believed that the same glorious God Who had saved his physical life would also save him spiritually. She had not come this far to give up! Surely Moses's siblings were included in the careful, fervent teaching, the retelling of their history, and the liberation that was to come. Maybe the boys dreamed of being a part of their people's deliverance.

Then came the separation. Moses left to become part of another family, but Jochebed was still his mother.

She had directed her small son in his choices and attitudes while he was with her. Now her part to play was to keep a normalcy, a calm about the home, and doubtless a continued intercession for the son she shared with Pharaoh's daughter.

Were other baby boys taken after Moses's life was spared? Was

Jochebed still alive when Moses disappeared from Egypt? Did she know what had happened? It really doesn't matter. God was in control. Her love and prayers, her hope and faith, and her teaching, were not in vain. As Jochebed served well in her time and place, so also her son served his generation well. 

Mother Jochebed and I

She was a mother, and so am I.

Our children, goodly, beautiful to God,
Are gifts from Him with purpose to live by.
We love them so! But God does even more.
Mother Jochebed and I.

She held to faith, and so do I.

The patient hope in evidence unseen...
It turns to God when hearts are asking *why*?
It will be taught when lived out day by day
By mother Jochebed and I.

She had a mission, and so do I,

To pave the road, to urge them ever on,
To keep the Truth, to bless when we would sigh,
To find a way to do what must be done,
Mother Jochebed and I.

She saw reward, and so do I.

So we and ours must look above, beyond.
What's suffering if the end will glorify?
The glorious recompense will one day come,
For mother Jochebed and I.

-S.G.

Children's Chores

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

It is important for children to learn to be helpful and work.

Children who live in Africa and in many other lands, carry water home for their mothers every day. Mothers need water to drink, for cooking, and washing. If you were a small child you would have a little water jug to carry. The bigger you grew, the bigger your jug to carry. Girls often carry their jug or water pot on the top of their heads!

One morning in Kenya, I went with my neighbor girls to carry water. They did not give me the biggest container. We walked back a country dirt road to a spring, filled the jugs, and carried them home. I was grateful I did not need to carry water for a daily chore.

Some of our friends lived up the hill from the river. That meant when they carried water home they were going uphill with a heavy load. Many women and girls took their clothes down to the river and scrubbed them on the rocks. We would often see the rocks and surrounding bushes

covered with clothes. The wet laundry dried in the warm sunshine on the rocky shore.

The girls learn to help their mothers wash clothes by hand. They are well skilled at washing, whether in a river or a plastic bowl. The majority of Kenyans do not have washing machines.

We often saw children go by with a big bundle of sticks they tied together and carried on their heads. Women do most of their cooking over outdoor fires with a kettle set on three stones. They can quickly light a fire.

Guarding cattle is a job for children or adults. There are few fences. The cattle must be guarded all day, so they do not wander into a neighbor's cornfield or shamba (garden). In the evening the cattle are herded home and tied in the yard or cattle pen close to the house.

Kenyans raise a lot of corn. They need corn to cook their favorite food, ugali. Children help harvest, dry, and shell the corn by hand. The children carry the grain to the posher mill,

where for a few shillings it is ground into fine cornmeal.

It's exciting for the children to go to the market with their mothers to sell bananas, tomatoes, papayas, or chickens. What fun they have watching the cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls that are sold.

CONTRASTS

Children's chores in America include washing dishes in a sink full of warm water that comes out of a spigot. In Kenya they first carry the water home and then wash dishes in a plastic bowl set on the ground, bending over at the waist to wash and scrub.

Instead of bringing home a bundle of sticks for their mother to use for cooking, children here help their dad cut and stack firewood to heat their house in the winter.

We gather eggs and feed chickens in their coop. In Kenya the chickens sleep in the house. How handy to pick up eggs right off the chair.

There are many huge differences between what children have in America compared to those in other lands. Children here have many books and toys. Households in Kenya may not have any. It was rewarding to visit schools and give each child a Bible storybook from Christian Aid Ministries. The teachers loved the gift of a Bible.

You learn to help your mother by sweeping with a broom or running a vacuum cleaner. In Kenya children sweep well with a small, short-handled broom.

Our houses get cluttered with things we could do without. Children need to learn to pick up toys and make a room tidy. Children in Kenya have homemade toys: an old bicycle tube or other tires to roll along on the ground. They make toys with whatever scraps they can find. They are happy playing.

Wise parents get their children to help garden. Hoeing weeds or picking rocks out of the garden helps cure naughtiness. Growing food is fun and a good skill to learn.

All over the world, children should be taught to work. Chores and jobs teach responsibility. Work gives a sense of self-worth and contributes to the family well-being.

Children in Kenya are happy with little. They work hard. Are we grateful in the midst of our abundance? Are we happy when there is work to be done?

It is important that children learn to work. The Bible says, "six days shalt thou labor." It also says if we want to eat we should work. Children are happier and play nicer if they have chores every day. To work and enjoy it is a good thing!



What Bible are You Reading?

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

A group of youth are having a Bible study one Thursday evening. Phil's turn to read a verse has come, and he confidently reads something that the rest of the group don't find in their own Bibles. Did Phil get the wrong chapter? Did he accidentally read the wrong verse? Mike leans over amiably to show Phil the verse he was "supposed" to be reading. The simple explanation is that Phil is using a different Bible translation than the rest of the group.

This was a fictional account, but many of us have found ourselves in similar situations. Whether in a youth Bible study, Bible school, or church Sunday school, the reaction is usually the same, and the impact on the situation differs based on which Bible versions are involved. Growing up, our family would go to visit my grandparents. My grandparents and their church used the NIV. As much as I enjoyed going to church with my grandparents and our family devotions around

the table, I was always slightly put off by the differences between my grandfather's Bible and mine when we read Scripture. Even at a young age, it was easy to see and hear that something was different, and I was confused as to why there were differences. As a child I reasoned, "The Bible is the Bible, right? Why doesn't theirs say the same thing as mine"?

There are lots of options out there for us to choose from. In fact, there are currently over 450 different English translations of the Bible.¹ Some are more familiar to us than others. We probably all have at least two or three different versions in our homes. The versions most common to us are the KJV, NKJV, NIV, and Amplified. With so many options to choose from, how can we know which translations are safe to use, and which ones are best to avoid?

We need to remember that we only have translations. Some translators did their absolute best to translate

word for word, while others tried to translate the thought of the verse which of course would be impacted by that person's personal interpretation of the Scripture. Have you ever noticed the italicized words in the King James Version of the Bible? These words were added to improve the grammar of the verse and make it readable. This means that the version that is so widely accepted among Christians isn't even a word-for-word translation. Due to the differences in sentence structure between English and the original Hebrew and Greek, we must recognize that a literal word-for-word translation would be impossible if we want to be able to actually read it. Translators have to be able to interpret and restate a sentence and keep the message as identical as possible.

Let's take a look at two of the more popular translations. In 1604, King James I authorized a translation of the Bible and approved 47 translators for the project. These were divided into six groups that met in three different locations and began the process of translating the portions given to them. The finished product was published in 1611 and is known as the King James Version or KJV.¹ The King wanted the translation

done quickly, so the translation was as fast and accurate as possible. Since the project was backed by a king, every known resource was made available to the translators. This is one of the reasons that the KJV is held in such high regard.

The New International Version or NIV was first published in 1973 as just the New Testament. The Old Testament was added in 1978. It was touted as a "dynamic equivalence": that means the translators study the verse, try to figure out what the author was saying, and then add words or change sentence structure to make the meaning clear. Plans were made to continue revision of the NIV as new discoveries were made and as changes in the use of the English language occurred.¹ The original version was fairly accurate, but later revisions have cut verses and made it more LGBT friendly. (In fact, two people of the 1984 board of revisers were members and advocates of the LGBT community.) Currently the ownership and publishing rights to the NIV belong to the same man who also prints the satanic Bible and pornographic material.² In 2002 another version of the NIV called the TNIV (Today's New International Version) was printed, and this version used gender-neutral language to refer to people. Both


¹ Wikipedia

the 1984 NIV and the TNIV were discontinued in 2011 following the release of yet another revised and updated version of the NIV.²

We need to know who printed our Bibles and what doctrinal agenda is pushed by the translators. This is true not only of different translations but even of the study notes in the various “KJV Study Bibles” that are so widely accepted and used. It is not uncommon for an “approved” translation to have study notes that do not support our doctrinal beliefs.

How can we decide on which Bible to use? First, ask advice. Talk with your parents, ministry, or other trusted older individuals and get their input and advice. They have been around longer and have the wisdom and insight to help you make a decision. Your church may have an approved translation but don’t be afraid to ask why. Secondly, research. Look into it yourself. Facts

are our friends. Having facts allows us to make informed decisions. Don’t blindly accept things; seek truth. “*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). Last but not least, pray about it. God has all the answers, and He works through the Holy Spirit to give us the discernment needed to make a wise decision. What you study and research becomes a part of your convictions and belief system.

If the church you attend has chosen to use the KJV for its services and promotes the use of it in everyday devotions, it is important that you respect that decision, respect others in the church, and use it—especially if you are a member of the church. Although we may use multiple translations for personal study on occasion, being unified with the body of believers in the Bible translation you use will promote peace and not confusion within the church and within your own heart. 

² israelitesunite.com

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Self-control is needed these days in the supermarket.

• • • • •

He who doesn't hope to win has already lost.

• • • • •

A father is neither an anchor to hold us back nor a sail to take us there, but a guiding light whose love shows us the way.

• • • • •

Circumstances don't make a man—they serve him.

• • • • •

Spend your time counting your blessings—not airing your complaints.

• • • • •

If Paul and Silas would have complained while in prison,
would the Philippian jailer have accepted Christ?

• • • • •

The rich are not always godly, but the godly are always rich.

• • • • •

True wealth is the satisfaction of talent used in Christian service.

• • • • •

The secret of contentment is knowing how to enjoy what you have.

• • • • •

If we cannot have what we like, maybe we can like what we have.