



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

JULY 2020

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Calvary Messenger

July 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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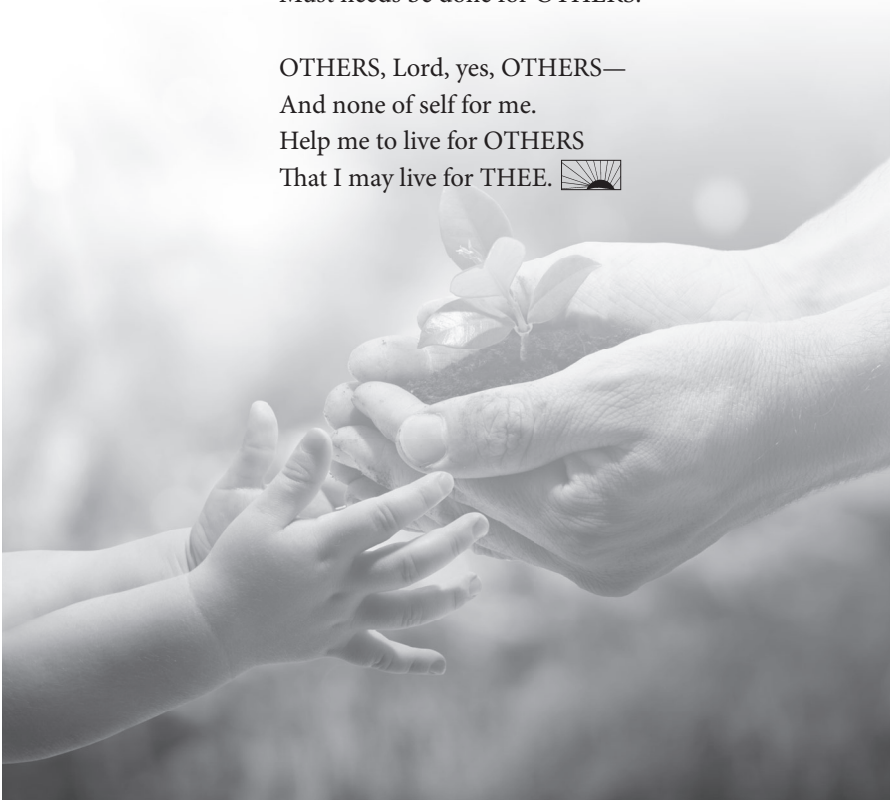
Others

Charles D. Meigs

Lord, help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way,
That even when I kneel to pray
My prayer may be for OTHERS.

Help me in all the work I do
To ever be sincere and true,
And know that all I do for You
Must needs be done for OTHERS.

OTHERS, Lord, yes, OTHERS—
And none of self for me.
Help me to live for OTHERS
That I may live for THEE. 



Washed, Sanctified, and Justified

Paul L. Miller, Partridge, KS

Still in my files from my work as editor of *Calvary Messenger* (1999-2019), I have a deeply-moving lament about sexual molestation of children. I agree with the concerns of the writer. He/she gave facts and figures about this darkness in some of today's conservative Anabaptist homes which, if confirmed, are very disturbing. *But I chose not to publish the article.* Why did I pull back on such an important issue? Here's why: **The writer did not sign his/her work.** As I recall, the mailing envelope had no clear return address. I did not know from whence it came.

Because I agreed with the writer's concerns, however, I worked on it awhile and actually started a possible postscript, but then gave up on it. I will quote freely from my postscript. And surely you won't charge me with plagiarism if I state truth from this "hidden" writer's article, will you? I shall generally avoid his/her word choices, but stand by his/her

concerns. Let me start with those concerns.

Children Need Protection

When Jesus said, "**Whoso shall offend one of these little ones..., it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea**" (Matthew 18:6). We believe sexual violation of children is such an offense to a child.

Childhood sexual abuse affects a person in every level of his being: body, soul and spirit. The implications are huge. It's like putting on sunglasses, then seeing the world in a different and disturbing way. That child's view of God is severely damaged—especially if the abuser was someone whom the child trusted. Child abuse, especially incest, is destructive. It is anti-life. It sets children up for lifelong struggles.

Children Need Information

A different area of concern is giving children thoughtful information about the sexual aspect of marriage. The sexual aspect of marriage is

God's way of blessing and continuing the human family—and ultimately populating heaven. Parental reticence and embarrassment on this subject is, we are told, worldwide. Perhaps it helps us to acknowledge that God designed sexual intimacy for marriage only—so we can speak to children from that premise. What is better than simply saying? “God has designed physical intimacy for marriage only! Everything outside of that design is destructive and leaves serious problems in its wake!”

Children Need Correction

Let us take the subject of how children should be treated in yet another direction. Abuse of children, including excessive bodily pain, also leaves severe after effects. In my boyhood, after a church service in a church member's home, I remember a father who had taken his young child—perhaps five or six years old—behind a grain bin to deal with an infraction. Some of us adolescent boys eavesdropped and heard how severely he whipped him, then insisted that the child stop crying. The child seemingly could not stop sobbing, only to be given more pain to make him stop. How cruelly unreasonable is that?!

People tend to go to extremes. Some generations ago, Dr. Spock wrote against the negative effects

of spanking. He recommended building self-esteem. Dr. Spock had a worthy point, but if *only* that approach is followed, it takes us away from biblical instruction that gives *both* negative correction (including pain for a young child's willful disobedience) and positive encouragement (commending and rewarding cheerful cooperation). Good principles include both positive and negative guidance as expressions of parental love. *If only either positive or negative feedback is given*, the child's best possibilities in life are diminished.

Another poor parenting example which I saw one day was that of a mother who was treating her preschoolers by giving them ice cream cones. She told them to sit down so they'd be less likely to lose control of their cones. That sounds like a good idea, doesn't it? Unfortunately, however, this mother did not wait until the children could be seated before she repeated her command! Then she kept on repeating it! How does she expect her children as they grow up to obey her if she doesn't pause long enough for them to do what she's asking them to do?

All of God's Children Need Love and Correction

We find principles for child

discipline in Hebrews 12:5-12, that enhance spiritual maturity. Remember that **God applies these principles with respect, diligence, and mercy. He gives grace for us to do the same with our children!**

- We all need our Father’s correction.
- We must not despair when we are disciplined.
- Good child discipline comes from parental love.
- If we resist God’s discipline, we forfeit legitimacy.
- Yielding to God’s correction precedes its potential benefits.
- Appropriate correction is decided by the parent—not the child.
- Yielded, cheerful compliance brings life-long benefits.

Finally, Brethren

May God have mercy on those who offend a child. May the offender come to sincere sorrow and repentance before God and make appropriate apology to those he offended. Where a crime was committed, may God help the offender accept the legal consequences.

We all need forgiveness. **“There is none righteous, no, not one”** (Romans 3:10). We all must turn in

repentance and acknowledge our sins, whatever they may be. Only then can we extend forgiveness to others. We cannot find release in *penance* (self-abasement to show others how sorry we think we ought to be). Only sincere, straight-forward repentance merits forgiveness. Furthermore, only Jesus can lift the dark cloud of guilt; we have no way of removing it ourselves. He forgave Paul for his murderous persecution of Christians (Acts 26:10, 11). **Jesus also forgives sexual offenses, “...uncleanness, lasciviousness....”** (Galatians 5:19), **against children.**

Receiving His forgiveness may be something of a process, but God gives grace to come to Him and stay humbly in His presence until we have His forgiveness. Paul spoke candidly to the Corinthians (in 1 Cor. 6:9-11) about their lives of sin before Christ had transformed them. **“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators... nor adulterers...shall inherit the kingdom of God”** Then he says, **“and such were some of you: but you are washed,...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus....”** God’s detergent for sinful uncleanness and violation of God’s life-giving principles is the blood of the Lamb of God!



Re: What Bible are You Reading?
June 2020, p. 35

Josh Kooistra addressed a relevant topic in June’s Youth Messages. His thoughts on the KJV were particularly informative. We did, however, have some concerns about the facts that were put forth concerning the NIV. Facts may be our friends, but a fact taken without proper context can be misleading. It is true that the publisher of the NIV is owned by a publishing and media empire which also publishes all sorts of ungodly books. But it is worth noting that the relationship between all these entities is too complex to be summed up in a few words. Yes—as Josh urged you, look into it yourself.*

It would seem wise, however, to read our sources critically. If we are to “know...what doctrinal agenda is pushed by the translators”, should not the sources for our research also be judged by the same criteria? Israelitesunite.com, the source of two points in the article, makes sensational claims of exposing evil in the world (“The NIV...is straight out of the pits of hell”) and has unusual (to say the least) ideas about racial identity as it relates to the Biblical text.

This is not to suggest that Josh

agrees with everything on this site, nor is it to discount any conclusions he drew in his article. It is simply to provide a caution about how we read our sources. There are innumerable online resources which claim to inform the Christian, but too many present a troubling worldview, one in which the search for truth is reduced to a hunt for the “bad guy” behind every bush. This attitude bears a resemblance to the identity politics that sets neighbor against neighbor all over our nation and threatens to do so in our churches. Thank you, Josh, for exploring a topic that is complex and controversial. We need more discussion on topics like this.

*<https://www.harpercollinschristian.com/p/2019/5/15/EF%BB%BFsatanic-bible-inquiry/>

–Anthony and Rani Schrock

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Concerning the public reading of several translations in the same setting as was depicted in the article “What Bible are You Reading” in the June 2020 edition of the *CM*. How do we handle it when a person reading from the KJV Acts 8:36 and the next one is to read verse 37 in his NIV— and it is not there. Or Matthew 18:11— and it is not there. Or the last part of the Lord’s

prayer in Matthew 6:13 “for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen”— and it is not there. Or any of the other fifteen entire verses that are missing entirely from the NIV, ESV, etc. Or in Isaiah 14:12 when the only mention of Lucifer is changed to a title given to only Jesus Christ (morning star, star of the morning, etc.) Especially considering the dire warnings given in the Word of God concerning

adding to, or taking away from, the Word of God. Revelation 22:18-19; Proverbs 30:6; Deuteronomy 4:2. The manuscript underlying the KJV, the “Textus Receptus,” is much different from the manuscripts underlying most, if not all of the other versions, the corrupted “Alexandrian Manuscripts” which have deleted many verses and changed thousands more. (Vaticanus and Sinaiticus).

—Elmer M. Yoder 

Announcements

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

To register, or for questions about the seminar, please call 614-873-1199 or email info@dmlmohio.org.

This seminar is sponsored and hosted by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd

Plain City, OH 43064

www.dmlmohio.org 

Faithful Women Seminar

October 3, 2020

Diapers, Attitudes, and Me

Walking with God – Lily Bear, Elida, OH

The Littles – Sylvia Yoder, Somerset, OH

Teens and Young Adults - TBD

In Community – Faye Shaum, Orrville, OH


To register, or for questions about the seminar, please call 614-873-1199 or email info@dmlmohio.org.

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the bottom line

Getting Noticed

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

We are here now at March 29, 2020, two weeks into which our government called on everyone to stay at home because of the worldwide coronavirus hitting our land. It is contrary to our lifestyle, our restless nature, and our inner hankering to get away. In our drive to be busy at work, we often

had longed to just have more leisure time. Suddenly, without regard to the Bible, our own physical well-being, or previous government law, it happened. And we so soon, some of us at least, have run out of exciting ideas of what to do at home in our everyday leisure time.

We have these spacious and

comfortable homes to fly back to, land, refuel, and take off again. The end of this fearsome virus is not even optimistically in sight, but pessimistically some say, it could return after a certain mutation and be worse upon us when the weather cools several seasons hence.

The world of sports has numerous events which are layered in our larger communities and overlap with each other year around. Players and spectators are hard hit as they are set back in not having much other purpose for twelve months of the year. Staying at home is not a good option for the general public. One teenage girl was frustrated, and was quoted by a newspaper reporter, saying, "Now we have no way to get noticed." That says a good bit about the human spirit, eh?

Being noticed can be good or not good. God created us with eyes to see all around, near and far. All things that God had made, He called good. When He created Adam, He called that living masterpiece, with its five senses, "very good." Satan continually tries to corrupt that good work of God, to hinder its good use, and destroy it somehow by various second-rate and third-rate distractions, or worse.

Getting noticed caters to our vanity and in subtle ways seeks to

draw the attention away from God. God is worthy to be praised and to be noticed through the eyes of worship and faith. The wonderful and fabulous world-wide creation is a primary way for God to be noticed. The Bible says in Romans 1:20, "*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*"

The underlined phrase "*are clearly seen*," transliterated from Luther's German, says, "so man des wahrnimmt" as being, "if man will take notice of it." The manifold creation is manifested as God's kindergarten lesson to get noticed by all people everywhere and to prove that there is a God! By that, God says, "they are without excuse." The creation, being noticed, should awaken a conclusive awareness of God being Lord over all in very fact.

The apostles preached the basic message of Jesus Christ, Who shed His blood, died, was raised from the dead, and lives forevermore. But when Paul arrived at godless Athens, his emphasis turned to a sermon even more basic than the resurrection of Christ. He preached the most primary message of all and got right to the point of the creation of the

earth and man. The middle idea of this ten-point sermon in Acts 17:22-31, was the foundational goal, “*That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.*” Paul told those sinners, those idol worshippers, that they should feel after God and find Him, since God has placed it outwardly in the creation, and inwardly in the conscience, and by that, God has arranged things so that He should be noticed!

Here are a few things in the Bible about people being served a notice.

1. Satan said to Eve, “Did you notice this unique and attractive fruit?”

2. God took special notice of Abraham, as an individual, for his faith (Genesis 18:19).

3. God took special notice of Abraham when he would have slain his son (Genesis 22:23).

4. The death angel took notice of the blood on the lintel of the doors (Exodus 12:23).

5. The Lord takes notice of the heart (I Samuel 16:7).

6. The Lord said to Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job?” (Job 1:8).

7. God is omnipresent and sees all things, visible and invisible, to which all mankind universally should take

notice that He is God over all the earth.

The Bottom Line is that God remembers His covenant and His promises. He never fails to notice us. Aunt Savilla lived to be 102 years old; she used to say that she thinks God might have forgotten her. Sister Anna has suffered all through her life with numerous headaches, threatened blindness, and other ills, traveled to other states for lengthy periods of treatment, and had numerous hospital stays. Others have suffered great losses by fires, storms, floods, or imprisonments. Others have lost much by accidents. In the midst of these calamities, we ought to come alongside the suffering ones with comfort and blessing. We cannot know how it is to feel forsaken until we also have suffered loss. Thoughtful Christian people come alongside to share their grief. To those who suffer, it can seem as though God still has His eyes upon them when caring people take notice of them. We should give of ourselves and share in ways in which they have need.

“But to do good and to communicate (sharing our goods) forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Hebrews 13:16.)

By God’s grace, we all get noticed by Him!



Lord, Stir the Coals

Simon Schrock, Catlett, VA

Over six decades ago I attended a small Mennonite mission in Washington, D.C. My dad's friend, Isaac Baer, was the pastor. They met at Camp Mead, being conscientious objectors during WW I. I would class Brother Baer as being of the "old school" of Mennonites. He may have been one of the "hold back brethren" in the denomination. He told the story of a Mennonite who had visited an Amish community. Upon his return he gave a very negative report of the spiritual blindness and coldness of the Amish. That is with the assumption that the Mennonites were spiritually aflame for the Lord and His work. They were faithfully proclaiming the Gospel to a spiritually dead and lukewarm world. The implications were that the Amish were spiritually blind and certainly not a good witness for Christ.

Someone countered this assumption that "when we're finished (we Mennonites), God will stir the smoldering coals of the Amish." Isaac Baer saw us Beachy Amish as being stirred by the Lord into being a light to this evil world. He actively worked with our brethren to get a mission into Washington,

D.C. under the leadership of our mission-minded brethren. He saw the flame of his brotherhood fizzling and God stirring the embers of the Beachy Amish. In hindsight he was fairly accurate in his assessment. The beginning of our brotherhood has its roots with a burden of mission, taking the Gospel to the world. (Matthew 28:19-20)

My observation of Isaac's denomination is that the once fledgling flame of serving Christ in mission of winning the world has gone down considerably. Instead of calling the world to repentance and new life in Christ, many have joined the world in its life and practice. It seems to me that God did stir the embers of some of the Amish to get involved in the work of Christ through missions. And He is still stirring the embers to flame for the Lord.

The history of the Woodlawn Amish Mennonite Church, "A New Thing", gives some clear insights into what Brother Baer may have seen in God "stirring the smoldering coals of the Amish." These 108 pages of history give an account of the "smoldering coals" bursting

into vigilant flames to proclaim the Gospel to a spiritually blind world. “They began to see the church as not simply maintaining boundaries with the world: rather, it’s called to lead lives of service to God and God’s creation. The twin emphases of inward spiritual health and external religious expression were tightly linked.” In our natural harvest fields, our tools have improved from year to year. But in our spiritual harvest we have had the best, which is the power of the Holy Spirit, from the beginning. Are we using this power effectively, or are we denying it?” asked minister Elam Hochstetler, who would become Woodlawn’s first bishop.

The story of coals fanned into flames led to establishing Mission Interests Committee, formed to give leadership of missions proclaiming the good news of the Gospel. This later became the fulfillment of Brother Baer’s vision of having MIC’s involvement of bringing a conservative Anabaptist witness to the nation’s capital. This was the beginning of Fellowship Haven in Washington, D.C. It was sponsored by MIC and AMA (Amish Mennonite Aid). In the 25th anniversary history of AMA, Ervin Hershberger wrote relating to Fellowship Haven, “For a web begun, God sends thread. He

did it again in this case. By God’s blessings the work grew, and by His grace the needs were supplied. He led so marvelously step by step, we can only praise Him Who did all things well.” Back then the flames for missions were not “lukewarm” but intentionally “hot.” (Revelation 3:15-16).

Thirty years ago I was preaching revival messages at one of our churches in a faraway community. One of the mid-elderly brothers invited me to his residence for a visit. I accepted. The main thing I remember about the visit was his concern. It was about the possible loss of the vision for mission in our brotherhood in fulfilling the great commission of Jesus Christ. Have we lost the vision? Do we need a fresh stirring of the embers from God called a revival?

AMA’s Personnel Director, Mark Webb, sent a message to the Beachy Ministers’ e-mail group asking, “Where are the Missionaries?” In his plea for workers he wrote, “Several weeks ago, I sent a message out to all the ministers in the Beachy Ministers’ e-mail asking for names of potential missionaries to serve with Amish Mennonite Aid. I received the name of one couple from one of the 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." Is it time to ask the Lord to stir the smoldering coals into flaming visions for missions of the Gospel?


Then almost like a "thief in the night" the world is awakened by the plague of COVID-19. It has invaded the communities where we reside in our temporal dwellings. As the expression goes, "We have never seen anything like this before; it has changed everything." No church gatherings, meetings canceled, schools closed, vacations, cruises, weddings, and much more postponed. And going out for dinner is not an option. This octogenarian no longer goes into the post office to have postage put on his outgoing mail. The record of infections and deaths is constantly posted by the news media. Since the "*many shall run to and fro*" (Daniel 12:4) has come to a "screeching halt," would this be a good time to invest the much money saved into missions winning souls for Christ? The prophet Daniel wrote, "*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the*

stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:2-3). Since so many of our travel plans have been put on pause, could these funds be channeled to a soul-winning mission that will point others to an eternal vacation with the Lord Jesus Christ?

Is the COVID-19 God's call for repentance? Many believers, prophecy scholars, and religious leaders think so. Writers, preachers, and others often quote 2 Chronicles 7:14, "*If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*" The meaning of this is that someone should repent. But who? Should it begin at the White House or on Capitol Hill? Should it begin with the fallen away "churches"? Can a nation repent? Where should God stir the embers and bring forth revival?

In 1968 the Mountain Anthems released their first album, "Precious Lord." I listened to the second song on the album dozens (maybe hundreds) of times while driving and working. The title of the song is, "Send A Revival." A phrase of this song still rings in my mind. "Lord, send a revival and let it begin in me." Ah! That's a good place to start. I can't bring revival in the hearts of

others. History tell us many revivals started with individuals who cried to God from a “broken and contrite heart.” An individual named Saul cried to God, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” The Lord revived his name to Paul. God used him to bring revival to the people of his time. The fruits of his commitment are

still blessing the church today with his New Testament’s writing in our Bible. Revival of individual persons is soon noticed by others. The Lord uses spiritually revived persons to stir the lukewarm embers in others. We need revival. Pray for revival. “Lord, stir the embers and send a revival and let it begin in me.” 

Wilt Thou Follow Me?

“Wilt thou follow Me?”

The Saviour asked.

The road looked bright and fair;
And filled with youthful hope and zeal
I answered, “Anywhere.”

“Wilt thou follow Me?”

Again He asked.

The road looked dim ahead;
But I gave one glance at His glowing face:
“To the end, dear Lord,” I said.

“Wilt thou follow Me?”

I almost blanched,
For the road was rough and new.
But I felt the grip of His steady hand
And it thrilled me through and through.

“Still followest thou?”

‘Twas a tender tone,
And it thrilled my inmost heart.
I answered not, but He drew me close,
And I knew we would never part.


-Unknown



marriages

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

Helmuth-Wittmer

Bro. Ross, son of Mark and Retha Helmuth, Harrisonburg, VA, and Sis. Jenise, daughter of Barbara and the late Larry Wittmer, Montgomery, IN, on Oct. 5, 2019, at First Mennonite Church for Mt. Olive Mennonite Church, Montgomery, IN, by Dave Wittmer. 

cradle roll

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

Fisher, Nathan and Ruthie (Fisher), East Waterford, PA, sixth child, fourth daughter, Charis Willow, May 17, 2020.

Frey, Elvie Jr. and Sonya (Riehl), Elkhart, IN, fourth child, third daughter, Briella Claire, May 12, 2020.

Hostetler, Chris and Donna (Martin), Auburn, KY, fourth child, second daughter, Krista Renae, May 6, 2020.

Jantzi, Darren and April (Overholt), Wellesley, ON, fifth child, second daughter, Mandi Grace, May 9, 2020.

Jess, Brian and Lori (Plank), Arthur, IL, first child and daughter, Felicity Rose, April 29, 2020.

Kauffman, Jeremy and Linda (Yoder), Oakland, MD, second child, first daughter, Briley Ann, April 16, 2020.

Kauffman, Josh and Katie (Raber), Bourbon, IN, first child and son, Cole Bentley, May 18, 2020.

Lapp, Austin and Susan (Lee), Antrim OH, (currently in Boston, MA), first child and son, Emerson Zaccai, May 11, 2020.

Lapp, Jonas and Leah (Zook), Hampton, CT, seventh child, third daughter, Annika Mary, February 27, 2020.

Leinbach, Willie and Carla (Kauffman), Hampton, CT, second child, first daughter, Charlotte Rose, April 25, 2020.

Martin, David and Beth (Sommers), Fresno, OH, sixth child, fifth daughter, Sara Grace, March 26, 2020.

Mast, Jonas and Emma (Yoder), Walhonding, OH, fourth child, third son, Colton James, April 7, 2020.

Miller, Eric and Amanda (Yoder), Goshen, IN, third child and son, Camden Lynn, May 22, 2020.

Miller, Ronnie and Beulah (Graber), Scranton, KS, second child, first daughter, Kate Brielle, April 21, 2020.

Raber, Timothy and Glorianna (Helmuth), Antrim, OH, sixth child, fourth son, Bradley Loyal, May 1, 2020.

Stoltzfus, David and Rachel (Nissley), Advance, MO, first child and son, Bryson Valor, April 26, 2020.

Stoltzfus, Mahlon and Charity (Miller), Hampton, CT, fifth child, second son, Boaz John, February 21, 2020.

Stoltzfus, Marcus and Dawn (Knepp), Iva, SC, first child and son, Watson Marc, April 6, 2020.

Swartzentruber, Kendall and Tina (Graber), Abbeville, SC, second child, first daughter, Paityn Elise, April 20, 2020.

Wagler, Travis and Lorinda (Zimmerman), Cross Hill, SC, first child and son, Finnley Brock, April 10, 2020.

Weaver, Aaron and Jen (Derksen), Greensburg, KY, first child and daughter, Courtlyn Brooke, April 27, 2020.

Weaver, Micah and Rebecca (Yoder), Owenton, KY, seventh child, sixth daughter, Elliana Joy, January 26, 2020.

Yoder, Darrell and Linda Dawn (Herschberger), Sullivan, IL, second child, first son, Wyatt Shane, March 31, 2020.

Yoder, Elvin and Melanie (Slabaugh), Hampton, CT, fifth child, second son, Theodore David, April 27, 2020.


Yoder, Kristoph and Regina (Hershberger), Oakland, MD, first child and daughter, Leyna Hope, May 31, 2020.

Yoder, Loren and Kendra (Wagler), Abbeville, SC, first child and son, Griffin Benjamin, March 19, 2020.

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

Zook, Justin and Jessica (Esh), Rural Retreat, VA, second child and daughter, Hazel Paige, May 5, 2020.

Zook, Nelson and Beth (Otto), Arthur, IL, second child and daughter, Danae Richelle, April 22, 2020.

Zook, Randall and Mary (Yoder), Rural Retreat, VA, third child and daughter, Olivia Kate, April 4, 2020. 



King, Eleanor Faith, beloved daughter of Vernon and Elaine (Witmer) King, was stillborn on December 22, 2019, at Baccus Hospital in Norwich, CT. Born at 40 weeks, all perfectly-formed six pounds of her were a testimony to God's perfect design. We are comforted in knowing Eleanor now enjoys perfection in the presence of her heavenly Father. She joins two miscarried siblings in heaven.

In addition to her parents, Eleanor is survived by grandparents: Andy and Anna Ruth King, Honeybrook, PA, and Daniel and Carol Witmer, Sheakleyville, PA; 11 aunts, 12 uncles, and ten cousins.

A funeral service was held at the Hampton Congregational Church on December 24, 2019, followed by a burial at the South Bigelow Cemetery with Jonas Lapp, Sam Fisher, and Mahlon Stoltzfus officiating.

Schrock, Ernest Ray, 58, of Warsaw, OH, died peacefully at his home with his mother by his side on Sunday, April 12, 2020.

Ernie was born on August 1, 1961, in Decatur, IL, to Daniel and Marie (Herschberger) Schrock.

He was a Downs Syndrome child. He loved to help others and enjoyed spending time with children, taking walks, picking flowers, and getting the mail. Ernie liked collecting cards, pictures, and special items he made at

the workshop that he attended. He also enjoyed singing and music.

He is survived by his mother, Marie Schrock; brothers: Gary (Mary) Schrock, Montezuma, GA; Dale Schrock, Atwood, IL; sisters: Carolyn (John David) Stutzman, Warsaw, OH; Ruth (Jon) Miller, Goshen, IN; Dorothy (Elvin) Stoltzfus, Honey Brook, PA; 11 nephews, 13 nieces, eight great-nephews, and seven great-nieces.

He was preceded in death by his father, Daniel Schrock; grandparents: Menno and Esther Herschberger, and Menno and Sovilla Schrock; uncles: Junior Herschberger, John Schrock, and Abe Schrock; and an aunt, Anna Helmuth.

A private service was held on April 15, 2020, at the Meadows of Light Church, Coshocton, OH, with James Mullet and Floyd Yoder officiating. Burial was at the Salem Amish Mennonite Church Cemetery.

Yoder, Samuel (Sam) Eugene, 59, of Hiddenite, NC, died on April 9, 2020, at his home. After bravely fighting stage IV colon cancer for a year, he peacefully and swiftly passed away of sudden cardiac arrest. He was born on April 10, 1960, in Geauga County, OH, to MaryAnn (Hochstetler) and the late Alfred Yoder.

He gave his heart to Christ in his youth and was a member at Dayspring Christian Fellowship where he loved to attend! Although he was a farmer at

heart, he worked in construction for his last number of years. He loved his family very much and was always showing them that he cared. He enjoyed meeting people and always had time for them. He was a truly kind man!

On June 4, 1983, he was married to Christina Miller. She survives. Also cherishing and honoring his memory are his children: Jonathan (Tina) Yoder and children: Sierra, Willow, and Laurel; Janelle (Jason) Fehr and children: Brooklyn, Jaxon, and Denver; Janean (Evan) Sommers and children: Donevan and Lincoln; son, Jared Yoder (fiancé, Amy); daughter, Heidi Yoder; and son, Justin Yoder. Also surviving are his siblings: Laverne (Mary) Yoder, Jim (Naomi) Yoder, Leon (Anita) Yoder, Joyce (Ken) Yutzy, and Grace Yoder; and his mother, MaryAnn Yoder.

He was preceded in death by his father and mother-in-law.

A small graveside service and burial was held on Easter morning, April 12, 2020, at Dayspring Christian Fellowship Cemetery with Vernon Troyer and Laverne Yoder officiating.

*Weep not, my dear friend – weep not so
for me,*

At last I am home – at last I am free.

I'm free from a life of cancer and stress,

And free to be home, where all is so blessed.

*No more of chemo, nor constantly cold,
Nor will I ever be feeble or old.*

So weep not, my friends, for I am not dead;

For really right now I'm living instead!

*Words cannot express nor tongue could
convey*

This beautiful place or brightness of day.

The music so sweet and never grows old,

Yes, sweeter by far than anyone told.

And to see Jesus, my Savior and Friend

And all of this glory that never will end.

*Take courage, dear wife; dear children,
stay true,*

For God will provide for each one of you.

The grandchildren all, each one is so dear,

*And trust then at last – you all will come
here!!*

–Written by Stephen Miller,

Sam's brother-in-law.



observations

Michael and Pam Rozell founded Potter's Field Ministries around 30 years ago near Whitefish, Montana. The ministry was supported by and affiliated with a large evangelical church group called, Calvary Chapel

Association. Potter's Field Ministries had ongoing missions in six foreign countries. The ministry holdings in Montana include an 80-acre ranch as well as a local chain of four hamburger joints called Mudman. The chain was known for serving

very large hamburgers.

But in recent times, the ministry has come under scrutiny related to allegations ranging from abuse of the persons who worked and served there to financial improprieties. A financial audit didn't reveal any impropriety. But last July the restaurants closed, and Calvary Chapel Association withdrew its involvement and clarified its actions with this statement, "We find that the Potter's Field form of discipleship training and methods of ministry are not compatible with the Calvary Chapel form of ministry."

In mid-May of 2020, one of the restaurants quietly reopened. Former workers noticed and were not amused and protested outside the location.

I have no connection to any of this, so cannot vouch for the accuracy of the allegations. However, some of the things that are alleged are certainly things that a redeemed child of God should seek to avoid. Part of what caught my eye about this kerfuffle was that the allegations leveled against the organization included workers being underpaid for labor on behalf of the organization.

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One value that I esteem highly in my cultural upbringing is the value of volunteerism. Those of us with Amish and conservative Mennonite heritage rightly recognize that the military draft of yesteryear served

to stoke the interest among our people in finding suitable volunteer efforts that didn't contribute to the war effort. But many who choose to volunteer now are young enough that the connection between current volunteer opportunities and the draft seems quite remote. This is refreshing if it means that volunteering is regarded as valuable on its own merits.

I welcome the emphasis I've heard in recent years that we should not regard "service" as something we "go into". Without stating this it can build the impression that we "go out of service" when the volunteer leaves that post. As Jesus followers, we should live our entire lives in His service. I propose that we as constituencies, churches, families, and individuals position ourselves to reap big benefits when we set aside specific time to serve others without the expectation of material remuneration. I'd like to stoke the embers of volunteerism in our midst. My impression is that a variety of factors have dulled our appetite for volunteering both at home and abroad. I'll list a few here:

1. Economic prosperity makes some people feel like they can't afford to drop out of the income-earning pool. Someone observed that mission organizations and residential voluntary service units staffed by volunteers have a more difficult

time filling staffing needs when the economy is booming. Currently we have an expanding array of options for volunteering for weeks or months which is often regarded as being less disruptive to wage-earning efforts. When short-term stints reinforce the need to live lives of service, these are useful. But when short-term stints serve to inoculate us with the assurance that we've "done our part now," this is regrettable.

2. In some cases legitimate family responsibilities can morph into a self-preservation mindset that competes with, rather than complements, Christ's expectation of exclusive primary loyalty.

3. When monetary support for a volunteer is presented as a wage or salary, this shifts the focus. I'm mentioning this, not because it is right or wrong, but because I think we should acknowledge its effect.

4. When a volunteer's monetary support depends on his ability to raise his own support, it shifts our focus. This is illustrated by the story of our neighbors who served in a foreign country. They became thoroughly disillusioned by the need to "prove" the legitimacy of their ministry, by promoting it shamelessly to a variety of churches and organizations during the time they spent away from their foreign post. I propose that when we expect our volunteers to be good at raising their own funds, it results in

moving the needle in the direction of earning rather than volunteering.

It's been over 30 years ago that I went to Central America as a volunteer under Amish Mennonite Aid for a two year term when I was 22 years old. About seven years later, our family went back for another four years. I found the experience of those six-seven years being very formative in terms of my awareness of the value of volunteering. There was something very satisfying about the idea that I was giving my time to the effort. And the organization that I was working under took the responsibility of taking care of my material needs, without financial remuneration beyond a monthly allowance. As a single volunteer in the late 80s, I was able to save some money on my allowance of \$20 per month since I didn't have much need to spend money.

It can be rightly noted that what I experienced functions better for those whose time is marked by years rather than decades. Many volunteers find it necessary to return to their native settings at some point after they've invested decades focused on efforts that don't generate funds. Unless they've figured out some way to live that doesn't require any money, they often need some help in addressing those inevitable financial needs. That help can come from a variety of sources, including the

organizations they served with, their families, and home congregations.

In our homes, churches, and communities, let's continue to reinforce the value of volunteering. Legitimate volunteering includes serving at home in obscure ways, serving our family, serving our church, serving our neighbor, and serving away from home.

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I've often heard people refer to dogs as "man's best friend." I suppose that this idea comes both from canines' ability to perform useful duties and because of their relational qualities. For most of my growing-up years, we had two dogs. Duke was a large black dog that ran fast enough to get an occasional rabbit. His side-kick was Sid, a short-legged little dog who seemed to have been built more for comfort than speed. Sid seemed to resent Duke's abilities and nursed an inferiority complex. When we petted Duke, Sid would often growl until he got some of the attention that Duke was getting. Some of these tendencies that Duke and Sid displayed were comical for us to observe because we were far too familiar with those shortcomings. We enjoyed those dogs.

A kind reader pointed me to an article in *World* that ran in March of 2019 that highlights a more concerning element of our relationship with pets as a society.

The article is entitled "The Temple of Fido" with this subtitle, "How our worship of animals dehumanizes us" by Warren Cole Smith. This article offers a perspective on pets that today's Christians do well to hear.

We shouldn't feel guilty for enjoying the benefits of our relationship to animals. However, we should be concerned when we see animals as being as valuable as humans, or maybe even more so. We rightly recoil at that suggestion. But is it possible that sometimes our actions give a message we wouldn't dare say out loud? Some animal right's apologists don't believe that animal ownership is a proper concept. Facebook is a social media platform that has been used to buy and sell a wide variety of things. But it is against their rules to buy and sell animals.

Life is risky. American society is one that places a high priority on minimizing risk. But if society is conditioned to avoid risk, is it a surprise that people avoid the risk of raising children, and opt for the low risk choice of having a pet instead? I'm not so concerned when people have pets. But most of us have seen examples where people invest relational and financial resources in animals that should go to our families, and neighbors far and near. Sometimes it becomes difficult to understand when we cross that line

between what is proper and what is excessive. And the line probably isn't the same for all of us. But, if we can all agree that this line exists, it should open the door for healthy discussion about how that line affects our investment of relational and financial resources and maybe even our vocational efforts.

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Bee keepers are concerned and keeping a wary eye on the

developments of an invasive “murder hornet,” officially called the Asian Giant Hornet, that has been first detected in North American in recent months. These large insects can move into a bee hive and kill all the inhabitants in short order. I would be concerned too if my livelihood depended on honey bees who were under attack by this sort of invasive species.

-RJM 

Biblical Perspectives on Work

Wendell Heatwole, Olar, SC

During my lifetime I've built two houses for my family. In working on the plans I particularly enjoyed drawing the elevations. They showed what the outside of the completed houses would look like from different perspectives.

If work were a house, what would it look like? Let's look at work from four different Biblical perspectives: from Creation, the Fall, our present life outside Eden, and eternity.

Perspective from Creation

From Creation we learn that work is a gift from God, not something that came into effect after things went sour. Instituted at Creation, work was imbued with dignity from the

start. Part of work's dignity rests on the goodness of creation. Creation is good because it is the work of God. Would God create something inherently evil? Contrary to some religious philosophies, our material world is good, not base or evil.

Work also has dignity because it is a duty given to us by God. God intended that man rule creation and subdue it, and He instructed Adam and Eve to tend and keep the garden (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15). Just as being made in God's image sanctifies human life, so being entrusted with the responsibility to care for the earth dignifies man's work.

The mandate to subdue and rule creation does not give us license to abuse and ravish the earth but

speaks of mastering and managing it. Caring for creation and using its resources was not beneath Adam and Eve's spirituality; in fact, it was part of it. Sometimes well-meaning people who are earnest for heavenly things unduly devalue or despise earthly concerns, not realizing that work is spiritual. God works, and He commanded sinless man to work.

The perspective from Creation shows us the demands of work. Since God gave us material bodies, the earth and its atmosphere provide the natural resources we need for life and productivity. Consequently, work is very utilitarian and down-to-earth. The Bible presents it as ordinary and matter of fact, part of God's design and order. He intended work to be one aspect of what it means to be human just as searching for food is part of what it means to be an animal.

While work is necessary for our survival, our work holds greater meaning and purpose than scavenging does for a coon. Nevertheless, Scripture does not present work as an explicit act or form of worship. This is the opposite error of devaluing earth-keeping and life-sustaining work. Does tilling the soil and planting seeds draw us into communion with God? Then what about unclogging the drain or pumping the septic tank? If one kind of work is a worship experience, why not the other, when both farming

and plumbing have inherent dignity? Consequently, while work brings us into God's will and may draw our thoughts Godward, it is not a vehicle for worship.

Before leaving Creation's perspective, we might ask what work is. Some folks seem to think that unless significant physical activity is involved, it's not real work, or at least it doesn't measure up to God's standard. And sometimes we use language which demeans those who are supported financially in Christian service: "Do you work or are you supported?"

Mastering and managing the creation for the glory of God and the good of mankind involves a profusion of interdependent tasks. Some of these are labors of charity and service which provide no means for financial support. Others involve mental labor rather than manual. It is no more right to say that accountants, engineers, and scholars are not part of the workforce since they do not grunt than it is for the eye to tell the ear that it is not part of the body since it does not see. Almost any minister will tell you that preparing to preach is hard work, as are a lot of other tasks involved in meeting humanity's spiritual and material needs. Work is work whether one supports himself or he is supported by others, whether the sweat is literal or figurative.

Perspective from the Fall

Work from the perspective of the Fall reveals distorted features resulting from the corruption of the design's initial beauty. But just as man's fall into sin did not obliterate God's image in man, neither did it nullify the goodness of work. However, it did make the task of mastering and managing creation physically difficult and spiritually treacherous.

Paul speaks directly to the changed spiritual climate: "Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned..." (Romans 5:12). Mankind became morally contaminated. Adam and Eve were no longer inclined toward obedience and righteousness. Sins such as greed, envy, ambition, covetousness, selfishness, stinginess, and sloth started to affect their work.

The physical conditions changed because God cursed the ground. In Adam's sentence God reveals the altered nature of our work. Labor would be intensified and frustrated, the earth becoming more difficult to master and manage. Wrestling out a living would involve pain and misery. Much work contains a miserable element— be it disagreeableness, boredom, or danger—leading to the mistaken notion that work is bad, something to be avoided.

Work would also be less productive

and more demanding. Thorns and thistles would spring up and compete with the desirable plants which were for man's consumption and benefit. Work would become a lifelong struggle. Wealth seems to mitigate some of the struggle, so much so that many are able to prepare for a long retirement of ease. The possibility of a pleasure-filled retirement does not invalidate the basic truth that the tentacles of the curse reach to life's end. Neither does it justify a self-centered old age which leaves us spiritually barren and personally unfulfilled.

It's worth pondering why God brought these difficult and disagreeable elements into work. The first part of Adam's judgment contains the clue: "Cursed is the ground for your sake" (Genesis 3:17). "For your sake" must mean the Curse was more than simple punishment. Rather it was intended to be instructive and redemptive. These changes were for mankind's good and benefit.

Aggravating and wearying aspects of work remind us of sin's consequences and call us to desire a better country (Hebrews 11:13-16). Perhaps also God cursed the ground for the same reason He confounded the languages at Babel—to prevent a utopian environment in which sin could thrive unchecked. So the Curse is redemptive in that God

changed our physical world in order to have a positive impact on our spiritual lives.

The perspective from outside of Eden

The greater realities of the Fall were revealed when one of Adam's sons murdered his brother. As a result of his sin Cain lived in exile, "east of Eden" (Genesis 4:16). We don't need to live "east of Eden," overwhelmed by our depravity. We can be washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Nevertheless, we live outside of Eden. Even though we are partakers of the divine nature, we are still plagued by sin. Greed, envy, ambition, covetousness, selfishness, stinginess, and sloth easily taints our work. No one-time experience or commitment can eradicate the curse of sin once and for all. However we do not need to flounder in it like the man in Romans 7, unable to experience the deliverance presented in Romans 8. Nevertheless, the fact that sin is always lying at the door, waiting to trip us up, calls us to a close walk with the Lord and highlights the value of a functioning and accountable church relationship to help safeguard our worklife. Sin's ever-present danger is why the Bible addresses several areas of work from a perspective outside of Eden.

Scripture calls us to confront our tendency to laziness. I suppose there is a sanctified laziness involving needed rest and relaxation. Accurately reading our bodies' warning signals when we are becoming exhausted is quite different from shirking the command to work. That is why Proverbs exhorts us to consider the ant's diligence, and Ephesians tells us not to steal, but to work to have enough for our needs as well as the needs of others (Proverbs 6:6-11; Ephesians 4:28).

We must also recognize the danger of idleness. Though often associated with laziness, the wealthy are not immune to its lure. Part of the shortcoming of idleness is a parasitic rather than a productive approach to life. Able-bodied people given to idleness are like children who weasel out of work, forcing their siblings to complete jobs assigned by their parents. An even greater peril of idleness is captured by the well-known dictum that it is "the devil's workshop."

When Paul wrote, "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat," he rooted bad behavior in idleness. Similarly when saying that young widows should not be put on the roll, Paul was concerned about the devastating personal and spiritual consequences of unemployment (see 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 and 1 Timothy 5:11-14). Perhaps one

reason God cursed the earth was so our increased workload would keep us from having so much time for mischief. Seriously!

The contamination of sin demands that we deal with the appeal of riches, a motive that drives the work of many a person. Christians are not immune to the love of money and the sins it spawns. So subtly can wealth ascend to the throne of our lives, and the greatest sin of all is that it displaces Him who we say we serve. Part of the danger of pursuing riches is the cost of the chase. One of those costs is the demands it puts on one's time. The appeal of wealth can lead to the opposite of laziness and idleness—workaholism. Pursuing riches distances us from God and godly values, from family and family relationships, and from church and brotherhood accountability.

Haunted by a focus on material things, we must orient our lives and chart our course by fixing our eyes “not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV). As strangers and pilgrims on the earth who are moving toward our eternal homeland, we “use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away” (1 Corinthians 7:31 NIV). If our work-life is not governed by a mind that is set on things above,

we easily succumb to materialism (Colossians 3:1-2).

While life outside of Eden's sinless perfection involves vigilance against our work being infected by sin, it also invites us to enjoy the satisfaction of work as a simple pleasure of life. Just as the earth is still filled with beauty even though the original creation was destroyed by water, even so work retains its basic purpose and essential dignity although some of its original sheen was lost in the Fall. Yet we can corrupt work's goodness by making it carry meaning unintended by God.

Isn't it wonderful when we find our work satisfying and meaningful? However, work is not the essence of life. Life's true meaning and satisfaction rests in knowing the Creator and joining in the work of His kingdom which goes beyond time into eternity. Nevertheless, one of the rich things God has given us to enjoy is work. Perhaps no one says it better than the author of Ecclesiastes: “Every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God” (Ecclesiastes 3:13). We fail when we pursue the simple pleasures of life in the place of God rather than enjoying them for what they are.

Our lives are filled with work. For many of us, work consumes the single largest segment of our time. Yet work is the handmaiden to our

existence, not the essence of it. The essence is seen in Eden, not while Adam and Eve tended the garden, but as we picture it to have been, when God walked with them in the cool of the day. In the words of the apostle Paul, "To live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21).

Speaking in the context of work, Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Not that work is antithetical to serving Christ, but work is not what life is all about. Life is about Christ, and work is both complementary and subordinate to that. Even the Preacher of Ecclesiastes wraps up his musings by saying, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

The perspective from eternity

When our life's work is ended, what will our work look like from eternity's perspective? That question must be answered by first reaffirming the spirituality of all morally legitimate work. While the words sacred and secular express valid distinctions, we should not attempt to sort our work into separate piles under those categories, delighting in the one and disdaining the other. Just as body, soul, and spirit are integrated to constitute what we are as human beings, so the material and spiritual

dimensions of work are integrated to form a unity. Who we are in Christ flows into our entire work experience, and our work flows out to the glory of God and for the cause of Christ.

Forced servitude must be one of the most demeaning conditions under which to work. Yet Paul's instructions to those serving in bondage shows that even work under such conditions is not a strictly physical matter, it is imbued with the spiritual: "Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men . . . for you serve the Lord Christ" (See Colossians 3:22-24). All work that is legitimate for a Christian is permeated with spiritual meaning.

However, that is not the same as saying all work accrues to equal eternal value. People may pursue work that fails to capture their potential for Christ and His church. Some serve the cause of Christ best through work in the marketplace, while others are suited to function in more direct church and service-oriented work. Timothy may well have become a merchant in Lystra, but what loss to the church if he had not joined in the work of the apostle Paul. Lydia, on the other hand, was oriented to Christian service as a businesswoman.

As people open themselves to God's leading, they sometimes shift the focus and nature of their work

over the course of their lives so they can count most for the cause of Christ. And it must be said that sometimes people who are zealous for God choose work they think has high potential for eternal good, but for which they are not well suited, leading to frustration and ineffectiveness.

The perspective of eternity calls us to utilize whatever our work may be for the kingdom of God. God has brought us on board as Christ's ambassadors to join with Him in the work of reconciling lost mankind to Himself. This high spiritual calling should permeate our work with meaning and purpose. Whatever the nature of our work, we should seek to leverage it for eternal good.

Sometimes those under consideration for church leadership are asked whether they will endeavor to make all else subservient to the interests and welfare of God's kingdom. Is that not a valid question for all of us? Why should our own interests and goals take priority over the Lord's? So even beyond utilizing our work for God's reconciling purposes, we must subjugate our work to ends of lasting spiritual worth. That means values beyond paychecks, productivity, and profits will govern our work.

From the perspective of eternity, will we wish we had spent more time at work and less time nurturing our

families? Will we regret participating in service projects or the time we gave in voluntary service? Will we wish we had paid our employees less and driven harder bargains with local businessmen? Will we be ashamed if earning power was our primary consideration in work? Will we rue a career invested in children's lives by teaching school when we also had a bent toward far better paying work in business?

Not that teaching is more spiritual work than business. Rather, the spiritual realities of eternity awaken us to thoughtfully choose and use our work for God's glory. The dignity and sacredness of all legitimate work should not dull our sensitivity to how God would have each of us employ our work in His service. Neither should it serve to rationalize our own unwillingness to engage in work of great eternal potential that requires considerable personal cost.

Since our work is in large measure how we serve God, we should work carefully, making the most of our opportunities, and seeking to understand the will of the Lord (Ephesians 5:15-17).

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Glimpses of Our Missionary Journey (Part 1)

Darrell Nisly, Sioux Narrows, Ontario

Several years ago at our annual Beachy Ministers Meeting Brother Darrell spoke with such tenderness and urgency as he told his story. He waited for thirty years until he was finally asked to speak in a public setting among the First Nations people in the north. Tears moistened my eyes as he shared his heart-breaking story after waiting, yearning, and praying so-o-o long for such an opportunity. -FS

July 31, 2019, marked the thirty-second anniversary that my wife Kathy and I, along with our daughter and son, first set foot on Believers Fellowship property in Sioux Narrows. Although we had never seen the place, we committed to serving here for two years. We came with the instructions to “do church and Sunday School” and develop relationships in the Sioux Narrows and surrounding First Nations communities.

Being young, uneducated, and inexperienced, we found ourselves asking many, many questions. We sought advice from MIC board members, seasoned missionaries, local acquaintances, and anyone whom we felt could give us insight into what our “job” should be. Oftentimes we came away from encounters with these people having no clear answers

and even more questions. Sometimes it felt like we had walked into an impossible situation.

The first years were spent looking for ways to connect with people. We conducted Sunday worship services and Sunday School in a wide variety of venues and schedules: in our living room, in our basement, in our garage, in a re-claimed abandoned building on the Reserve, in co-workers’ homes, morning, afternoon, or evening. I subscribed to a native news publication, taking a copy to every home on the Reserve every other month. I attended as many community events as I could; events such as hockey and volleyball tournaments, celebratory feasts, fishing derbies, weddings, and funerals. I initiated numerous gardening projects with various individuals with limited “success.”

I became known as “the Bible man” and our van was dubbed “the Bible van”. For those who saw me as bringing “white man’s teachings,” I became a threat to the native traditional ways. I have had people refuse to come to the door for me, close the door in my face, order me off their property, and heard nasty things shouted at me. One chief said to me, “I dislike all white people, but I hate white Christians.” Later I discovered that in his youth he had been abused in a “Christian” residential school.

However, many of the people have received me very warmly, welcoming me into their homes and inviting me to special events in their lives! Perhaps the highest compliment of my experience came from a band manager who requested that I come to the community at any time because “you’re one of us.”

I have attended more funerals than I can begin to recall. Today I attended another in a long list of traditional native funerals. Listening to the monotone intonations of the elder “instructing” the deceased spirit in Ojibway how to make his final journey, I couldn’t help but remember the first funeral I attended. The deceased was a young lady who had committed suicide, and although I didn’t actually know her, I was acquainted with the family and wanted to show my support. I waited outside the home with

others as people drifted in and out of the house. After several hours, I noticed that the father and a brother had come outside and were talking together while looking toward me. Suddenly they were coming my way and abruptly moved into my personal space.

“What are you doing here?” they inquired rather gruffly. “Oh, I just heard about your loss and wanted to come and show my sympathy and support,” I replied. “You won’t say anything?” they asked. “No, certainly not unless you ask me to,” I responded. “Okay then, you can stay;” was their verdict.

I was relieved and rather shaken as I tried to understand what was going on. Not until sometime later did I learn that just prior to this incident, Mormon missionaries had attended one of their funerals. Waiting until the casket was lowered into the ground, they stepped up and “preached” to the captive audience. Shocked, I now understood why they were so skeptical of my presence!

As the years rolled by, I made it a point to attend as many of the funerals in the community as I could, in an attempt to build trust and understanding. Never again was I interrogated concerning my intentions in attending, but how I longed to publicly share the Gospel in such a setting.

To be continued next month. 

Jesus's Hands (Part 1)

Susan Schlabach, Ripley, OH



We could benefit from getting to know a certain group of people who lives among us. Perhaps they seem a bit obscure to us because they are not organizing events in the forefront. They may hurry off after church services (after sitting in the back), and they hardly intermingle in our socializing because they live such distracted lives. Distracted with what?

Ah, they are “the ‘parents’ of the parents!” They care for the very personal needs of adults. They may be up at night. They change diapers. The food might be puréed, but for sure the terry bibs are oversized. They comb, shower, put to bed, comfort, dress, wipe drool, and sometimes restrain. They are the “Hillcrest Nursing Home and Mountain View Nursing Home” staff in our homes. Only there’s no on-and-off duty. Days off and task sharing are rare. There is no end of a term in sight. Their wages don’t benefit some overseas ministry. They **are** the mission.

Because I don’t have experience

in this matter, I took the blessed opportunity of interviewing over a dozen ladies who are or were caregivers. The care being referred to is usually for aging parents, but could also be any physically-challenged loved one. The fine details vary, but the fatigue and feelings of isolation add up in the same way.

Let’s hear them carefully as they relate to us some of their biggest challenges, their blessings, their regrets, their vision, and their longings for greater involvement. Basically, let’s allow them to be human and fail. Let’s learn how to laugh and cry with them. Hear their challenges in their own words.

Caregiving is so daily. The 24/7 duty times can isolate us from the rest of the world, besides making us feel unproductive in anything. We have no idea when it will end.

Life steps up to a much busier pace. There are showers to give, special food preparation, frequent doctor visits, and more. That’s all in addition to the demands of normal life.

We feel like sandwich filling between two pieces of bread. We are the filling, between parents on one side and husband and children on the other. Sometimes the filling gets squeezed out and things get messy.

As a daughter, it becomes delicate to give directions to a father on something as basic as teeth-brushing, yet try to keep respect for his person. It becomes especially complicated when he makes unwise or unsafe choices.

It's a challenge to find worthwhile things for them to do. Letting them help me is not helpful.

When to seek medical intervention, or even a nursing home, are haunting questions about getting this right. When we receive unsolicited advice, it makes us feel insufficient. We didn't apply for this job.

It's especially challenging when the person I'm caring for is critical and unappreciative. Or when I have to guess at what their needs are because they can no longer convey a message. Answering the same questions ten times an hour wears my soul down and my own response makes me question how truly saved I am. I hate to ask others to provide respite care so that I can go and take a break.

What do you wish someone would have told you? What regrets do you have?

Going into this experience, emotions

ran high. We were respected and honored by others for being willing to do this. It wasn't long until everyday reality swallowed up all the positive.

It is important that the decision of parental caregiving comes with whole-family involvement. I wish someone had warned me that if we moved her in with us we might have her with us for a long time. If we had considered the larger picture, we might have had someone move in with her first. I wish someone would have told us about the toll this takes on a marriage. I hadn't known that people would get tired of hearing me talk about our situation.

I wish we had kept better record of regression of ability and health (with pictures, videos or writing it down) to help document more carefully how her ability changed over time and to keep absent family members abreast of the declining changes.

When relationships wear ragged, (think Alzheimer's, dementia, etc.) I shouldn't take negative remarks personally. I wish I had not allowed my frustration to spill over during confrontational times. I wish I'd been more gentle with Mom when she was losing her speech, sight, hearing, memory, and mind.

I wish that in insignificant matters we would have allowed Dad to have his own way instead of always needing to be in charge. In small ways he

could have maintained some dignity during this difficult time of declining independence.

And lest we begin to think all is negative about caregiving, read on! They tell about blessings in the calling.

We learned family history and stories through memories we'd not heard before. At those times when I despaired of the task at hand, I remembered that young people at Hillcrest Nursing Home (for example) do these things for people they don't even know! What a privilege to care for the one who first cared for me.

Mom's fitting responses from time to time show her personality or her appreciation.

We laugh at the humor in some of the unpredictable reasoning!

Keeping a Thankfulness Journal created a keen, daily awareness of my blessings.

The final weeks when Mom needed total care was a beautiful ending to the years of more difficult caregiving.

God grew compassion in my life that I never experienced when caring for small children. God grew empathy in our family toward others. God grew in me a moment-by-moment dependence on Him.

A closeness in relationship develops that others in the family may not be aware of. Our adult children's

assistance was such a blessing and drew our family together in a new way.

Both my husband and I had close relatives who were handicapped, preparing us in a unique way for our own handicapped child. My mother (whom I'm caring for) relates having cared for her mother, and I ponder my daughters' observations of caregiving.

To push the wheelchair of this steadfast, faithful, godly man, about to end his race, is a beautiful precious burden. I get to watch my mother's gentle care of Dad despite her own limitations and am inspired. When my dad prays I hear his childlike heart coming to His all-knowing Father, and it is beautiful. I have a front seat, seeing my parents' faith in God staying strong to the end.

I am indebted to this group of ladies for allowing us to "step inside their skin" and in a very small way see what they see and feel what they feel. Next month this subject continues with more thoughts from their experiences about caregiving tips, routines, and expressions of appreciation.

"Lord of the loving heart, may mine be loving too.

Lord of the gentle hands, may mine be gentle too.

Lord of the willing feet, may mine be willing too.

So may I grow more like Thee

In all I say and do."

—Phyllis Garlick 

Do What You Can for Jesus

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Low-hanging branches of scraggly bushes scratched against the small Rav on the narrow track to old Sophia's house. A lady beside the road was holding a small child in her arms. As we slowly bounced past, the child saw my white skin and drew back in terror and wailed. I was grateful for the dear African church friends with me.

Six ladies and I met at Sophia's house. Our purpose was to destroy her horrible chigger problem once and for all, we hoped. Chiggers were coming up out of her dirt floor because it was not cleaned and swept every day and sprinkled with water.

The ladies said Sophia's head is not working. I believe it. Why else would she live in such filth and not bathe? Why else would she just go away every day, walking and walking, to markets and where else, God knows. Zadock was helpful by going to her hut early and telling her to stay at home because we were coming.

The women brought containers of cow dung; fresh, sticky, and smelly

stuff. They carried it in big bowlfuls on their heads. They dug up dirt and mixed the dirt and dung with water with a hoe till it was the right consistency to smear the walls and floor of her small hut.

I washed some of her dishes and her wobbly table and chairs. Everything needed to be cleaned.

The women carried handfuls of the dirt and dung mixture into the house. I did not want to help, but I decided I should. I got big handfuls and took it inside and plopped many loads on the floor. Finally, I started doing it with a big hoe. It was not easy to have that mixture on my white hands. The women smeared the walls and floors and said, "Now Sophia's house is clean."

I told the dear African women that we are doing this work for the Lord.

We were hungry. Bananas and a big cookie sheet of banana bread were much appreciated. Dorice cooked beans and a large kettle of rice on three stones over a small fire. I had brought 20 chapoties. It was a special

time of fellowship.

When we were done eating, Mary read Psalm 23 in Luo, and I shared some thoughts. I am not sure if they were familiar with Psalm 23. The one lady was a new Christian and wanted the reference.

We walked back to a beautiful, fresh water stream in the heart of the country for more water. The children and women bathing in the clear water eyed us curiously. The women filled a tub with water and plunged in Sophia's filthy blanket. Julline stepped in the tub and stepped up and down, up and down, to clean it. The water got a filthy gray, was poured away, and the process was repeated. The women carried back heavy bucketsful of water on their heads. I just carried two jugs. They work hard and are stronger than I am.

Mark and Micah came over with the pikipiki (motorcycle) and replaced two metal sheets on the roof. There had been many holes.

Sophia's feet got soaked in a strong


anti-chigger solution. Mary patiently dug chiggers out of Sophia's gnarled feet with a pin. The ladies took Sophia behind the house to bathe her using a large plastic tub. Sophia laughed and said, "I have not bathed for ten years." No wonder she smelled badly.

When it was time to leave they all wanted to ride with me to the main road. I had the small Rav. I decided to just let them pack in and they happily did.

They worked hard. I appreciated their help and their songs as they worked. They were singing as we drove over the small narrow track back to the church house.

God bless those helpful and caring African women. Some sweet day I hope to sing with them in heaven's choir.

When I got home I scrubbed and scrubbed in the shower. I quickly took my dirty clothes out to the back porch. I was very tired.

Wherever I live, I want to work for Jesus and care about others. 

WHEN YOU DO WHAT YOU PLEASE,
DOES WHAT YOU DO PLEASE GOD?

Lost Art of Communication

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

The Great Quarantine of 2020 was an eye-opening experience for the majority of the world and had a massive impact on our methods of communication. I believe that it forcibly swung the pendulum in favor of more digital and virtual communication out of pure necessity. Those people who observed the stay-at-home orders, and social distancing protocols, were forced to find other more creative ways to stay in communication and operate companies remotely. One popular video conferencing service had a jump in daily users from 10 million to 200 million in only three months' time during the pandemic.¹

For years, the majority of human communication was verbal. God created much of the world verbally, and His first communication with mankind was verbal. In the beginning God's communication with mankind was clear and personal. God walked

in the garden with Adam and Eve and had a close relationship with them. Then, sin separated them from God and the intimate back-and-forth communication that they had with God was broken. Few people have had that intimate back-and-forth communication since the fall of man.

Verbal communication is the use of language to transfer information through speaking or sign language. This is the oldest, most efficient, and most common form of communication. We use it in meetings (both in-person and video conference), phone calls, and in person-to-person conversation at work, home, school, and wherever else we interact with other humans. In the 1970s a man by the name of Albert Mehrabien came up with what is known as the 7 – 38 – 55 Rule. The general explanation of the rule is that only 7% of what a person communicates is actually the words he says. 38% is the pitch and tone

¹ venturebeat.com

of his voice, the speed and rhythm of the spoken word, and the pauses between those words, and 55% is the person's gestures, his pose, and his facial expressions. Which brings us to another form of communication. Nonverbal communication is the use of body language, gestures, and facial expressions to convey information to others. This can be both intentional and unintentional. Actions as simple as crossing your arms or raising your eyebrows can say more than the words that come from your mouth.²

The ability to communicate and communicate well is paramount to the survival of civilization. When God confused the language at the Tower of Babel and communication was broken, society as they knew it was over. Nothing could be accomplished. They were no longer unified in their mode of communication. People soon grouped together based on whether they had the same mode of communication. We don't know, but we can surmise that families were split, friends could no longer speak to one another, and social hierarchy probably took a back seat. Everyone was divided based on their mode of communication (language: spoken, written, or visual).

2 rightattitudes.com

Today, we see a similar yet far more subtle disconnect. There are many methods of person-to-person communication that have to do with written or visual communication. Social media is now more of a platform than an interesting pastime. What started as a way to stay connected with friends and distant relatives has blossomed into learning platforms, business platforms, advertising, and people living in the equivalent of a glass house. Texting has become a preferred form of communication. Texting is considered more efficient, since it dispenses with the social pleasantries expected in a phone call, and allows for time to formulate answers to questions without feeling the pressure of time. Even with emojis, these positives come at the expense of the nonverbal cues that come from a face-to-face conversation, and the tone and pitch variations present in verbal communication.³

For those who are plugged into and utilize these various forms of communication, it is easy to forget and lose touch with those who are not connected to the same social network that we are. Are we alienating people

3 <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/careerdevelopment/types-of-communication>

whom we love because we are so busy communicating with the people at our fingertips? It is so much easier and takes so much less time to quickly type a text message, email, or leave a “post” on someone’s “wall” than it is to write a letter, send a birthday card, pick up the phone, or even—“GASP!”—go and see them in person! It is very easy to fall into this trap of taking the path of least resistance regarding communication. Someone recently shared with me what an elderly woman from their Sunday School class shared. With tears streaming down her face, she told the class, “I love my grandchildren, but as they’ve gotten older, they no longer come and visit to sit and talk with me. They come to visit and get out their phones.”

Are we building a technological Tower of Babel? In a world where we are so connected, it seems as though we’ve never been so far apart. The ability to communicate with anyone anytime, seems to have resulted in more superficial communication and less deep, face-to-face, heart-to-heart communication. As a mentor, I have found that people who genuinely want to communicate on a deeper, personal level want to do it face-to-face. The art of

meaningful communication takes time. Regularly taking time to communicate takes commitment. Commitment to a relationship takes character.

Does this mean that these various methods of communication are wrong? No, they are amoral. We have a responsibility to use these various methods of communication with wisdom and moderation. When used properly, most forms of communication can be used to bless others.

Let’s take the time to examine our lives, our relationships, and our communications and find areas where we can improve and put more time and effort into communicating in a more meaningful and personal way. Take the time to send a handwritten letter to someone you care about. Take the morning you were going to sleep in to meet someone for coffee whom you know could use some encouragement. Visit your grandparents while they are still here. Put your feelings for your loved ones on paper. Call someone you know who is in service far from home. Meaningful communication is the foundation of meaningful relationships. Let’s practice the art of meaningful communication before it is forever lost.



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The old nature knows no law; the new nature needs no law.

• • • • •

The Christian's heart is God's home.

• • • • •

Christians should outlive, out-love, and out-laugh anyone in the community.

• • • • •

People make enemies by complaining too much to their friends.

• • • • •

To be agreeable when we disagree is a goal
most of us have to keep working at.

• • • • •

Courage is grace under power.

• • • • •

Be quick to praise, slower to criticize.

• • • • •

Those who can, do; those who can't, criticize.

• • • • •

Remember that it is the daily grind that gives a person polish.

• • • • •

When there is pruning, the gardener is nearby.

• • • • •

Pedestrians should be seen and not hurt.

• • • • •

If you have plans for tomorrow—drive safely today.

• • • • •

The car to watch is the car behind the car in front of you.