



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 2021

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Calvary Messenger

June 2021

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.**

Calvary Publications, Inc., is a non-profit organization, incorporated in the State of Ohio, for the purpose of sponsoring, publishing, and distributing Christian literature. The board is elected, one member annually, by the ministers of the Beachy Amish Mennonite Churches, at their annual spring meeting.

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Material for *Calvary Messenger*, marriages, births, ordinations, obituaries, and general articles—send to the *Editor*. Other material—mail to their respective *Editors*.

Subscriptions, renewals, changes of address, etc.—mail to **Circulation Manager**.

When you move, please notify the Circulation Manager one month in advance, giving your old and new address in full, so that your mailing label can be properly corrected and your credit be kept in order.

This periodical is digitally available at calvarymessenger.org

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Calvary Messenger (USPS 767-160) is published monthly by Calvary Publications. Subscription rates are: 1 year (U.S.) \$11.50, 3 years (U.S.) \$33.00. For congregations using the every-home-plan, \$10.00 per year to individual addresses. With a renewal at \$11.50 for 1 year, you may use a 1-year gift subscription free. Second class postage at Sugarcreek, Ohio. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvary Publications, Inc., 7498 Woods West Ave., London, OH 43140.

Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer


Father, hear the prayer we offer;
Not for ease that prayer shall be,
But for strength that we may ever
Live our lives courageously.

Not forever in green pastures
Do we ask our way to be:
But by steep and rugged pathways
Would we strive to climb to Thee.

Not forever by still waters
Would we idly quiet stay,
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along our way.

Be our Strength in hours of weakness,
In our wand'rings be our Guide;
Through endeavor, failure, danger,
Father, be Thou at our side.

Let our path be bright or dreary,
Storm or sunshine be our share;
May our souls, in hope unwearied,
Make Thy work our ceaseless prayer.

Love M. Willis 

Public Domain

Pg. 522-Hymns of the Church

God's Stone Hewers

“And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God” (I Chronicles 22:2).

On the granite face of a mountain in the Black Hills of South Dakota, a colossal sculpture of the heads of four famous men catches the attention of any observant passerby. In 1923, a state historian conceived the idea of making carvings of famous men in granite columns known as the Needles. He persuaded a well-known sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, to travel to the area to ensure the carving could be accomplished. “However, Borglum realized that the eroded Needles were too thin to support sculpting. He chose Mount Rushmore, a grander location, partly because it faced southeast and enjoyed maximum exposure to the sun.”¹ In the course of 14 years and with the help of 400 workers, this famous national monument was constructed.

In the construction of Solomon’s temple, *“the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and*

hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders did hew them, and the stonesquarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house” (I Kings 5:17-18). But even before Solomon began the construction of *“the house of the LORD God,”* King David began gathering materials for the temple. *“And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God” (I Chronicles 22:2).* How were these stones hewed and squared?

The construction of Mount Rushmore involved the use of dynamite and pneumatic drilling tools to remove 450,000 tons of granite. Workers were suspended from the top of the mountain with air tools. And in the final smoothing of the sculptures, every inch of surface was touched with tools, including their 20-foot noses.

We assume that in the hewing of the stones for Solomon’s temple, only

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Rushmore

hand tools were used. We can only speculate and wonder how the stones were placed on top of each other without our modern equipment. *“And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building”* (1 Kings 6:7).

However, in any sculpture or dressing of stones for construction, material needs to be removed to end with the finished product. And whether we imagine ourselves as a person of God, showing His image to the world, or as *“lively stones,”* a virtual building block in God’s spiritual house, there is much material that needs to be removed in our lives. This process may be painless to granite and limestone, but to lively or living stones the process is painful.

We often have plans for our own lives, but we should trust and believe that the Sculptor’s plans are best. Before Borglum began on the granite face of the mountain, he constructed a model of his plan of the final sculpture. God has His own image in mind as He directs the removal of material in our lives. Does the finished product always resemble the vision of the sculptors? What causes the final result to be different from the sculptor’s vision?

There are many times when we cling to our own plans and are not sound enough in structure to bear the removal of material. On Mount Rushmore, the location of the sculptures changed because the granite was not stable enough to bear the blasting and chiseling that was required for the face of the mountain to become the desired image of the master sculptor. It is both humbling and extremely challenging to trust the Master Sculptor enough to believe that since He knows us better than we know ourselves, He will not try to make us into something that is more than we can bear. Does it make a difference whom the Sculptor turns loose on our faces?

King David gathered together the strangers in the land of Israel to hew stones for the temple that Solomon would build. Wouldn’t we rather that God send patient and gracious men and women of God to chip away at what stands in the way of becoming His image? But God’s stone hewers are not all gracious or patient! There are many *“strangers”* we meet who gladly drill deeply into our carnal nature and load it with heavy loads of dynamite! But the Master Sculptor’s blasting is carefully calculated even if the drilling and blasting is done by *“strangers.”* He doesn’t desire that we add to that explosion when someone

“gets our goat.”

There are times when God directs our good friends or fellow believers to chisel away at our lives. We don't appreciate it when people seem to be going over every inch of our faces. But God can use those who know us best to clean up the rough edges in our lives. Being solidly grounded on the Rock will help us take on the Master Sculptor's image in our lives.

It is pleasant to observe, and it brings glory to God when we observe people in the last decades of their

lives who have responded well to the blasting and chiseling in their lives. That can only come as they have kept a close look on the Master Sculptor as He was working in their lives. He, indeed, is the Model He uses in sculpting our lives!

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18).

–AY 

Announcement

Single Ladies Seminar

August 6-8, 2021

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

Single women can sometimes feel that they don't belong or are useless. As single women, we want to be a thriving part of the body of Christ – useful for His kingdom.

Topics include:

The Will of God—Loraine Schrock, Aroda, VA

Handling Finances—Karla Good, Logan, OH

Relating to the Church—TBA

Indignities with Dignity— Rosemary Troyer, Plain City, OH

Victorious Amidst Desires—Bettina Yoder, Honey Brook, PA

Excellent in Spirit—TBA

Hosted and Sponsored by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd.

Plain City, OH 43064

Pre-seminar registration required. If you are planning to attend the seminar, please contact Deeper Life Ministries by July 16 at 614-873-1199 or info@dlmohio.org to register.

Visitors at Church

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

We have had a distinct privilege to “entertain” visitors at our church at Weavertown over the years. Our church house is situated at a unique location in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. We are in the heart of Amish country, only a country block off the “main drag” from Route 340, and blessed with Amish heritage and history. It is public knowledge that Lancaster County draws over one million tourists every year. This article will feature six exhibits of tourist visitors at our church.

Exhibit 1: The late Matthew Welde and family

The Weldes came for their first visit likely in the 1960’s. He was the typical pastor of a Presbyterian church in a suburb of Philadelphia, 50 miles to our east. Welde brought his family to our church frequently, perhaps nearly every year. He confided to me that the Presbyterians were a wayward church, misled by a faulty interpretation of the Bible.

Welde eventually left his pastorate and founded an independent movement along with an organization in worldwide evangelism. He was

sought after as a speaker and resource person in city-wide preaching campaigns in the United States. This spread to various countries in Asia and Africa in a clarion call to salvation in Christ and a back-to-the-Bible movement on a practical and literal basis.

He often commended us for our consistent witness and call to Biblical discipleship in our Sunday School classes and preaching. They always enjoyed the visits in our homes. They valued the interchange of their children with our families. He said our practical lives demonstrated a literal interpretation of the Bible which stirred in his heart to call nominal Christians to a higher level of discipleship.

Exhibit 2: Mike McManus

McManus was a tall gentleman and had the aura of a commanding presence. He was present with us on a Sunday morning in 1992. I was preaching that day. The amen was scarcely spoken as I ended the benediction when I saw him come up the center aisle like he was on an intentional mission. I was preaching

on a chapter in the “heavy part” of Revelation on that day, being on a series of the whole book. I immediately suspected him to be a Protestant professor or preacher of some renown, and assumed he was prepared to verbally tackle me on my interpretation of Revelation.

I was not eager for a confrontation on future prophecy even on my own turf. His first question to me was, “How many people do you have in this congregation who are divorced and remarried?” I assured him we have no one. He was astonished, even shocked! He said, “You have this many people in your congregation and none are divorced and remarried?” I could assure him that my answer was correct. Up until now, he thought all churches have this problem. Of course, he was curious as to how we can be so ideal.

McManus was a very busy man, and sat through our church service to pose his question. He was a syndicate writer for newspapers and publications all over the United States, to whomever would purchase his news features. Our own Lancaster newspaper featured his articles. The larger burden on his heart was to address the purpose of marriage and to try to deal with the breakdown of marriages in the United States and the errors of divorce and remarriage but

not necessarily from a Biblical basis.

He publicly used some of my comments about our view on the Bible principle of marriage, which while not altogether new to him, was not generally practiced. He referred to our church and comments on the permanence of marriage in his syndicated articles. We had acquaintances in western Ontario who heard about the Weavertown church on the national radio program conducted by McManus.

Exhibit 3: a lone road walker

He sat in the back of the church with his backpack, evidently not a typical churchgoer. I was told by a church brother that he wished to speak to the pastor. He introduced himself by asking me to read Revelation 1:8. “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*” He asked me to read it out loud, and before I could say anything after the reading, he said, “That is me.”

I retorted with, “That was spoken by Jesus Christ.”

He stretched himself to his full height (being several inches taller than I), and said, “That is me.” I could scarcely believe any mortal man would even think of making such a blasphemous declaration, let alone say it.

I said, “It seems to me that I smell cigarette smoke on you.” He acknowledged that he had gone outside after dismissal to smoke and now came into the church house again. Would Christ do such a thing? Of course not.

Exhibit 4: Two “bums” in the church parking lot

I saw them over there at a safe distance. Why would they be at our church? This is a distinguished youth meeting where the great themes of discipleship and witnessing will be discussed by some important and qualified speakers. These two hapless strangers somehow do not fit to this special meeting. Maybe someone will give them several gospel tracts before they wander out the road to a place more suitable for their kind.

During this church conference, these two “bums” revealed themselves to the whole assembly as being the very ones out there in the church parking lot. They said they were not invited to come into the church! No one came to meet them or to inquire whether they had need of anything.

I was smitten more than anyone, I would suppose, being a church leader, for I also viewed them only at a distance.

It was truly a Kansas-style idea! True to form, these two young men were from the Beachy church in

Kansas, as I recall. They intended the disguise as a way to make a practical point to this large youth gathering. They were right when they said our glorious words about witnessing could use some more practicality with having both feet on the ground!

Exhibit 5: Eight men from the Army War College

What could they want to see and hear among us and in our church house yet besides? All eight of them sat on one pew. Several of them introduced themselves to me. We were a bit awed at such an institution being “interested” in our church’s worship service. Are we surreptitiously under some kind of an investigation? A War College might be looking for more ways to kill people and conquer land areas. But no, they assured us that in their classes they actually are looking for ways to address conflict with nations without needing to go to war. They said that includes inviting speakers to discuss alternatives to war. I got excited! With that, I briefly spoke to them about our position on Biblical nonresistance, that I have been a teacher for many years and would be available to travel to their Army War College as a resource speaker. It is located only 65 miles from our house, and I would be delighted to address their personnel, besides being open

to questions and discussion.

It never happened.

Exhibit 6: We were tourists in the upper reaches of Alaska

We were on a tour to Alaska with two other couples from our church. We were way up in that remote state on our own for the evening meal. There were no options except snacks of candy and little cakes at a garage or at a nearby hotel.

We arrived at the hotel door where they had posted some available food ideas. We briefly tried to overcome the shock of seeing hamburgers costing ten dollars. We went inside to take a look. A waiter advised us to go into a back room where food was less expensive. Oh, but it was the bar room. Does buying drinks offset the high price of food in here?

We arranged chairs for us six travelers, stuck 4000 miles from home in a hotel that was poised to reduce our hard-earned cash. Just then a young man walked by and said, "Hey, I think I know you." It was the son of the Ed Bernadion family. They had often visited our church and our families over the years as tourists to Lancaster County many years ago. At that time he was a boy, then a teenager, and now was the manager in this remote hotel, way up in the boonies of Alaska!


After the exchange of pleasantries,

he said we should go with him to be seated in the front room. He gave us eye-popping menus and said we should order anything we desired, and it would be free of charge with repeat servings! We could also eat breakfast there tomorrow morning and that would also be free. (Our motel for that destination did not serve food.) It seemed like a replay of when Jacob's sons were sent to Egypt to buy more grain when Joseph, as the manager for the monarch, Pharaoh, seated them at his princely table, gave them the finest meal, and provided as much as they could eat free of charge. We three traveling couples felt especially rewarded.

Unexpected rewards can come from showing hospitality to strangers, especially in social enrichment. In addition, there can be the pleasure of new information, and maybe even an occasional, unexpected, and monetary reward.

The Bottom Line is that the promises of God are for a multitude of personal experiences every day of the week and year by year. The Bible says, "*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*" (Hebrews 13:2). Other people in our church also have their own stories of special occasions to entertain

strangers. We always try to invite tourists to our homes for Sunday dinner. The blessings for us and them are mutual and often have made enriching lifetime friendships. We remember the encouraging words from Jesus, when He said to His

disciples, *“And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward”* (Matthew 10:42). 

Understanding and Responding to Oversensitive Children

Shawn Miller, West Lafayette, OH

[I did not do extensive research for this article; rather, I wrote from personal experience and from conversations with parents having children in this stage. I also spoke with children themselves.]

Many of us have been tremendously blessed to grow up in godly homes where we have received Biblical teaching from our childhood. A family devotion time is encouraged. Many ministers teach in churches about how to raise godly families. Dozens of books have been written about raising children who learn to walk in the ways of God. An oft-quoted verse from III John says, *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”*

While we thank God for all these tremendous blessings, we also recognize a challenge that sometimes comes along with them: young children who become extremely sensitive and overly concerned about

spiritual things that are too big for their young minds to handle. These children get so occupied with doing everything perfectly and avoiding any possible chance of sinning that they don't enjoy life as God intended. I was one of those children.

Understanding Oversensitive Children

Many parents seem to have trouble understanding exactly what their oversensitive children are going through. The children also don't understand the dynamics playing out in their minds. What exactly is going through the child's mind to cause such super sensitivity?

Because of the teaching given in the home and in the church, children can quickly become plagued with

fear about hell. This does not mean parents and ministers should quit teaching about it. But because of this fear of hell, children want to be saved from their sins to avoid going to that awful place. At a young age of 8-12, such children may make a commitment to follow God, but it is more out of fear than of love.

A very sensitive stage ensues where children are extremely concerned that their sins are always forgiven at any given time of the day. Because of their young age, they are unable to clearly define the difference between sin and things that are neither right nor wrong. Rather than trying to figure out the difference, children will confess things throughout the day to make sure they are “at peace” with God. Their pursuit of peace ends up acting in reverse, causing turmoil in their minds because of the many things they feel they need to confess to have that peace. It ends up being a vicious cycle that robs them of the joy of living.

Confessions, Confessions, Confessions

Throughout the day, probably 90 percent or more of the things they confess to God are not sin issues but little things like not being neat or careful enough. Following are real-life examples of things oversensitive children might confess or feel guilty

about.

Example 1: I am writing in school and one of my letters goes a tad below the line. I’ll feel guilty if I don’t go back, erase it, and rewrite it because I know my teacher wants neat handwriting. Am I disobeying my teacher if it is not neat enough? *“Sorry, God. I should have erased it right away and made it better.”* (This might be why your child has homework.)

Example 2: I turned off the water faucet and walked away. But I kept thinking, “What if the faucet is actually not turned off completely? That would be wasting water, and Dad said we need to conserve water. I should go back and check it, so I don’t feel guilty about not pleasing Dad. *Sorry, God. I should have checked that right away.”*

Example 3: I have an exceptionally long prayer list to go through every night. The prayer list is so long that I don’t even enjoy praying, but if I don’t pray for each one on the list, I feel guilty. It might not be pleasing to God if I skip over someone. Or what if I skip over someone on my prayer list and something happens to that person? Wouldn’t it partly be my fault because I didn’t pray? *“Sorry, God. Last night I forgot to pray for that one person. I’ll pray for him now.”*

Example 4: Today I confessed

something I thought was wrong. While confessing it, I got interrupted. I feel guilty that the interruption took my thoughts away from confessing to God. *“Sorry, God, that I got interrupted and was not able to concentrate on my prayer.”*

It makes my mind spin just to think about it all. It is easy to see why your children might constantly look a bit sad or moody. Their minds are spinning almost out of control with worry about sin and making sure they are on the right track. Because they are so anxious, they often come to their parents and share what they are feeling, asking them if something is right or wrong.

Frustrated and Weary

Parents may often wonder if it's their fault that their children struggle in this way. Probably it's not the case. Parents may have children who feel overly sensitive and others who are quite the opposite. There is no need to blame yourself. The same child-training methods can affect children differently. Some children are born with a more sensitive nature than others. God created each one uniquely.

Parents can easily get frustrated when one of their children comes repeatedly in the same day for advice about whether little things are sins or not. I remember times when my mother would be at a loss when I

came to her for the tenth time in one day. A child's troubled conscience bothers the child's parents, and the parents want to ease that conscience. But how? They want the child to be free of worry, but they don't want to “quench the Spirit” that might be working in the child. Parents may fear that if they brush off the child's worries too quickly, the child's conscience might actually become dull later in life.

Mothers often face the brunt of these things since they are at home with the children more than the father. However, fathers often come home from work and face the same things with their children, especially at bedtime. Bedtime is one of the worst times since children want to make sure all their sins are forgiven, and all the appropriate prayers are said before falling asleep. The worried minds of children can quickly cause the parents to become frustrated and weary. Not only are the children coming fifteen times a day to confess things, but it's taking them ten times longer to do simple tasks!

Practical Advice

There are two distinct things that helped me snap out of the frenzy of this oversensitivity, and I am thankful to my parents for this. I think both of these things can be of value to other parents.

My mother was feeling frustrated with the number of times I came to her one day. She discussed it with my father, who told me, "From now on, if something bothers you during the day, don't go to Mom about it. Wait until I come home from work and then ask me about it." That solved several problems. First, it eased the pressure on my mother. She could tell me to wait until Dad came home. Second, by the time Dad came home from work, I forgot most of the things I would have asked Mom during the day. This was a big step toward freedom for me.

The other thing that helped me tremendously is related to the first. My father advised me, "If you are not sure whether something is a sin or not, wait until evening. If you think about it again at the end of the day, you can confess it then. Since we are your parents, we will take the responsibility of your actions throughout the day. It is on us, not on you."

I took their advice and quit confessing every little thing throughout the day. And guess what? By evening I had forgotten almost everything that had bothered me throughout the day! This was because most of what had troubled me wasn't sin. I was free!

The advice my father gave me

bothered me at first. Wasn't each person responsible to God for his own actions? Could my parents really take responsibility for my actions during the day? But I decided to trust them, and it gave me freedom. Looking back, I see a lot of wisdom in their advice. I believe children are more responsible to their parents than to God. And so in a sense, yes, parents can take responsibility for the children's actions. The only commandments directly for children in the New Testament are to obey and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-2). It doesn't say "obey God." In that way it does seem that they are directly responsible to their parents rather than to God.


For the Children

Children, I completely understand what you as oversensitive children are going through. I was in your shoes too, and I sympathize with you. It is not fun. It makes life difficult. God doesn't want you to be so worried and burdened. He loves you. He's not out to punish you for not writing neatly enough, for not closing the faucet completely, or for not remembering to pray for everyone on your list. No, He just wants you to do one thing: obey your parents. That is the only thing the New Testament directly tells children to do.

Do you think your parents would

punish you for not writing neatly enough? No, and God won't either. Do you think your parents would punish you if you forgot to pray for one person? No, and God won't either. They are just happy that you want to pray. Do you think your parents would punish you because some water was dripping from the

faucet? Of course not. God won't either.

You see, God wants you to be assured of His love. You can rest assured that if you are obeying your parents, God is pleased with you. Doesn't that sound easy enough—and better? It is. Let your worries fly away. 


If

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting, too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can talk to crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty second's worth of distance run—
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a **man**, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

Public Domain 

marriages

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

Kauffman-Beachy

Bro. Tyler, son of Nate and Jane Kauffman, Mt. Pleasant, PA, and Sis. Leslie, daughter of Mark and Carolyn Beachy, Plain City, OH, on April 23, 2021, at United Bethel Church for Canaan Fellowship by Merv Lapp.

King-Beachy

Bro. Brandon, son of Kenneth and Edith King, Cottage Grove, TN, and Sis. Juliana, daughter of Glen and Alta Beachy, Summertown, TN, on March 20, 2021, at Westfalia Farms, Paris, TN, for Calvary Christian Fellowship by Dwight Miller.

Lebold-Yoder

Bro. Wayne, son of the late Jacob and Fannie Lebold, Millbank, ON, and Sis. Betty Yoder, daughter of Crist and the late Elnora "Mae" Yoder, Hutchinson, KS, on January 2, 2021, at Pleasantview Activity Center for Center Amish Mennonite Church by David Yoder.

Peachey-Peachey

Bro. Brian, son of Marvin and Martha Peachey, Lewisburg, PA, and Sis. Rebekah, daughter of Ivan and Kay Peachey, Dyke, VA, on March 20, 2021, at Dayton Mennonite Church for Faith Mission Fellowship by Jonathan Martin.



cradle roll

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

Gerber, Brian and Emma (King), Milverton, ON, sixth child and daughter, Brianna Emma, March 19, 2021.

Kauffman, Norman and Rose (Raber), Hicksville, OH, fourth child, first son, Adrian James, March 13, 2021.

Lapp, Lamar and Angela (Marner), Worthington, IN, first and second children and sons, Wyatt Cole and Carson Wade, November 21, 2020.

Miller, Kenneth and Wanda (Mast), Hindsville, AR, second child, first daughter, Addison Sue, April 14, 2021.

Miller, Ryan and Judith (Schlabach), Fresno, OH, second child and daughter, Andrea Peace, February 3, 2021.

Mullet, Terry and Janette (Coblentz), Sugarcreek, OH, fifth child, third daughter, Chloe Abigail, April 21, 2021.

Nissley, Clifford and Ruth (Lapp), Fresno, OH, first child and daughter, Cassia Rae, March 13, 2021.

Overholt, Rylan and Charity (Swartzentruber), Auburn, KY, first child and son, Mason Cruz, March 21, 2021.

Suarez, Titus and Charity (Yoder), Hartselle, AL, fourth child, first daughter, Jill Alexandria, March 15, 2021.

Yoder, Doyle and Diane (Yoder), Middlebury, IN, second child, first daughter, Eden Reign, March 15, 2021.



ordination

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

Bro. Matthias Miller, 40, (wife, Kathleen Yoder), Huntsville, AR, was ordained deacon for Lighthouse of Faith Mennonite Church on April 18, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Kinley Coulter. The charge was given by Dan Byler. James Mast, Karl Yoder, and Alvin Yutzky Jr. shared the lot.



obituaries

Riehl, Jacob A., 87, formerly of Lewisburg, PA, entered his final rest March 12, 2021, at his home in Due West, SC, after a two-week battle with COVID-19 and complications.

He was born December 21, 1933, in Lancaster County, PA, to the late Abner B. and Mary Riehl. On November 3, 1953, he married Barbara E. Zook, who preceded him in death.

Jacob was a long-time member of Shekinah Christian Fellowship, Middleburg, PA, but attended Cold Spring Mennonite Church after moving to SC in 2016. He volunteered for Mennonite Disaster Service in various rebuilding projects. Jacob was self-employed, engaging in different business enterprises, primarily as a woodworker but also metalworking.

Surviving are five children: Maryann (Samuel) Yoder, Aaronsburg; Abner (SallyAnn), Due West, SC; Edna (Stephen)

Longenderfer, Willow Street; Linda (William) Peachey, East Waterford; Jacob Jr. (Vera), Lewisburg; one brother, Menno S., Leola; 23 grandchildren, and 41 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a sister and brother.

Visitation was held at Cold Spring Mennonite Church, Abbeville, SC, on Monday, March 15, with a private graveside service on March 18 at Shekinah Christian Fellowship Cemetery, Middleburg, PA.

Stoltzfus, Jacob K., 96, formerly of Cochranville, PA, passed away April 17, 2021, in Ontario, Canada, at the home of his daughter. He was the husband of Suvilla B. Stoltzfus who passed away on July 13, 1991. He was born in Morgantown, son of the late John F. and Mary Kauffman Stoltzfus.

He was a member of Mine Road

Amish Mennonite Church of Kinzers, where he served as pastor from 1969-2010. He was a lifelong dairy farmer in the Oxford area. He had a strong interest in missions and served on various mission committees and boards.

Surviving are five children: Barbara (Benuel) Smucker, New Holland; J. Omar (Carol), Gap; Alvin, Paradise; Melvin, Cochranville; Kathryn (Darrell) Nisly, Ontario, Canada; 28 grandchildren, 67 great-grandchildren, four great-great-grandchildren, six siblings: John U., Morgantown; Lydia Stoltzfus, Honey Brook; Aaron K. (Susie), Dundee, NY; Priscilla (Christ) Stoltzfus, Lewisburg; Sarah (Eli) King, New Holland; and David F. (Priscilla), Morgantown.

He was preceded in death by daughters-in-law: Lily (Alvin), Mary Ellen (Melvin), a granddaughter, a great-granddaughter, and seven siblings: Katie Smucker, Henry U., Amos, Anna Stoltzfus, Malinda Stoltzfus, Benuel (Katie), all of Honey Brook; and Mary (Sam) Ebersol, Chambersburg.


The funeral service was held at Calvary Monument Bible Church, Paradise, PA, April 23, with the interment in the Mine Road Amish Mennonite Church Cemetery.

Walker, Millicent Emily, 83, of Homestead, FL, passed away March 9, 2021. Millicent was born May 31, 1937,

in New York, NY, to the late Will and Evelyn James.

Millicent married Ludlow Walker, Sr. on December 10, 1961, in Harlem, New York City. After living in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, they relocated to Belize, Central America. They have been living in Homestead, FL, for some time since returning to the US. She played significant roles alongside her husband as Sunday School teacher, church treasurer, and church secretary. It is perhaps her role as Sunday School teacher that Millicent is most affectionately remembered by the Southmost Mennonite Church congregation. Her love and dedication to the needs of her congregation, especially the children, are unparalleled as she often went above and beyond the call of service to meet these needs.

Millicent leaves behind her spouse, Ludlow Walker, Sr., two children, Dawn Walker and Ludlow Walker, Jr., daughter-in-law, Tameeka Law-Walker, sister, Gertrude Harrison, grandson, Solomon Dean Walker, and a host of extended family in FL, GA, NY, Canada, and the membership of Southmost Mennonite Church, Florida City, FL.

The funeral service was held March 20, 2021, at the Caballero Rivero Funeral Chapel, Naranja, FL, with interment at the Woodlawn Cemetery. 

YOU CANNOT TAKE YOUR MONEY TO HEAVEN,
but you can invest it for **eternity**.

Perhaps 10 years ago, though I cannot say precisely when, one afternoon an elderly gentleman arrived at our house unannounced on his small, motorized scooter. From my vantage point in the office I watched him inquire at the front door then proceed to the office to speak to me. He introduced himself as Beryl Forrester and stated that he was on a home visit from his mission assignment with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa. I was employed by Golden Rule Travel and it so happened that EMM was an organization that I worked with at that time, helping to arrange some of their foreign travel. Since we were standing in front of our wall map of the world, I pointed to the little spot that is Guinea Bissau on the west coast of Africa, and he seemed surprised and pleased that someone knew where that was. Working in the travel industry has a way of sharpening one's sense of geography if allowed to do so.

Beryl was in the process of traveling across the USA at about 40 miles per hour on back roads, stopping for lodging with Mennonite folks whom he found along the way. He asked if

we would be willing to provide him with an evening meal and a bed for the night. Of course, we invited him to stay with us. He had spent the previous night several hours east of our area near Seymour, Missouri, and was told that he would find some Mennonites here in this area. He inquired of several local folks where the Mennonites were before he found a neighbor who led him to our house. After leaving our place the next morning, he went on to Hutchinson, Kansas, where he had been invited to give a presentation at Plainview Mennonite Church (Conservative Mennonite Conference) to their youth group who was planning a missions trip. He seemed eager to give a few pointers, encouraging them to focus on the place they are visiting and maximizing those opportunities rather than what they had left back home. One of my nephews was visiting in Colorado with his wife and children about that time and reported that this same Beryl Forrester dined with them as mutual guests in the home of another Mennonite family a couple of days later. Later, I learned that one of my uncles remembered Beryl from their mutual time at EMC about five decades earlier.

We were happy to have him join us for supper and the night. I recall that we had fish and rice for supper. We inquired about what the folks in his host country tended to eat. He replied that they eat a LOT of fish and rice, something he wasn't too fond of. Oops! But he hastened to add that the way that Brenda fixed the food was different and better than what he was accustomed to. That evening he hooked up his little computer to a larger screen, and we looked at pictures and listened to stories of his work in West Africa. The next morning he borrowed our internet connection and made a Skype call to the young man who had joined him in the work in Guinea Bissau. If I remember correctly, his colleague needed to travel about four hours one-way in order to participate in this pre-arranged conversation.

In the April 16, 2021 issue of Anabaptist World, I noticed Beryl Forrester's obituary. He died in Guinea, West Africa, on March 2 at age 80, having worked in several different West-African countries since 1999. The following is from his obituary:

“His work included building schools, founding churches, planting orange orchards, digging wells, and establishing community gardens. He taught and preached radical

discipleship of Jesus. He developed curricula that were translated along with parts of the New Testament into the native language.”

I distinctly remember that we considered it a real privilege to host this impromptu guest. Meeting Beryl and being introduced to the work he dedicated his life to was one of those experiences that expands our awareness of how God is working in a variety of contexts in a variety of ways. When we have the opportunity to observe how other folks are responding to the call to discipleship, we do well to ask if we are stewarding well the opportunities that God has given us in this place and time. To the extent that what we learn from others results in greater faithfulness, God is glorified, His children are blessed, and His Kingdom grows.

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There are usually about 100 folks attending our Sunday morning services. In recent months two of our youth returned from serving at Hillcrest Home. Currently one of our youth is at Faith Mission Home and another one is preparing to leave for a time at Mountain View Nursing Home. Next week one of our families plans to spend a few weeks here on furlough from El Salvador where they are stationed. Several of the young men in our congregation have taken

the opportunity to serve with CASP over the years. I admit that I am both encouraged by the response of folks in our congregation to serve as volunteers elsewhere and also wonder if we couldn't foster a more responsive posture to these opportunities than we currently demonstrate.

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And while we are on the subject of opportunities, how about those opportunities that come to us in our normal day-to-day interactions? Do I see my calling and vocation as a trust that God has given me to build His Kingdom? When we see our lives through that lens it tends to open our awareness to a host of opportunities that might have otherwise been disguised as interruptions. I remember a sign on the wall of a place of business that said something like this, "Customers are not an interruption to our work. They supply our work."

How am I—how are we—stewarding the opportunities to serve Christ here and now by serving others? Our Christian service happens where we are located now. When we change locations, we must still serve from our present location. It's good to remember that those who reach out at home are likely to reach out when they relocate to serve elsewhere. If I don't take the

opportunities to serve where I am currently, it's not likely to change too much if all I do is change my address.

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Several years ago, we upgraded the windows in our house to energy efficient, Low-E windows. We like the windows. They look a bit blue from a distance and have more reflective capacity than the windows they replaced.

About three feet outside our living room window we have a platform on which a bird feeder is situated. This provides a wonderful opportunity for us to observe the birds that accept our offer for nourishment.

Recently, a male cardinal noticed his reflection in our window and became quite concerned. It seems he thought his reflection indicated the presence of another male cardinal in his territory. This bird did not exhibit a fearful and retiring posture to this "intruder," but rather went into attack mode with impressive persistence. When we placed curtains behind the window he was attacking to obscure the reflection, he checked out other windows to see if his foe was hiding elsewhere. Of course, he found his foe lurking in every window he checked. His relentless attack began about a week ago and continues to this day. He's smeared his blood on our windows in his

efforts at eradicating his opponent. I wouldn't accuse this bird of being a quick learner, but he does distinguish himself with his persistence and sincerity. While sincerity is a noble attribute, it's an inadequate substitute for seeing things as they really are. If this bird doesn't wise up, he's liable to kill himself with his efforts.

• • • • •

It's easy for us to see the futility of this bird's response. Do you suppose that there might be ways that we exhibit remarkable diligence and sincerity in ways that are based on mistaken or incomplete understanding of things as they really are? When it is us, rather than

a bird-brained cardinal, the results aren't really amusing but can actually be quite dangerous to our well-being. This consideration is a bit humbling if we think about it just a bit.

Sincerity and confidence are not a suitable substitute for understanding things as they really are. An appropriate awareness of reality needs to begin with a settled understanding in the reliability of Scripture and the absolute necessity of a relationship with Christ. In addition to that, we often need our brother's perspective to gain a better understanding of reality.

-RJM 

The Lost Billfold

Gilbert Miller, Nappanee, IN

Written by Allison Miller

"Praise the Lord!" Tossing my billfold high into the air, I could hardly believe it was true. God is real. He does answer prayer. Miracles still do happen.

I used to work at Newmar RV company. Every day I'd come home to the farm and go back outdoors to do the chores. I always carried my billfold with me as I used cash for all my purchases instead of a card.

On this particular spring day in 1980, I headed out to the thirty-acre field that needed to be plowed.

Fixing my eye on a certain tree at the opposite end of the field, I began plowing. Plowing north and south, I finished the field except for the final swaths at each end.

Out of habit, I reached for my billfold...my heart leaped...it was... GONE! What could have happened to it? My only thought was that I had lost it in the field while plowing.

"Sue! Lisa!" I called my wife and daughter. When they appeared at the door, I called them over. The boys came running to see what was

happening. After a brief explanation, I said, “Let’s pray.”

Forming a circle, we bowed our heads. I prayed, “Lord, what can we do? Where can we go to find this billfold?”

The voice came to me as clear as could be: “Go to the north end and start plowing backwards.”

“Let’s start at the north end,” I told my family.

At the Lord’s direction, I began to unplug my field. The first furrow revealed nothing. In reality, one could hardly expect this technique to uncover anything. Physics could hardly prove even a small chance of a billfold coming up on top by unplowing. But by faith I unplowed.

About half way through the second furrow I heard the words, “I found

it!” Twisting around in my seat, I saw Wayne rushing to pick up my billfold from a neatly unplowed furrow. Leaping off the tractor, I threw that billfold high into the air, shouting, “Praise Jesus, Hallelujah!”

We had our own PTL meeting right there in the field. If God had chosen not to reveal my billfold of cash and driver’s license, I would have been fine with that. But I think God had a specific reason to return that billfold—to show to my little children, through this miracle, that HE IS REAL and FAITH WORKS!

Faith—you have to believe God’s going to make something work.

Reprinted from the January-February 2020, Midwest Mennonite Focus. Used with permission.



An Epitaph to My Grandpa, Wayne D. Gingerich

Karin A. Yoder, Bloomfield, MO

Today is June twenty first, two thousand and twenty. It is Father’s Day. It is also the day my mom’s dad, Grandpa Gingerich, died. In the blaze of mid-morn’s light, he was carried to Jesus. I read Revelation 21 and 22 and pause as I imagine the bliss, joy, and glory that he is experiencing. A sense of loneliness and a pang of

jealousy encompasses my soul. I am homesick for the Heavenly Land; not as fearful of death anymore because I am enlightened by the knowledge of Grandpa waiting there with Jesus. Walking streets of pure gold, eating fruit (he loves it!) from a tree bearing twelve diverse flavors, and singing rapturous music. What riches, true riches!

I grow pensive. Grandpa was one of the humblest men I knew. His life exemplified moderation in all things. He had an avid enthusiasm for traveling and learning about different lands and cultures. His bright blue eyes lit up vividly, and he'd lean forward eagerly as he described systems, scenery, or stories. He personified gentleness and unselfishness. I remember sitting around the old wooden table for meals, and before taking seconds, Grandpa always made sure no one else wanted the food. He took a keen interest in world events; he wondered, speculated, then prayed. He was frugal to a funny fault, having grown up during the Depression. He hoarded old typewriters, magazines, egg cartons, nails, glass, and tin. When Grandpa prayed he always ended with the Lord's Prayer, and his voice broke as he recited those ancient, familiar words. Tenacious, tough, observant, and generous describe his character. He treated everyone with a dignified respect and only once did I hear him raise his voice. He called Grandma, "Clarie." I wonder whether it was simply Pennsylvania Dutch or a term of endearment.

On New Year's Day we attended their church. A few of Grandpa's friends shared with us how much they appreciate his faithfulness, wisdom, stability, and song leader

abilities. One of the older brethren stated, "He's a pillar in the church. As long as I can remember, he's been here." Yet when I passed on their words to Grandpa, he wanted no glory. A man of principle, Grandpa practiced good habits. He got up every morning when the rooster crowed, paid his bills on time, and used only necessary, clean language; no more. To be sure, Grandpa had his faults, but he knew them and put them under the Blood. His tenure here was brief, but his reputation and spiritual legacy—lasting. It has not yet been a day since his passing, and I miss him. I miss his slow smile, soft chuckle, and easy stride.

Here is a quote that portrays a life of quiet contentment. It also reminds me of Grandpa. "The sun is setting in the west, the animals are fed, crops are growing in the fields, Mother is finally able to rest, and my youngest son is sitting in a chair reading a book. Life is good." I echo this and more.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way" (Psalm 37:23).

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandment to do them" (Psalm 103:17-18).



I Need a Hero

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

I need a hero:

Someone who will exemplify to me the difference between the wrong and the right.

Someone who can come down to my childish level and at the same time remain a mature mentor.

Someone who will protect my childhood innocence and conduct me safely through it without any abuse.

Someone who will answer my questions honestly and with adequate sensibility.

Someone who will discipline me so that I will learn to function in life with proper self-respect and dignity.

Someone who will love me with fervent affection for my emotional, mental, and spiritual security.

Someone who will demonstrate to me how a good man loves, respects, and values man's female counterpart.

Someone who will purposely indoctrinate me regarding the sanctity of human sexuality.

Someone who is able to protect me physically without smothering my adventuresome spirit.

Someone who will shepherd me into adulthood through all my awkward stages of development.


Yes, I desperately want someone who is able and willing to meet all these

necessities of mine. I realize this may seem like an extremely demanding order for anyone to fulfill, yet if I am to become a mature and useful person in this world I really need someone who will step in and intentionally take on this responsibility.

If no one purposely sets out to be my life-guide and mentor, then by default I will turn to anyone whom I can admire and imitate. However, if I fail to be the kind of adult you hoped for me to become, please do not unjustly lay all the blame on me but lay it squarely on your own shoulders. Remember, you had the opportunity to influence me when I was new and malleable.

Certainly, you know this world is a big and scary place for an innocent one such as I. Thus, if I am to make it safely into adulthood to fulfill my God-created purpose, then I really need a true hero whose thoughts and behavior I can imitate to be properly equipped to leave a positive mark on this world.

Daddy, whether you like to think about this truth or not, you are my hero. Therefore, keep in mind that the adult I become will remarkably resemble you!

-A child's plea 

Promoting Masculinity

Brian Martin, Director of Allegany Boys Camp

Camp is a boy's world! Cutting and splitting wood, carrying heavy logs uphill, constructing a campsite—the activities at camp have an age-old connection to the desire of a growing boy. Since the days of the American pioneers, boys have been dreaming of living by their wits in the forested mountains. Though camp is not a woodland survival program, (we don't eat squirrels, we buy groceries like everyone else!) it is an adventurous lifestyle for boys. A steep climb to stand on top a mountain or fending off the elements of snow, blistering sun, or driving rains are regular opportunities for boys to test their masculinity in the noisy, spirited, careless way of boys.

Camp's woodland is also a place for boys to learn the important values of godliness, respect, selflessness, hard work, discipline, and determination. To live in a campsite surrounded by woods year-round with nine other boys under the guidance of a chief creates an opportunity for growth.

Today, by God's grace, there are 40 boys enrolled at Allegany Boys Camp. Boys have come to us from nearby families in Maryland, West Virginia,

Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Virginia. They come from the farther-away states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Kentucky. And they also come from the far-flung states of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Oregon. Since September 1, 2011, we have graduated 99 boys from the program. Two more will graduate this month.

Boys arrive here from a waiting list that currently numbers about 20 and from a dozen different ethnic and religious backgrounds. They represent a wide variety of family structures and all points on the economic spectrum. The thing that all the boys have had in common is the desire to learn and live in the woods. We have enrolled Matts and Mikes and Johns. Also Noahs, Jordans, Garys, Patricks, Lukes, and Joshuas, to name a few. They have surnames that are common and well-known, and ones never heard of before. The boys have spanned ages of 9-17. Some are small, barely 50 pounds, and some are big guys, taller than most men. Curly hair, straight hair, blue eyes and brown, dark-skinned and fair, chubby and lean, each different and unique yet created in God's image.

I wish you could meet them all or even just one because it will change your life. It surely has mine! So, by God's grace we will continue to build His Kingdom by serving boys and their families on a little patch of

woodland in Western Maryland.

Camping with Jesus and a bunch of boys.

[From the March 2021, Allegany Boys Camp Newsletter. Used by permission.]



Me First

Charles A. Breneman (1919-1996)

When Jesus began His ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, He chose helpers, or disciples, to assist Him. Two of these were brothers, James and John. Their father's name was Zebedee and their mother's name was Salome.

Before they became followers of Jesus, the two brothers worked with their father as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. But when the call of the Master came, they quickly left all and followed Jesus.

Concerning the parents, we can see the virtue of the father who gave no interference when his sons left the fishing business after they heard the call to a heavenly occupation. But the mother showed a mixture of devotion to Jesus and selfish ambition for her sons.

We believe Jesus is a perfect judge of character, and He had something to say about the character of James and John. He called them Boanerges,

or the sons of thunder (Mark 3:17). The nature of thunder may have been true of them when they were younger, but it is difficult to think of the aged John, who penned five books of the Bible and was known as the apostle of love, as being a man of thunder. The Lord was able to take the thunder out of the brothers.

We have one example of their thunder-like nature recorded in Luke 9:52-56. Here the brothers wanted to call fire down from heaven to destroy some Samaritans who wouldn't receive Jesus. But our Lord rebuked them and said, "*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*"

In a similar story, the sons of thunder were disturbed when they saw a man casting out devils in the name of Christ but didn't follow with His disciples (Luke 9:49-50). Again Jesus rebuked them.

In spite of their flighty nature,

James and John were deeply devoted to Jesus and were in His circle of Peter, James and John. They witnessed some events which many of the other disciples did not.

There was a dark stain on the brothers' lives: they wanted to have first and second place in their Master's coming kingdom. It was the "me first" attitude. This story is told in Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45. Their mother had a part in this selfish request. The rebuke from Jesus was sharp. He told them they would share in His cup of baptism and suffering, but someone else would assign their places in His kingdom. The other disciples were much upset by their selfish request.

Jesus taught that the way up is down. Our Lord came not to be ministered unto but to minister. He humbled Himself and took upon Himself the form of a servant.

This was a hard lesson for His disciples to learn. Have you learned it yet?

The desire to be great, or greatest, will always trouble men in their time of carnal temptation. On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus confronted this with His disciples in the upper room. When they should have been soberly thinking about what was about to happen to their Master, they were instead disputing

about who should be greatest. Jesus gently rebuked them and told them the way of true greatness is serving. He then gave them a personal example and stooped down and washed His disciples' feet.

After Jesus left the earth, James and John, with the other apostles, continued on in the work Jesus had given them to do. John, the younger brother, had been charged with the care of Mary, the mother of Jesus. He remained in Jerusalem as long as she lived. Then he went to Asia and labored in the Ephesus area for a long time. According to tradition, he was at one time carried to Rome where he was dipped in a vat of boiling oil but remained unharmed. Back in Ephesus, he was exiled to the isle of Patmos where God had a special vision for him to record. In a ripe old age, he died a natural death.

God had something different for James, the older brother. He had a special honor to confer upon him. He had wanted to be first, and God gave him this privilege. But we don't suppose it was in the way he expected.

All the apostles except John gave their lives as martyr sacrifices. James was the first of the twelve to honor their Master in this way. The story is told in Acts 12:1-2. No details are given. It is simply stated that at the

command of King Herod, James was taken and killed with a sword. And so he drank of the cup of suffering and received the baptism of suffering.

In the eternal kingdom the Father had a place for him. We believe he is satisfied with the place assigned to him. Now he can see in much brighter light the glory of the Heavenly Father and is reunited with the Savior, who

called him from the fishing nets to a divine occupation.

“Lord, help us to learn, help us to submit, and help us to be willing to suffer with Thee.”

[From The Connector, Vol. 13, January 2020. Used by permission of Bro. Breneman's daughter, Mrs. William Coblentz. Submitted by Paul L. Miller.]



Just a Puff of Air

Enos D. Stutzman, London, OH

In the interest of dental health, we visit the dentist semi-annually. At the end of each visit, the dentist gives us a small, complimentary sample tube of toothpaste. We have noticed something unique about these tubes. When you squeeze the tube after it is partly empty, all at once a puff of air emerges. The tube obviously was filled with a mixture of toothpaste and air, in order to save money. So the size of the tube is misleading, since it contains less toothpaste than it seems.

Within the last year, we have noticed a similar phenomenon in the brand of toothpaste we have been using. You are squeezing along merrily as usual. All at once a puff of air emerges, and the tube collapses slightly, as the air escapes the tube. The tube's net weight is printed on

the outside, and is certainly accurate. But the size of the tube itself leads one to assume that it is filled to the brim with toothpaste. That is obviously not the case. In spite of the fact that the net weight accurately states the correct amount of product, the appearance of the tube itself leads one to assume that it is filled with toothpaste. “Puff!” –and the ruse is revealed.

Toothpaste is not a matter of life or death. A few ounces less than expected is not a life-threatening emergency. In fact, I recall reading an article many years ago, stating that one would be just as well off not even using any toothpaste, and brushing with a bare brush. That may or may not be true. In spite of the article, we still use it.

But I had to wonder. Is there

perhaps a lesson in this for us? Does the manner in which we live our lives lead the onlookers to assume some expectations about us? Do our lives contain the authentic ingredients which are expected by onlookers? Or, if the pressure is applied, do we merely emit a PUFF of emptiness?

In this land, we are sheltered from much of the opposition that Christians experience worldwide. We are able to lead comfortable lives which largely reflect the “American Dream.” Is that our primary goal? Why do so many of our people react to hurts, disagreements, personality clashes, or other non-doctrinal situations by trading our Anabaptist convictions for membership in evangelical groups which do not uphold the teachings of Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount, and other unpopular doctrines of the New Testament? Why are we so driven to

embrace modern fads which call to question our loyalty to established church practices?

Part of this problem may stem from the entertainment opportunities which are so readily available today. Live it up, and the social whirl will drown out the most important aspect of our lives.

The religious climate in our land has been deteriorating markedly in the last several years. The time may come when the tide of evil will continue to flood our land to the extent that our commitment to the Kingdom of God may be seriously challenged. What will emerge from our lives, the genuine thing, or just a puff of (hot) air? Now is the time to become serious in our commitment and strengthen the foundation of faith so it will stand the coming storm.



mission awareness

God's Recipe for a Blessed Marriage (Part 1)

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

One of the definitions that Mr. Webster gives for recipe is “any procedure

for accomplishing something.” In Part one I will write on the scriptural basis of “God's Recipe for a Blessed

Marriage” mixed with some practical ways for couples to enjoy life together. Part two will focus more on the “nuts and bolts” or practical ways to keep a marriage flowing smoothly.

Going into the mission field will not automatically make you a different person. You will have the same likes and dislikes. You will have the same strengths and weak points as you had at home. You will carry yourself with you wherever you go. Oh, I love II Corinthians 3:18: *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* In His divine sovereignty God gives us opportunity to be changed from one degree of glory to a higher degree of glory by the Holy Spirit through His Word and in prayer if we cooperate and listen to Him. The Holy Spirit even uses fellow missionaries to chisel off some rough, carnal edges of our lives. Husbands, listen to your wives. Their quiet mannerisms and suggestions may be just what you need to experience the true freedom in Christ that you so long desired, and your marriage can be blessed.

In Ephesians 5:22-33 the Apostle Paul enlarges and gives rich enlightenment on how marriage is symbolic of Christ and the church. (It may be of high value if every

wedding ceremony would have an exposition of this passage or at least some mention of this beautiful type which is deeply rooted in creation—Genesis two). Herein is entrenched some gold to be discovered as a recipe for a blessed marriage and a more fulfilled mission life. Actually, it is rather simple if we are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to crucify all selfishness that lies so close to the surface at times.

Paul begins by stating that wives are to submit to their own husbands *“as unto the Lord”* (verse 22). This comes on the heels of 5:21: *“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”* He further encourages, *“Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything”* (5:24). I submit comments from Nelson’s Bible in the phrase *“as unto the Lord.”*

“This is a comparative clause. But in the Greek there are two different types of comparative clauses. (1) Elucidation, which means that wives are to give their husbands the same unquestioned, absolute submission they give Christ. Would this apostle expect wives to render the same submission to imperfect husbands they give to their perfect Lord, when other apostles recognized the periodic need for believers to obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29), if the wills of human

and divine authorities clash? It is better, then, to take the comparative clause as that of (2) emphasis, which means that wives are to submit to their husbands as submission rendered to Christ Himself. When the wife yields her will to her husband, she yields to the Lord—provided the husband's directions are in line with God's will (verse 21)."

Paul closes this paragraph with a third encouragement for the wives: ". . . and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (verse 33). The Holy Spirit is gracious. This is probably spoken to Christian wives in the atmosphere of unbelieving husbands, in that they are to give them due respect and deep reverence. However, blessed also, is a God-fearing wife who gives reverence to a Christian husband.

The Apostle Paul does not let husbands off the hook. He clearly states three times in Ephesians five that husbands are to love their wives: "*Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. . . . Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife . . .*" (5:25, 28, 33). Here the Greek word "agape" is used to describe the attitude of husbands to their wives. It is a self-giving, sacrificial love!

In Kearney, Nebraska, is a valve factory. Valves of many sorts are manufactured there. There is, of course, a valve testing procedure. Every valve is submitted to some degree of testing before approval. The valves are normally subjected to twice the pressure they would need to withstand in actual usage. That pressure exposes any defects that might be present.

On the mission field married couples are often under certain pressures and tests unequal to the home country. There is the test of a different climate: humidity, heat, rain, hurricanes, mud, drought, fatigue, or cold (chilled to the bone) and then sickness or even death. There may also be tests in working with fellow missionaries or submission to mission board members. The test of purity comes along in an "undressed" society as a deceptive device of Satan to throw a dart in your heart to lead you down a path of uncontrolled thoughts. But Jesus Christ is our Victor in all tests and trials! "*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*" (Hebrews 4:15).

There is the test of an interrupted schedule. Perhaps you are on call or demand 24 hours a day so that you do

not even have time for a meaningful devotional life. Remember, our precious Lord also was extremely busy with “*many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat*” (Mark 6:31b). Jesus had just told his disciples, “*Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and there rest awhile.*” When the multitudes saw them going, they ran and arrived before them at the place where Jesus and His disciples had planned to rest. Jesus was moved with a deep heartfelt compassion and “*began to teach them many things*” (Mark 6:34b). At this occasion Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fish. Jesus

let nothing go to waste for there were twelve baskets left over. Jesus is the Master of multiplication. We need to surrender our meager loaves and fish (our small Bible knowledge) to Jesus and allow Him to ignite our hearts and lips and put fire in our bones.

Yes, God’s recipe for a blessed marriage is not to fall apart but to come apart and rest awhile. Then mission work done “unto the Lord” brings joy and a deep fulfillment rather than imitating former missionaries and trying to please everyone. Be yourself and enjoy a happy marriage.



A Woman After God’s Heart

Preserved

Susan Raber, New Concord, OH



Imagine with me a well-kept garden with rows of various vegetables. The sun is shining, the plants are lush and green, and the gardener is hoeing between the rows. Her passion is evident in her movements.

So God tends each of us as tender plants. We learn obedience from our parents as we grow in the garden called *family*. One example of growth may be that we start meeting with God more regularly, growing

spiritually, morally, and physically. “Having devotions,” some call it.

Ouch! This overzealous gardener nicked me with her hoe. What does she think she’s doing? It’s like she’s the parent and while focused on godly parenting (i.e. hoeing), Mom overreacts and does something that hurts me! My parents¹ really failed with my brother. They were so

¹ this is an imaginary scenario

focused on parenting properly (such as passionate hoeing) that they “chopped off a corn stalk,” and my brother hasn’t recovered spiritually from that! Why couldn’t my parents show us love in a way that we could perceive it? Why were they always nagging, warning, and pruning? Pruning hurts. Why were they so uncaring? Why couldn’t they trust us and leave the weeds? Couldn’t we have survived with a few weeds left in our row? Why did they shelter us from the world? Couldn’t we have learned to stand better against worldly temptations if they hadn’t sheltered us so strictly? Maybe they tried too hard.

Once we’ve matured, the Gardener picks us off the vine and carries us to the house. We have a certain feeling of satisfaction knowing that our lives are good enough to be harvested and mature enough to be used by the Master Gardener. We can witness and thus be food for others; but wait a minute, the housewife is now stuffing me into a jar with a bunch of other beans. Wait, God, what’s happening? Why are you allowing me to be crushed? I can’t breathe! There are so many people in one jar! Am I supposed to be okay with this? I can’t give my life to this monotony. How will I be noticed? Who wants a squished bean?

Okay, God, I’m beginning to see

how You teach us lessons through adversities and how important relationships are. God, I give myself to You to use as You see fit. I can do this with Your help, and yes, through these true-to-life experiences, and while rubbing shoulders with those around us, we continue to minister to others.

But now it’s raining. God, I wish the sun would always shine in our lives. However, we trust You to engineer our circumstances, and I can learn to dance in the rain of Your love. But now something else is wrong. The water’s getting too deep! Help! I’m drowning in work, parenting responsibilities, this job, or in being misunderstood so long. I can’t keep my head above the water. You don’t seem to be listening, God. And just like that, a cap is placed on my jar.

God, how can I grow when my prayers don’t seem to go beyond the ceiling? Take away this barrier I feel in my relationship with You. Don’t You care? I’m dying inside. Where are You when I need You the most? Can You hear me? You seem so far away!

Okay, I’m beginning to be okay with this calling. I’m warming up to these people, this stage of spiritual maturity, this new way You are showing me. You keep showing me how to love, to be humble, to think less *princess* and more *servant*. I sense

a peace, a warm feeling of belonging.

But now it's getting too hot in here. Where is this heat coming from? Another trial? Another test? I'm not ready for this! God, aren't You trusting me with too much? Will I ever be able to trust You fully? I learn one lesson and You act like You don't see the improvements that I've made, and You keep turning up the heat. What do You expect of me? I want to be good and to be understood. This doesn't feel right. You can't be doing this to me. You're asking too much! I'm toast!

Or should I say "canned?" The jar has been sealed. I'm now ready for the Master's use and am prepared unto every good work. It's not how I expected my life to turn out, but I can honestly say as I sit in this jar on the shelf in the basement that God has given me everything I need for my

present happiness. I know that while I wait in a seemingly inactive state I can choose to be content in this state. I can fast and pray and encourage those around me. I mostly pray that our *"whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Others may look at me on this shelf and say I should get out and make something of myself, but what I have learned growing up in a garden is that God created all things for His glory. I have learned that to be accepted by God we need faith and obedience to Him. I have learned that the best way to glorify God is to mimic Him in love and justice to those we bump shoulders with, whether we are waiting, preserved, or living out of a jar.



junior messages

"Did God Tell You Anything?"

Ellen Kratzer, Richfield, PA

"R-i-n-g. R-i-n-g." It was recess time. "The game is 'Cat and Mouse,'" announced Miss Ellen.

Silent cheers filled the room! Yes, silent, for they knew how to express excitement with arms pumping the air and mouths forming the word "Yea!"

And then someone couldn't

restrain from raising his hand and announcing to the whole class, "And we are mice!"

Yes, they were! For this year the theme in the First-grade Room was "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." And the symbol was mice! Just as Samuel in the Bible heard

God speaking and listened, so did Christopher Churchmouse in those old classic stories.

But now it was time to go play! “You may stand to be dismissed. Row One, you may go.”

As Row One filed out, Miss Ellen noticed that one little boy was not standing. He was sitting in his desk. He was shaking with sobs.

She gave a questioning look to her helper, Miss Honor, who answered with a questioning look herself! She motioned for her to check it out and continued dismissing students.

“Row Two. Row Three.”

“You go ahead and go out with the children,” she told Miss Honor, “I’ll find out what is wrong.”

Miss Ellen got a few tissues and went by the sobbing boy’s desk. He mutely looked up at her and accepted the tissues but could not speak. She laid her hand gently on his shoulder and just waited until the dear boy gained control of himself. Then she simply asked, “What is wrong?”

Just as simply he answered, “Benjamin kicked me.”

“Why?”

“I don’t know,” he said and started to sob again.

Miss Ellen went to the door and called, “Benjamin, please come in.”

Obediently, he left the happy group of playing children and came in.

Miss Ellen asked, “Do you have any idea why Clint is crying?”

There was a moment’s hesitation. He looked back at his crying classmate, and then so honestly said, “I kicked him.”

“Was that kind?”

He readily admitted, “No.”

Now Benjamin knew if he was not kind his little mouse on the Discipline Wall could have no cheese, and he would need to take his mouse and put him in the mousetrap box. But he chose to be honest. Sadly, he got his little mouse and dropped him in the box.

He then looked at Miss Ellen, and she said, “If you want to tell Clint something, you may, but you don’t have to.”

He wanted to, and Miss Ellen listened as he went back to the teary-eyed Clint and said, “I’m sorry.”

Clint so sweetly said, “I forgive you.”

Miss Ellen sent the had-been-sobbing boy out to play and told the now-contrite boy to sit in his desk. As he sat in his desk, Miss Ellen said, “I want you to put your head down and see if God has anything to say to you. Like Samuel of old say, “Speak, Lord, I’m listening.”

All was quiet. The minutes ticked by.

Then gently Miss Ellen said, “Benjamin, you may put your head up.” His eyes met hers as she asked,

“Did God tell you anything?”

His answer touched her heart as he said, “Yes, He told me not to be mean.”

Prodding, Miss Ellen asked, “And are you going to listen?”

His answer was a strong “Yes!” and then with a happy heart he ran off

to play as Miss Ellen followed a bit more slowly but with a happy heart also knowing her little “mouse” was learning to listen to God’s voice.

[Ellen Kratzer has taught school for many years. She is still influencing lives for Jesus in the classroom. MEB]



youth messages

Of People, Sheeple, and Shepherds

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

Sit back at a large event of some kind and observe people. They can often be divided into three groups. The first group of individuals is not terribly hard to pick out. They are persons with an inflated feeling of self-importance, standing their ground and refusing to budge when asked to accommodate others. If and when they do, it is begrudgingly and often with a smart remark or mumbled retort under their breath as if the world should revolve around them! I will call them “people.” They may be young and entitled, or old and feel like the world owes them a certain level of respect. Will they lift a finger to help? Not unless they think they might be recognized for it. These *people* look out for themselves first and foremost, often taking advantage of the next group of

people (somewhat like wolves). Man, woman, old, or young—somewhere along the line they missed out on the blessing of serving others.

The next group of people can be labeled “sheeple” which, according to the dictionary, is a “*plural noun: people who are docile, compliant, or easily influenced: people likened to sheep.*”¹ Sheeple, sadly, tend to make up a sizeable portion of many crowds. These folks do not pick up on social cues, don’t look ahead at a situation, and rarely try to figure out what their role might be. Often, these dear folks do not pay enough attention to hear when directions are given or prepare themselves to act on them. *Sheeple* tend to blindly follow the flow around them. This group tends to have more of a herd mentality. Never

¹ merriam-webster.com

asking questions, they wait until they see someone doing something they want to do and then they go do it too! *Sheeple* don't always mean to get in the way; some are even a little more observant than others and at least move when they realize they are standing in the middle of traffic. Others (like the little woolly sheep they imitate) stand right in the path of foot traffic even after being asked multiple times to "excuse me" by those from our next group.

Our final group is, of course, "shepherds." *Shepherds* are necessary because as philosopher Matshona Dhliwayo observed, "*When sheep grow blind, it is only wolves that rejoice.*" *Shepherds* are continually alert and are always watching for potential dangers or problems. *Shepherds* look out for the *sheeple* and deal with the *people*. *Shepherds* are not always recognized publicly, but it doesn't take much watching of a crowd to pick them out. They are always ready to lend a helping hand. If there is a need, a *shepherd* nearly always finds a way to fill it or facilitate the filling thereof by someone better suited to do so. *Shepherds* take direction from other *shepherds* and put their all into helping however they can. *Shepherds* are available. There are times when things are out of their control and some plans

can't conveniently be changed, but if and when they can, *shepherds* will change them. *Shepherds* think of the *sheeple* first and their own needs next. Dhliwayo also said, "A good *shepherd* always feeds his sheep first even when he himself is hungry." The Apostle Peter said, "*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*" (I Peter 5:2-4). These verses apply to ordained persons within the church, but the principles can be applied to any of us as we live and relate to our world as Jesus did.

Christ, the Good Shepherd, gave us the perfect example. He put the needs of others above His own life in order to provide us with what we needed—salvation. He gathered men around Him and taught them to be shepherds, and they in turn led others in the New Testament church. Jesus led by example and took the time to tend those who were sick and hurting. When His disciples got out of line, He reprimanded them in love and redirected them. Sheep follow shepherds whom they trust—shepherds who show them love and

not abuse.

In an honest evaluation of yourself, which category do you most often fall into? *People* tend to lean more toward self-centeredness and independence. *Sheeple* are either blindly doing their own thing, doing something they saw *people* do, or milling about waiting for a *shepherd* to give them direct instructions. *Shepherds* are serving, leading out, giving direction, and constantly looking for potential problems and trying to prevent them. Are we intentional about which group we identify with, or does it depend on how we are feeling in a given situation? Shouldn't we be able to be counted on to lend a hand and be a leader and a facilitator when given the opportunity?

How can we be better *shepherds*? Firstly, make yourself available. “*Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me*” (Isaiah 6:8). Isaiah made himself available for God's work. God calls different people to different avenues

of service, whether it's something as simple as being usher at church, helping an older couple with a project, or showing up for a church working bee. Maybe it's going to a foreign country to serve or being called to teach in your church school. Whatever the case may be, make yourself available to serve. Secondly, when asked, do what you can even if it's out of your comfort zone. Shepherds don't complain or whine about what they've been asked to do. If they need help, they ask for it to ensure that the job gets done properly. Remember, what you are doing should be done as unto the Lord. “*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men*” (Colossians 3:23). Thirdly, go the second mile. Don't just do what is asked of you, ask if there is anything else that can be done. “*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain*” (Matthew 5:41). Go above and beyond whenever it's possible.



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• • • • •

Satan covets a tired man and uses him;
God rests a tired man and inspires him.

• • • • •

A love of heaven makes a man heavenly.

• • • • •

If a man wants his dreams to come true, he must wake up.

• • • • •

The world steps aside for the man who knows where he is going.

• • • • •

God's promises are always greater than our needs.

• • • • •

You can never find a lost opportunity.

• • • • •

A smooth sea never made a skillful sailor.

• • • • •

Master that sin in your heart, or it will master you.

• • • • •

Godly talk does not always imply godly walk.

• • • • •

Weak men wait for opportunities—strong men make them.