



Calvary

MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

OCTOBER 2021

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Calvary Messenger

October 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 Sugar creek, Ohio. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvary Publications, Inc., 7498 Woods West Ave., London, OH 43140.


Ode to Autumn

Balmy sunshine, lazy weather,
How it makes my heart to thrill,
Just to breathe the scent of autumn,
As I gaze on scarlet hill.

Autumn, autumn, how I love you,
You who glow with colors bold,
You who bear the Master's paint brush,
Dipped in pots of red and gold.

Ah, but you are only canvas,
Have no say to colors spilled,
Yet you draw me to my Father,
Who creates the blazing hills.

So in life there comes an autumn,
What's my canvas prone to show?
Oh, that all the scarlet blotches,
Had been washed like whitest snow.

Sara Viola Gingerich, Mountain View, AR
[Inspired by a trip to Maplewood Cemetery, Harrison, AR.] 

When Thou Art Full

As we drive along the roads in our rural farming community, we see lush fields of corn and soybeans. We have enjoyed an exceptional summer of plentiful rainfall. The corn stalks are exceptionally tall; in some cases reaching up into the scarcely-used irrigation equipment. It may be a near record that our lawns have not once turned brown, but often we have needed to mow twice weekly. Our gardens and orchards have produced bountifully. (Sadly, some of you readers have not had this experience.)

Many communities throughout this country have experienced an overabundance of work. Businesses have been blessed with more work than can be accomplished. The prices for goods and services have soared, and the demand has given the seller the ability to set almost any price. There seems to be prosperity on every side.

In general everybody enjoys times of prosperity. Is it okay to take advantage of the good times? What should we do with the abundant harvest? Does God give us any instructions and cautions about prosperity?

It was after 40 long and sometimes painful years of wandering in the wilderness that Moses rehearsed, in the book of Deuteronomy, the important happenings of the children of Israel since they had been delivered from their bondage in Egypt. As they began the journey towards the Jordan River and looked forward to the land *“flowing with milk and honey”* that had been promised to their forefathers, Moses gave them these words of warning, *“And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; **then beware lest thou forget the LORD**, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage”* (Deuteronomy 6:10-12).

Do not forget God

When our physical and virtual “bellies” are full, there may be little

sense of need. We can easily forget that we enjoy blessings that are beyond our scope of accomplishment. The Israelites weren't going into a land that was uninhabited and untamed. Because of God's judgment upon the inhabitants of the land, they would be given houses and homesteads ready to move into and enjoy. They didn't need to be pioneers in a jungle or untamed landscape, but there were walled cities and roads, crops in the fields, animals in the barns, and fruit on the trees. Moses cautioned them to remember that God had brought them here from the house of bondage in Egypt.

Moses told the children of Israel that one danger of being full and forgetting the Lord is not living by His laws and commandments. "*Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes*" (Deuteronomy 8:11).

Obviously we did not work extra hard this summer to make it rain. We also did not have anything to do with being born into one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Let's not forget the Lord but recognize that all blessings come from Him. "*For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst*

not received it?" (I Corinthians 4:7). Indeed, God gives us these many blessings so we can return them to Him.

Remember and bless God

*"When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt **bless the LORD** thy God for the good land which he hath given thee"* (Deuteronomy 8:10).

We also can easily become proud and boastful about our possessions and our wealth. It is natural for us to say, "*my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.*" (Deuteronomy 8:17). But we should remember the Lord our God, "*for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*" (Deuteronomy 8:18). It seems obvious that God did not judge the rich man in Luke 12 because of his abundant harvest and lack of storage in his barns. But God calls him a fool because he seemed to forget that the accumulation of wealth and possessions does not promise longevity of life to live selfishly. Storing up treasures for ourselves should not take the place of being rich toward God. As stewards of the riches God has entrusted to us, we can bless Him by sharing richly with the needy, generously supporting local and foreign missions, and graciously supporting our local congregations and schools. This is one way we can lay up treasures in heaven.

Moses's final instructions to God's people are good for us today as well. "And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there" (Deuteronomy 26:1-2).

May we live our lives out of the heart that God desires for each of His children when He said these words after the Israelites asked

Moses to speak to them instead of hearing directly from God, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deuteronomy 5:29).

-AY 



Announcement

Faithful Women Seminar 2021

Theme: Diapers, Attitudes, and Me

Saturday, October 2, 2021

Walking With God - Lily Bear, Elida, OH

The Littles - Sylvia Yoder, Somerset, OH

Teens and Young Adults - Bernice Troyer, Free Union, VA

In Community - Faye Shaum, Orrville, OH

For more information or to register, please call 614-873-1199 or email info@dlmohio.org

This seminar is sponsored and hosted by:

*Deeper Life Ministries
5123 Converse Huff Rd.
Plain City, OH 43064*



Announcement

Faithful Men Seminar 2021

Theme: Restoring the Heart of Anabaptism

Saturday, November 13, 2021

What Have We Lost? - Tom Johnson, Plain City, OH

Establishing a Clear Vision - Dave Snyder, Plain City, OH

Loving Like the Master - Dave Snyder, Plain City, OH

Equipping for Service - Ben Waldner, Plain City, OH

For more information or to register, please call 614-873-1199

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reader response

Reader Response- “The Early Anabaptist View of Scripture,” July 2021

There is one article recently that I have a response to. Jeremiah Fox wrote “The Early Anabaptist View of Scripture (and Its Influence on the Modern Conservative Mennonite Church)” in the July issue. I generally appreciated the article except for one point and that was possibly because it wasn’t nuanced as much as I would think appropriate. Fox wrote, “It takes no specialized training to understand and implement the Word of God

as written.” However, Peter wrote about Paul’s writings, “*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are **hard to understand**, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures*” (II Peter 3:15, 16 ESV emphasis mine). The point I want to make here is that there is significant benefit in studying the Scriptures.

Ignorance is not blessed by God. For the most part I appreciate our tradition of ordaining men who have not been trained at a seminary, but there are dangers also. I know of a conservative Anabaptist minister who spoke on the phrase, “beware of dogs” from Philippians 3:2, thinking it was referring to literal dogs because he wasn’t aware of the figurative usage in that particular passage. I’ve been blessed by my studies at conservative Anabaptist Bible schools and there is much more that I could learn. Many of our Bible study tools come from educated people who have spent years studying the Bible. I wish our Anabaptist people would have more folks who have made it their life’s work to seriously study the Bible.

On the other hand I do acknowledge that many educated people have

done harm to the work of Christ by using human wisdom to explain away the Scriptures. This is a terrible thing! Maybe this is where we need educated people to offer a defense to the plain reading of Scripture?

I don’t consider myself educated, but I wish for more. I hate to see us discourage education, especially in studying the Scriptures. I can’t verify this myself, but Finny Kuruvilla of Sattler College argues that a significant factor in the birth of the early Anabaptist movement in Zurich was the education of people like Michael Sattler who understood the original languages of Scripture. We value manual labor but do we value doing the hard work of thinking well?

Luke Nisly

Oswego, KS



the bottom line

Dead and Gone

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Old Rufus lived way back in. Going in his lane, one had to endure potholes filled with some water, so you could never see how deep they were. The canopy of trees appeared as a foliage tunnel. Seeing old Rufus in town was similar to seeing a deer in cropland where

a deer in his transit would seldom be seen.

Well, old Rufus is now dead and gone, as they say. A few people felt a tinge of conviction for not stopping by his house to give him some Gospel tracts or an invitation to believe on Jesus. Certain others said his passing

was a blessing.

Old Rufus died and was buried, a human basis to be sure he is dead and gone. Up front, dead and gone seems like a duplication of terms. Whoever heard of being dead and kept?

Any options? One option is from several unusual, even weird, news reports of the past where a decayed corpse was found in an outbuilding because a spouse could not bear to see his dearly beloved being buried. Another case reported an attempt was made to cover up criminal activity. In those kinds of situations, death happened, but the dead body was not gone, being shut out in a secluded basement room or cave cellar. Those options are cases where the spirit and soul are gone, but the body is not. The body is dead but not gone.

Another option is where the Bible assures us that there will be a mere moment of time when all the righteous will be changed into new bodies; their human souls and spirits will rise in the “twinkling of an eye” in those bodies “to meet the Lord in the air!” In that startling transition, all qualified believers in Jesus all over the world will be gone and more alive than ever before. Not dead and gone, but gone forever from this earth and alive with a perfect body—forever with Jesus! And that without dying.

We remember that Jesus had said there will be a future time when “*He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*” He further says it will be as it was in the days of Noah, wherein righteous Noah and his family were saved from the world-wide flood in which every living person who was not first secured in the ark was drowned, dead, and gone.¹

Lot, his wife, and daughters were rescued out of Sodom by the angels of God before Sodom and Gomorrah were completely destroyed in a terrible instant.² Rahab and those with her were rescued out of Jericho before God completely brought it to total ruin in a moment.³

Jesus said the time will come when one shall be taken and the other left, saying that astounding fact twice as a double witness. That is then immediately followed by Jesus’s warning of sure condemnation for those who are unfaithful.⁴

The Bible says further, “*We shall not all sleep (in death), but we shall all be CHANGED, in a moment, in the*

1 Matthew 24:31-51

2 Genesis 19

3 Joshua 6

4 Matthew 24:48-51

twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be CHANGED.” ⁵ We shall be changed from living, breathing persons in a miniscule, precise moment from being physically alive into being immortal (deathless-Greek), and thus grandly escorted by the angels to heaven. It is assured by the use of the word “shall” four times in just two verses.

The Word of God then puts it in triplicate when it restates that those righteous dead who died, whether recently or long ago, will not have any advantage over those still living. Those will have been dead and gone, but not dead, hallelujah, now more alive than ever. God will bring those righteous dead with Him when He comes for the saints still alive on the earth.

This solemn word is clarified by

5 I Corinthians 15:51, 52

God, for the Bible says, “*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*” ⁶

The Bottom Line is that these three Bible passages clearly display a glorious prophecy that there is a day coming when the righteous will not be dead and gone, as is the case now. It will be the day of going home, a select generation that will not have first died, prior to becoming immortal (deathless-Greek), never being dead and gone. It will surely be a climactic, eternal experience of being CHANGED, and gone home to be with our Lord Jesus. Amen!

6 I Thessalonians 4:16, 17



Are You a Missionary—AT HOME?

Clyde Zimmerman, Altoona, PA

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the

Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV)

Is it possible the Anabaptist community has viewed this mandate from Jesus too narrowly and has missed the largest opportunity? Are we missionaries to those we interact with frequently, right where we live, work, worship, go to school, and live daily life?

Have you ever thought about these questions?

Are our neighbors in North America a new “unreached people group” who have perhaps never heard the name of Jesus?

Does the Anabaptist community simply accept the lost around us as normal and believe we need to board an airplane to be a missionary?

What would be the impact if our churches became more intentional about being missionaries as a part of our daily lives?

Have we considered that North America is a changing place? The Judeo-Christian worldview of past generations is mostly gone. Young people are growing up without ever having heard the name of Jesus Christ, what the Bible forbids is now flaunted as right, and millions are medicated to take away the pain. People are hurting, perhaps more than ever, and while medication may dull the pain, it does not bring peace. There is only one “Peacegiver” Who is what a hurting and suffering

America needs. But how do we effectively share this Giver of peace in our own neighborhood? In our own communities, it is not about lack of food or shelter, but it is about broken relationships, addictions, making poor financial decisions, and a continual cycle of destructive choices. To show the compassion of Christ in your community, what should you do first? What are things you should not do? Should you pay the needy person’s \$25 minimum credit card payment each month and establish dependencies or is there a better way?

These are difficult questions. Perhaps you have never really thought about these things in this way.

My family and I are part of a small Mennonite church in west-central Pennsylvania in the city of Altoona. Our community has many hurting people with real needs. While I have lived in western Pennsylvania most of my life, until experiencing severe needs overseas, I missed the severe needs at home. Many of the needs have been all around me for decades. How or why was I blind to the hurting and suffering people around me? More importantly, what does the Word of God call me and other followers of Jesus to do? Even more sobering, how are we doing in these biblical mandates?

I still vividly recall being in one of the poorest communities in Asia. Homes were bamboo and mud huts, substance addictions were obvious, and there was limited work for able-bodied men to do. But perhaps the most difficult thing was the hopelessness on the faces of the masses. The pain I experienced in my heart and soul while being in the middle of that poverty is hard to describe. They wanted a gift or handout from me, and I cared about their souls. I still recall holding up the Bible-based SALT teaching guide and telling them I will not give money, but with weekly teaching, if they are committed, this will change their lives in ways giving them a handout never will.

During the past handful of years, I have seen similar scenes play out in many countries and cultures. I still clearly recall going back to communities steeped in poverty that agreed to start savings groups and listening to the excitement of young men starting businesses, mothers sharing the hopes and dreams they have for their children now that they could go to school, and fathers not wasting their money on addictions so they could provide for the needs of their family and reduce suffering. But all these blessings pale in comparison to when souls started responding to

the call of Christ in their lives and became part of God's Kingdom. I still recall coming home and sharing the excitement with others about what God is doing in some of the poorest places on earth! But then I started becoming convicted about my own community. What about the needs and suffering all around me in Altoona? Even more convicting for me was seeing the Kingdom Christian SALT facilitators share the Gospel in a holistic manner that shows care and love for the whole person—not their spiritual welfare only. If I want to be faithful at home, what should I do first? Is this Scripture calling us to do more than sing at the old folks' home once a month, hand out tracts, or similar traditional outreach efforts? Is it possible that I see our outreach efforts as an obligation where I simply "check a box" to appease my conscience, then I go serve myself?

This journey described above has caused those of us who work in SALT to ponder if Bible-based teaching materials could be created that would bless the Anabaptist communities at home similar to what we have seen the Lord do overseas. This started us on a long journey of creating and piloting teaching materials that speak clearly to our hurting neighbors while staying true to biblical Truth as Jesus taught it. This

became known as the Salt & Light program. We soon realized that this method of outreach in walking with needy people over the long term has largely not been utilized. We have completed orientation seminars in a number of Anabaptist communities and almost 400 people have attended. We find most people really connect with this way of outreach, but find it very difficult to put it into daily practice. Thankfully, there are some bright spots where faithful brothers and sisters are endeavoring to be missionaries at home.

Here is an example from a person after taking the course with a Mennonite church in Tennessee:

This Salt & Light course has been beneficial for me, and I think you should go through the class too. It has opened my eyes. Sometimes we fuss and think we are in bad shape, but we learned that we have many assets—not only financial but many others too that are often overlooked and many things we take for granted. We also should remember we are only stewards of our possessions and not owners. This class doesn't tell you how to spend your money but rather is a guide to wise spending, and once we learn a bit of self-control in money spending habits, we realize we become self-disciplined in other areas too. We might not think of debt as a choice

because we want to spend money to keep up with all of our friends. So we keep buying more and nicer things just to keep up with everyone else, and then we realize we are deep in debt and in a trap. We are servants to the lender, therefore make wise choices in purchases and avoid debt and live a more kingdom-focused joyful life!! Small choices are very powerful, and we need to learn what really matters to us.

Here is another example from an Anabaptist brother from a church in Maryland:

Just a brief update on the Salt & Light course from our community. We are now in our eighth week and it has been very good. It has been a blessing to share together in honest and meaningful ways. One of the participants has asked if we could continue meeting after the course is completed to study the Scriptures together.

To be clear, we do not believe the Salt & Light course is the “secret sauce” to reach out in our own communities. But we do believe it can be *one* tool in the outreach “tool bag.” It provides a structured way of walking with those who are hurting. It also shows that we really care about the whole person, and it is *authentic caring*, not just inviting people to church and thinking we

have done our duty (whether they come or not). There are many tools at our disposal to walk with hurting people. Godly homes are one of the most powerful tools we have in demonstrating the Kingdom of Jesus. Is your home open and inviting where the sin-sick soul can join the family for dinner on a regular basis? What powerful teaching opportunities these interactions provide to us parents for teaching our children! Is your garage or workshop open to allow others to bring their vehicles for maintenance and repair? There are perhaps dozens of ways we can show Christ to those all around us! Warning! This journey is costly to self! Are we committed and ready to show Christ to the lost all around us in ways we have not traditionally done?

I will close with a sobering scripture:

“Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor

and needy” (Ezekiel 16:49 NKJV).

Typically, when we think of Sodom, we think of the sins of immorality. In the Scripture above, the prophet Ezekiel calls out Sodom’s sins of pride, fullness of food, and too much free time while ignoring the needs of the poor and needy. He does not even mention their immorality. Serving self and not taking care of the needy seems to be equal to or worse than sexual immorality. Who of us in conservative Mennonite or Anabaptist homes do not have “fullness of food, abundance of idleness” or, yes, perhaps even some pride, while not even “seeing” the needy all around us? God help us!

If you are interested in using the Salt & Light course in your community as an outreach tool to share the gospel and help hurting people make better choices, please email czimmerman@camoh.org or call 330-893-2428.



[I lead with permission.]
**Salt &
Light**

The Bible Brings Hope
for Our Financial Problems



Happiness can be thought,
taught, and caught—
but not bought.



Tomorrow

He was going to be all that a mortal should be—
Tomorrow.

No one should be kinder or braver than he—
Tomorrow.

A friend who was troubled and weary he knew,
Who'd be glad for a lift, and who needed it too:
On him he would call and see what he could do—
Tomorrow.

Each morning he stacked up the letters he'd write—
Tomorrow.

And thought of the folks he would fill with delight—
Tomorrow.

It was too bad, indeed, he was busy today,
And hadn't a minute to stop on his way;
More time he would have to give others, he'd say—
Tomorrow.

The greatest of workers this man would have been—
Tomorrow.

The world would have known him would he ever have seen—
Tomorrow.

But the fact is, he died, and he faded from view,
And all that he left, when living was through,
Was a mountain of things he intended to do—
Tomorrow.

Edgar A. Guest 

marriages

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

Chupp-Yoder

Bro. Wesley, son of Mark and Freida Chupp, Eden Valley, MN, and Sis. Marita, daughter of Verlynn and Laurel Yoder, Grove City, MN, on July 24, 2021, at Evangelical Free Church for Believers Fellowship Mennonite Church by Glen Chupp.

Kauffman-Herschberger

Bro. Micah, son of Naomi and the late Eli Kauffman, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Rose, daughter of Eugene and Edna Mae Herschberger, Amboy, IN, on August 21, 2021, at Bethany Fellowship by Darlton Bontrager.

Yoder-Martin

Bro. David, son of Aaron and Naomi Yoder, Leesburg, IN, and Sis. Cheyenna, daughter of Darrell and Loretta Martin, Goshen, IN, on August 7, 2021, at Berea Christian Fellowship by Scott Burkholder.



cradle roll

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

Bontrager, Clifford and Krista (Martin), Rochelle, VA, twin daughters, fifth and sixth children, second and third daughters, Janessa Beth and Jade Esther, August 25, 2021.

Chupp, Mike and Rosie (Diller), Paynesville, MN, third child, second daughter, Alyssa Rose, July 14, 2021.

Gehman, Delbert and Lydianna (Glogovsky), Churchville, VA, first child and son, Callan Reid, August 9, 2021.

Gerber, Bradley and Margaret (Gerber), Perth, ON, fifth child, fourth daughter, Natalie Grace, August 3, 2021.

Habegger, Kenneth and Thyme (Smith), Harrison, AR, third child, second daughter, Irasa Ruth, June 7, 2021.

Hochstedler, Lester and Lisa (Bontrager), Kokomo, IN, third child, second daughter, Estella Joy, August 16, 2021.

Kooistra, Josh and Beth (Yoder), New Concord, OH, third child, second daughter, Serena Elise, August 19, 2021.

Kuhns, Ronnie and Sheila (Miller), Leesburg, OH, second child, first son, Ashton Marc, July 30, 2021.

Mast, Aaron and Alicia (Byler), Hutchinson, KS, third child, first daughter, Makenna Abrielle, August 19, 2021.

Miller, Lucas and Julianna (Mullet), Warfield, VA, sixth child, third daughter, Abigail Dawn, June 29, 2021.

Miller, Lamar and Michelle (Yoder), Centerville, PA, third child and son, Giovanni Quinn, August 9, 2021.

Otto, Mark and Robyn (Godwin), Humboldt, IL, third child, second son, Alexander Nicholas, June 11, 2021.

Schapansky, Jake and Rose (Sensenig), Bastrop, TX, second child, first daughter, Avry Jo, August 6, 2021.

Snyder, Dustin and Abigail (Stoltzfus), North Lewisburg, OH, first child and daughter, Savanna Brielle, July 28, 2021.

Wagler, Darrell and Becky (Graber), Loogootee, IN, fifth living child, first son, Brayden Kia, born June 27, 2018, and sixth living child, fifth daughter, Jewelyah Hope, born July 12, 2019, both received for adoption June 15, 2021.

Weaver, Jerald and Krista (Miller), Greentown, IN, first child and son, Liam, April 29, 2021.

Yoder, Darrell and Rhonda (Zook), Burgettstown, PA, second child and son, Elias Dirk, July 2, 2021.

Zook, Joseph and Catherine (Gingerich), Cumberland, OH, fourth child, third daughter, Kayleen Joy, August 20, 2021.



ordinations

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

Bro. Weston Graber, 36, (wife, Esther Zook), Peru, IN, was ordained deacon at Bethany Fellowship Church on April 25, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Monroe Gingerich and Joel Gingerich. The charge was given by Darlton Bontrager and Marvin Beachy. Gary Bontrager and Joshua Mast shared the lot.

Bro. Joshua Mast, 31, (wife, Laura Wagler), Kokomo, IN, was ordained deacon at Bethany Fellowship Church on April 25, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Monroe Gingerich and Joel Gingerich. The charge was given by Darlton Bontrager and Marvin Beachy. Gary Bontrager and Weston Graber shared the lot.



obituaries

Beachy, Martha Lucille, 91, of Franklin, KY, passed away at her daughter's home February 25, 2021. She was born October 5, 1930, in Honeyville, IN, to the late Simon S. and Mary (Steury) Graber. Her

husband, Eli, preceded her in death on January 11, 2010.

Martha was a faithful member of Franklin Mennonite Church. She was known for quilting, and enjoyed piecing

quilts and finishing them for her many grandchildren.

Surviving are her 10 children: David (Betty), Noah (Rosie), both of Franklin; James (Irene), Auburn; Thomas (Brenda), Long Island, VA; Philip (Sue Ann), Millersburg, OH; Mary (Laverne), Malta, OH; Ruth (Jason), Concord, AR; Titus, Springfield, TN; Grace (Brad), Auburn; and Mark, East Earl, PA; three sisters: Verna Zook, Goshen, IN; Barbara Mast, and Betty Hochstetler, both of Nappanee, IN; 64 grandchildren, and 115 great-grandchildren.

Martha was preceded in death by a son, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held March 1, 2021, at Franklin Mennonite Church with Wayne Overholt officiating. Burial was at the church cemetery.

Byler, Ada, 89, of Cynthiana, KY, passed on to her eternal reward on June 23, 2021. Ada was born in Dover, DE, on December 19, 1931, to the late Adam and Tillie Byler. She was married to William E. Byler who preceded her in death on February 20, 2016.

Ada was a member of Franklin Mennonite Church. She loved her family and enjoyed when people sang for her.

Surviving are her 10 children: William (Erma), Auburn; Martha (Melvin), Chesnee; Melvin (Stephenie), Trenton; Vernon (Betty), Whiteville, TN; Irene (Wayne), Ava, IL; Andy (Donna), Veedersburg, IN; David (Kara), Allensville; Alta (Elton), Cynthiana; Paul

(Rose), Vanleer, TN; Kathy (Milton), Forest City, NC; 68 grandchildren, and 78 great-grandchildren.

Ada was preceded in death by a daughter, Linda, two brothers, and one grandchild.

The funeral service was held June 26, 2021, at Franklin Mennonite Church with Wayne Overholt officiating. The burial was at the church cemetery.

Byler, Ruby June, 85, of Nappanee, IN, passed away peacefully on August 13, 2021. Ruby was born June 5, 1936, in Bremen, IN, to the late Eli and Mary (Yoder) Schmucker.

On May 6, 1972, she married Lester A. Byler at Maple Lawn Church in Nappanee. He preceded her in death on May 29, 2019.

Ruby most loved being a mother. She also had worked as a nursing assistant, cleaning lady, and taxi driver.

Ruby is survived by her children: Philip (Cathy), Sarasota, FL; Larry (Violet), Hutchinson, KS; Rhoda (Adam) Rees, Brainerd, MN; (from Lester's first marriage), and Ruth (Nathanael) Yoder, Lesvos, Greece; Naomi Byler, Nappanee; 16 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, four brothers, and one sister: Mahlon (Martha), Vernon (Katie), Ivan (Sadie), Owen (Norma), and Erma Schmucker.

She was preceded in death by Lester, her husband of 47 years, a brother, Earl, and sister, Elizabeth.

The funeral service was held August 15, 2021, at Maple Lawn Church with

Thomas Mast and Gary Burkholder officiating. Interment followed at the church cemetery with Scott Burkholder serving.

Hochstetler, Samuel Estel, 90, of Aroda, VA, died July 27, 2021, at home with family. He was born March 25, 1931, in Goshen, IN, to the late Elam S. and Eliza Ann (Bender) Hochstetler.

He married a twin, Clara Bontrager, on March 27, 1952. Soon after they were married, missions and outreach were being encouraged, and in 1958 Samuels took their two sons and moved to a new settlement in Madison County, VA. He was soon ordained as minister and later as bishop. He learned to adapt to new trades for a living and was instrumental in community outreach and helping other churches.

He served on the board of Fellowship Haven, Washington, D.C., and also on the founding board of Mountain View Nursing Home. He was a very practical preacher, living out his faith regardless of what it cost. After retirement he stayed active with the Food Pantry and walked to Mountain View Nursing Home to play checkers with several of the men. He enjoyed making a difference for people, leaving a legacy of hope and courage.

He is survived by his wife, Clara, sons: David (Alma), Eldon (Lois), Aroda; Daniel (Karen), Harrisonburg; Lamar (Margaret), Aroda; and daughter, Marilyn (John Stephen) Schrock, McKenney. He is also survived by brothers: Laban, Daniel (Arie), Goshen,

IN; Noah (Loretta), Elkhart, IN; Joseph (Patricia), Minerva, OH; sisters: Miriam (Orie) Schrock, Marietta (Jonathan) Stoltzfus, Goshen, IN; 28 grandchildren, and 43 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Walter, and sisters: Esther Hershberger and Rhoda Hochstetler.

The funeral service was held at the Oak Grove Mennonite Church on July 30, 2021, followed by the burial at the church cemetery with Lamar Hochstetler and Timothy Miller officiating.

Miller, Susan B., 81, Sugarcreek, OH, passed away peacefully at her home on August 1, 2021. She was born August 16, 1939, to the late Joe M. and Lovina (Mullet) Beachy. On November 1, 1959, she married Aden O. Miller who preceded her in death in 2018.

Susan was a homemaker and a faithful member of Maranatha Fellowship.

She is survived by her children: Jeffrey (Marlene), Walnut Creek; Matthew (Anna), Sugarcreek; Abigail (Mahlon) Stoltzfus, Killbuck; Liz (Dan) Yoder, Sugarcreek; daughter-in-law, Grace (late Durlan) Miller, Sugarcreek; 26 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren; brothers and sisters: Ada (Aden R.) Miller, Sugarcreek; Marie (late Raymond) Hochstetler, Walnut Creek; Gertrude (Lewis) Schlabach, Sugarcreek; Reuben (Rosemary), Sarasota, FL; Matthew (Linda), Dover; David (Linda), Sugarcreek; Christine (Brian) Valot, New Philadelphia; and Robert, Canton; sisters-in-law: Catherine (late Menno)

Beachy, Sugarcreek; and Patricia (late Joseph) Beachy.

She was preceded in death by her oldest son, Durlan Miller; great-grandson, Seth Elliot Miller; three brothers: Menno, Aden, and Joseph (Mary); and brother-in-law Raymond Hochstetler.

The funeral service was held August 4, 2021, at Maranatha Fellowship with Paul L. Miller officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Nisly, Larry, 78, Hutchinson, KS, died August 18, 2021, at his home. He was born September 27, 1942, in Hutchinson, KS, to Edward D. and Elizabeth (Yoder) Nisly.

Larry was the owner and operator of Midwest Farm and Dairy Supply for 46 years. He was a member of Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite Church where he served on various committees with steady faithfulness. Larry valued education; he served as board member of Pilgrim Christian School for 25 years, and as high school administrator for much of that time. He also served eight years on the board of Prairie View Mental Health in Newton. He enjoyed singing and gardening. Larry valued relationships and treasured times with his grandchildren. He sought ways to serve others and was particularly known by customers and community members for his listening ear.

On June 4, 1967, Larry married Barbara Miller in Hutchinson. She survives.

Also surviving are children: Stan

(Carol), Altamont; Rod (Sylvia), Nickerson; Jeanene (Wendell) Nisly, Harrisonburg, VA; Angela (Abner) Schmucker, Hutchinson; Andrea (Leon) Troyer, Bourbon, IN; Brad (Rosa), Hutchinson; 29 grandchildren; brother, John F. (Sara Mae), Hutchinson; sister, Barbara Ellen (David E.) Miller, Hutchinson; sisters-in-law: Edna Nisly, Abbeville, SC; Iva Nisly, and Cora Nisly, Hutchinson; brother-in-law, Paul (Nancy) Nisly, Grantham, PA; and numerous extended family members.

He was preceded in death by his parents and siblings: Vera, William, Harley, Laura, Lester, Daniel, and Elmer.

The funeral service was held August 21, 2021, at Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite Church with Lee Nisly, Donald Miller, and Paul Miller serving. James Shetler conducted the committal in the West Center Cemetery.

Nisly, Melvin, 93, of Hutchinson, KS, died August 20, 2021, at his home. He was born January 29, 1928, on the family farm in rural Hutchinson to Samuel A. and Delilah (Beiler) Nisly.

Melvin was a farmer and stockman and worked in the family butcher shop. He enjoyed fishing, working in the woodshop, and making miniature furniture. Melvin's greatest enjoyment, though, was farming and his grandchildren.

On October 23, 1949, he married Fannie Yoder in Hutchinson. She died September 2018, after sharing almost 69 years of marriage.

Melvin is survived by his children: Judith (Perry) Stutzman, Hutchinson; Joyce (Steve) Bontrager, Kokomo, IN; Cynthia (Dale) Miller, Plain City, OH; Titus (Marijane), Hutchinson; and Janelle Nisly, Evansville, IN; 10 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; sister-in-law, Ellen Nisly, Hutchinson; and three brothers-in-law.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three brothers, five sisters, and two granddaughters.

The funeral service was held August 23, 2021, at Center Amish Mennonite Church with Dwight Miller and David Yoder officiating. Burial followed in West Center Cemetery.

Stoll, Howard J., 88, of Odon, IN, passed away March 24, 2021, at his home. He was born September 11, 1932, in Montgomery, IN, to the late Victor and Lydia (Wittmer) Stoll.

Howard married Emma Marie Stoll on April 26, 1955. She survives.

He was a member of Mt. Olive Mennonite Church. Howard loved his family and his dogs.

Howard was preceded in death by his son, Daniel Joe; brother, Raymond; sisters: Anna Stoll, Clara Swartzentruber, and Lilly Graber.

He is survived by his wife, Emma Marie; children: Karen (Ura) Miller; Edward (Ruby); Stephen (Nancy); Ronald, all of Odon; Lois (Michael) Miller, Sarasota, FL; and Allan, Odon. Also surviving are 16 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held March 27, 2021, at Mt. Olive Mennonite Church. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Troyer, Ervin E., 79, of Plain City, OH, passed on to be with Jesus at Grant Medical Center August 6, 2021. He was born August 3, 1942, in Plain City, OH, to the late Eli and Barbara (Borntrager) Troyer. He married Esther M. Kurtz on June 6, 1964. She preceded him in death on November 8, 2006. On June 6, 2009, he married Anna L. Gingerich.

Ervin followed the Lord faithfully and was a member at Bethesda Fellowship.

He was preceded in death by his brother Joseph.

Ervin is survived by his wife, Anna, and his six children: Rosemary; Hosea (Bernice); Nathanael (Ruth); Bertha (John) Stutzman; Lois (Dwayne) Stoltzfus; Heidi (Roger) Peachey; 25 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Also surviving are 10 siblings: Oliver (Emma), Wilma (Dan) Gingerich, Perry (Edna), Mary (late John) Yoder, Lester, Vernon (Leona), Gertrude, Sue (Mervin) Lapp, Fannie (James) Weaver, and Marvin (Wilma); also Cindy Sharpe and Pat Roy, longtime Troyer family friends.

The funeral was held August 9, 2021, at United Bethel Mennonite Church for Bethesda Fellowship Church with Elmer Stoltzfus, Dale Miller, and Galen Stutzman serving. Burial was in the Bethesda Fellowship Church Cemetery.

Wagler, Willard, Sr., 89, of Odon, IN, went home to be with his heavenly Father December 5, 2020, at the Jasper Memorial Hospital. Willard was born to the late David and Katie (Graber) Wagler on March 23, 1931, in Daviess County, IN.

Willard married Martha (Knepp) Wagler on November 24, 1951. He had 9 children, 38 grandchildren, and 90 great-grandchildren.

Willard was a member of the Mt. Olive Mennonite Church. He lived his life to the fullest. He was a sweet, caring man who loved the Lord Jesus. His family was very special to him, and he loved nothing more than for them to stop in for a chat. He was always ready to give a witty remark or a good laugh when needed and was known for his generous hospitality. He was a farmer at heart,

and his favorite hobby was collecting antiques. His favorite song was “There’s Nothing Out There.”

Willard is survived by his loving wife of 69 years, Martha Wagler, and his children: Dale (Rose), Karen Sue (Ray) Lengacher, Gary (Diane), Darrel (Lynn), Willard, Jr. (Annetta), Ellen (Mark, deceased) Graber, Mary (Raymond) Marner, Travis (Renee), and son-in-law, Darrel (Naomi, deceased) Stoll.

Willard was preceded in death by his siblings, daughter, Naomi Stoll, son-in-law, Mark Graber, granddaughter, Beth Ann Lengacher, great-granddaughter Grace Willow Graber, and grandson-in-law, Mark Tristan Stoll.

A funeral service was held December 9, 2020, at Mt. Olive Mennonite Church with the burial following in the church cemetery.



Four Ounces

Frank Reed, Manheim, PA

An acre is a large tract of land. It is 43,560 square feet. This year in farming I sprayed a field of non-GMO soybeans with Pursuit herbicide. The recommended application is four ounces to one acre of land planted in soybeans.

It would seem to make sense that four ounces of herbicide sprayed in 20 gallons of water to the acre, would get lost and do no good at all. Not so.

There were weeds already starting

to grow on the field. Broadleaves, grasses, thistles, and other kinds of weeds had begun growing and threatening the crop. Not to fear. All weeds are dead and the soybeans look great.

How is this possible? Is this some kind of magic? What can we learn from this miracle of modern science? Science can produce a product so deadly to weeds and yet so protective of the crop. Actually this practice has become commonplace in our world.

Science applied to life has made life so much better. Antibiotics are miracle drugs. Infections, once feared and deadly, are scarcely noticed. Central heat and air conditioning, in my childhood a luxury, are now standard in most homes and places of business and vehicles. All of this in one lifetime. Along with these are the safest cars and trucks we have ever known. Rack and pinion steering and radial tires are forgiving of much operator error.

If and since all this, and far more, is true, why can we not seem to apply this level of expertise and diligent science to our moral, social, and spiritual lives? A society capable of producing abundance of food and health should be able to apply their brain power to our social ills.

The level of control attempted by the powerful to the masses is evidence that this is possible. Imagine with me; what if plans and controls would be applied to moral problems like abortion and human trafficking? Wrong use of drugs could also be targeted. Teaching men to be fathers and providers would change the world. Education could be applied to researching and developing methods of making lives as clean as the soybean fields. What if?

How can four ounces applied at the right time protect a crop to harvest?

Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. You are the salt of the earth.” How much does it take? How much salt does it take to season food? How much love does it take to bring joy to a hurting heart? How much light does it take to dispel darkness?

Four ounces of a product, mixed with a bit of liquid nitrogen and a bit of surfactant in 20 gallons of water applied to 43,560 square feet of land in a few minutes... if we can do that with modern technology, we can change the world with a few words of Jesus. We can change the world with the application of grace and mercy and respect and love and care. The “weeds” will have to flee and the crops will thrive.

And our lives will tell the story of the good news of the Kingdom of God. And everybody will want what we have so they can thrive in love and peace. And God’s Kingdom will come and His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV).



<https://biblicalbrethrenfellowship.wordpress.com/2021/08/25/4-ounces/>

The Adversity of Prosperity in the Twenty-First Century

Ivan Bender, Nashville, MI

I will never forget the opening words of a financial seminar I attended one evening. The elderly gentleman at the podium dangled a very interesting question in front of the audience: **“Our culture has survived adversity—will it survive prosperity?”**

What a loaded question!

As we all know, the Amish and Mennonites faced severe adversity in the past. Many of our forefathers were burned at the stake, chopped to pieces, or left to rot in their prison cells. Their adversary’s tactics were very clear, but despite the extreme measures to obliterate them, their numbers kept increasing. They persevered! They didn’t give in! And now we’re reaping the fruits of their labor and drinking from the wells they dug. Are we keeping these wells clean so our descendants can also enjoy the waters we are now enjoying? Are we letting the waters get muddied by the cares of this world and America’s prosperity?

Although we aren’t facing physical adversity the way our forefathers did, we still have a very real adversary who is determined to destroy us. We know

who this adversary is. It’s the same one who tempted and persuaded Eve to eat the forbidden fruit and who directed the painful experiences of our forefathers. But what are his tactics in this century? Before we can protect and preserve our cultural treasures, we must be able to detect our enemy’s way of trying to destroy them. We must understand his tactics in our modern age.

While this discussion could go in many different directions, this article will focus on the financial aspects.

The Modern Age

Most of us are familiar with the term *modern*. Modernism or modernity are closely related. When we think of modern things or modernity, we think of the latest styles in the world and the latest technology. Perhaps we even think of modern ways of thinking and acting. Interestingly enough, we as Anabaptists aren’t the only ones who think of modernity in terms of thought patterns and attitudes. Today’s sociologists (people who study human habits and societies) also conclude that modernity is more than just “things.”

According to sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Liquid Modernity*, there is a difference between modernity today versus a hundred years ago. People a hundred years ago believed modern things would result in a better future for them and their descendants. They envisioned coming to a point in time when people would reach the “golden age,” a time when there would be a better society, a better place to live, and better surroundings to raise one’s children. The people behind the main thrust of this modern age were those with influence and money: the John D. Rockefellers and Andrew Carnegies who built “solid things” like railroads, mansions, and factories. Modernity up to 1945 or even later meant building and endorsing these practices. It took much perseverance, financial planning, and even sacrifice on the part of the ones who pursued this mindset.

The times we live in are often referred to as *post modernity* or *liquid modernity*. Liquid modernity involves a mindset of individuals not wanting to be tied to anything permanent or binding, from financial investments to marriage. Why invest a lot of effort in maintaining and cultivating a permanent relationship with your marriage partner when it’s deemed perfectly acceptable

to abort and dismantle past commitments for another round of fresh romance? Why have long-term financial interest in any particular commodity when they make changes so quickly and one can perhaps make more money in another field? Even many manufactured goods are disposable. And in the age of instant communication, we get instant answers by googling. It makes sense that many fear that being committed to something might prevent them from enjoying the next source of instant gratification.

But what does all this have to do with finances among us plain people? Hang in there, and we shall get there eventually.

Consumerism

One of the great differences between solid modernity and liquid modernity is the choices available to the consumer (the person who buys and consumes goods). Sociologists regard today’s typical consumers as being in a state of compulsion which has turned into addiction. This addiction is likened to a race that has an ever-shifting finish line—once the perceived goal is reached, there’s always another one to reach. All the gadgets available today are practically outdated by the time one learns to use them properly. The continual running, the gratifying awareness

of staying in the race, becomes the true addiction. There really isn't any particular prize waiting for the few who manage to cross the finish line.

As the general public is whipped into a buying frenzy, the producers of these goods do everything in their power to make sure that the consumers are never satisfied. Constant changes in car styles, clothing fashions, technology, and interior fashions keep the consumer buying. Change seems to be the key word to keep the buying frenzy going. Jeremy Seabrook describes the scenario this way:

*"It is not so much that capitalism has delivered the goods to the people, as that the people have been increasingly delivered to the goods . . . the selling of which alone gives shape and significance to our lives."*¹

Many concerned brethren in our plain communities would agree this consumerism is the adversity our enemy Satan is throwing across our earthly trek to the Promised Land. Consumerism hides behind the mentality of "everyone else has it, so I need it too," and "if they can afford it, surely I can too." This worldly mindset seeps subtly into our circles, finding and filling every crack in our

churches and families that isn't firmly sealed by the Word of God.

We live in a time that is ripe for this consumeristic mindset to wreak havoc within our circles. Fifty to one hundred years ago, most of the Amish were farmers. They didn't have a lot of cash. Instead they had land, machinery, tools, and other collateral that could be converted to cash when they reached the age to pass the farm to the next generation. Today most plain people handle a lot of cash, but sometimes struggle to channel that cash in the proper places. That's why it is essential to be aware of our adversary's tactics when it comes to being a faithful steward in God's kingdom.

The good news is that if we are truly a part of God's kingdom, today's adversities can be overcome, including those in the financial field. God's Word is as potent as ever, and Satan and his tactics have no choice but to back off. What are some practical steps that can be taken to combat that nasty cycle of consumerism and the huge pressures we are feeling and seeing in our circles? One way is by tracking our expenses to gauge whether or not we are spending our money as true stewards or if we are bending to the idol of consumerism.

Tracking Expenses

How often at the end of the year

¹ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2012), p. 85

do we go to file our income taxes and are aghast at how much money went through our hands and how little we have to show for it? Often we have no way of knowing how much we spent for what! Tracking our money is very helpful in becoming aware of our spending habits. Perhaps you are a conscientious individual and will learn that you haven't overspent; it just simply costs a lot to support a family. Or you may learn that you have spent much more than you were aware of or wanted to in certain categories.

Take a simple notebook and make columns with headings at the top of each column. Typically the headings consist of *giving, taxes, housing, transportation, recreation, food and household, savings, clothing, education, medical, miscellaneous*, and any other category you feel is appropriate. Also include a column dedicated to tracking your income. Then write down every penny you spend, listing it in the proper category, as well as all your income in its column. At the end of the year, or even monthly, you can see exactly where all your money went. At that point you can divide your income into each expense category total. This will tell you what percentage of your income each expense category consists of.

In the *Tracking Budget Guide*, featured at the end of this article, you will find a guideline budget on page 46.² These percentages can give you an idea what the percentage should be of each category. By comparing your percentages to the guideline budget, you can get an idea if you are on track or not with your spending habits. If you find that the percentages you're spending every month nearly match the guideline budget, great! Give God the glory and carry on.

But what if one of these categories is glaringly disproportionate? You might say, 10% for giving? There is no way I can do that! And recreation and travel a mere 1%? How can I enjoy God's creation in the woods during hunting season and take my boys to a few horse sales a year for that little? If only my wife wouldn't spend so much on her groceries!

Don't be discouraged. Remember, you are merely a steward of this money and not the owner. A steward doesn't have the right to spend at his own will, but neither does the Master expect the steward to figure out the mess on his own. Entreat the Master in prayer and search the Scriptures, so that you and your life partner can, through the grace of God, make

² Tracking Budget Guide (To order, call 570.800.2191)

changes in these spending habits.

Find some books and resources that explain budgeting. Budgeting will tell your money where to go, whereas tracking shows where it went after it was spent. There are resources available that can help you be a faithful steward of the goods the Owner has entrusted to you.

Summary

We truly are challenged as a culture to maintain foundational values that establish our identity as a separate people: a people who are called to be “*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*” (I Peter 2:9). It is of utmost importance that we fully appreciate and have interest in our cultural identity as Biblical stewards if we

expect our children to enjoy the benefits of this heritage as we do today.

We cannot help that we live in the twenty-first century. We cannot help that we live in a society where happiness is thought to be obtained in compulsive consumerism. Let’s not be discouraged by the times and challenges we are facing! Let’s not be complacent and unconcerned. The same God who allowed us to be born in these times will assist us in being faithful stewards.

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mission awareness

Help Wanted! Apply Now!

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

The signs are all around, especially in our larger plain communities. They are planted in the ground along roads at common dwelling places, shops, and construction businesses. Large and small billboards tell you to apply for employment in restaurants, banks, auto-repair garages, grocery

stores, and more. Advertisements in abundance appear in the weekly Penny Saver, Bargain Hunter, and the daily newspaper: “Help Wanted.”

Jesus planted a sign long ago: “*The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few*” (Luke 10:2). Laborers were few in Jesus’s day. They are few today. Seminars are numerous. Winter Bible

schools and Bible Institutes have increased through the years. Mission programs and organizations are enlarging their focus and boundaries. But the sad condition persists year after year. Why are there never enough laborers?

Following are four major *hindrances* which may contribute to this shortage. The New Testament meaning of “*hindrance*” is “*to cut into;*” *it was used of impeding persons by breaking up the road, or by placing an obstacle sharply in the path; hence, detaining a person unnecessarily.* (Vine’s Bible Dictionary)

It is humbling to consider the hundreds of dedicated workers from our churches who are serving (or have served) in VS units, in home missions, in the north land, and across the seas. Many have taken the call of God seriously and have not permitted these hindrances to blur their vision of human needs.

The first *hindrance* is Satan’s attack. The Apostle Paul earnestly desired to visit the young flock at Thessalonica because his gospel team had to leave so abruptly due to persecution. He writes from a burning heart: “*But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. Wherefore we would have come unto*

you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us” (I Thessalonians 2:17-18). Satan uses strategic devices and utmost zeal to keep the Gospel from penetrating into communities and villages where Christ has not been named. Paul confesses this: “*Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation: but as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you*” (Romans 15:20-22). Satan is holding great sections of the world in spiritual darkness, having multitudes bow down and worship idols. He is aggressive and moving in every part of the world with his power and deceitfulness. Like a wolf attacks the jugular vein of his prey, so Satan will attempt to drain the blood-bought Church of her energy and power by internal problems or by focusing on material pursuits and worldly pleasures. However, we thank God for the multitudes in lands of heathen darkness where thousands are calling Jesus, “Lord” and are gloriously saved despite persecution, imprisonment, and death.

The second *hindrance* why laborers are few could be downright selfishness. Perhaps we detest the

nature of the term “laborers.” A laborer is a field hand. One who works for a low wage. The laborer has it tough. Blisters are common. His feet may get sore. His back aches. He gets dusty and dirty. You see, by nature we would rather be a supervisor, an executive, an administrator, or a chairman of the board—anything but a common laborer. I would miss my secure weekly paycheck. Or it would mess up my retirement plan. The large mortgage on the house or that debt on the vehicle is a hindrance. Selfishness is at the bottom of all disobedience, and it grows into hostility when it collides with God’s commandments. This is the nature of sin. It is a “falling from or missing the mark.”

The third *hindrance* is often sentimentalism. I would miss the purr of the diesel tractor pulling the five-bottom plow and turning over the clods of earth or miss the accomplishment of making that beautiful furniture. The construction of those modern houses is such a fulfillment. How about the humming of the modern sewing machine, designing all sorts of fancy stitches or the plush living room carpet and convenient kitchen facilities? I will miss my friends and family too much. Therefore I cannot go. The fact is that some of these good things (not

wrong in themselves) often become the very issues that hinder us from more fully experiencing the deep joy and abiding peace of walking in the will of God.

The fourth *hindrance* for the scarcity of laborers is shortsightedness. Shortsightedness results from the wrong choices we make. Moses demonstrated an inescapable law at work in every human life. Life is made up of “refusing” and “choosing.” A person cannot choose something without in that very decision refuse something else. Moses “*refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God*” (Heb.11:24, 25). Moses exercised faith in the invisible God. His obedient choices kept him from pursuing a worldly lifestyle despite having an opportunity of being the future Pharaoh. His Egyptian education, excellent brilliancy, and thorough military training were no hindrance in following God’s call to be a laborer among a most rebellious people. Moses looked far away, to the great beyond, and saw that the eternal rewards of suffering for Christ far outweighed all the wealth of Egypt.

“*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest*” (Luke

10:2b). Jesus frequently taught His disciples to pray and how, and then occasionally on what to pray. Is Jesus actually saying that He, the Lord of harvest will wait on our prayers before He will send laborers into the harvest? Herein lies one of the deep mysteries of prayer. Andrew Murray said, *“How little, Christians really feel and mourn the need of laborers in the fields of the world so white for the harvest. And how little, they believe that our labor-supply depends on prayer, that prayer will really provide ‘as many as he needeth.’ So wonderful is the surrender of Christ’s work into the hands of His church. So dependent has the Lord made Himself on them as His body, through whom alone His work will be done. So real is the power which the Lord gives His people to exercise in heaven and earth, that the number of laborers and the measure of the harvest do actually depend upon their prayers. Solemn thought!”* Yet we believe God is all-powerful and may choose to send out laborers without our prayers. For example, Peter was sent by the Holy Spirit to the house of Cornelius, the Gentile. It is doubtful that the apostles of the early church at that time were praying for laborers to be sent to the Gentiles. On the other hand, it is likely that while Cornelius was fasting and praying that he cried out in desperation to God to send

someone to show him the way of salvation.

What place does this prayer for laborers have in your life or in the church prayer meeting? The solution to the problem of the shortage of workers is not complicated. It is so basic and simple. We admire the Moravian Brethren of 1727 for their commitment to prayer. Even the children had prayer meetings. There was so much intercessory prayer day and night that the church was melted together in an outpouring of love for Christ. One result of that remarkable revival was a prayer meeting twenty-four hours a day that lasted for 100 years. It caused a missionary expansion that sent workers around the world to many countries and thousands of souls were harvested.

How did they do it? Twenty-four people each covenanted with God to pray one hour per day, round the clock, to intercede for the power of God to be poured out on their mission workers, mission projects, and mission leaders. For example, one person would pray for one hour from 4:00-5:00 a.m. Another person would pray from 5:00-6:00 a.m., and so on, around the clock. Jesus’s sign, *“The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few”* is urgent. The harvest is now! Tomorrow may be too late.



Only God (Part 2)

Heidi Zook, St. Margaret, Belize



(In last month's column we began the stirring story of 11-month-old Zion, son of Dwayne and Heidi Zook of St. Margaret, Belize. A positive COVID-19 test, a breathing machine, phone and van difficulties, and a government hospital all weave a miraculous account of God's provision. Susan Schlabach)

Finally, we reached KMH. What would we encounter? I felt vulnerable without my husband, but I keenly sensed the peace of God surrounding me.

They unloaded Zion, pushing his bed into the hospital. They had been alerted and were waiting for us. They told me I couldn't follow and quickly started pushing him down the hall. I kept following. They repeated that I couldn't go with them, but I walked on. Then I heard the one who was obviously in charge say, "Put him on the ventilator!" I decided now was my time to speak up and I said, "I am the baby's mother, and I request that he not be put on a ventilator here."

They stopped immediately. The doctor turned and said, "You mean you are not going to let us put him

on the ventilator?"

"That is right," I replied.

"She doesn't want him on our ventilator!" I heard her say to one person and then another. Finally, one offered, "She is the mother. She has the right to say what she wants or doesn't want."

I continued, "He also will be transported to Belize Health Care, and I am requesting a paper to sign his release from this hospital."

That upset the fruit basket! "Put him in that room over there then!" she ordered. Zion was pushed into an empty room and I was not permitted to go in with him. Thankfully, I could watch him through a glass door.

While standing there, I found out Dwayne was on his way to Belize City. And bless Miss Zelah's heart for lending Dwayne her phone since I carried the one phone we owned. Dwayne had talked to Belize Health Care. They would start the process of admitting Zion immediately. I called BHC as well, asking for an ambulance. The lady said that because of the late hour their ambulance service wasn't available, and they weren't sure how

to get Zion to their hospital, only about a mile away. I would talk to the Dangriga ambulance driver and see if they could possibly transport us.

I asked Mr. Alfred, the driver, and the two who had ridden in the back with Zion, if they could please take us to BHC, offering to pay them. They looked at each other hesitatingly, and finally said that they don't normally do that but they would like to help me. They wanted me to make sure again that it was acceptable to take Zion over there before the money got there by calling the doctor first. They did not want to be left set with this baby. I would call again and get a doctor's name for them.

But as I went back into the hospital and looked in at Zion I saw he was beginning to wake again! He was choking and gagging and struggling. I hollered for someone to come help my baby, but no one heard. I knocked loudly on the nearby glass window! They just calmly said, "We aren't suited up. We can't go in there."

"Then let me go in!" I begged.

"No! You can't go in! Ask the ambulance guys to help you. They still have their suits on."

Out the door I ran, hollering for them to come help my baby! They came immediately and entered the room. They asked for more sedation, but the staff told them they'd used

their last and had no more.

Finally, they found a little and it was such a relief to see Zion lying still again. But by now the ambulance folks were ready for action. They wasted no time in getting him out of that room and into the ambulance. I asked if they still wanted me to call for the doctor's name and they said, "No, let's just go!" One man told the driver, "This baby has only minimal sedation. Don't waste time getting to that hospital!" It was close to midnight.

Upon reaching the private hospital we were told to unload him in the quarantine section. Again, I was not allowed to follow Zion, but I was less fearful this time. Soon Dr. Rios called, asking exactly what had happened. She said they are running another COVID-19 test, since she feels strongly he does not have the virus. I wept unashamedly. Her sensible talk and approach to helping Zion was like a lifeline to a drowning person.

Alfred, who felt like another angel the Lord put into our path, was allowed into the quarantine ward. I asked him to please mention to the doctor about the possibility of Zion having aspirated milk into his lungs. Later, he came out and said they had put a drain into his lungs and fluid was coming out.

I found a place to sit and wait for Dwayne and was delighted when I

heard the familiar rattling-van noises coming toward me. Apparently, the Lord had His hand on our lives, our baby, phone, van, and on its troublesome belt.

At 12:48 the doctor called again, “Your baby does NOT have COVID-19. His test is negative! You can be with him as soon as you get tested.” What music to our ears! We laughed and cried and praised the Lord. I was going to go see my baby!

While waiting for our COVID-19 tests, we updated our WhatsApp status to let everyone know the good news. We were amazed at how many people were still up at that hour. Many told us that they couldn’t sleep and were praying for us. That meant more than they realized.

Night rates for COVID-19 tests were more expensive, so while I did the test immediately, Dwayne would do his test in the morning. The lady doing the swab told me she saw my baby and that he was so cute and strong!

While we waited, Dr. Rios came out to the parking lot to give us an explanation of what she thought had happened. She said that he probably was starting with a fever over the time that he was drinking his bottle, and then had a fever convulsion (seizure) which made him aspirate milk into his lungs. “But he’s a strong boy and will be fine!” she added.

We rejoiced when my negative test results were declared. Finally, at 3:00 a.m. I was cleared to go into the hospital. Hallelujah!

Zion never looked sweeter. Wrapped in a soft blanket, he appeared to be sleeping peacefully. He was still heavily sedated and on the breathing machine, but the doctor told me that he was stable. They would take his tube out in the morning and allow him to wake up. His nurses were so gentle and watchful of him, quickly earning my respect.

But every so often Zion would stir and try to wake up. I cringed when I would see him gag and struggle, and I could tell he was crying although no sound came out. It took a nurse and me to hold him still while another nurse injected more sedation. The last thing we all wanted was for him to pull out one of his IV’s or the tube in his throat.

Around 8:00 I left the room to take something out to Dwayne. Gary and Rachel (from Haynes Street Mission) had brought breakfast for us so we talked for a few minutes. Dwayne went to get his COVID-19 test done, and I headed back in. Suddenly, a doctor ran past me, throwing a white coat on as she ran. I didn’t think anything of it until I turned the corner and saw a swarm of activity in Zion’s room. I went straight into his

room and what I saw felt like lead in my stomach. He lay limply on the bed while nurses pumped on his chest and squeezed an air bag. The doctor looked at me and said, "Please just go out! We had a crisis. Go out and wait!"

My heart sank. We'd thought he was doing so well. Quickly I called Dwayne and told him something was going on with Zion and it didn't look good. I put a new message on my status, "Things are suddenly going downhill for Zion. Please pray!" Immediately my phone started dinging with 40 incoming messages from people assuring us of their prayers.

I don't know how long I waited until an older nurse came huffing and puffing, telling me to sit down. (I was apprehensive!) "Your son gave us a big scare. We had a crisis, but I think he will be alright. That is why I'm out of breath! I'm too old to be running! Don't worry, I think everything will be fine. The doctor will come to tell you what happened."

Soon the doctor came and related that Zion had started to wake up and had managed to pull the tube out of his throat and ended up not breathing again. (Earlier they had told me that the machine was doing pretty much all his breathing to help his little body relax and recover easier.) She said he was breathing on his own now but still sedated. They

weren't quite ready for me to come into his room but hopefully soon.

Then I heard him! It was like a weak meow at first but absolutely wonderful! When I was allowed in again, he was fighting the nurses and hollering in his hoarse little voice. The nurse said, "Pick him up, Mommy!" I didn't need to be told twice! It felt so right to be holding him again! He fell asleep for a few minutes but was soon awake crying and acting like he was hungry. I asked if I could feed him, and they said I could try but acted like they didn't think he would. He took off like he was starved, much to the amazement of those who were watching. They started cheering and almost danced out of the room!

For the rest of the day we had nurses and doctors sticking their heads into the room just to look at Zion. They could hardly believe it was the same baby. They would ask, "Is he actually nursing? Is this the same boy?" Then, "Your baby is a miracle!" or "It could only have been GOD!" Only God. Going from life support to nursing this fast was an answer to hundreds of prayers.

Dwayne was finally cleared to come into the hospital. What a happy daddy to be able to hold his little guy again! The next step was a CT scan of his brain. Although we weren't

terribly concerned about it, we also knew that there was a possibility of his brain having been affected. Dwayne and I prayed about it and again our prayers were answered when the scan came back normal.

Tuesday morning Zion needed to do blood work, and if normal, we would be dismissed. But before the blood was drawn, I began to notice he had a fever. His face was flushed and his whole body was warm. I was concerned that perhaps we wouldn't be discharged after all. Again Dwayne said, "Let's pray about it!" Just minutes after we prayed, a nurse came in and I mentioned something about Zion having a fever. She pulled out her thermometer gun; 97.1° F, it showed. His face wasn't

flushed anymore and his body no longer felt hot. A touch from God!

The greatness of God continued to overwhelm us. At last, the staff emerged, announcing, "Zion's blood test looks good. We will process your discharge." God had done it again!

We were less than a mile from the hospital on our way home when the van's serpentine belt tore loose again. We were reminded Who was fighting for us every step of the way.

We thank everyone who prayed for us during this faith-challenging journey. Your prayers made God's power real to us while He carried us through Zion's emergency. Our Almighty Father still does miracles today!



junior messages

Would Your God Heal My Goat?

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Ralkin watched his Christian missionary neighbor every day. He knew his neighbor visited sick people and prayed for them. He was surprised and amazed how God healed people who were ill because of this man's prayers.

One day Ralkin's goat fell and was limping. It would not eat and could hardly walk. Ralkin was scared. His

family was very poor. What would he do if his goat died?

He thought of his neighbor and his prayers for the sick. Would his neighbor consider praying for his goat? Would his God care about goats?

Ralkin decided it was worth asking his neighbor if he would pray. "I know you go around praying for sick people and your God heals them,"

said Ralkin. “Does your God care about goats? Would God heal my goat if you pray for it?”

This was an unusual request for the missionary.

“Yes, I will come,” he said. “My God created all things, He made the animals, and He cares for them too.” The men entered the small shed where the goat lay. They knelt beside it, and the missionary placed his hands on the goat and asked God to touch and heal it.

Ralkin watched in amazement. The goat got up and happily chewed the grass and weeds that were in the shed for it! The goat had no limp at all. The Lord had immediately healed the animal!

Ralkin and his family were amazed and happy. They stood in awe of a God who cared about people and goats. They asked their neighbor to tell them about this God.

They listened through the whole dark night as the missionary shared the good news of Jesus’s love for all men and of His death and resurrection. He told them that Jesus is alive to help us and forgives the sins of everyone who comes to Him. Ralkin’s family decided to believe on the Lord. They were the first of 22 believers who became part of a new church in their village.

In the Word of God we read many

times how the Lord uses animals, birds, and nature to fulfill His will:

-God punished the Egyptians with hordes of pesky flies and annoying frogs in their houses and food. He sent lice, hail, fire, locusts, darkness, and death.

-A ram was caught in the thicket when Abraham needed an offering.

-God told a raven to feed Elijah with bread and meat twice daily.

-A huge fish caught up with and swallowed the runaway prophet Jonah.

-Two bears punished 42 youth who mocked prophet Elisha.

-Jesus told fishermen to drop the net on the right side of the boat. They obeyed and caught 153 fish!

-God made a donkey talk to warn Balaam.

-Peter caught a fish that had money in its mouth to pay his taxes.

Animals, storms, and all of nature obey God. What about you and me? Do we obey our great Heavenly Father? Do we love and adore Him and worship Him?

God is watching over us. He loves us and cares about every detail of our lives. God sees even a little sparrow fall, and He healed a poor man’s goat in India. How much more does He love and care for every one of His children!

[Adapted from a story in an old Gospel for Asia newsletter.]



Read Your Bible

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

We all can agree that reading our Bible is very important to our relationship with God and our growth as Christians. Recently I found out about three young women who were embarking on an experience I had never heard of—reading the Bible in one week. One of these young women is from our youth group so I approached her about sharing her experience with our readers. I was personally challenged with what they accomplished and was very curious about their experience and if they would recommend anyone else doing it. How many people take a week or two vacation to spend at a beach, traveling out west, or to go on a hunting trip? I had never heard of anyone taking a week to read through the Bible. As you read the following account, please remember that this is one person's very personal experience. It probably won't be the same experience for everyone, so keep an open mind as you read. Even if you don't feel you can set aside as much time as these young women did, consider being more intentional about your Bible reading and tailor a

plan to spend more time in the Word that fits your schedule. I don't believe that anyone got to the end of his life and wished he had spent less time reading the Bible.

Here are some specifics on how they did the reading. They started on a Friday morning and read until the next Thursday. The amount of hours per day of reading varied since they split their readings by chapters instead of pages or verses. The longest was a 12-hour span, and the shortest was a 7.5-hour span. Whenever it worked, they got together and read aloud. They even read some of it aloud when they were by themselves. They did allow themselves to listen to an audio recording which helped if they needed to drive somewhere, but they tried to do that as little as possible. Reading it out loud together seemed to build community. God bless you as you read this account.

The Bible in Seven Days

Rosina Lapp, Quaker City, OH

All three of us were excited, yet unsure of what to expect that morning. We had agreed to read the Bible from cover to cover in seven days. There was a reverence as we opened our Bibles to

the first chapter of Genesis. And we began. As we read, we felt ourselves transported into another world—the same world—only younger and more vibrant. We watched that world become the world we know, one filled with pain and brokenness. We mourned with God over the fall of man and rejoiced with Hannah for answered prayer. In all the tumult of emotions, deep truths worked to change the framework of the Bible in my mind and in the minds of my friends.

I cannot give the whole of my experience to you on paper. I cannot even describe everything that transpired. Why? A lot of what I experienced happened in my heart. There were experiences and feelings I cannot explain. Nevertheless, I will try to give you a glimpse of how my view of God and the Bible changed.

First of all, the Bible became smaller. Connections between books became clearer. Yes, the Bible is a compilation of different books, yet a unity is found among them that only comes from the inspiration of God. Large themes run throughout the entire Bible. One I noticed was God being a Rock. I never fully understood what that meant. To me, God being a Rock not only means He is my Stronghold, my Deliverer, my Anchor, but also my Source of Life for out of a rock came water for the Israelites.

*Secondly, the Bible became personal. The people in the Bible were just like you and me. I always had an impression that the patriarchs were chosen and “**bam**” they had the skills they needed. No, these were common people with hearts that sought God. Through their surrender to Him, He prepared them for their future. Have you ever wondered why Moses was called to lead the people of Israel through the wilderness? He spent years in the wilderness shepherding his father-in-law’s sheep. God was preparing him to shepherd His own chosen people through the same area. God always, always has a purpose in mind.*

Thirdly, God became bigger. Often when we read the Bible, we tend to focus on the people. Reading the Bible at a great speed, I saw people come and people go, and the only constant factor amongst it all was God. He is the same TODAY, YESTERDAY, and FOREVER. I can testify to His faithfulness for I have witnessed and experienced it.

In conclusion, those seven days of reading were worth it. I do not regret throwing out my plans for a week, and diving into the Bible, for there I found life and healing. In my mind, the Bible became smaller, not in value but in size, but God became SO MUCH BIGGER.



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Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned.

• • • • •

We make a living by getting, but we make lives by giving.

• • • • •

The Lord is more interested in people than in things.

• • • • •

Time in Christ's service requires time out for renewal.

• • • • •

When you relate to God as a person,
you develop a personal relationship with Him.

• • • • •

You cannot kindle a fire in another's heart until it is burning in your own.

• • • • •

Putting God first brings satisfaction that lasts.

• • • • •

Pray until the tears come; work till the sweat comes; give till it hurts.

• • • • •

Mend your nets with prayer, cast them in faith, and draw them in love.

• • • • •

In the eyes of the Christian, happiness is wanting what you get.

• • • • •

To know God's will is life's greatest treasure—
to do God's will is life's greatest pleasure.