



Calvary

MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

NOVEMBER 2021

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Calvary Messenger

November 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.

Editor: Aaron D. Yoder

5188 W. 825 N., Leesburg, IN 46538

Ph: 574-646-2123; Fax: 800-956-7850

calvary.messenger.19@gmail.com**Assistant Editor:** Paul L. Miller

7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566

Ph: 620-567-2286; Fax: 620-615-7352

plmiller1934@gmail.com**Contributing Editors:**

Simon Schrock, Enos D. Stutzman,

Aaron Lapp, Ronald J. Miller

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus

3750 E. Newport Rd.

Gordonville, PA 17529

Youth Messages Editor: Josh Kooistra

2445 Rough & Ready Rd.

New Concord, OH 43762

cm youtheditor@gmail.com**Junior Messages Editor:**

Mrs. Mary Ellen Beachy

11095 Pleasant Hill Rd.

Dundee, OH 44624

maryellenbeachy@icloud.com**Women's Editor:**

Mrs. Susan Schlabach

7184 W. Henry Rd., Ripley, OH 45167

skschlabach@gmail.com**Circulation Manager/Treasurer:**

Enos D. Stutzman

7498 Woods West Ave.,

London, OH 43140

Ph: 614-460-9222

enosmary@gmail.com

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.

Thanks to God for My Redeemer

Thanks to God for my Redeemer,
Thanks for all Thou dost provide!
Thanks for times now but a mem'ry,
 Thanks for Jesus by my side!
Thanks for pleasant, balmy springtime,
 Thanks for dark and stormy fall!
Thanks for tears by now forgotten,
 Thanks for peace within my soul!

Thanks for prayers that Thou hast answered,
 Thanks for what Thou dost deny!
Thanks for storms that I have weathered,
 Thanks for all Thou dost supply!
Thanks for pain, and thanks for pleasure,
 Thanks for comfort in despair!
Thanks for grace that none can measure,
 Thanks for love beyond compare!

Thanks for roses by the wayside,
Thanks for thorns their stems contain!
Thanks for home and thanks for fireside,
 Thanks for hope, that sweet refrain!
Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow,
Thanks for heav'nly peace with Thee!
Thanks for hope in the tomorrow,
 Thanks through all eternity!

August L. Storm

Public Domain



A Garment of Praise

*“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, **the garment of praise** for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified”* (Isaiah 61:1-3).

Several evenings ago the men and boys of our congregation got together for a campout. As we gathered after a busy and hectic week, we enjoyed a time of fellowship and camaraderie around a roaring campfire. It was a nearly perfect evening. As the sun set over the lake, the dads and boys took canoe and paddleboat rides. We enjoyed the quietness as darkness settled over the land. Someone commented that it’s difficult to imagine the busyness of a

large city while enjoying the sounds of the chirping crickets and katydids.

But alas, we live in a fallen world and such times of quietness are a respite even from the daily fallenness we encounter in our work and travel. How can we exercise our faith in a complaining and grumbling world?

In several weeks we will celebrate Thanksgiving Day. We look forward to family time, a break from our day job, and food. Again, as with an enjoyable campout, a special day of thanksgiving does not automatically make us grateful people. We could grumble about a missing favorite food or about the hotdog that rolled off the grill and into the fire. While the food at our campout was scrumptious and filling, it obviously wasn’t the same as we will expect on Thanksgiving Day. But do we appreciate all the food on our tables and plates or do we long for whatever is missing? Do we see the blessings in our lives or grumble about all that is missing?

In Gary Miller’s book *Life in a Global Village*,¹ he condenses the world into a village of 100 people.

¹ *Life in a Global Village*, Gary Miller, 2014
by TGS International

At the time of the book's publication, only five people in the village were from North America. Eighty-eight villagers earned less than \$10 each day. Seventeen people in the village earned less than \$1.25 per day if they could find work. There was only one man in the village who earned more than \$34,000 a year. Sixty villagers had no access to a toilet. That means there was none available in their entire community. Only nine people in the village owned a personal vehicle. And many villagers did not have access to clean water.

This discourse is not about how we can help all the rest of the people in our village. But I'm proposing that as Christians who have discovered the richness of being a child of God, we show gratitude to God by appreciating the blessings we enjoy. And if we have received the spiritual blessings that come from being a new creature in Christ, we should live out our deliverance in our daily lives. He came *"to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised"* (Luke 4:18b). May we reach out to

the brokenhearted and the blind. Let's offer the beauty of a life in Christ versus the ashes of a life of sin and self. Let's put on the garment of praise instead of wearing the spirit of heaviness that comes from being bogged down with the troubles in the nation. And that may be as simple as being grateful for the job we have, the car we drive, the toilet in our own bathroom, a refrigerator filled with food, and even the stability of our government system, *"that He might be glorified."* Let's brighten our place in the world!

Put on the garment of praise
For the spirit of heaviness,
Lift up your voice to God,

Praise with the Spirit
And with understanding,
Oh, magnify the Lord!

"Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever" (Psalm 30:11).

-AY 

— PRAISE is the soil in which joy THRIVES. —

Announcement

2022 Annual Beachy Ministers' Meetings

March 29-31, 2022

Hosted by:

Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL

To be held at Sarasota Community Church

(aka Bahia Vista Mennonite),

4041 Bahia Vista St, Sarasota, FL 34232

For information contact:

Bill Yoder

941.650.1350

billyoder65@gmail.com

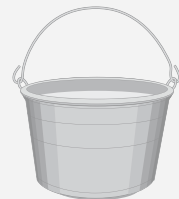


Announcement

CBS Clean-up Week

November 8-10, 2021

We are again soliciting help from folks like you for the annual clean-up effort at Calvary Bible School on November 8-10, 2021. This short-term voluntary service opportunity features lots of good old-fashioned work for young (like recent CBS alumni) and old (like less recent “grandparent” type CBS alumni), ample chance for fellowship while working alongside others, generous helpings of good home-cooked food, and lodging provided in the CBS dorms! Should you and a number of friends from your church or youth group be willing to volunteer or have more questions, please **contact Lowell Swartzentruber at 864-378-3394**. Thank you very much for your assistance in the past and in the future!



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
or email info@dmlmohio.org.

This seminar is sponsored and hosted by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd.

Plain City, OH 43064



Announcement

REACH 2022

March 24-25, 2022

REACH brings together conservative Anabaptist ministries and Kingdom workers from all walks of life. Join us for this two-day program that includes 97 breakout sessions to support and equip people in ministry and all those with a desire for service. Over 50 participating ministries share their vision in focus sessions and displays. General sessions tie the event together with sermons, singing, and prayer. All are welcome!

Location: Calvary Church

1051 Landis Road, Lancaster, PA 17601

Read more information and register:

fbep.org/reach-2022



The Walk Through That Valley

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Part One

It was 2:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning several months ago at a prestigious, state-of-the-art hospital. I was drenched in sweat in an unexpected crisis. Doctors and nurses converged around my bed along with a large portable x-ray machine and other back-up equipment. My sense of being alive kept draining away naturally—not by drugs. I went so low it seemed as though I was passing through “*the valley of the shadow of death.*” All that remained, as I was held by the last thread of life, was to choose to pass on in death. The unreal experience was peaceful in soul and restful in spirit which somehow held my mind in a passive state. I did not consider it needful to choose between remaining alive or dying, being aware that it was not my choice. And yet, the choice to just close my eyes and pass on in death was appealing, largely to be removed from the misery of the moment.

Later reflection upon that surreal occasion clearly revealed how some people might actually die. Somehow, without a struggle to take another breath, the body passes from life unto

death in a moment of relaxed and yielded contemplation of a higher level of relief and rest.

In all reality, nonetheless, I was still aware that it was not a choice for me. I was held by a loving God to abide in the flesh, as though put on hold in my low physical state for a time. Gradually, the five-hour crisis had passed; I was still alive.

There were hours of reflection on that experience. Despite my experience, the medical personnel assured my wife that I actually was not at risk of dying. Paul had numerous near-death experiences. He said, “*But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not (know not). For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ (actually!); which is far better: Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you*” (Philippians 1:22-24).

The classic lines of Psalm 23 were very real to me, “*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*” O Lord, why must some

of your sheep pass under your rod of much physical affliction as they walk through that valley? Our loving Shepherd does not find it necessary to answer or explain our curious questions. And then others die in a peaceful and calm sleep, as it were, held graciously steady by His staff of security and comfort.

For believers unto salvation by Christ, the sting of death has been removed by the powerful resurrection of our Lord. Sin is the sting of death. When sin is removed, that frightful sting of death is removed. The physical body still needs to die prior to Christ's return. But as believers, we do not need to fear death as we abide in Christ.

Part Two

I was halfway through the fourth session of my finance seminar. All at once I began to burp, yawn, gave my belt several notches, and began missing some material. The bishop was right there on the front pew and asked whether I needed help. I replied by saying that I think if he gets me a chair to sit on and stands there beside me, I will be alright, and by it, tried to keep on speaking. My wife spoke up, "I think he needs assistance off the pulpit."

Two men came, and with strong arms under me, bore me back to their kitchen. It was winter, but they

opened windows for fresh air, and turned on several fans. One church man was an EMT. He brought in his blood-pressure monitor but could not get any reading. He tried again, and my blood pressure registered zero. Somehow, though weak in consciousness, I was aware that I might be dying as I sank lower.

I was not afraid to die, not at all. Surprisingly, it almost had a welcoming aura about it. Ever frugal, it did enter my mind about the high cost of shipping my dead body from far-west Colorado to way-eastern Pennsylvania!

Earlier in the day, a couple from their church had wanted to show us around in the resort town of Telluride, a fabulous ski resort. The church people lived on a large mesa of ranches, farms, towns, and general commerce. Its elevation was 7,000 feet above sea level, whereas Telluride was 10,000 feet (Lancaster Co. elevation is 368 feet). We came home a tad later than planned, so we went straight to church. My sessions use the overhead projector and have me speaking for an hour and 15 minutes. By my lengthy speaking, I was exhaling more than inhaling, and I literally ran out of air (oxygen).

My crisis in the pulpit happened because my body was oxygen-depleted, being near to nothing. Just

as it was in the hospital, so it was here. There was no fear of dying on my part since it almost seemed natural to just close my eyes and pass away. Did God give these two similar experiences as a dual-experienced witness to the children of God as to what it means to die in the Lord? If that is fully, or even partially valid, it brings to us a measure of comfort and divine grace in regard to walking the path of that valley.

The Bottom Line is given here in a list.

1. We should never seek for a vision, dream, or experience of the supernatural.

2. Extra-biblical material should never be used to either verify or disprove the Word of God.

3. My several cited experiences should not be used to establish the facts about dying.

4. Dying quietly and peaceably should not be considered as evidence of having been saved.

5. I do not wish for anyone to attach more to my testimony than what is on the surface.

6. We shall never rely on the experiences of anyone about the seemingly supernatural work or visions of angels, circumstances, or men.

7. The Bible is our only safe guide to establish the fixed facts of life and death.

8. Be encouraged by biblical studies concerning death, resurrection, future judgments, and immortality.



Weight Loss

Vincent "John" Waldron, MD, Gladys, VA

Dr. Waldron," the woman said to me as I prepared to leave the exam room. "I have one more question. How can I lose this extra weight?"

I sighed inaudibly as I sat down to discuss the situation with her. Dealing with weight gain is not the sort of thing that is easy to tack onto the end of an office visit, and there have been many lengthy books written on the subject.

Americans seem to struggle with this. They spend an average of 33 billion dollars on weight loss products every year and 65 percent of Americans are either overweight or obese.

The whole discussion is a challenging one. We want a quick fix—to take a pill or add in a fat-burning food or do a simple exercise that will melt the extra weight away simply and quickly. The reality is that while we gain weight quite easily, it is

much more difficult to lose that same weight. Maintaining weight loss is harder yet.

In the Beginning

We don't know much about life before the fall in Genesis 3. We do know that "...*God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good...*" (Genesis 1:31).

It is safe to assume that Adam and Eve did not struggle with their weight before sin entered the world. They were created perfectly which meant that they would not have struggled with metabolism issues. They also did not have the uncontrolled appetites for food that their descendants deal with today.

Two things happened with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. First, humans started to have physical ailments—their bodies did not work as well as they did before. Adam and Eve were still able to live much longer lives than humans today, but metabolic diseases and other illnesses began to develop. The second thing that happened was that they began to have a sin nature.

Those two things have led to a lot of problems. Among them are metabolism and weight issues.

What the Bible Says About Food

Our bodies need to eat nutritious food—without eating they would deteriorate and eventually die. "*There*

is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God" (Ecclesiastes 2:24).

The Old Testament law was restrictive regarding what the Jewish people could eat. Under Kosher Law, the number of clean animals was far outweighed by the numbers of unclean animals. More than that, the book of Proverbs mentions several times that overeating is dangerous. "*Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags"* (Proverbs 23:20-21).

From the New Testament we find the early church no longer required Gentile Christians to follow Jewish laws regarding their diets. The Jerusalem council specifically required "...*that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood*" (Acts 15:20). Otherwise, it seems that they were free to eat whatever they wanted.

What did not change in the New Testament was the idea of self-control. The Fruit of the Spirit lists temperance as one of the things Christians should have and Paul made it clear that he was focused on controlling his desires, lest he become

a castaway (see I Corinthians 9:27).

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (I Corinthians 3:16-17).

Scripture is clear that Christians should take care of their bodies, put their desires under the control of God, and avoid things that have anything to do with idolatry.

Reasons People Gain Weight

It is easy to break down reasons for weight gain into two big categories.

1. Problems with metabolism
2. Problems with excessive calories

When we think about metabolic issues, these include things like thyroid problems and diabetes. These disorders affect the rate at which our bodies burn calories. One of the main ways we have to increase our metabolism is to increase our activity levels, particularly exercise that increases the heart rate—cardiovascular exercise.

Excess calories mainly come

from overeating. It is important to remember that people eat for lots of reasons other than because they are hungry. People eat because they are bored, lonely, sad, and yes, sometimes because they are hungry. Some medications, particularly steroids, can increase appetite and negatively affect the metabolic rate.

We call the number of calories our bodies burn while at rest, the body’s metabolic rate. There are a couple of different formulas used to calculate our basal metabolic rates. They use height, weight, age, and gender to determine how many calories your body will burn in an average day. There are a few applications and websites that will do this calculation for you. <https://www.active.com/fitness/calculators/bmr>. The important thing to know is that this is the number of calories you should consume to maintain your current body weight. Eat fewer calories than this number and you will tend to lose weight, take in more calories than this number and you will gain weight.

Is Weight Important?

From a medical standpoint, being overweight is associated with several different things. It tends to increase insulin resistance, and it can lead to diabetes. It increases blood pressure. It can lead to obstructive sleep apnea,

and it worsens arthritis in the back and legs.

Being overweight is not necessarily an indication of a spiritual problem and depending on a person's genetics, it can be difficult to get it where it should be according to the charts. Even though most people feel much better when they are close to their ideal weight, Scripture does not indicate that there is a specific weight or body mass index (BMI) that Christians should not go over.

The important thing is that our lives are to be under the control of God if we have yielded ourselves, appetites, and all, to Him. We should try to be healthy in order that we can best participate in Kingdom building. More than that, we should attempt to set an example for others of a life that is yielded to God.

Myths About Weight Loss...

There are many things that people believe about weight loss. We will look at a list of things which people repeat. While there may be a grain of truth in them, they are not completely true and may discourage activities that can help a person who is struggling with his weight.

...Vigorous exercise is the only way to lose weight.

Many people believe that the reason that they can't lose weight is because they can't do enough exercise. They

struggle with pain, arthritis, or some heart or lung condition that makes them unable to do vigorous athletic endeavors.

Maybe they know someone who took up running and lost a bunch of weight and that seems like the right way to do it. They just don't feel able to take that path and feel hopeless about the whole endeavor.

Exercise is important. Most medical societies recommend that people exercise at least 150 minutes a week. While exercise does boost our metabolism and helps our hearts and lungs, it still may not change a person's weight very much.

Most people burn between 200 and 300 calories with a half hour of exercise. While this may sound like a lot, a body must burn 3500 calories to lose one pound. In addition, most of us are hungrier after we exercise, and it is awfully easy to eat an extra 200 calories that basically negates whatever was burned during the exercise time.

...Carbohydrates make you gain weight.

Carbohydrate is the medical term for sugars. The calories we consume in our diets come from one of three sources: carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. Carbohydrates are present in desserts, but they are also present in many starchy foods like rice, corn,

pasta, bread, and lots of other things.

There are several diets, like the Atkins Diet and the Keto Diet, that push those who follow them to cut out as many carbohydrates as possible. People often do lose weight on these sorts of diets. Unfortunately, these diets are difficult to maintain long term as they are quite restrictive.

The healthiest thing is to eat carbohydrates moderately and steer towards the healthier options. Using whole grains and more complex carbohydrates is important. A bowl of oatmeal may have a similar number of grams of carbohydrates as compared to a sugary breakfast cereal, but it will be broken down more slowly by our bodies and is easier for them to deal with.

...Starvation is the only way to lose weight.

Starvation does result in weight loss—there were no heavy-set people who came out of the concentration camps in World War II. This certainly is not the only way to lose weight, nor is it a healthy way to lose weight.

We know that when people starve for extended periods of time, they will begin to lose muscle mass, their bones will get weaker, and their metabolism will decrease. Most people who starve themselves will end up regaining all of the weight they lost within a few years and

because their metabolism has been downgraded, in the long run it will be harder for them to keep weight off.

...You just need to eat ‘___’ fat-burning food to lose weight!

I specifically left the food blank above because it seems that this is always changing. Maybe you’ve read that Greek yogurt, or cinnamon, or goji berry juice will help you lose weight. Studies indicate that there is no magic food that will melt fat away.

If these foods work, it is because you have replaced something unhealthy and rich in calories with something healthier. For example, if your normal breakfast consists of five strips of bacon, a glass of orange juice, two slices of toast, and two eggs, and you replace that with a glass of water and a bowl of oatmeal, you will probably lose weight. It is not because the oatmeal is “burning fat,” but rather that it has significantly fewer calories than the breakfast you were eating before.

Some foods have almost no calories and probably take as much energy to eat and digest as humans get from them. Celery, iceberg lettuce, and mushrooms all fall into this category. The problem is that if you put peanut butter on the celery, salad dressing on the lettuce, and fry the mushrooms in butter or oil, then suddenly they aren’t the low-calorie foods they

purport to be. We humans are very good at fixing low-cal foods so that they both taste better and are no longer low-calorie.

...Fat free and diet foods are the key to weight loss.

There are many foods and condiments on the market that have reduced fat and claim to be lower calorie than the normal versions of themselves. These often have a lot of different chemicals and sugar substitutes in them to get the taste and texture as similar to the regular versions as possible.

Sugar substitutes seem to be healthier than sugar when used moderately, but they also seem to encourage people to crave sweeter foods. Studies have linked artificial sweeteners with the onset of glucose intolerance—something that could lead to diabetes. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3095502/>. Dieticians seem to think that of the various sugar substitutes, stevia is the safest.

All in all, our goal should not be to try to eat all the same foods, just with fewer calories, but rather to eat a variety of healthy foods and moderate-sized portions. This is what will lead to a better metabolism and not simply getting reduced fat versions of our favorite foods.

...The solution is diet pills.

Over time I have seen many people take medications and supplements, both prescription and over-the-counter varieties, to try to help them lose weight. These medications and supplements are supposed to do a number of things—reduce appetite and increase the metabolic rate are several of these.

They often work in the short term. People lose quite a bit of weight in the first few weeks and think that they have conquered their struggles. The problem is that over time, they usually get used to whatever it is that they are taking, their appetite returns, and their metabolism goes back to normal.

While these sorts of solutions may give short-term help, being healthy in the long term means figuring out a healthy eating plan and exercise schedule, then sticking with it long term. The goal should never be simply to “take off ten pounds,” but rather to be as healthy as possible.

We’ve covered a lot of things not to do and probably reading between the lines you can see some of the things that are helpful to do as well. A second part (Lord willing) will be coming with the next issue to discuss positive things that we can do to achieve a healthy weight.

Continued on page 25

marriages

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

Gingerich-Hershberger

Bro. Lukas, son of Kathryn and William (deceased) Gingerich, Guys Mills, PA, and Sis. Karen, daughter of Roy and Ruth Hershberger, Saegertown, PA, on July 31, 2021, at Shekinah Mennonite Church for Plainview Gospel Church by Roy Hershberger.

Kauffman-Yoder

Bro. Zachary, son of Tim and Ruth Kauffman, Reedsville, PA, and Sis. Samantha, daughter of Mark and Martha Yoder, Whiteville, TN, on June 19, 2021, at Hickory Withe Baptist Church for Whiteville Mennonite Church by Kevin Yoder.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. James, son of Herman Jr. and Mary Miller, Spencer, WI, and Sis. Edith, daughter of Ernie and Martha Yoder, Jamestown, PA, on September 18, 2021, at Plainview Gospel Church by Roy Hershberger.

Swarey-Sharp

Bro. John, son of Reuben and Frieda Swarey, Paris, TN, and Sis. Katrina, daughter of Joe and Martha Sharp, Belleville, NY, on July 9, 2021, at the Northern Light Christian Fellowship Church by Wilmer Peachey.

Yoder-Yoder

Bro. Larry, son of William Jr. and Lila Yoder, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Brittany, daughter of Wesley and Laura Yoder, Montezuma, GA, on June 19, 2021, at Clearview Mennonite Church by Dwight Yoder.



cradle roll

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

Banner, Aaron and Glorisha (Taylor), Isabella Bank, Belize, second child and daughter, Aubrey Erin, September 16, 2021.

Coulter, Jared and Eunice (Peachy), Honey Grove, PA, second child, first son, Zebulon Hart, September 4, 2021.

Danner, Wendall and Esther (Mast), Owenton, KY, sixth child, third daughter, Marcia Rose, July 28, 2021.

Garber, Lyndon and Abigail (Overholt), Melvern, KS, first child and daughter, Kalie Lynn, August 22, 2021.

Gerber, Edwin and Kaitlyn (Ropp), Wingham, ON, first child and son, Maxton Edwin, March 9, 2021.

Iwashige, Shane and Dorcas (Kuepfer), Partridge, KS, fifth child, first daughter, Autumn Hope, September 27, 2021.

Kleiner, George and Malinda (Yoder), Aroda, VA, fifth child, fourth son, Marshall John, September 28, 2021.

Mejía, Héctor Joseph and Grace (Alfaro), La Marina de Aguas Zarcas, Alajuela, Costa Rica, second child and son, Declan Rhys, August 28, 2021.

Miller, Aaron and Martha (Yoder), Baltic, OH, sixth child, third daughter, Hadassah Raine, September 25, 2021.

Miller, Javon and Genevieve (Barkman), McConnelsville, OH, second child and son, Zakai Dre, September 18, 2021.

Miller, Kevin and Angela (Mast), Auburn, KY, (currently serving in El Salvador), first child and son, Rodney Lee, September 28, 2021.

Nisley, Christopher and Sharon (Smucker), Cochranon, PA, first child and daughter, Emery Sinéad, September 26, 2021.

Schrock, Anthony and Rani (Nissley), Millersburg, OH, second child and daughter, Eliza Rose, August 7, 2021.

Sharp, Matthias and Debra (Peachey), Mannsville, NY, second child, first daughter, Keturah Grace, July 24, 2021.

Sommers, Joe and Maria (Byler), Advance, MO, sixth child, fourth daughter, Brynlee Jade, August 14, 2021.

Stoltzfus, Duane and Regina (Stoltzfus), Gap, PA, first child and daughter, Savanna Brooke, August 28, 2021.

Troyer, Josiah and Amy (Mullet), Sugarcreek, OH, third child, first son, Jadon David, born April 15, 2019, received by adoption, July 26, 2021.

Tulcey, William and Lucy (Schrock), Scotland Halfmoon, Belize, third child and son, Asaph Matthias, July 27, 2021.

Yoder, Alex and Marissa (Amstutz), Montezuma, GA, first child and son, Andre Dwight, August 25, 2021.

Yoder, Jamison and Tonya (Chupp), Centreville, MI, first child and son, Gage Dakota, February 9, 2021.

Yoder, Jerry and Franie (Yoder), Lyndon, KS, fourth child, first daughter, Jerusha Faith, July 15, 2021.

Yoder, Joni and Andrea (Eash), Russellville, OH, third child and daughter, Kiersten Ellie, September 18, 2021.

Zook, Anthony and Ruth (Fisher), Georgetown, OH, third child, second daughter, Jana Elizabeth, September 6, 2021.



ordinations


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

Bro. Larry Beiler, 35, (wife, Karla Mullet), Gap, PA, was ordained minister at Mine Road Amish Mennonite Church on September 26, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Ivan Stoltzfus. The charge was given by Floyd King, Ben Stoltzfus, and Alvin Stoltzfus. Arlin Stoltzfus shared the lot.

Bro. Will Groff, 28, (wife, Heidi Miller), Russellville, KY, was called by the voice of the church and ordained deacon for Providence Mennonite Fellowship on September 5, 2021. Preordination messages were given by

Steve Swartzentruber. The charge was given by Jason Miller, assisted by Luke Troyer and David Yoder.

Bro. Lucas C. Hilty, 37, (wife, Anne Yoder), Guys Mills, PA, was ordained minister at Plainview Gospel Fellowship on September 26, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Earl Peachey. The charge was given by Roy Hershberger.

Bro. Jamison Yoder, 25, (wife, Tonya Chupp), Centreville, MI, was ordained minister at Pilgrim Fellowship Church on March 28, 2021. Preordination messages were given by Marvin Beachy. The charge was given by Jon Yoder, assisted by John Miller and Marvin Beachy. Jonathan Schrock and James Detweiler shared the lot. 

obituaries

Detweiler, Elmer J., 70, of Centreville, MI, went to be with Jesus on December 23, 2020. Elmer was born May 10, 1950, in Mercer, PA, to John and Fannie (Mast) Detweiler. He married Clara Miller on September 18, 1970.

He was a member of Pilgrim Fellowship.

In 1968 he moved to Paraguay with his parents where he met Clara. This is where his passion for horses and cattle began. In 1991 he moved his family to Michigan where he had a dairy farm and helped many in the community take care of their animals.

Elmer is survived by his wife, Clara,

six children: Erleen, South Asia; Leroy, Centreville; Arthur (Lisa), and their children, Aliyah, Justin, Jediah, Clark, and Darci, Reinholds, PA; Janice (Joshua) Snader, and their children, Adilene and Elliot, Coshocton, OH; Andrew (Stephanie), and their children, Ezekiel and Iris, Reading, PA; and Eric, Centreville, his parents, and thirteen siblings.

Elmer was preceded in death by two sons, Vernon and Ervin.

The funeral service was on December 27, 2020, at the Community Youth Center, Nottawa, with Norman Yoder serving. Burial followed at Pilgrim Fellowship Cemetery.

Herschberger, Edna Mae, 68, of Amboy, IN, passed away August 31, 2021. She was born November 15, 1952, in Arthur, IL, to the late Levi H. and Lydia (Otto) Miller. Edna married Eugene A. Herschberger on September 13, 1973.

Edna was a member of Bethany Fellowship Church and loved serving others whenever her health allowed. She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends. The grandchildren were Edna's delight.

Survivors are her loving husband, Eugene, two sons and three daughters: Marsha (Paul) Plank, Arcola, IL; Virgil (Susan), Pleasureville, KY; Rose (Micah) Kauffman, Montezuma, GA; Mary Herschberger, Sugarcreek, OH; and Wilbur (Krissa), Peru; 11 grandchildren, four sisters: Elizabeth Ann Miller, Tuscola, IL; Mary Ellen Miller, Winesburg, OH; Martha Herschberger, Arcola, IL; Barbara Plank, Arthur, IL; sister-in-law, Dorothy Hostetler, Arcola, IL; three brothers: Henry, Charlotte, MI; John Elmer, Macon, MI; Homer, Arthur, IL; and brother-in-law, Ervin Schrock, Arthur, IL.

She was preceded in death by a son, Marcus Herschberger, grandson, Daniel Herschberger, sisters, Fannie Marie Hostetler and Amanda Schrock, and brothers-in-law, Henry Miller and Ervin Hostetler.

Funeral service was held September 3, 2021, at Bethany Fellowship School with Darlton Bontrager officiating. Burial followed in Christner Cemetery.

Hershberger, Henry E., 83, of LaGrange, IN, died unexpectedly on July 10, 2021, at his residence. He was born January 25, 1938, in Middlebury, IN, to Eli B. and Katie (Bontrager) Herschberger. On January 26, 1960, in Plain City, OH, he married Susie Arlene Miller. She survives.

Survivors in addition to his wife are six sons: Virgil Dean (Jackie), Shipshewana; Keith Lavern (Ruth), LaGrange; Lyndon Lee (Lenora), Russellville, OH; Myron Eugene, Lorne Edward (Sharon), both of LaGrange; Nathan Lyle (Elizabeth), Shipshewana; daughter, Edith Joan (Galen) Miller, Sioux Lookout, ON, Canada; 30 grandchildren, eight bonus grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, 22 bonus great-grandchildren; brother, Daniel (Orpha) Herschberger, Wakarusa; sister, Esther Bontrager, Middlebury; and brother-in-law, Elmer (Sara Viola) Gingerich, Mountain View, AR.

He was preceded in death by his parents, son, Duane Dale; daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Hershberger; grandson, Scott Dale Hershberger; sisters, Fannie Miller and Lavina Gingerich, and brothers-in-law, Chris Leroy Miller and Elmer Bontrager.

Henry was previously a member and minister at Hebron Christian Fellowship for 50+ years. He was currently a member of Pilgrim Fellowship Church. He was the previous owner of the family business, Alpha Building Center, in Shipshewana.

The funeral service was on July 13, 2021, at Fairhaven Mennonite Church

with Jon Yoder serving. Burial followed in Thomas Cemetery, Goshen. The committal was by Elmer Gingerich.

Nisly, Anne, 97, of Hutchinson, KS, died September 12, 2021, at Hospice House. She was born May 8, 1924, in LaGrange, IN, to Lawrence and Mattie (Bontrager) Yoder.

Anne was a homemaker and dedicated pastor's wife. She loved gardening, baking, and reading. More than anything, Anne loved spending time with her children and grandchildren. She was a member of Center Amish Mennonite Church.

On November 8, 1951, Anne married Amos Nisly in Hutchinson. They shared nearly 70 years together.

She is survived by her husband, Amos, sons: Phil (Lucy), Tim (Shelli), and Larry (Pam), all of Hutchinson; daughter, Rosi Nolder, Selinsgrove, PA; son, JR (Renee), San Antonio, TX; 18 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Anne was preceded in death by her parents and siblings.

Funeral service was September 16, 2021, at Center Amish Mennonite Church. Burial followed in West Center Cemetery.



observations

[Due to an omission at the publication level, the Observations were missing in the October issue. While the final format was carefully scrutinized for mistakes by several reviewers, none of us noticed the omission. My apologies! This is what Brother Ronald had submitted for the October issue, so add a month to the recent events he mentions. AY]

Several years ago I was peddling my bicycle a couple of miles from our house when I was startled by a voice beside me. I looked over and was surprised to see that Dave had approached me unawares from behind on his bicycle. Dave had attended church with us about 15 years ago during

a very difficult time in his life. He lives about 15 miles away from us so I was surprised to find him near our house on his bicycle. We chatted awhile catching up on a few things as we peddled merrily along. He talked about his seasonal cycling hobby and his collection of bikes. He wondered what technique I use to warm up before I ride. I don't have a technique, so he wondered what I think about yoga. He was effusive in his enthusiasm for the benefits of yoga before he rides. I told him that I can easily see there could be a benefit to stretching and limbering up before strenuous activity. But I did state that there are elements of yoga that I wouldn't feel good about participating

in. He said he expected that would be my answer but encouraged me to incorporate some physical limbering up before riding even if I don't want to practice yoga. I never did get started with the exercises.

The word yoga has Sanskrit origins and means quite literally, to yoke, or to join. Merriam Webster defines yoga as: "a Hindu theistic philosophy, teaching the suppression of all activity of body, mind, and will in order that the self may realize its distinction from them and attain liberation."

Real and legitimate benefits exist for people who exercise physically. But a disciple of Christ need not dig very deeply before uncovering profound objections to the practice of yoga.

Yoga brings together physical, mental, and spiritual components in order to achieve the desired results of personal balance, union with the divine, and physical benefit, among other things.

One emphasis of yoga is to empty the mind so the person can be "united/yoked" to the divine. Scripture exhorts us to put off what doesn't belong and put on the new man. Being filled with Christ and living out of that fullness is quite different from yoga.

Yoga emphasizes that we cease mental activity. Scripture invites us to engage the mind. The exhortation

to "*think on these things*" concludes that helpful list in Philippians 4:8, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"

The discipline of yoga has deep roots in Hinduism. That isn't Christian. A child of God must carefully and without apology avoid this unequal "yoke." This means we shouldn't practice yoga.

Part of the difficulty with yoga is that it mixes legitimate physical components with objectionable spiritual elements. This blending can suck unsuspecting and innocent folks into spiritual compromise who are in search of physical benefit. Let's be careful.



A brother sent me a Gospel tract along with a pamphlet that lists 100 reasons and ways to use Gospel tracts. His accompanying note stated that he is one who enjoys using Gospel tracts as a witnessing tool. A person who looks for opportunities to pass out tracts will likely be surprised how often those opportunities present themselves.

I've generally considered tracts as

primarily reaching out to the recipient, whoever they may be. However, there is a secondary benefit that we do well to consider. If I give someone a gospel tract, this should help remind me who I am. For instance, if I behave myself in an unseemly manner to the mechanic who didn't fix my car correctly, how will it work to give him a tract? If I'm disappointed in the service at my restaurant table and am rude to the person who took my order and brought my food, how would a tract be received? If I leave a paltry tip for the wait staff and supplement the lack of money with the "gift" of a tract, what emotions do you think the recipient will experience? How about a generous tip along with a Gospel message?

Inasmuch as passing out Gospel tracts reminds us that we act as agents of God in this fallen and sinful world, this can be a useful reminder to align our conduct with our message. That is a good thing. Furthermore the percentage of folks who receive tracts and respond favorably to the message doesn't need to be high for it to be meaningful.



The tract that this brother included was entitled: "A Greater Danger than COVID-19. An Effective Cure Available to All." Sin is worse than COVID-19. Jesus Christ has the

remedy for our sin. Praise the Lord!



Late this spring, I thought that the worst of COVID-19 was behind us. I am still hopeful that this is the case. But the longer this goes on, the less certain I am that I understand where we might be collectively in the life cycle of this pandemic. The increased presence and effective transmission of the Delta variant has recalibrated expectations considerably. Since these comments won't be read in *Calvary Messenger* until a month following their writing, the picture could look quite different by then from what we see today.

Much has been said about COVID-19 and its origins, dangers, causes, effects, and treatments. Sad to say, brotherly discussions about some of these things have been a bit elusive for some of God's children during this time.

Yesterday I found a picture on my phone from an acquaintance of mine of his 36-year-old wife in a hospital bed. His comments were, "*My wife's dying of Covid. Please send prayers to the Most High. She's in a coma and not breathing on her own.*" He and his wife have been married for some time and they had fervently wished for children. Ten days ago, he sent me a picture of their beautiful little baby girl who had just been born.

Shortly after the birth, his wife and he became very ill. She was soon hospitalized. He reports that he is too ill to care for the newborn baby but not ill enough to be hospitalized. The baby is being cared for by his wife's sister 1500 miles away. His wife has been unresponsive on a ventilator for about five days as of this writing without much change. He is earnestly praying for her recovery.

Despite the differences that COVID-19 has surfaced for us, let's be reminded that Christ cared for and cares deeply for those who suffered illness and disease. Christian compassion for those who are suffering and those bereft should be something that all of us who name the Name of Christ can agree on.

Many of us have had this virus and come through without complications. But it's not that way for everybody. COVID-19 is real and its effects have been deadly for many. That is sad. Now is a good time to remind us that we should love each other well.

However, as bad as COVID-19 is, sin and its results are worse. Some people seem to enjoy sin, but it kills those who harbor it. Death for the child of God represents an introduction to something much better than what is left behind. But a Christless eternity is the worst thing anybody could experience. Sin is

worse than COVID-19. Christ offers to forgive our sin and deliver us not only from sin's penalty, but its power and ultimately its presence.

• • • • •

Two days ago we were part of a crowd that gathered in a cemetery near Hutchinson, Kansas. We had gathered to lay to rest the body of Larry Nisly. Larry was a man with a gentle, peaceful, and joyous demeanor. He lived life with dignity and grace. Pondering the testimony of a life well lived and a life at rest, leaves me wanting to be more faithful to what the Lord has called me. I suspect that many, if not most, of those who knew Larry could say the same thing.

As the burial was completed, those gathered energetically sang the hymn, "Lift Your Glad Voices." I was moved and struck by the reality expressed in the last words of the last stanza as the crescendo faded away. The last line reads, "For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die."

What a precious gift for God's children! We lay to rest the body that the departed person no longer needs. Despite the difficulty this brings, God's children can still joyfully affirm that the one who dies in the Lord will not die. It's all because Jesus died and rose again that we can experience eternal life. Praise the Lord!

-RJM 

Try Something Different

Simon Schrock, Catlett, VA

In my journey with cancer I have received many calls and notes that I call II Corinthians 12:9 “touches of grace” God gives through others. Many of these are references to certain verses of Scripture that I now rehearse in my mind nightly trying to fall asleep. As I think of one particular passage that has become very precious to me, I wonder, how would life have been different 60 years ago if I would have meditated on and practiced this Scripture back then? In thinking of this I join the chorus of octogenarians tip-toeing on the edge of eternity who now regret foolish actions of the past. However, we have claimed the promise of I John 1:9, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* From there we move on.

I do not recall meditating on this passage in my youth. I realize there is a difference in how young people and older folks think, especially if their lives are not surrendered to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

My peers and I were quite skilled in seeing the faults of others. That was nurtured by hearing some older folks complain about the preachers and the church. The spirit of rebellion

was easily detected.

In the summer of being what some called “sweet 16” I joined the instruction class with several girls and three or four other boys. There was considerable dissatisfaction and criticism being heard about the church’s standards. Several of us boys really wanted cars, which were forbidden. We even boasted about driving a neighbor’s car. What was happening here was a human trait that just comes naturally and needs no exercising.

Late one night three of us boys were discouraging one another with complaints of what we didn’t like about the church. We decided to drop out of the instruction class. We did not show up at the next class. While we thought we knew what we did not want, what we really wanted for church affiliation was not so clear. Two of my peers returned later and went on to baptism. What was missing that night was any rehearsing of the Scripture that has become a nightly ritual in falling asleep. As I reflect on my many years of life’s journey since then, I observe that the spirit of voicing dissatisfaction with the church and the leaders has been going on ever since.

One summer I was back teaching Bible School in the community where I was born and lived about a fourth of my life. One day I was at my parents' house alone. A longtime friend of the family unexpectedly stopped by. The conversation soon went to listening to the faults and dissatisfaction with others, which as I recall included the church and her leaders. It was an emotional relief when this ordeal was over and the person left. This person was indulging in what comes naturally and has not been changed by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. I wonder how this visit would have been if this person would have expressed more of the admonition this Scripture calls believers to practice?

Another particular situation still lingers in my memory. There was a certain preacher who frequently got "roasted" in casual visiting. His preaching was criticized as being shallow, his actions scrutinized, and more. I occasionally sat under his preaching. I decided to lift him up in prayer instead of criticizing. After that I could get blessed and encouraged by his preaching. He left a positive and lasting impression on my growing Christian life. The preacher died and was given a good memorial service. However, life at the church continued about same in seeing the faults of others. Now I

wonder what difference there would have been if this Scripture had been practiced more faithfully.

On the other hand there were and are many other occasions that this Scripture was the forefront of the visit and its discussion. The results were a real encouragement in the fellowship of the Lord. It's nearly 60 years ago that my first wife died. This grieving widower was living in a small trailer in Alexandria, Va. A young believer whom I did not know from a South American country came by for a surprise visit. The main thing I remember about him is he would sing, "Dear Jesus, use me, and please don't refuse me." Another memorable time more recently was the reconnecting with our African-American brother and his wife. He was a faithful Anabaptist preacher. Most of our exciting time together was spent in the spirit of this Scripture. A very recent experience was when an elderly Spanish man came with the drywall finishers to work on our renovation project. Our conversation went to being believers in Jesus. His several adamant expressions of rejoicing were "I love Jesus, I love Jesus." It was like a refreshing and encouraging touch of grace from God.

Here is the scripture, "*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say,*

rejoice!” This is followed with further instructions and a promise, “*Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*” (Philippians 4:4-7 NKJV). Here believers are instructed to continually rejoice in the Lord, to let our gentle spirit be known to those around us—those we come in contact with in our journey of life.


The world we live in and the religious bonds of the past seem to be falling apart. Bible teachers we once trusted as being sound in the Scriptures have succumbed to falling away from faith and obedience to the Word of God. Some even rejoice in practicing what God calls an abomination. Satan is going to and fro on the earth sowing doubt and discord among believers. Harboring long on these difficulties can easily lead to fretting. The Bible says, “*Do not fret, it leads only to evildoing*” (Psalm 37:8 NASB). Instead of fretting, try something different. Rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice for the goodness of His love toward us, His forgiveness of our sins, His sustaining grace, and giving you “peace like a

river” that lets you sing “it is well with my soul.” Through it all we are invited to cast our burdens upon the Lord. “*Let your requests be made known to God.*” Commit yourself to Him to be used in His kingdom. Then we have this promise from God, His peace “*which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*”

This does not mean being indifferent and overlooking sin in fellow believers and in the church. Neither does it mean going along with the crowd in departing from the faith once delivered to the saints. However, rejoicing in the Lord always, and rejoicing “*because your names are written in heaven*” is a good solid foundation to start from when discussing our concerns and dissatisfactions.

Yes, I know we have burdens “so hard to bear, that no earthly friend can share,” unrest and discord in the churches, our pastors can’t please everyone, and friends and family members are leaving the true faith and going with the world. Events in the world and politics are discouraging and alarming. Expressing our fears, frets, complaints, and drifting into slander would be so easy. Yes, we need to hear one another’s concerns and bear one another’s burdens. We all need someone that we can truly trust to listen to the concerns of our hearts.

But before fretting and complaining, first *try something different*, rejoice in the goodness of the Lord, then move on to “*prayer and supplication, with*

thanksgiving and let your requests be made known to God.” Then rest with the peace of God that surpasses all our understanding. 

Weight Loss (continued from pg. 13)

With all of this, it is important to remember that our goal is not about achieving some sort of earthly beauty. The aim, rather, is to treat our body as the temple of the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 6:19). I have heard this verse used to explain why we shouldn’t drink, smoke, or get tattoos, but we need to treat it with

respect when it comes to eating and exercise, as well.

As we care for our bodies, we will be better able to meet the needs of the people around us, and we will be prepared to meet whatever plan God has for our lives.

[Reprinted from Volume 25, Issue 2, Summer 2021, of The Heartbeat of



Integrity?

Chester Weaver, Itasca, TX

On the day my father was visiting our bakery in Texas, Marvin Stone dropped by as he often did on a Saturday afternoon. Marvin was a friendly, white-haired attorney. No other customer was in the store so I decided to introduce my father to Marvin. When my father discovered that Marvin was an attorney, he said in his typically blunt manner, “I hear that attorneys do not always tell the truth.”

Marvin replied, “We tell the truth according to our clients.”

I will never forget the exchange because of the profundity of the experience.

With the deep political cleavage between Left and Right in American culture these days, we are impacted by the cleavage whether we realize it or not. The evidence reveals itself in the kind of news we absorb, the political comments which issue from our tongues, and in how we have navigated the COVID-19 issue. And by way of extension how we relate to conspiracy theories swirling around us.

We become emotionally involved with our belief systems. Why? Our belief systems are who we are at the core of our being. Since we are humans, we tend to tell “the truth” according to our belief systems. We

speak out of who we are. We cannot do otherwise. We are who we are.

And right there lies the real issue. Who are we?

At the core of my being, am I one person or am I two?

By the standards of fallen humanity, a human being is two; one self-interested, the other a good image. It has been this way since Creation. This double standard has been mankind's problem through the ages. It has interrupted human relationships, it has caused wars, and it has always driven politics regardless of the historical age.

But then Jesus showed up in human history. He was different. In no way was He double. His singleness inspired and won loyalty from some but infuriated others. Why? How does integrity both inspire and infuriate?

Integrity is all about *wholeness*, about being undivided, about completeness. In our heart of hearts, the echoes of being created in God's image still reverberate. Instinctively, we recognize the rightness of *integrity*, the value of *integrity*, and the importance of *integrity*. *Integrity* is all about identifying with the way we were originally created. It has always been this way.

When Jesus showed up, those individuals who still heard the music of *integrity* reverberating in their

hearts, recognized that music and rejoiced in the song that Jesus sang. The music of *integrity* motivated twelve men to each do heroic deeds in this cause of *integrity*. (One of the original twelve slipped back into doubleness but when he understood the enormity of what he had done, could not handle it and committed suicide.) From there, once the Holy Spirit energized the messengers of *integrity*, the Roman Empire trembled. The music of *integrity* moves mountains and reshapes men. It always does.

But at the same time, it infuriates others. How can the same message do both?

Think about what happened when Jesus began His ministry among the Jews. While some heard Him gladly, others were soon plotting His death. Why such strong reaction? Why did trickery, deceit, and false accusations enter the picture? Why could the Jews only put up with Jesus for three and one-half years before they killed Him? Why did the Jews cry "Crucify Him" when Pilate declared, "I find no fault in Him?" Why did the Jews request a Roman guard for Jesus's tomb? Why did they bribe the useless Roman guards to fabricate a false story?

All this happened because *integrity* contains power within itself. The truth is the truth and will always remain

the truth. Instinctively, humans understand this foundational fact. That is why students still study algebra and commerce still works.

Falseness destroys algebra and falseness interrupts commerce. *Integrity* in business is understood to be so foundational that commerce cannot function as commerce without financial *integrity*. To ensure financial *integrity* the law of the land enforces business *integrity*.

But even though *integrity* reigns supreme in algebra and business, it is otherwise in human relationships. In human relationships self-interest has reigned supreme. Cain wanted to serve God in his own way, so he killed Abel. The Hebrews feared to take the land of Canaan, so they disregarded the faith of Joshua and Caleb. King David killed Uriah in order to get Bathsheba. Because the Jews did not like the messages of the prophets, they killed the messengers. And, of course, when Jesus criticized Jewish religious failure, the Jews had no other choice but to kill Him. And thus the story goes.

Why is it this way?

Doubleness is the way of man. Self-interest and good image.

Integrity is the way of God. The two cannot mix. Doubleness fears *integrity* at the deepest level. Instinctively, human beings understand that

integrity is good, right, and proper. *Integrity* is the right way, hands down. No one faults wholeness except those given over to wickedness.

Doubleness is the way of fallen mankind. Falseness and deceit cover human failure. In his crookedness, man chooses doubleness because doubleness is easier than *integrity*. It is easier to lie and be deceitful when ugly truth is exposed. Naturally, proud human beings hate to be exposed as false. Exposed hypocrisy must be prevented at any cost. And thus, cowardice energizes man to take drastic measures to remove the presence of *integrity*. Doubleness loves doubleness. When doubleness is everywhere, doubleness is understood to be the way the world works. Just put algebra and commerce in the exception boxes and go on with the game. Do anything to keep *integrity* at bay. Don't even think about *integrity*.


When Jesus appeared and insisted upon *integrity* in the presence of religious doubleness, He could not be tolerated. If left unchecked, He would spoil the working system. He was such an intense threat that only three and one-half years were required to remove Him from the Jewish system.

Anabaptism was born in Europe in the 1500s. Why? Anabaptism was birthed because of the doubleness

of both the Roman Catholic system and the new Protestant system. Anabaptism insisted on religious *integrity*. Humans should practice what they preach. Jesus Christ meant what He said. Human beings should be literal disciples of Christ because Christ had made it possible. Disobedience to the obvious words of Jesus Christ indicated that the disobedient were not actually disciples of Jesus Christ even though they professed faith in Jesus Christ. Professed creeds meant nothing in the eyes of God; the being and the doing demonstrated actual faith. Only the *integrity* of faith counts.

This insistence upon religious *integrity* infuriated the religious establishment of Europe, both the Roman Catholic establishment and the Protestant establishment. Why? Once again, this insistence upon *integrity* had interrupted the religious systems. By 1600 both systems had figured out how to manage religious doubleness and make doubleness work with the masses. When Anabaptism challenged both religious systems, Anabaptism would need to be silenced. Persecution was the way to do this. And the religious systems literally annihilated Anabaptism in some quarters. Anabaptism was forced to emigrate in others.

And then Anabaptism jumped the Atlantic. In free America Anabaptism developed its own form of doubleness, usually expressed in religious formalism. Various revival movements shook the doubleness and caused some numerical loss. Materialism, so native to the American culture, created the largest expression of doubleness. The atmosphere of religious and political liberty invited doubleness to proliferate among the Mennonites in America. Some lonely voices called for *integrity* but they were too often ignored. Religious doubleness was the new way Anabaptists expressed themselves in America. Calls for *integrity* may not rock the boat. It had taken a long time to figure out how to successfully operate Anabaptist doubleness.

Today, Anabaptists too often identify with some form of doubleness. With no persecution to separate the wheat from the chaff, religious doubleness is the easier way to experience church life. Anabaptists prove to be just as human as their former persecutors. Today, some Anabaptists are infuriated by calls to *integrity*. Other Anabaptists respond with delight. Why? Marvin Stone said, "We tell the truth according to our clients." 

Partnering with Anabaptist Churches for the Unreached

Aaron Crider, State College, PA

Our churches treasure the Word of God in English, but many people groups have no faithful church—and significantly, no Bible in their language.

All-Nations Bible Translation addresses this need by partnering with churches to send teams who facilitate Bible translation and community development while working to establish indigenous churches. Here is what that means.

Working Together

We help churches send by overseeing and coordinating the team's training and eventual placement in the field. Churches support their members during training years and on the field. Like Paul and Barnabas, these teams are sent both by the Holy Spirit and the church.

Team members may come from different churches. We communicate with the churches to help determine whether they share a vision for their members to collaborate. We help the team members through the process

of communicating expectations and preparing to work together.

Toward Local Churches

When we think of an indigenous church, we think of a believing community set apart to God, yet sustainable and reproducible in its cultural context. A faithful church is the goal of each team. They pursue discipleship and church planting under the direction of their sending churches.

We believe that having Scripture in the mother tongue is foundational to a maturing church. We provide direction to team members who work on Bible translation. Mother-tongue speakers play an important role in translation, learning God's truth from the Scriptures and interaction with the team. Even the process of Bible translation serves the goal of a local church.

We believe God gives every community resources to develop. Some team members are trained to help people develop these resources to serve the needs of the community

in sustainable ways rather than depending on foreigners. Because community development counters dependency, it also serves the goal of a local church.

A Team Sent to South Asia

Several years ago, two churches in the Midwest US sent Family A and Family B to South Asia. After some time learning the language in another part of the country, these families moved to live among a Muslim-influenced language group of several hundred thousand who have no translated Scripture.

The team was able to start a business, allowing them to remain in the country longer than a tourist visa allows. They are exploring various business possibilities and have experimented with a savings-group program as a community development project.

A current project is comparing different dialects of the language and learning where they are used, along with other social factors. This will help determine where the team locates long-term.

A teenage boy who interacted a lot with the Family A was attracted to the way of Jesus. He studied the lives of Mohammed and Jesus and chose to follow Jesus. This decision has not been easy. His family resists his choice and severely limits his

interaction with his Christian friends.

This young man's experience demonstrates the challenges his people will face as they choose to follow Jesus. Please support this team's work through your prayers.

Lost Peoples in South America

On our own side of the world, in the Amazon jungles, live dozens of language groups without the whole Bible. The Witmer family, sent by a Mennonite church in Virginia, lives in the town of Leticia along the Amazon River. This is right at Colombia's southern point, a strategic location for their work of connecting with indigenous people groups in the region and helping send teams to them.

The neediest of the Amazonian peoples are still out of reach. They've had little to no contact with the outside world. It has been said that they are "unreachable by traditional strategies."

The Witmer family has a vision to train and disciple indigenous Christians to penetrate and advance the "edge" of the church farther into the Amazon basin. Living in Leticia since 2019 has helped them understand the barriers to reaching the neediest people. Working with members of more accessible indigenous groups may be a viable long-term approach. The

transforming love of God might then propel those people onward to touch others out of our reach as foreigners.

Not all the lost peoples of the Amazon seem so far out of reach. Alvaro, from a Tanimuka-speaking village, knew some Christians who taught him from the Bible. A heavy drinker and drug user, Alvaro claims to accept both Christian and cultural beliefs. Alvaro's people are on our list of groups needing Bible translation and church planting.

Many miles and several plane rides across the jungle, another team is making contact with a language group we'll call the Ahsatdah. Only a few pages of Scripture have been translated into their language, and there are no known Christians in their villages in Colombia. Pray that Jesus will win Ahsatdah people, and others of the Amazon, to Himself.

The All-Nations Vision

From Genesis to Revelation, we see God seeking to redeem to Himself a people of faith from every nation, tribe, people, and language. At All-Nations, this is our vision: "Communities of believers in every language group living out the Word

of God."

Besides the people groups already mentioned, teams are pursuing the vision in other areas:

- a semi-nomadic Muslim group in West Africa,
- people who speak a dialect of Mixtec, in southern Mexico,
- villages with a unique dialect of Tarahumara, in northern Mexico,
- Mayangna-speaking people of Nicaragua and Honduras,
- a likely project among a dialect of displaced people in Kurdistan.

We owe God thanks for the gift of the Scriptures in our language. Others labored hard and gave their lives for this blessing. For people still without the Scriptures today, we can pray the prayer of Psalm 67:

God be merciful to us and bless us,
And cause His face to shine upon us,

That Your way may be known on earth,

Your salvation among all nations.
Let the people praise You, O God;
Let all the people praise You.

[For more information about All-Nations Bible Translation, contact Aaron Crider at aaron.crider@abtmil.org.]



Tarry at a **promise** *until God* **meets you** *there.*

Where She Gets Her Jewelry

Beth Martin, Fresno, Ohio



She is decked out in jewelry of the most expensive sort. Everyone cannot help but stare a bit and wonder. Her husband smiles on her in satisfaction and with a glow of pride as he watches her put it on. He loves to watch her place yet another costly pearl around her neck or on her wrist.

She is not actually a stunning model woman. In fact, she is aging, and it shows. She wonders sometimes whether there is anything lovely about her looks at all. But no one really notices this, because she has covered all of this so well with her secret beauty treatment and her jewelry. She is truly amazing.

Her feminine poise is real, not disgustingly fake with put-on airs. Quiet, unassuming confidence seems to be the air she breathes.

Her genuine smile warms the hearts of everyone around her. She exhales warmth and compassion. She engages with people, whether they be her own child with a petty, tiresome need, a guest, or a poor stranger.

Sharpness, haughtiness, bitterness,

and especially fretfulness, the great disfigurements of women everywhere, seem to be foreign to her.

How in the world does she do it?

When I ask where or how she does her beauty treatments, she smiles a tiny smile and pulls a small, worn paper from her purse. On it is written what I first think to be an address: Philippians 4:6 and 7.

I realize it is a Scripture reference, and go quickly to the place in my Bible.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Suddenly I understand.

There is no ugly fussiness present in her; every trace of anything that frets her is sold away. Worry about her future, irritation over ruined expectations large and small, all the hurts that people give her, frustration over her own failures, obsession with

the horrid lurking “impossibilities” in her family, her culture, and her society; she has carried the whole box of them to the cross and left it there.

This, she says, she practices daily.


She has decided to trust and to rest in the complete strength of her Shepherd.

That is where she has gotten this expensive jewelry in exchange for all she is and all she owns.

“I’m just so grateful to God,” she exults! “Whenever I give Him my inadequacy, my imperfection, and uselessness—as soon as I set my eyes

away from that, and onto His great glory, He gives—gives HIS perfect, lovely, undeserved beauty! I just thank Him!”

I look at her in wonder. And then I realize, her gem is rare, rare because that path to the cross is difficult, and most women’s courage fails before they get there. It is expensive because it is crafted from the trials and hardships which she goes through and yields to the Lord.

But it is indeed accessible to anyone, this coveted ornament of a quiet, restful, contented spirit. 

junior messages

Grumbling Missionaries

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer” (I Timothy 4:4-5).

New cultures and foods are fun and exciting when you are traveling or in a foreign country for only a short time. But when time stretches into days, months, and years, there can be so many adjustments, grumbling, and tears. There is nothing wrong with tears or adjustments. Adjusting takes

time. Give yourself time. Crying to God to see you through is the very best thing to do. Cultivate a heart of gratitude for beauty and God’s good gifts in every place you live.

But the grumbling? Numbers 11 tells the story how it displeased the Lord when the Israelites complained. His anger was kindled and people died. Later the people wept again and said, *“We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. But now our*

soul is dried away: there is nothing at all beside this manna, before our eyes" (Numbers 11:5-6). The anger of the Lord was kindled, and Moses was also displeased.

In Numbers 20 the children of Israel complained again to their leader, "Why did you make us leave Egypt? Why are we here in this evil place? There is no water to drink, no grain, no figs, or grapes. We are hungry for melons and cucumbers."

In Africa, with all the heat, dust, bugs, and germs, it was easy to become disillusioned and complain. Why God, why did you send us to this strange place?

Much of the water is contaminated. The chai is so sweet.

White bread, though it's their best and special to them, is still unhealthy white bread.

I don't care for cooked intestines or those tiny fish.

Ugali is stiff and tasteless (but Africans love it as one of their very

best foods).

There is a scarcity of good cheeses, and ice cream is so pricey.

We would like to have American fruits: peaches, strawberries, and apples.

Naturally we like the foods of our homeland best. But what about our attitudes and grumbling? Was God pleased when the children of Israel complained? Is He pleased when I do? Thankfully, eventually we learned to enjoy many new African foods!

May God help me to have a grateful heart, every day, and in every place for Jesus.

Read Numbers 11 and 20.

["Grumbling Missionaries" was taken from Mary Ellen's new devotional book Leaning Toward the Light. Of the 99 devotionals in this book, approximately half of them are from the time their family served in Kenya. If you wish to order, email maryellenbeachy@icloud.com or call 330-260-4327.]



youth messages

Bread Upon the Waters (Part 1)

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

Recently I spoke with a gentleman whom I will call D.M. He worked with an

organization that smuggles Bibles and other gospel materials into restricted nations. For their protection and this interview, we will refer to them as Organization X (Org. X). Reading their newsletters in the past sparked an interest in their work. I reached out to him for an interview which he graciously accepted after seeking permission from his board. The work at Org. X is dangerous for certain people in many countries. This interview has been edited and censored by Org. X personnel to protect information about their contacts and procedures from getting into the wrong hands. Please enjoy the following interview. May it challenge you to consider getting involved in spreading the Word of God in some way, praying for our brothers and sisters in restricted countries, and praying for the work of Organization X.

1. What is the mission of Organization X?

The main goal of our work in other countries, as stated in our mission statement is “To reach out to God’s suffering children in obedience to our Lord’s command, and to remember them that are in bonds as bound with them. We desire to do this as the Lord opens doors by:

a. Visiting their countries and sharing in their sufferings.

b. Providing Bibles for those who have none.

c. Providing sound doctrinal and evangelical literature.

d. Encouraging them by teaching and by example, to observe all things that our Lord has commanded.

e. Remembering the material needs of the fatherless and the widows.

A focal verse for us is Isaiah 41:17, “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none... I the Lord will hear them...”

2. What is/was your job description/responsibilities while serving with Org. X?

Org. X is involved in various restricted countries. Most of my involvement has been in China as a courier, carrying literature through borders as well as traveling and delivering those books throughout the country. The books we carried were not only Bibles but also children’s Sunday School material and various titles of our own which have been translated into Chinese. These include Young Man Be Strong, The Peaceable Kingdom of God, Moral Purity, Dying to Live With Christ, Beyond Instinct, What Every Man Should Know, and many other practical teachings. In recent years I’ve carried very little literature through the border but helped more with daily trip planning, meeting teams across

the border, handling and shipping material from inside, and coordinating meetings with Chinese contacts.

3. How did you get involved with Org. X?

Though I took an interest in evangelism at home, I hadn't considered working in another country, certainly not China. In 2009 I was asked to join a courier team, and with a few qualms, decided to go. That trip was short, only a week and a half, but it proved to be an amazing exercise in faith for me as our team saw prayers answered, met face-to-face with Chinese believers, listened to their stories, and tasted the fulfillment of being an answer to someone else's prayers! Over the next few years, with multiple return trips, I grew to love those people a lot. On one return trip I encountered a man I'd not met before who asked me very directly if I love the Chinese people. He told me that if I love them and truly want to help them, I need to come, learn the language, and live among them. Several months later I unexpectedly met him again. He immediately asked if I'd decided to answer that call. I didn't yet see this as a clear call, but a few years later when God opened that door I was ready to go for as long as He wanted me there!

4. How has your work with Org. X impacted you personally?

Being among those who have

suffered physically for Christ's sake has caused me to re-evaluate my own commitment. Daily border crossings with that heavy bag, sweating, praying, and counting on God's protection have helped me realize in a new way that I'm in a spiritual battle! I need God's power and protection from the enemy all the time, every day, and only an open and pure heart can claim that power.

5. How has your attitude toward the Scriptures changed based on your interaction with those who don't have easy access to it?

We so often speak of how much others need Jesus, or how these restricted countries need copies of His Word. If the Holy Bible is in my hand but not in my heart, my words about others needing it and my goal of sharing it with the poor and needy is a sad contradiction. My love and appreciation for the Word has grown as I've seen others' joy in receiving it.

6. Are you at liberty to tell us how many different countries you've smuggled into?

Our ministry produces literature in various restricted countries including Vietnam and Nepal. In most of these other places it is possible to produce literature within the country. China is the only one into which we've crossed the border with "bread."

7. What is the most rewarding

thing about your involvement with Org. X?

The most rewarding part of this work is simply the fulfillment of obedience to God’s call. As a friend who works in Nepal has often said “We go, not because of the sacrifice but to be obedient.” Obedience always brings joy and a satisfied heart, even when it is difficult.

The personal contact with oppressed believers is also one of the greatest privileges and rewards of the stresses and tests of this work. We come and go where and when it is safe to do so, taking great care not to act in a way that would bring them danger. We can leave again, but many of them cannot and would not even if they could. They remain there, under surveillance and sometimes under threat, but so often expressing joy! They have joy in the growing numbers of believers, joy and hope in what God may do in the future, and even rejoice in remembering suffering for Him.


8. Having worked with Org. X as a single person and now being married, have your views of personal safety vs. what God has called you to, changed at all?

I’ve been privileged to sit down with

an elderly pastor who spent twenty years incarcerated in a forced labor camp because of his faith. His wife passed away while he was in prison. Several other men we know well have spent time in prison, been beaten, and have often come under threat. They know what it is to suffer. Yet when God calls them to lead, they lead. When He calls them to teach, they teach. When we know what God is asking us to do, shall we count out the risks of obedience?

Having said that, as a married person I would think more about the feelings of my wife or family were I to be detained or be away from home longer than anticipated. Communication beforehand, staying in touch as much as possible even when away, and together committing the day and work to the Lord are always important, but perhaps especially so when leaving on this type of work with a family remaining at home.

[Author’s note: If you are interested in finding out more about Organization X or signing up for their newsletter, please contact me, and I will get you in contact with the correct people.]

[To be continued next month] 

When we cease to WONDER, we cease to WORSHIP.

THOUGHT GEMS

He who lives content with little possesses much.

• • • • •

If you are not happy with what you have,
how could you be happier with more?

• • • • •

Contentment is the power to get out of any situation all there is in it.

• • • • •

Think sometimes of all that you have
instead of wishing for what you don't.

• • • • •

Thanking the Lord in adversity changes burdens into blessings.

• • • • •

If a care is too small to be made into a prayer,
it is too small to be made into a burden.

• • • • •

There is no time lost in waiting if you are waiting on the Lord.

• • • • •

How strange that men fight for peace and work for leisure.

• • • • •

If you find yourself wearing a spirit of heaviness,
put on a garment of praise.

• • • • •

A small step of obedience is a giant step to blessing.