



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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2005

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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 Saviour;
 To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;
 And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.

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God is Faithful

Kathryn Mast

Belvidere, TN

There is One who walks beside me,
Every moment of each day.
Giving love and grace and power.
Close to Him I'll always stay.

Though at times my faith is weakened,
And I struggle, it seems, alone.
I wonder, "God, are you still leading?
For my strength is nearly gone."

Then He answers, "Child, I'm with you;
I'll not forsake my very own.
I'll always lead and guide you
Softly on until you're home.

"When, at times, you feel the tempest
And you think that you've gone wrong.
Do not fear these lonely heartaches.
They produce a person strong.

"Just as clay needs heat and pounding,
For a vessel in My hand,
So your life is shaped and molded
To fit the image of My plan.

"I never like to see you wounded,
For it fills my eyes with tears.
Yet, it's mostly in these valleys,
That you feel the Lord so near.

"So as you face the future—
Every moment of each day,
I will give to you My Spirit,
As by my side you always stay.

"Continue trusting Me, dear child,
I'll fill you with my grace.
Your life is made for purpose,
As you bravely fill your place."

Now as I face each battle,
With the Lord right by my side,
He will give to me His Spirit,
As I all to Him confide.

I will trust Him in each heartache
He will always my guide be.
For He's making, molding, shaping
Something priceless out of me.

Then some day I'll be rewarded,
When my race on earth is run.
I will hear His blessed welcome:
"Come on home, My child, well done!"



With A Good Will

William Barclay, in *Daily Celebration*, page 67, offers biographical comment about Miles Coverdale, an early Bible translator, who was asked by English King Henry VIII to produce a Bible in the language of the people. Coverdale was aware of his limitations in Hebrew and Greek, the original Bible languages. He wrote, “Considering how excellent knowledge and learning an interpreter of scripture ought to have in the tongues, and pondering also mine own insufficiency therein, and how weak I am to perform the office of translator, I was the more loath to meddle with this work.”

However, he overcame his initial reluctance according to this further explanation: “But to say the truth before God, it was neither my labour or desire to have this work put in my hand; nevertheless it grieved me that other nations should be more plenteously provided for with the scripture in their mother tongue than we; therefore when I was instantly required, though I could not do as well as I would, **I thought it my duty to do my best, and that with a good will.**”

What I appreciate about Coverdale is that **he did his best**. It is Barclay’s opinion that his work became a masterpiece. I cannot vouch for that, but I can vouch for his excellent attitudes: He saw a need. Even though he thought others could do it better, no one seemed to be doing it. When the King bade him do it, he eagerly did his best! That’s how God’s work gets done with God’s blessing.

According to Thompson’s Chain Reference Bible, #4220, Coverdale’s work is dated 1535. It is the third known translation of the Scriptures into English from Latin. This work is not credited with having had great bearing upon later translation efforts. Later English translations included the Matthews translation, dated 1537; Great, 1539; Geneva, 1560; Bishop’s, 1568; and King James, 1611. King James rested mostly on Geneva, Matthews, Tyndale, and also indirectly on the Latin Vulgate, 400 A.D.

Is King Jesus laying a need and a work on your heart? What one of us cannot do, another can. Is He calling you to volunteer for a term of service? Perhaps prison ministry looks too hard but you could help in

disaster cleanup or vice versa. The list goes on, and life goes on. Last year's opportunities may be gone, but new ones come along. Watch for them with readiness.

• • • • •

He Did It Again!

My friends, Amos and Anne Nisly, have an interesting way of giving glory to God. Here's how Matthew Keim reported that this 80-year-old couple has been known to converse:

Amos gets an unusual or special answer to a problem and it's obvious that it is more than mere coincidence, so he says to Anne, "He did it again!"

Anne says, "Praise the Lord! Tell me about it." Then Amos gives the account of the combination of events that confirmed God's attention to a specific need he had.

That's great! That's giving credit where credit is due. That offers "the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15). That's gratitude—a grateful attitude—"in shoe leather."

Let's not merely think it—Let's say it! Let's give God the glory He deserves. The "quiet in the land" don't need to feel boastful for making positive comments about God and His bountiful gifts to those who depend on Him. Of course, to be

loud and boisterous does not make us sincere. But if we are sincere, it's better for us and for our relationship with God if we are unashamed in thankfulness.

This is how I think God wants it.

DAILY:


1. We praise Him in prayer for His care and protection.

2. We commit all our needs to Him.

3. We ask Him to undertake for us and bring glory to Himself as He does so.

4. We thank Him for things that are ordinary—and extraordinary.

5. Thus, we acknowledge that having a wholesome tongue is more than not using bad words. It is saying good words, for "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life..." (Proverbs 15:4).

James (James 4:13-16) warned against presumption and boasting. Then he wrote, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (4:17). None of us ought to claim credit for how well our plans work out. God is sovereign. He delights in taking care of His children. Sometimes our closed lips may give the impression that our foresight and good management outshine His providence. God knows better than that. We should acknowledge it, too. —PLM 

Tainted Vaccines:

[The following is a letter written and recently revised by Dr. Nolan Byler, D.O., Mt. Eaton, OH, who lives and practices medicine in that state. After I quoted him, (January, 2005, page 8), I was informed that he is constrained by conscience to refuse administering certain vaccines. The following statement to his patients will clarify these issues. Thank you, Dr. Byler, for giving me permission to print it. —PLM]

Dear Patients,

As a Christian, I believe in the sanctity of human life. God creates all life, which begins at the moment of conception. I believe very strongly that it is wrong to take the life of another human being, including unborn babies. Therefore, I cannot knowingly use or provide medical products derived from a deliberately aborted baby.

I have become aware that a number of vaccines in use are fetal cell line grown, which means they are grown on cells originally from deliberately aborted babies. One of these vaccines is the “**R**” of the **MMR** for Rubella, also known as German Measles.

Although I have used and administered this MMR vaccine in the past, I will no longer be able to since I am

now aware of its origin.

In the MMR vaccine, the Measles “M” and the Mumps “M” components are both derived from chick embryo cell lines and have been manufactured separately. They are available.

What does this mean? It means that I will be unable to give you or your children protection against Rubella by way of this “tainted” vaccine. I am actively seeking alternatives at the present time, but do not know when it will be available for use.

I am concerned about Rubella, which can have some serious complications. Rubella, or German Measles, is basically a harmless childhood disease, but it can have serious effects on the unborn child when a pregnant woman is exposed to the virus during her first trimester. Should this occur, 20-25% of these cases will develop some form of Congenital Rubella Syndrome, which may cause deafness; malformations of the heart, eyes, or brain; or liver, spleen, and bone marrow problems. However, I believe it would be better to suffer consequences of disease than to attempt to preserve health through the use of abortion, which is murder and therefore, morally wrong.

Other vaccines that are grown

on fetal cell lines are Havrix, a Hepatitis-A vaccine; Imovax, a Rabies vaccine; Varivax, the only Chickenpox vaccine; and Poliovax, a Polio vaccine. I have not been administering these “tainted” vaccines to my patients routinely, nor will I be able to in the future. There are alternative vaccines available in the United States for Rabies and Polio that are derived from cell lines of chick embryo and monkey kidney cells, respectively. However, there are no non-fetal cell line vaccines available in the United States for Rubella, Hepatitis-A or Chickenpox. There are alternatives in the United Kingdom for Rubella and hepatitis-A, but these are not FDA approved for use in the United States.

Please understand that I am not against vaccinations. I encourage everyone to obtain them, except for vaccines produced from human fetal cell lines. I use IPOL, the polio vaccine grown on monkey kidney cells. I continue to recommend, supply, and administer the “untainted” vaccines: **DTaP, Hepatitis-B, Hib, Polio, Pneumococcal** and **Flu** vaccines.

You may not agree with the conviction regarding the use of the vaccines derived from human fetal cell lines. However, I can no longer in good

conscience supply them for you. If you have questions or desire more detailed information, please feel free to ask.

Sincerely,

Nolan W. Byler, DO

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Partiality:

We have some problems with exclusiveness among our young people. We’d like to have some good material on partiality. Can you possibly send me a reprint of such an article in a back issue of *Calvary Messenger*?

Name withheld

Editor’s response: I looked for an article on that topic through all the indices since CM’s founding in 1970. I found no article listed under such a heading. In this issue, however, I’m reprinting a good article on that subject from Brethren Revival Fellowship. I’m also asking our readers and writers: Is there someone out there who will undertake to either send a good article on the subject or at least something that could be used to further address the subject?

Please be invited to do so. James 2 certainly addresses this besetting problem in human relationships.

—PLM 

... COURAGE IS GRACE UNDER PRESSURE ...

The Vow, The Plow and The Wow!

Aaron Lapp

Kinzers, PA

Church life makes periodic use of the vow. Typically, vow-making is involved at baptism, in marriage, in ordination and in membership transfers. Sometimes in confession of sin and backsliding, a vow is made to the church along with amendment of life.

For our admonition, this month we will look at the vow, the plow and the Wow! of Christian living. These three have a relationship to each other. These three also show a distinct progression of thought and action.

The Vow

Vow-making is serious business. When I was baptized as a fourteen-year-old at the Weavertown Church, I considered two things. They both seemed to be beyond me. For one, making this vow as a lifetime commitment was no small undertaking. I expected to live a long time. Would I feel the same about the church in 10 or 50 years from then? And then, as I considered trials and temptations I had already

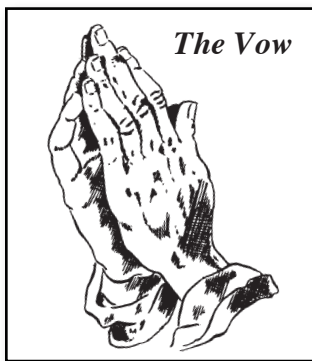
experienced, I wondered, *Will I be able to maintain victory?* Making a vow for one year at a time would have seemed safer. And making a vow *after* I had been victorious for a year would have seemed more logical.

In recent years, the well-publicized Promise Keepers rallies have hit a very sensitive nerve in America's evangelicals. People in our modern times have really messed up in regard to vows. Jesus touched on this with this apt observation:

“The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26:41). Some of us made vows with absolute intentions of fulfilling them. Some people make vows and plan to keep them if it suits. Some make vows with no intention to follow

through. Calling on men to return to keeping their vows has sparked this national movement.

The critical question for any new movement, large or small, is: Will it



cross the line inward toward Christ and His Word? Will it move toward repentance, revival, and holiness of life? The evidences of movement inward is when there is amendment of life, all the way to a new obedience to God's Word and commitment to Christ as the Center.

Mass movements can be man-centered, and move outward. This outward movement retains a nominal profession of Christ. The outer periphery tends more toward appeal based on the lowest common denominator so more people will come on board. Man-centered mass movements can be powered by the emotions. They quickly rise and quickly subside. The rally heats the emotional momentum, but lacks stamina to endure or grow.

The classic verse on vow-keeping says: "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it;...Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay" (Ecc. 5:4,5).

In our time we have seen an unprecedented need for counseling among Amish and Mennonites. We have available hundreds of good books that deal with many aspects of Christian living. The level of

academics in our Bible schools has risen appreciably.

The preaching in our pulpits is markedly improved, in practicality, in originality and in clarity. Good magazines are abundant. Never before have we had the multiplicity of enrichments in learning, the endowment of heritage and the possible engagement in service projects. Alongside all that, why are there so many needs for counseling?

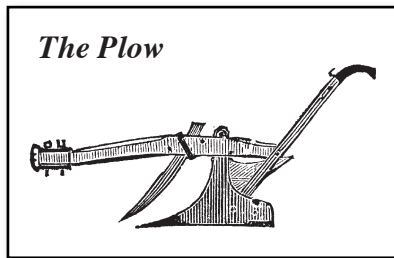
Part of it is our off-and-on problem with our vows; that is, our problem with the plow. Our commitment to God for the larger part involves heart (vow) and hand (plow). Being and doing. The vow involves *whose* I am. The plow explicitly involves what I am *willing* to do.

The Plow

For centuries, *the plow represented work and farm industry.* It was hard

work that required a good eye to break that first furrow. The walking plow was strenuous work for a strong man. It required both hands on the handles. Tilting one way or other

made a difference in the quality of the job. Hitting a rock beneath the surface meant a sudden jolt to a man's upper body. A plowman needed strong arms and muscular



legs. The walking plow represents skill, strength, and stamina.

The plow represents sustained work, keeping at it, day after day. One man with two horses and a walking plow could reasonably plow two acres a day. Both man and beast needed periodic rest during a day's work. My experience started with plowing using a small Ford 8N and two, 14-inch bottoms. It changed a little at a time so that now I go with a Case IH 7230 pulling a 15-foot wide subsoiler. My Amish neighbor told me with that I do more plowing in one hour before breakfast than he gets done in three whole days with a single plow. But with today's acreage, a farmer still works early and late. Plowing is still work.

The plow represents hope. Opening and turning the soil is the first visible ray of the farmer's annual vision of hope. Few things compare with the satisfaction of seeing the good, soft earth being turned and tilled. The previous year's dead stalks, weeds and other undesirables are turned under. It is a new crop year, symbolized by fresh, upturned soil. The hope generated by the plow gives vision to a crop of one hundred-fold, in which the

previous sweat, toil and long hours of work are forgotten. The Bible says, "...he that ploweth should plow in hope,...he that thresheth, in hope should be partaker of his hope" (1 Cor. 9:10). Thus the Bible connects hope with plowing.

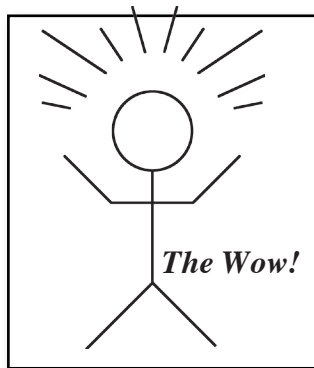
We have considered the *vow* and the *plow*. They are two essentials of faithfulness. The vow without the plow is a mere profession of Christ without a commitment to discipleship and service. The plow without the vow can be likened to a regimen of good works done in the flesh for selfish and ulterior purposes. The plow (works) without the vow (Christ) makes the plow a symbol of slavery with drudgery. Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). Those who get some plowing done are those

who look ahead with a comprehension of the value of their work done in the course of time and with a vision for the future.

The Wow!

Make sure of your *vow* to Jesus Christ, the Savior, to save you from your sins. Being saved, put both hands

to the *plow*, turning over new ground in faithful service for the Master. The





result will be that at certain stages, you will say, “Wow!” It is the glory part of Christian living, spiritual surprises, special graces, going beyond what you had expected in life. If it is allowed in heaven’s vocabulary, after opening our eyes in the glory world, no doubt, we will say, “Wow!” Heaven will be more than we ever imagined.



Yesterday it was our *vow* to God,

today, with steady pace, we have both hands on the *plow*, and at some tomorrow, will say, “Wow!”

THE BOTTOM LINE is:

 With the vow, we look up, and make our start,

 With the plow, we look forward, and do our part,

 With the Wow!, we look all around with a true heart. 

Silent, Slow, Sure

Rosie Bontrager

Chilton, TX

“**W**hen does the dew fall? Does it come all at once?” These interesting questions came from a young questioner. I told him I thought it came over several hours’ time.


Thinking of dew and how slowly and silently it falls made me think of other slow, silent, but sure, natural phenomena—a sprout pushing up out of the ground, a flower unfolding, the first lighting of dawn, a baby growing.

In the kingdom of God there are many similar beautiful experiences: the way God’s Spirit works in a life that doesn’t know Him, the healing of a grieving heart, signs of growth in our walk with the Lord and so on.

We tend to hurry slow processes.

We are impatient for a change for the better. We would do well to spend a night outside, watching the dew fall and the dawn come. We would do well to sit beside a rose and watch it open.

God has a scheduled plan. He works out His own program. It may be slow. It is often silent but it is always sure. It is amazing how He can work in spite of our bumbling human efforts, our impatience, our unwise choices!

Can we open our hearts to our Father’s work and His timetable? Can we learn to quiet our hearts and wait on Him? Can we “fret not, trust in the Lord, and rest” (Psalm 37:1-7)? Surely His way is best! 

marriages

Beachy-Mast

Bro. Darrell, son of Ivan and Elsie Beachy, Free Union, VA, and Sis. JoAnna, daughter of Stanley and Edna Mast, Concord, AR, Feb. 12, 2005, at Arbanna Baptist Church for Shady Lawn Mennonite Church, by Elmer Gingerich.

Hostetler-Yoder

Bro. Jesse, son of Ezra and Leah Hostetler, Belleville, and Sis. Mary Ann, daughter of Raymond and Linda Yoder, Adams, NY, Oct. 22, 2004, by David J. Peachey.

Loewen-Nisly

Bro. Eddy, son of Tony and Nettie Loewen, Spanish Lookout, Belize, and Sis. Ellie, dau. of Arthur and Lil Nisly, San Salvador, El Salvador, at Cayo Deaf Institute in Cayo, for the church at CDI, Feb. 19, 2005, by Frank Thiessen.

Mast-Miller

Bro. Abe Mast, widower, Charm, OH, and Sis. Laura Kay, daughter of Mose S. and the late Niva Miller, Sugarcreek, OH, on March 12, 2005, at Maranatha Church, by Paul Leroy Miller.

Mast-Zehr

Bro. Matthew, son of Elsie and the late Lowell Mast, Mtn. View, AR, and Sis. Larisa, daughter of Jim and Regina Zehr, Guys Mills, PA, on March 5, 2005, at the First Christian Church, by Milo Zehr.

Miller-Swarey

Bro. Loren, son of Amos, Jr., and Rachel Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA, and Sis. Marcia, dau.; of Ivan and Lena Swarey, Stuarts Draft, VA, Mar. 19, 2005, by Bennie Byler.

Yutzy-Weaver

Bro. Matthew, son of Rudy and Marietta Yutzy, Brookfield, MO, and Sis. Freda Joy, daughter of James and Fannie Weaver, Brookfield, MO, on Oct. 16, 2004, at Brookfield United Methodist Church for Locust Creek A.M. Church by Elmer Mast.

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

As perfume is to the flower,
so is kindness to speech.



cradle roll

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

Brenneman, Lowell and JoAnn (Miller), Falkville, AL, seventh child, third daughter, Charity Dawn, Jan. 8, 2005.

Byler, Freeman and Mary (Sommers), Middlefield, OH, eleventh child, seventh daughter, Abigail Merci, Jan. 26, 2005.

Byler, Robert and Katie (Stoltzfus), Mtn. View, AR, sixth child, second son, Timothy Robert, Feb. 20, 2005.

Byrum, Shane and Lucy (Miller), Crossville, TN, second child, first son, Travis Lloyd, Mar. 4, 2005.

Caceres, Adonay and Leona (Miller), Crossville, TN, sixth child, fourth dau., Angelica Ruth, Mar. 9, 2005.

Coblentz, Norman and Dorothy (Miller), Danville, AL, ninth child, sixth daughter, Angela Rose, Feb. 1, 2005.

Gingerich, Joseph and Rhoda (Stoltzfus), Dyke, VA, first child and dau, Alexis Ryanne, Mar. 10, 2005.

Hostetler, John and Julie (Gingerich), Plain City, OH, fourth child, third dau., Allison Joy, Mar. 22, 2005.

Hostetler, Jonathan and Linda (Stoltzfus), Plain City, OH, second child, first dau., Katy Alana, Feb. 22, 2005.

Kuhns, Vernon and Lu Ella (Schrock), Sullivan, IL, second child and dau., Jodi Lynn, Mar. 9, 2005.

Mast, Timothy and Anna Joyce (Troyer), Crossville, TN, fifth child, second son, Julian Dale, Mar. 5, 2005.

Miller, Arlyn and Sharon (Hochstetler), LaGrange, IN, sixth child, fifth son, Austin Michael, Jan. 30, 2005.

Miller, Nathan and Miriam (Miller), Holmesville, OH, first child and dau., Kayla Diane, Feb. 13, 2005.

Miller, Virgil and Matilda (Nissley), Freeport, OH, first child and dau., Mary Elizabeth, Feb. 24, 2005.

Peachey, Ivan and Kay (Raber), Dyke, VA, seventh child, fifth son, Joel Wesley, April 3, 2005.

Schmidt, Peter and Tabitha (Beachy), Baltic, OH, first child and dau., Erinna Kathryn, Feb. 1, 2005.

Stauffer, Lawrence Lee and Julia (Weaver), Sturgis, MI, first child and son, Isaiah Lee, Mar. 4, 2005.

Stoll, Eldon and Linda (Coblentz), Summersville, KY, second child, first dau., Lavonna RoSann, Jan. 23, 2005.

Thayer, Matthias and Martha (Kauffman), Free Union, VA, first child and son, Neil Hezekiah, Mar. 18, 2005.

Wagler, Jason and Dena (Knepp), Loogootee, IN, first child and son, Kyle Wesley, Feb. 13, 2005.

Weaver, Duane and Ruth (Miller), Waynesboro, VA, fourth child, second dau., Anne Elizabeth, Mar. 5, 2005.

Weaver, Joe and Fern (Schrock), Blackville, SC, seventh child, fifth son, Quinten Adam, Dec. 6, 2004.

Yoder, Ivan and Cindy (Mast), Sugar-creek, OH, second child, first dau., Erica, Jan. 19, 2005.

Yoder, Philip and Marietta (Weaver), Whiteville, TN, sixth child, fourth son, Luke Andre`, Nov. 22, 2004.

Yoder, Carl and Mary Jane (Hostetler), London, OH, seventh child, third dau., Alaina Kate, March 11, 2005.

Yoder, Kenneth and Carol (Kauffman), Arthur, IL, first child and dau., Makala Rose, Mar. 2, 2005.

Yutzy, Matthew and Mary Esther (Schlabach), Plain City, OH, second child, first dau., Rebecca Kay, Feb. 18, 2005.

ordinations

Bro. Julian Nisly, 31, was ordained to the office of minister at Center A.M. Church, March 27, 2005. Bro. Elmer Smucker, Lott, TX, ministered in pre-ordination services.

The charge was given by David Yoder, assisted by Paul L. Miller. Bro. Lowell Miller was also in the lot.

Bro. Joshua Yoder, 28, Clarkson, KY, was ordained to the office of minister on March 20, 2005, at Cedar Springs

Mennonite Church. Preordination messages were brought by Raymond Fisher, Greenville, TN.

The charge was given by Jim Yoder, assisted by David Yoder, Jr. and John Mast. Also in the lot was Henry Yoder.

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

No rules for success will work, if you don't.

obituaries

Helmuth, Fannie (Miller), 83, Whiteville, TN, died Jan. 10, 2005, at Jackson-Madison Co. General Hospital after an illness of ten days with congestive heart failure. She was born Dec. 20, 1921, at Arthur, IL, the daughter of the late Joseph B. and Katie (Schrock) Miller.

She was a member of the Whiteville Mennonite Church

On June 21, 1945, she was married to Eli C. Helmuth. They lived at Kalona, then Leon, Iowa, before moving to Tennessee. He survives. To this union was born one son, Lloyd (L.J.), whose wife is Rose Mary. Five grandchildren and one great grandchild survive.

Also surviving are three sisters: Susie Eicher, IN; Anna Hochstetler, FL; and Elizabeth Kemp, IA; and one brother, Joe Miller, IA.

She was preceded in death by two sisters, Mattie Weaver and Lydia Eicher.

Funeral services were held at Whiteville Mennonite Church with LaVern Eash and John Miller serving. Elmer Mast served in the committal at the church cemetery.

King, Dorothy E., 73, Quarryville, PA, died March 5, 2005, after a lengthy illness. She was born Nov. 27, 1931, daughter of the late Emanuel and Lydia (Stoltzfus) Lapp, in Leacock Twp.

She accepted Christ in her youth and was a member of Weavertown A.M. Church.

She was married to Christian L. King, who preceded her in death. Their children are Wesley and Lois (Martin), Denver; James and Pam (Bashian), Corvallis, MT; Wayne and Brenda (Weaver), Quarryville; Betty (Mrs. Sam A. Stoltzfoos), Kinzers; Barbara (Mrs. John R. Beiler), Quarryville; Saretta (Mrs. Andrew Batdorf), McVeytown. Twelve grandchildren also survive.

Other survivors include one sister, Fannie (Mrs. Elmer Lapp), Ronks; also six step-grandchildren and six step-great grandchildren.

Other close relatives deceased are a sister, Margaret, and a brother, George.

Funeral services were held at Weaver-town Church with David Stoltzfoos and Raymond King serving. Burial was in the adjoining cemetery.

Nisly, Ora Calvin, 89, died March 27, 2005, at his home in rural Hutchinson, KS. He was born near Hutchinson, KS, Oct. 21, 1915, son of the late Abraham F. and Sarah (Miller) Nisly.

He was a devoted member of Cedar Crest A.M. Church, Hutchinson.

On June 12, 1940, he was married to Sadie Beachy. She survives. Also surviving are seven sons: Melvin H. (Clara), Hutchinson; Samuel (Arlene), Hartselle, AL; Earl, (Irene) Nashport, OH; Clifford (Sue) and Calvin (Andrea), both Partridge, KS; Millard "Tim," Haven, KS; seven daughters: Esther (Marlin) Yoder and Beulah Nisly, both Partridge; Alma (David) Hochstetler, Belize City, Belize;

Carol Nisly, Aroda, VA; Grace (Lorne) Kuepfer, Hutchinson; Dorothea Nisly, Leogane, Haiti; and Darlene (Linford) Schrock, Columbus, OH; a brother: Paul W. Nisly, Grantham, PA; four sisters: Mary Miller, Partridge; Dorothy Beachy, Hutchinson; Viola Miller, Flint, MI; Esther Nisly, Abbyville, KS; 49 grandchildren and 45 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a son: Charles; and two sisters: Matilda Nisly and Alma Wagler.

Funeral services were held at Cedar Crest Church on March 31, with Paul L. Miller and Daniel Nisly serving. James Shetler served in the committal at the West Center Cemetery.

Roes, Mattie, 97, died Feb. 16, 2005, at People Care, Stratford, Ontario. She was born April 4, 1907, in Nobles County, Minnesota, daughter of the late Solomon and Mary (Gerber) Jantzi. She was the last surviving member of her family.

She was a member of Fairhaven A. M. Church, Milverton, ON. She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren.

She was married to Isaac Roes, who predeceased her in 1994. She was mother of Ruth and Sam Albrecht, Millbank; Laurene and Arthur Gerber, Melvin and Marietta Roes, both couples of Gadshill; and Erma and Stan Gerber, Brunner. Also surviving are 20 grandchildren and 47 great grandchildren.

Mattie was preceded in death by daughter-in-law, Mary Roes in 1992; by grandchildren

Ronald and Bruce Albrecht in infancy and great grandson, Joel Steckly in infancy; Jonas and first wife, Rachel and second wife, Emma Jantzi; Joseph Jantzi; Ezra and Dora Jantzi; Mary and Nick Jantzi; and brothers-in-law, and sisters-in-law, Eli and Nancy Roes; John and Barbara Roes; Sam and Lena Roes; Nick and Marion Roes; David and Elizabeth Roes; Dan and Barbara Roes; and Lavina Roes.

Funeral service was held on Feb. 19, at Fairhaven A.M. Church. Interment was in the Mornington A.M. Church Cemetery.

Yoder, Orpha, 83, a member of Bethel Fellowship church, and a lifelong resident of Walnut Creek, OH, peacefully died on Jan. 6, 2005, at Walnut Hills Retirement Home, where she had resided for the last six months. She was born Dec. 31, 1921, daughter of the late Eli M. and Sarah (Beachy) Troyer.

She had a happy testimony for the Lord and often would say to whomever she met, "I have had a good life. I am happy and enjoy life, but I am ready to go at any time."

On March 6, 1941, she was married to Jacob A. Yoder. He died Nov. 22, 1979. Orpha is survived by her children: James (Ruth) Yoder, Lewisburg, PA; Edith (Andy) Mullet, Lott, TX; Albert (Marie) Yoder, Abbeville, SC; Edwin (Mary Lou) Yoder, Millersburg, OH; Robert (Cindy) Yoder, Apple Creek, OH; Fran (Ivan) Miller, Millersburg, OH;

Sarah (Vernon) Miller, Sugarcreek, OH; Hannah (Tom) Bitticker, Dover, OH; her 24 grandchildren and her 25 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Jan. 9,

observations

Ron Sider is on the faculty of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written a number of books, including a recent one entitled: *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience*. Earlier, he wrote: *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*.

He is a member of the Brethren in Christ, also the Mennonite Church USA with dual membership.

Sider appeals to the evangelical community to be more engaged and responsible on social issues. His latest book addresses issues of personal morality and marital integrity.

Stan Guthrie interviewed Sider for *Christianity Today*, April, '05. The following selections are gleaned from this interview:

—Evangelical Christians and “born again” Christians get divorced just as often, if not a little more frequently, than the general population.

—Several studies find that physical and sexual abuse in theologically conservative homes is about the same as in the general population.

at Bethel Fellowship, with Bill Mullet and other members of the ministerial team serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

—Materialism continues to be an incredible scandal. The average church member gives about 2.6% of his or her income to the church. This is only slightly more than ¼ of the tithe.

—Average household annual income in the U.S. is reported to be more than \$42,000.

—Too often evangelicals don't live what they're talking about. We have to set our house in order before we can have any integrity or effectiveness in terms of helping the larger society recover wholesome two-parent families. Cheap grace results when we reduce the Gospel to forgiveness of sins only, when we limit salvation to personal fire insurance against hell...when we embrace individualism, materialism and relativism of our current culture. Evangelicals need to get biblical and embrace Jesus as Lord as well as Savior. Salvation is a lot more than just a new right relationship with God through the forgiveness of sins. It's a new, transformed lifestyle that you can

see in the body of believers.

—American individualism is at the core of the problem.

—The evangelical church is dominated by a culture that is radically individualistic. Basic New Testament images of the church are the body of Christ, the people of God and the family of God. Being a member meant you were accountable to one another. Joys and sorrows were shared. There was economic sharing. Church discipline is clearly taught by Jesus in Matthew 18. Paul’s letters to the churches affirm this important principle. Historically, Evangelicals and Anabaptists understood and practiced church discipline when they were strong and thriving.

Sider says; “It’s simply wrong for a local congregation to have no accountability to a larger body...It is flatly unbiblical and heretical for an individual congregation to say, ‘We’ll just be by ourselves and not be accountable to anybody.’” He does see the need for congregations sometimes to sever ties with a larger body that no longer upholds sound teaching and practice. But he strongly feels the “Lone Ranger” mind set is wrong.

Sider finds it “incredibly ironic” that conservative evangelicals and moral issues have factored prominently into the recent national election and yet generally evangelical

practices do not reflect moral integrity. He would remind us that the Lord does not take such hypocrisy and disobedience lightly.



The above gleanings reflect the impressions of Ron Sider about Evangelicals, in general. Let us hope that there are many exceptions to these generalities. I assume that what I write here will not be read by many from the larger church community. *Christianity Today* likely has that audience.

But let us note that we are not immune to the pressures that seem to have caused serious loss of integrity in other circles. Let us be vigilant and prayerful, remembering that God is faithful and His grace is sufficient to those who desire His will above all else. May this also serve to remind us that there are solid reasons for living our lives in fellowship with others who make a conscious effort to choose and practice what is biblical, knowing that it is often out of step with cultural and religious mainstream.



“Mennonite Education: Distinctive Emphases” by Steven Brubaker appeared first in Faith Builders’ newsletter. It was reprinted in the April issue of the *Sword and Trumpet*. The contents strike me as an appropriate complement to the above perspective

by Ron Sider. The article contains an introduction followed by three points of appropriate commentary. It seems only fair to note that it is written more from the perspective of conservative Anabaptists rather than Mennonite mainstream.

Point #1: Mennonite education emphasizes living over thinking. This point is well supported from Anabaptist history, from current context and from the Scriptures. Character is more important than intellectual excellence or formal credentials. But intellectual development should not be despised.

Point #2: Mennonite education emphasizes the community over the individual. Mennonite schools typically put a high value on history and music. Both are logical extensions of the importance of community over the individual. Brubaker warns against the imbalance of emphasis on community over the individual. He notes that this can easily become a deadening form of traditionalism. This quote is attributed to Jaroslav Relikan: "Tradition is the living faith of the dead. Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living."

Point #3: Mennonite education emphasizes a world vision over a national vision. The author offers a number of incidents that clearly illustrate the difference between those whose primary loyalty is to

a political/geographical entity and those whose commitment to the way of Christ is primary.

These comments do not come close to doing justice to what I consider to be an exceptional article. I continue to wonder if many of us have thought through the long-term effects of using school curriculum that seriously compromises our understanding of scriptural practice and that puts a high value and importance on patriotism and earthly citizenship. It occurs to me that if every board member, and every teacher and the patrons of our many church schools were to read Brubaker's article, it could make an important difference.

This article says nothing at all about curriculum. The way of Christ is not always easy, but it is always right.

The article reminds us that to choose to exercise Christian kindness can literally have life-saving benefits. The grace of God that brings salvation is for all people of every nation. Skin color and nationality don't count.


• • • • •

President Bush is quoted to have said, "Every American should be giving two years of his or her life to some humanitarian cause." We cannot in good conscience respond to such a request by enlisting in the military. But does anyone have a con-

science against giving two years of voluntary service in a good cause?

Erich Bridges writing for the *Baptist Press* notes that debts are often a barrier to qualified young people entering the mission field. These can be school debts, home mortgages or car loans. But the greater problem is another kind of debt: Big credit card balances and unsecured loans top the list of financial obligations that keep potential missionaries at

home. Missionary consultant, Jerry De Oliviera says: “We counsel them to tear up their credit cards and pick a plan to pay them off.”

Thanks to Johnnny Stoltzfus for this pertinent information. It is not a bit disquieting when we remember that VS commitments are often for only one year and that some of our VS units have continuing worker shortages? —DLM 

Rising Above Conformity

Author unknown

(Translated by Alfred Porsche from German, “Das Teuflische Diktat”)

Edited by the late Aaron Glick

“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold...” Rom.12:2a, Phillips). Here the Holy Spirit challenges the Christian to refuse to conform to the attitude and behavior of those who know not Christ. In a world of self-seeking, the Christian is to demonstrate a purpose for living that brings honor to Christ.

The following article is evidence that Christians in other countries are aware of Satan’s influence on today’s fashions. —AG

[Reprinted from Calvary Messenger, October, 1970, when fashions were somewhat different from today, but honest, common sense was also in short supply. Sisters, be courageous

enough to avoid the slinky, form-fitting dress styles of today. —PLM]

The Satanic Dictate

As in the day of Noah, so it is today that the influences and effects of demonic powers are frightening. Satan reveals himself especially brutal through today’s fashion, which has long ago ceased to be a means of covering, but a cunning means of uncovering and seduction.

The word *fashion* or *mode* comes from the Latin word *modus* and means:

The rule which determines, according to the taste of the day, hair style, customs, behavior, so that even

a school girl will shed tears when she is ridiculed because she is not fashionable enough.

This “harmless” fashion exposes itself today for what it really is:

A satanic dictate which is accepted by the mass of people which violates the freedom of decision of the individual through psychological pressure, making another choice nearly impossible, also because it manufactures only fashionable dresses.

The satanic direction behind this phenomenon is no longer hidden as it was in times past, since the divine commandments on the dress question have been discarded long ago.

The frightening thing in this development is the fact that this shameless fashion is gaining ground even within congregations of believers. And this is happening in spite of the fact that the will of God clearly demands modesty in clothing and hair style as shown by God’s Word. (Read 1 Cor. 11:3-15; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 Pet. 3:3). In the words of the Bible, the followers of fashion are among those “whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things” (Phil. 3:19).

Let us look now at three principal arguments that are cited in different variations by believing women to dismiss this abominable fashion as “harmless” or “insignificant.” Against these human, foolish arguments we will let God’s Word speak

out, because it alone is as a hammer that breaketh the (fashion) rock. (Jer. 23:29; Heb. 4:12)

Argument 1. (the most frequent): “The outward appearance is not important. The main thing is that Jesus lives in your heart; then everything is in order.”

Answer: “Know ye not that your *bodies* are the members of Christ: shall I...then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid. 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 [i.e., make visible] God in your body...” (1 Cor. 6:15, 19, 20). See also Matt. 5:29; 1 Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 4:10; Phil. 1:20; 3:21.

Argument 2. “We believers stand in *Christian freedom* and are no longer under the law.

Answer: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill” (Matt. 5:17). “Only us not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another” (Gal. 5:13). “As *free* [also of the DICTATES of fashion], and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God” (1 Pet. 2:16).

Argument 3. (the most infamous): “He who sees anything evil in

fashion, especially in short skirts, only betrays thereby his own evil thoughts.”

Answer: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Rom. 7:18). See also Rom. 7:1. “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences...woe to that man by whom offence cometh!” (Matt. 18:6, 7). A commentary on the above from the periodical of the *Evangelical Alliance*, June, 1968, says: “The significant things in the life of faith are always decided in the heart. The outward things are determined by what’s living inside.”

In many cases folks follow the fashions of the day because they do not have the courage to endure the ridicule and sneers of others. It is only a dead fish that will float with the stream.

The long (uncut) hair of women (properly covered) gives testimony before the unseen world (1 Cor. 11:10) and also points to the original glory before The Fall. The present-day fads and hair styles for men and women are dictated by an unregenerate (Satan-dominated) society. Those

who follow these fads obey Satan and serve the creature rather than the Creator. Rom. 1:25b.

The devil uncovers nakedness, still saying, “Ye shall not surely die.” Fallen man’s idea of covering or dress continues to be fig leaves, but the Lord’s will is that man be clothed. “The Lord God made coats of skin and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). This word *clothed*, as used here, implies to *cover* the body.

Believing women and girls need to dress decently. Skirts do not have to touch the ground, but the Word of God demands decent clothing and modest hair style. Often it is enough to make a tight skirt wider and longer. Naked knees and page-boy hair styles are indecent!

Help the young men in their struggle for the purity of their souls and do not continue to contribute to the moral desperation of thousands!

Show also outwardly that you are children of God and not children of the devil! Learn to cut and sew at least to the point where you can make your own skirts or lengthen them!

Be positive in your offense. “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banqueting, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them

to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead” (1 Pet. 4:3-5).

Swim, as live fish, AGAINST the current! Many believing young men, fathers, and even many women, girls, will be grateful to you!

Believing church members, wake

up, finally! Do not keep silence in the presence of satanic dictates of the shameless fashions of the women.

Leave the churches in which naked knees and cropped hair styles are being silently tolerated. We must find the way back to obedience toward God and His Word in matters of dress.



Who Shall We Believe?

Ernest Strubhar

Perkins, OK

If 21st century scientists say that the universe is 13 billion years old, and the Bible indicates it is some 6000 years old, which shall we believe? Don't scientists know more about the universe than Moses knew?

I agree that modern scientists have some advantages, with modern instruments and the accumulation of the knowledge of the ages in their hands. But Moses had some advantages, too. He had no telescope, but he knew the Creator! And that Creator spoke to him! Incidentally, Moses was no ignoramus. He was schooled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians who accomplished things that modern scientists have not yet figured out. [*Consider the pyramids, for instance. —PLM*]

Still, the question is not: Who

knew more—Moses or Einstein?

The question is: Who knows more—the scientist of today or the Creator God of eternity?


I was privileged to attend a Christian high school where the Bible was respected and its authority final. One year we studied the Bible using Williams Evans' *Book of Books* as our text. I still remember a definition of "inspiration" that I was required to memorize for that class: "*Inspiration is that operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the Scripture whereby they were enabled to communicate and record divine truth without any mixture of error.*"

That expresses what Christians have historically believed about the Bible, and what they believe today. And that's just what the Bible says about itself: "Holy men of God

spake as they were moved by the Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21), and: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16). So I am not impressed when Scientist X says the earth is 13 billion years old, nor when Sociologist Y says the marriage of man to a man is as good as the marriage of a man to a woman, nor when five Supreme Court justices rule that a woman has a right to destroy her unborn child.

The Creator God has already spo-

ken about these things. He knows more than any of us—more than all of us put together!

Do you want to talk about humility? Here’s the place to start. Humble your heart to believe the Creator God Who speaks through the Bible. That doesn’t mean that we cannot learn from other sources. We can and should. However, we should not believe anyone who dares to contradict the Creator of the universe! 

Jesse!

Eli J. Yoder

Hutchinson, KS

[A prison worker shares an allegory based on several true incidents. —PLM]

Jesse was the son of Alabama’s governor. Jesse liked Sara, got along well with her and enjoyed her presence. No wonder they were high school sweethearts.

After graduation, Sara started running around with the wrong crowd. She got into drugs and alcohol. Jesse wrote her a letter, pleading with her to consider whether she really wants to go where she seemed to be heading. She thought she was having fun and wouldn’t listen.

Then she shackled up with Chuck, her “druggie” boyfriend. They had wild parties, drove nice cars, and

had a “blast.” But there was little purpose in life for Sara. She tried to find something meaningful, but it seemed to elude her.

One night, after robbing a bank of \$30,000, they thought they were ready to really live it up. Out on a bluff, having a wild time of it, a female officer drove up to investigate and started asking questions. In their compromised condition, they were sure she was there to get them. They resisted. After a shootout that wounded people on both sides, the officer was left lying on the ground, shot through both legs and one shoulder. Boyfriend Chuck said, “Roll her over the cliff; she is the only witness left.”

The officer pled with them, “Please, NO! I have a husband and children!”

Chuck kept hollering, “Push her over! Push her over!” So Sara pushed her over, in spite of her pleadings. Sara couldn’t sleep well for weeks, because she kept seeing those distraught eyes and hearing that pleading voice. Eventually, all of them were caught and sentenced to prison.

After two years of lengthy trials, Sara was condemned to die in the electric chair. Chuck got a life sentence without parole. Sara, sitting in lockup, waited and waited. She had time to think, and did a lot of crying and even some praying. She reached a point of despair.

One day she got a letter from Jesse. “Sara, I still love you and really care about you. Would you be willing to renew our relationship?” he wrote.

Her response was a shrug and a cold shoulder, “Thanks, but no thanks. I’m too far gone. You don’t realize how bad I really am. I can never be forgiven.”

As time went on, she became more and more depressed. Some four years later, an officer came by and read her verdict. All means of appeal had been exhausted. “You will be executed in one year and two days in the electric chair.”

She cried out to God for mercy,

but still was unwilling to repent and blamed Chuck for everything. She got more letters from Jesse, but refused even to open them. “It’s no use, no use.”

One month before execution, she came across Jesse’s letters. In desperation, she finally opened one written some nine weeks earlier. “Dear Sara,” it said, “My dad reviewed your case and in hopes of your favorable response, he would be willing to grant you a full pardon if you would be willing to be my wife and live fully under my headship. You would be pardoned to me. Please do not ignore this plea! You will need to respond to this letter in thirty days, or you will have no chance to be pardoned. Although it has already been signed, you alone make the decision by what you do with this offer. All the things you have done are covered in the list of offenses and in the offer for pardon. All the things you kept secret for many years, all these have been exposed. You must bring them all. You will need to bring everything and throw them in the fire at the foot of the Cross of Calvary in our front yard. You will be pardoned by me, be under my jurisdiction, and may even be under house arrest for a time. If you are sincere, we can be married and live in wedded bliss, with me leading our household. I am very much looking forward to

this. Please respond right away! My dad has set the deadline. I have done the pleading, but you alone can make the move. The ‘ball is in your court.’ My dad is a very patient man, but he cannot be pushed. I am the answer for the meaning in life you have been looking for. With all my love, Jesse.”

After reading the letter, Sara realized she had missed the deadline. She

knew she would die in the electric chair, in spite of the pardon signed for her. But she had put off the decision too long. And her scream of, “I’m too late! Too late!” rang through the whole prison.

“...the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...’” (Hebrews 3:7, 8 NKJV).



Beware of Covetousness

Ervin N. Hershberger (1914-2003)

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Chapter Two

Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).

In chapter one, we looked at Jesus’ warning that we should beware of false prophets. In this chapter we examine our own hearts and beware of the evils Jesus described as springing up from within us.

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts,

covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23).

The thirteen evils listed all spring “out of the heart of men.” Jesus, as God the Son, was confirming what God the Father had said in the days of Noah:

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

“For the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Genesis 8:21b).

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

The basic problem is our unregenerate nature, with its natural tendency toward the subversive powers of greed. We need the grace of God to discern properly between right and wrong, and especially to reject and to flee from everything that is not for the glory of God.

Covetousness is listed among the vilest of sins, as an evil that must be put to death.

“Mortify [put to death] therefore... fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience” (Colossians 3:5, 6).

“For the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10).

Covetousness has a subtle way of competing with Christ for priority. We seem to have an inborn craving for more than our share of whatever we desire, and even for things that rightly belong to someone else. We can covet money, position, promotion, honor, fame, popularity, praise, and anything else that a human ego could desire. Covetousness is a tragic craving that seldom is fully satisfied. Its antonyms, “liberality,” “benevolence,” and “generosity” produce far more happiness at every level than covetousness does at any level.

Covetousness is named in Paul’s list of twenty-two sins, of which he

concludes that they which commit such things are worthy of death. (Romans 1:29-32) He says the downward plunge began “because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.” (Romans 1:21) What a tragic end to the path of ingratitude!

We all know that covetousness is sin. It is a miserable attribute by which to live and a tragic condition in which to die. Yet, have you ever heard of a church disciplining a member for covetousness? How often have you heard anyone confess it as a personal sin? This does not mean there are no covetous church members. The fact that Jesus felt the need to warn us suggests otherwise. Perhaps it indicates that covetousness is so deeply hidden in the secret chambers of the heart that it is hard to identify—and even harder to confess.

Covetousness is a sin that thrives under camouflage. The rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-27 was guilty of it and never suspected his sin until Jesus turned the spotlight on it. If he did not have it, it surely had him, and it seriously threatened his salvation. In fact, anyone who has not learned the grace of contentment probably is infected already with covetousness.

Unfortunately, covetousness is most common among people who have more of this world’s goods than

they need or can use wisely. We have heard wealthy people boast that they neither lend nor borrow. They glory in their independence, unaware that the sin of covetousness may be the determining factor in their choice of such independence.

The basic secret of survival among poverty-stricken people is sharing with one another. Poverty motivated the Macedonian churches to give liberally!

“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints [at Jerusalem]. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God” (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

Deep poverty had freed these Macedonian Christians from covetousness. It had cured them of many selfish thoughts, and motivated them to give most liberally. Paul and his companions were not taking offerings for themselves, but for needy Christians at Jerusalem. They were

amazed by how the Macedonian churches so willingly gave. “Yea, and beyond their power they were willing,” literally begging Paul and his companions to accept it all. Their own economic struggles had made them very sensitive to the needs of others, causing their liberality to flourish.

In Mark 12:41, 42, Jesus observed many that were casting in much; however, the poor widow gave all that she had.

“And he [Jesus] called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living” (Mark 12:43, 44).

Men counted the money, but Jesus considered the motive. The rich gave some of their surplus, expecting to be admired. The widow gave “all her living,” trusting God as the source of life and sustenance. Jesus, seeing it from God’s perspective, valued her contribution more than the lavish abundance given by the rich.

One of the most solemn warnings against the sin of covetousness is the fall of Judas Iscariot. He was one of Jesus’ twelve Apostles, the one they trusted with the money they shared in common. His access to the bag

got the best of him, reducing him to a thief, making him willing to sell his Savior for thirty pieces of silver. Jesus said sadly, “Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!

It had been good for that man if he had not been born” (Matthew 26:24). Eternal loss is a horrible price to pay for temporal gain.

Beware of covetousness!



Avoiding Person Discrimination

(A study of James 2:1-13)

Harold S. Martin

Lititz, PA

The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it is the highest of all goals. Our aim in this study is to gain additional insights for practical instruction and spiritual direction based on the opening verses of James 2.

To master any book of the Bible, we must read it continuously and repeatedly for some time. We hope each of our readers is doing that. Be sure now to read the first thirteen verses of the second chapter of James, and keep your Bible open to that passage.

The book of James is concerned especially with conduct and with behavior. One of the few “theological” concepts which James treats is the doctrine of faith. God (through James) speaks of the **testing** of faith in chapter 1 (1:3); of the **works** of faith in chapter 2 (2:18); and of the **prayer** of faith in chapter 5 (5:15).

James indicates in chapter 2 (verse 1) that true faith centers in Jesus Christ and that real faith avoids showing partiality toward persons.

1. Partiality is Inconsistent with Faith in Christ (2:1-4)

James begins his discussion of partiality by stating a prohibition: “Don’t show favoritism.” Verse 1 says, “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.” A more clear and smooth-reading statement of the thought would be: “My brethren, do not try to combine faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, with acts of partiality toward persons.” To have “respect of persons” is sin (verse 9).

To respect the rich and despise the poor is inconsistent for the Christian, because the Christ whom we serve was Himself so poor that He had no place to lay His head.

He came from a despised city.

“Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

He grew up in a humble home. Some were embarrassed that He was merely “the carpenter’s son.”

He lived in a simple family setting. His parents could only offer turtledoves at His presentation as a babe in the temple.

Yet He was given an exalted and reverent title as “The Lord of Glory!” This phrase reflects the Hebrew Shekinah, the glorious manifestation of God’s presence with His people. Jesus Christ is described as “the brightness of God’s glory” (Heb. 1:3). The essence of what James is saying is, “Do not try to combine faith in our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ, with acts of partiality.” It is grossly inconsistent to allow favoritism and discrimination, and at the same time be associated by faith with such an exalted person as the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are given an illustration of this truth in verses 2-3: “For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool...”

Imagine the setting. These early

Christians were gathered in assembly, perhaps in an old synagogue or in one of the believer’s homes, and a door opens. A well-dressed man enters. The ushers notice his hands loaded with rings (the Greek word is plural), and because he is a man of wealth and status, he is ushered to a good seat and shown great respect. Again the door opens. This time it is a man in shabby clothes. His very appearance indicates that he is a poor man. An usher at the door tells him that he can either stand at some out-of-the-way spot, or that he may sit on the floor if he wishes.

Neither of the two visitors was a Christian. Contrast the word “man,” (verse 2) with the word “brother” (verse 15). Non-Christians sometimes attended Christian assemblies. (1 Corinthians 14:22-23) Note that the man with gold rings was not “a brother.” The early Christians did not wear jewelry. They obeyed the inspired apostolic teaching not to adorn the body with gold and pearls and costly array (1 Timothy 2:9), but they did sometimes show wrong attitudes toward other people.

It is true that those of the same trade tend to associate more freely together, for example, a farmer with another farmer, and that those in a particular age group will tend to have closer ties with others of the same age group. These kinds of groupings

are common and acceptable, but to show favoritism on the basis of wealth or race or status, is a dangerous thing. The lesson here in James 2 is that just because a man is dressed well, does not mean he should have a special place in our assemblies. Neither should we offer the poor a lesser place.

The partiality shown to the two visiting men, in verses 2 and 3, indicated a deep hypocrisy. Verse 4 says, “Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?” The Christians were assembled to worship God, but by showing respect to the rich man, they indicated a desire to honor riches. Jesus said that we cannot serve God and mammon; that is, we cannot worship God and honor riches at the same time.

The phrase in verse 4 to “become judges of evil thoughts” more literally says “judges **with** evil thoughts.” (The gender in Greek is genitive of quality.) To show favoritism toward the rich is inconsistent with faith in Christ, for He tended to identify more readily with the poor. To look with favor upon the wealthy and to shun the poor is indeed a very grave sin. We need to learn from this Bible example.

2. Partiality is Contrary to the Purpose of God (2:5-7)

An argument against favoritism is given in verse 5: “Hearken, my

beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” The poor are the special objects of God’s concern. Discrimination against the poor is an affront to God, and such conduct defies His will.

Verse 5 does not mean that God’s choice has been limited to the poor, nor that because one is poor he is automatically saved. James does not say that **all** poor people are “rich in faith.” Nor does James exclude the rich from the ranks of the saved. There is no special merit inherent in poverty. Some of our Lord’s faithful followers were well-to-do. But generally speaking, the poor have been more open to the Gospel, and have more readily received its blessings. God loves the poor, and many have become heirs of His kingdom. But James was inspired by God to write to his readers and say, “You have dishonored the poor.”

In sharp contrast to God’s choice of the poor (verse 5), is the way James’ readers had been treating them. Verses 6-7 says: “But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?” Why should the believers cater to the rich, when it is

the wealthy, not the poor, who for the most part, are their enemies and persecutors, and who blaspheme God, and who think they can get along without Him? James says, “The rich whom you favor, are the people who drag you into the courts of law:

It was the rich Saducees who laid hands on Peter and John (Acts 4:1-3).

It was “the chief men” of Antioch who stirred up the people to persecute Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:50).

The rich often bring disrepute upon the name of Jesus Christ. They live in luxury; they spend endless money to have everything their hearts desire; they usually are slow to accept the message of the Gospel. James points out, “The rich are the ones who are exploiting you, are they not?” It is simply out of keeping with the purpose of God that we show favoritism toward the wealthy of this world. The Lord has a good purpose for all persons, regardless of social status, and we must avoid discriminating against one person and showing favoritism toward another.

3. Partiality is a Violation of the Royal Law (2:8-13)

For the Christian, **one law** controls our treatment of all persons—the law of love. It is called the “royal law” because it is the supreme law to which all other laws governing human relationships are subordinate.

Verse 8 says, “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.”

The “royal law” (Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself) is, in a sense, the king of all laws. It spells out in a few concise words the sum and essence of the whole second table of the Ten Commandments. Paul enumerates many of the Ten Commandments in Romans 13:9, and then says, “And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” And if we really love our neighbor, we will not do him harm. We will not deprive him of his wife (adultery), nor his life (killing), nor his property (stealing), nor his good name (bearing false witness). To love another is to fulfill the law because one who loves is really keeping all the law.

Verse 9 says, “But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” Being partial toward people is not just a breach of good manners! It is sin.

One who is partial toward the rich, stands convicted as a lawbreaker. Yet in many churches today, we find a tendency toward showing leniency toward the prominent. These are often the ones elected to offices and assigned responsibilities. One who is potentially a good financial giver is

catered to because of his wealth. He is placed on boards and committees, not because of his spirituality, but because of his ability to give. When our Lord chose men, for the most part, He chose men who were limited in this world's goods.

In verses 10-11, James explains how an act of favoritism makes a person a lawbreaker. To violate the Law at any one point is not to violate that one commandment only. The Law is essentially one unit, and when one commandment is broken, the entire law of God has been flouted. James says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."

The Jews often looked upon the Mosaic Law as being made of many detailed requirements, and they believed that strict obedience in one part made up for only partial compliance in another part. James says that such an idea is a false philosophy. One does not have to disobey every law in order to become a lawbreaker. If I steal money from my boss, I'm guilty. I can't plead "not guilty" just because I have never committed a murder.

Verse 10 does not mean, however, that one sin is as bad as another sin.

James is not dealing with the extent and degree of sin, but with its reality. Some sins are obviously more wicked in the sight of God than others are. The Stoics of the first century used to say that the theft of a penny was just as bad as killing one's parents. But obviously, an isolated failure to show kindness is not worthy of the same punishment as is willful, deliberate murder. Those in Thessalonica who refused to work were guilty of disobedience to God. They sinned, but they were simply not to eat. Those in Corinth who practiced gross immorality (living immorally with a step-mother) were to be excommunicated from the church and placed into the realm of Satan. Thus to break one law makes a person a lawbreaker and to show partiality is to break the law of God.

We are instructed in verses 12-13: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." The "law of liberty" is a reference to the Gospel, as it stands in contrast to the Law of Moses. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are justified (set free from the penalty of sin), and thus one who responds to the gospel message is freed from slavery to Satan and is liberated from sin's guilt. And so the Gospel

is certainly a law of liberty.

To “show mercy” is to show kindness in excess of what may be rightfully expected of us. Someone has transgressed against us and we are in a position to get even with that person. What should we do? We should strive to return good for evil. That is mercy.

James says that when we fail to show compassion on our fellowmen, we prove ourselves to be utterly destitute of Christian character. And more than that, if we fail to show mercy toward others, no mercy will be shown toward us in the day of judgment. Yet there were some in the early church, who, instead of showing mercy toward the man dressed in shabby clothes, were practicing cruel discrimination.

The point of the first thirteen verses in the second chapter of James, then, is that no distinction must be made between people who are prominent and those who are not so prominent. There is, of course, a place for social differences. There are people who show no desire to rise above their present level of achievement or station. They care nothing for accomplishment or success. They live month after month without any attempt to improve their condition. But social differences, even though they sometimes exist by people’s own choices, do not give us a right

to show favoritism.

Jesus was anointed to “preach to the poor” (Luke 4:18). He said to His followers, “When thou makest a feast, call the poor” (Luke 14:13). On another occasion, He said, “Distribute to the poor” (Luke 18:22). It is not that we should favor the poor and ignore the rich; it is just that when a person has a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, he will show equal love and sympathy toward both!

The world’s standards of values are far different from God’s. The world makes heroes out of people of wealth and fame. The Bible condemns such adulation.

There are some people without money who are actually rich! One can be rich in family associations, rich in the kinds of friends he has, rich in physical strength, and rich in intellectual gifts. Others who are wealthy, from a human standpoint, are very poor. Sometimes when we go into a rich person’s home, we can feel the tension there. It doesn’t take long to become aware of jealousy or pride or arrogance that exists in such a home. The important thing in our lesson is that we don’t show favoritism to either category of people. God does not condemn persons for being rich; neither does he put a premium on being poor. The rags of the poor man do not draw him toward Heaven, neither do the robes of the rich man

draw him toward Hell.

Preachers need to be careful about the matter of favoritism. Not too many preachers are like John the Baptist. He didn't "cut any corners," neither did he play any favorites. He reproved King Herod for his divorce and remarriage, even though it eventually cost him his life. He called the insincere multitudes of his day "a generation of vipers" (Luke 3:7).

Daniel Webster often attended a small country church in his home community. When questioned about this practice, Webster said, "The

preacher in Washington, D. C. preaches to Daniel Webster, the statesman; the preacher back home preaches to Daniel Webster, the sinner." And Mr. Webster was wise enough to appreciate the truth about himself.

May God help all of us to hold an equal regard for men, women, and children—regardless of their social status. May He help us to see each person as a soul for whom Christ died.


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The Lamp

Shirley A. Lebold

Millbank, ON

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

May my lamp shine bright in this cold, evil world,
That Jesus my Savior's love thus be unfurled.
The wick, is it trimmed straight and true?
The flame, is it burning too high or too low?
A steady, true beam that keeps shining from me,
An example for others, dear God, would I be.
Make my lamp's crystal chimney clean and bright
So all can see the true glow of Your light.
And oil of gladness must never burn low.
To Jesus for fresh, new, clean oil I must go
Each morning I check my lamp out again.
To see that it hasn't become smoky and dim.
For my light comes through Christ Jesus alone,
Who died on the cross our sins to atone. 

Tribute to Mother

Mary June Glick

Mother's Day is a special day set aside to pay tribute to mothers. Even though we should respect our mothers every day, it is right to have one day when we verbalize our love and care for them.

Each of us has a mother. There are people who have no memory of their mother, either because of death or because of adoption. If they are given up for adoption, many times they still have a mother who accepts and loves them.

Surely every language has a name for mother. What does it mean to be a mother?

A Mother is a Life-giver

In the Garden of Eden, God told Eve that in sorrow in intense pain and suffering she would bring forth children. Childbirth is actually a "valley of death." We are less conscious of this today because of advanced medical technology, but in the past it was *not* unusual for a mother to die in childbirth. Yet along with the pain comes the unspeakable joy of having a baby placed in her arms.

A Mother is a Care-giver

Many mothers have sacrificed

for the sake of their children. God planned that His Son would need a human mother to care for His physical needs and also to nurture Him emotionally. A mother's job is 24 hours, around the clock. She is *always* on call. The newborn baby needs to be fed (which ordinarily only a mother can provide), to be kept clean and warm, to be rocked and loved. As the child grows older, Mom needs to be there to kiss the hurts and wipe away the tears. A mother must care for the physical needs of providing food, clean clothes, a home and security.


A Mother is a Servant

A mother will go without food so her child has enough. She will use the chipped plate and give the child the perfect one. She foregoes new clothes so her child can be well-dressed. A mother chooses to be there when the child comes home from school even if it interferes with her plans; she gives up her own desires and plans to meet the needs of the child. It's a never-ending process. Even as grandmothers, we *gladly* change our plans for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

What do we owe our mothers this Mother's Day?

1. Our love and appreciation.
2. A visit, if it's possible. If we're too far away, let's call them on the telephone and let them know we are thinking about them.
3. A card or letter. Let's not just sign the card, but add a few words of appreciation. Better yet, let's write a letter expressing our love.
4. Flowers or gifts. We may not know *what* to buy, but potted plants or hanging baskets are usually appreciated, because most women enjoy flowers.

5. An invitation for Sunday dinner. One of my *best* Mother's Days was when we were invited to our son's house for dinner. I knew the granddaughters were especially excited. They gave me a big box with a note telling me that they had saved their pennies in a jar and Mommy had baked pies to sell to buy me this special surprise. Inside was a doll which I had admired with them. They had bought it for me instead of themselves. I will *always* treasure that special gift!

Give Mom roses while she's living; don't wait until she's gone. 

junior messages

Silas' Version

*Jean Yoder, age 15
Hutchinson, KS*

“Well, Paul, it looks like we're in for it again,” I said.

The multitude around us yelled. Paul had cast an unclean spirit from a girl, and her masters hauled us to the marketplace and complained to the rulers. The magistrates tore off our clothes and commanded the people to beat us, which they proceeded to do with vigor.

I was glad that Luke and Timothy,

at least, got away. Timothy was learning about these hardships, but it seemed almost overwhelming to have them thrust on him all at once. As for Paul and myself, we were getting used to it, if that's possible.

Two large, unkempt men got ahold of me and dragged me toward the jail. To my right, I saw Paul also being manhandled. The cobblestone streets felt especially rough after my beating.

“Jailer, here are some trouble-making Jews for ‘the hole,’” the magistrate bellowed. “See that they stay where they belong!”

The jailer, a smallish man with a straggly beard, thrust us at sword’s point into the innermost chamber and locked our feet in the stocks. He hastened out. I could see why.

Paul and I leaned against the mildewed wall and tried to sleep so our aching backs and empty stomachs would not disturb us for a while. It did not work. We just endured it the best we could for a number of hours.

After the second watch, Paul bowed his head and began to pray. I followed suit. Before long, I felt a little better and began to sing. Paul joined in. Instead of protesting that we kept them from sleep, the other prisoners listened.

Suddenly, the foundations of the prison began shaking. The doors flew open. Our stocks were loosened and the rest of the prisoners called out that their bands were open.

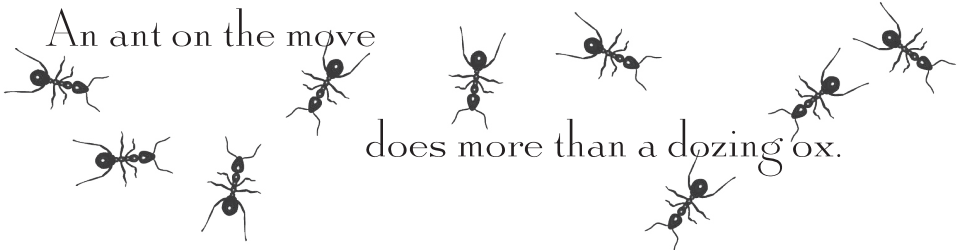
The noise awakened the jailer, who saw the doors were open, knowing he would likely be killed if we got away. He was about to fall on his sword, when Paul stopped him by calling, “Do thyself no harm, for we are all here!”

“Bring me a light!” the jailer called. Just then his son ran out of the house, bearing a lamp. The jailer took it, and, wonder of wonders, brought us out and fell at our feet, asking, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

We answered with joy, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” So we preached the Word to him and his family. He washed our wounds. He and his family all said that they believed on Jesus Christ. So we baptized them.

The family gave us some of their food, and we rejoiced greatly.

When it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants to let us go, but sorry, my friends, the rest of the story must wait for another time.



WORKER OPPORTUNITIES

at Mountain View Nursing Home

<Christian Care for the Aged>



- Nurse Aides—2 in June; 2 in August
- Orderlies—1 in June; 1 in August
- Kitchen—1 in May; 1 in August
- Floater—1 in May
- Construction Volunteers Needed!

To keep our costs down and funds flowing to the mission units, we would appreciate your help. Call to schedule a time you could assist in this project. Below is a projected schedule for the construction of the new wing:

May 9-June 4: Framing and Setting Trusses

June 6-18: Roof Work

June 20-July 2: Siding, Brick, Interior Framing

PLEASE CONTACT MARK WEBB AT: 1776 Elly Road . Aroda, VA 22709

Phone: 540. 948. 6831 · E-mail: Markwebb4@juno.com

Voluntary Service Opportunities AT HILLCREST HOME

"...who then is willing to consecrate
his service this day to the Lord?" (1 Chronicles 29:5b)



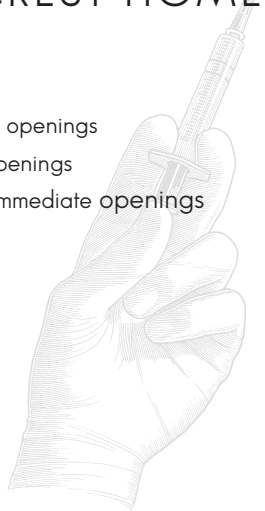
- Nurse Aides - Immediate and future openings
- Orderlies - Immediate and future openings
- Kitchen Workers (Ladies or Men) - Immediate openings
- Janitors - Immediate openings
- Floaters - Immediate openings

PLEASE CONTACT:

Jason Miller or Phil Yoder at: 870. 741. 5001 (any time)

Hillcrest Home . 1111 Maplewood Road . Harrison, AR 72601

E-mail: goyetherefore@characterlink.net



THOUGHT GEMS

Sarcasm is the humor of contempt.



In the last analysis, what we ARE communicates far more eloquently than anything we SAY.



If you stand straight, do not fear a crooked shadow.



Life does not require us to excel; it only asks that we do our best with each opportunity.



Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door.



None are more unjust in their judgments of others than those who have a high opinion of themselves.



Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it foregoes revenge and dares to forgive—without being asked to—an injury.



Discontentment is something that follows selfish ambition like a shadow.

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