



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 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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More of Thee

Darlene Miller

Linn, MO



Let me, dear God, but glorify Thy name,
Naught to pursue for sake of earthly fame.
Naught to desire that brings reproach or shame...
More of Thee, less of me.

Let me not, Lord, tear down where You would build,
Not my own will to seek, but what You've willed;
Never cease until it be fulfilled...
More of Thee, less of me.

Let me not seek for treasures that decay,
Pleasures of earth that soon will pass away,
But laying up against that perfect day...
More of Thee, less of me.

Let me not fear when men criticize,
When for Thy kingdom's sake I am despised,
Help me to keep my eyes upon the prize...
More of Thee, less of me.

Then let me, Lord, when death has dealt its hand,
When by Thy grace I've reached that better land,
Know then, as I before Thee stand...

ALL of Thee, NONE of me!



Dentist or Tax Man?

This morning's *Hutchinson News*, (4-12), publishes a comparison of people's dread of going to a tax preparer with going to the dentist. People often quail at both prospects. We shall not here consider the dread of a visit to the dentist.

What about paying taxes? Why is tax time so unwelcome? Here are four possible reasons:

1. Poor records

The feeling that we may not have recorded the details necessary to give a full and honest account is not comfortable.

2. Overspending

Without good foresight, hardship hovers over tax time.

3. Dishonesty

When the commitment to "provide things honest in the sight of all men" is weak, we will easily say, "What 'Uncle Sam' doesn't know, won't hurt him." But we must still give account to God. That fact ought to make an important difference. What a dreadful prospect it is to think that some day we will stand before the great Judge of all the earth, with His holy angels looking on and there have all such deviousness exposed!

4. Owners versus stewards


When I think that what I have is mine, I take ownership to a degree that goes beyond God's design. He invites me to partnership and stewardship, but not to full ownership. David observed, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). Thus when Caesar requires taxes that I find burdensome and excessive, I can rightly commit the situation to God with this attitude: "God, You know what I'm facing. Since You don't require me to bring correction upon civil powers, I will do what You have commanded me to do—pay my taxes cheerfully. In fact, I consider payment of taxes a reasonable fee for the many freedoms in this land. Thank You for the privilege of doing so."

A Better Way

Complaining about taxes can help us fit in with our neighbors, but it neither honors God nor those in government whom God allows to rule over us. If Peter spoke by divine inspiration in his epistles—and I rest assured that he did—I invite you to note select thoughts from his first epistle: "Submit yourselves to ev-

ery ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," (2:13a); "Honour the king," (2:17d); "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing," (3:17).

The Apostle Paul stated these ideals succinctly: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another" (Romans 13:7, 8a).

When we travel, I'm sure we all appreciate the wonderful highway system in this country. In many other ways, we have benefits derived from taxes. Let us start an epidemic of cheerfulness at tax time. It may temporarily cause people to think we have lost our minds, but they'll likely recover from the shock. Who knows, some may even leave the dirge of complaint and join the chorus of gratitude? —PLM 

Forgiven and Forgotten

Marietta Miller


East Waterford, PA

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"
(Hebrews 8:12).

O Heavenly Father, up above,
With open arms and heart of love
You sent Your precious Son for me,
Who shed His precious life-blood
free.

By dying there upon the tree
He cleared and wiped my record
free.
And after all, these sins He bore.
He promised to remember no more.

A boundless Love, so rich and full,
You brought me peace within my
soul;
I'll live for You, your praises sing,
But yet I ask just one more thing.

Help me, while living here below,
To ever treat my brothers so.
When I've wronged, I pray, Lord
let
Me remember Your love, forgive
and forget. 

reader response

Two books about helping those with depression are these:

1. *When Someone You Love is Depressed, (How to help your loved one without losing yourself)*, by Laura Epstein Rosen, Ph. D., and Xavier Francisco Amador, Ph. D.

2. *How You Can Survive When They're Depressed (Living and Coping with Depression Fallout)*, by Anne Sheffield.

Neither of these books is written from a Christian perspective, however, I believe both could be helpful for those who care for someone who is depressed.

Carol Schmucker
Hutchinson, KS

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April 2, 2005

Dear Brother Paul,

This is being written from Kiev, Ukraine, where my wife and I and part of the family are presently serving under Masters International

Ministries, headquartered in Wellesley, Ontario.

When one is far from hearth and home, you can really feel disconnected from your roots. Then *Calvary Messenger* arrives. It is devoured right away, while at home it can be easily laid aside for later. I was particularly impressed to see an article in the February issue (p. 23) by Dennis Kinlaw. I do not know him personally, but I have friends who do. I have his daily devotional book, entitled *This Day with the Master*. He is, in my humble opinion, a great Arminian theologian. So it was gratifying to see him in print.

Since we are overseas, we are unable to attend the annual ministers' meetings this year, but pray a blessing on all you who are there.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Miller

Maranatha Fellowship,
Sugar creek, Ohio

Presently: Kiev Evangelical
Mennonite Church, Ukraine 

When in doubt, ask.

When not in doubt, ask.



Beware of Neglect

Ervin N. Hershberger (1914-2003)

Taken from God's Wake-up Call, copyright 2004, Vision Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box 190, Harrisonburg, VA 22803 Phone: 540-437-1967. Used by permission.

Chapter Three

“**T**herefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?” (Hebrews 2:1-4).

This is the first of six solemn warnings in the book of Hebrews. This warning against neglect begins appropriately with *therefore*, the *wherefore* of which is found in the first chapter of Hebrews. This chapter introduces Christ as our Savior, who came to earth to redeem man-

kind from their fallen condition. To neglect His gracious invitation, letting those precious opportunities slip by, closes the door to salvation.

The Hebrew people to whom this epistle was addressed gloried in Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. The writer to the Hebrews needed to convince them that these great men in whom they trusted were God's messengers pointing them to Jesus Christ as the only means to salvation.

“Abraham believed God, and it [his faith] was counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23). Moses plainly taught, “the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet [namely, Jesus Christ] from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken” (Deuteronomy 18:15).

These men of God were made great by their unwavering faith in the coming Messiah. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he [Jesus] expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27).

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:1-3).

These three verses name eight things that make Christ superior to all others:

- He is God’s Son.
- He is heir of all things.
- He made the worlds.
- He is the brightness of God’s glory.
- He is the express image of God.
- He upholds all things by His powerful Word.
- He purged our sins.
- He sat down on the right hand of God.

Besides the Holy Trinity, not one being in heaven or on earth can claim any one of these eight superlatives.

The writer continues, showing that Jesus not only surpasses great men on earth, but that He also is superior to the greatest and most holy angels of heaven.

“Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than

they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth the firstbegotten unto the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him:” (Hebrews 1:4-6).

True worship is directed strictly to Deity. “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10b; Luke 4:8b). The title “Lord God” obviously includes the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).

And God commanded all the holy angels to worship that same Jesus. (Philippians 2:9-11) His deity is most thoroughly confirmed throughout the Word of God.

These are the foundational truths to which “we ought to give the more earnest heed,...lest at any time we should let them slip” (Hebrews 2:1). That foundation will not slip, but to let go of these basic facts is to slip from the foundation. The writer of Hebrews was deeply concerned for the salvation of his own people. He knew the fatality of not knowing Jesus. (Acts 9:1-5). All through chapter one he continues, finally quoting

from the Psalms to prove that the Hebrew psalmists recognized the promised Christ as preeminent over all men and all angels.

“7. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. 8. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. 10. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 13. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Hebrews 1:7-14).

You will find that verses 8 and 9 quote Psalm 45:6, 7, and that verses 10 and 12 quote Psalm 102:25-27. The word “and” at the beginning of

verse 10 links the second passage to the beginning of verse 8, affirming that both passages had been said “unto the Son.” The latter part of verse 12 is applied specifically to Jesus in Hebrews 13:8. Hebrews 1:13 is a repeat of Psalm 110:1, and the roots for verse 14 spring from Psalm 103:20, 21.

The Psalms, written by Hebrew writers, were used as the nation’s hymnal. Many people, however, failed to grasp the prophetic praises of Christ’s future glory that the Psalms plainly foretold. God provided the Epistle

to the Hebrews to convince unbelieving Jews that David and other psalmists whom they admired actually had proclaimed Christ long before He came in the flesh.

God, in His goodness, has provided perfect and full salvation for all who by faith receive Christ, and who abide in Him to the end.

“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off” (Romans 11:22).

To neglect so great a salvation leads to a tragedy from which there is no escape.

Neglect, according to Strong’s

Truth does not damage
a cause that is just.

Concordance, means “to be careless of: make light of.” Neglect can happen without effort, without thinking, and without our notice. Satan, the master deceiver, delights to keep our mind occupied with the cares and pleasures of this world. He cares not whether it be something good or bad, as long as it distracts us from focusing on things eternal. God, who made us for eternity, has carefully planned a great salvation that we cannot afford to neglect.

Salvation definitely requires a divine Savior! Every human stain must be washed clean by the sinless blood of Christ. The blood that Christ shed for us on Calvary is sufficient to save the worst of sinners who lay hold on Him by simple, trusting faith. “But without faith it is impossible to please him,” (Hebrews 11:6) or to obtain salvation by any other means. Neither Noah, Job, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, nor any other person ever was or ever will be saved except by faith in that great salvation through the blood of Christ. (Acts 4:12)

Redemption is God’s work of grace through our Savior Jesus Christ, and “we have access by faith into this grace.” We are purified by faith, sanctified by faith, justified by faith, stand by faith, walk by faith, and shall live by faith. In fact, “the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus

Christ might be given to them that believe” (Galatians 3:22).

Salvation is profoundly simple yet simply profound! It is not an accomplishment that the most able might attain by self-effort, but a gift of grace that anyone may obtain by a simple, sincere, childlike faith in Christ. Yet the vast majority plunge to eternal doom simply because they neglect, ignore, or esteem lightly the great salvation that God so freely offers. When such neglect continues until death, there is no escape.

To faithful believers the promise remains: “As we have therefore borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Corinthians 15:49).

“Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:51-55).

“But thanks be to God, which

giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as

ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:57-58).

Beware of neglect. Tomorrow may be too late.



the bottom line

Another Anabaptist Reconciliation Conference

*Aaron Lapp
Kinzers, PA*

Part One

Usually my gathering of information and doing analysis is like a funnel. Impressions and experience narrow down to some comfortable conclusions and neat, pat answers. Participating in this conference was not like that. It seemed more like a fast flow from a faucet that spread out in a shower too broad to contain. And underneath this dome of experience, I was trying to catch everything in my bucket which seemed too small for the downpour.

My title says “another” because some reconciliation meetings were initiated by the aged man, Geri Keller, a Swiss pastor in the Reformed church. In 2004, “Amish” bishop, Ben Girod, hosted a small gathering of representatives at his home area at Libby, Montana, where representatives from the Swiss

Reformed and Amish groups met. Also in 2004, Peter Detweiler invited interested Anabaptists to a meeting in Zurich, Switzerland. Peter is the executive secretary of the State Reformed Church. Zurich is his home city. But Peter actually came on his own, not supported by his organizational peers.

Officially the conference was called “Unlocking our Inheritance,” *An Anabaptist Reconciliation and Healing Conference*. Some fancy titles promise more than they deliver. This one seemed to pull out all the stops. My heart was warmed. My mind was filled. My praise to God was drawn upward. My spirit was excited. My meditation circuits went into overload, “tripping the breakers.”

It was held at the Petra Christian Fellowship near New Holland, PA,

seven miles from our home. This congregation ties in organizationally with the Hopewell network of churches. They have 14 congregations and 1200 members in eastern Pennsylvania. Their pastor, Lester Zimmerman, told me they are not Mennonite, but are Anabaptist. Since there seem to be Amish who are non-Amish, and Beachys who are non-Beachy, perhaps non-Mennonite charismatics can be Anabaptist. But who's who and what's what, I should probably leave to someone else.

It began Thursday evening, followed by morning, afternoon, and evening sessions on both Friday and Saturday, April 7, 8, and 9. The program was put together by members from Petra and some from Lancaster Mennonite Conference. That fact drew some visible protest nearby.

Just beyond the church property boundary was a large rented sign on wheels stating "Beware that you be not deceived. Matt. 24:4" The other side was also a warning obviously aimed at attendees. Between sessions I walked over to the lady stationed there who occupied a table and chair. Two teenage "Anabaptist" girls and a middle-aged man were there to do some "witnessing" in their style. The girls had many things to say in a non-Anabaptist way—too confrontational, too strong, too condemning.

When I had a chance to ask this protester lady about the concern, she said she feels the Swiss Reformers are here for the wrong purpose and will take us down the wrong road. Why would we want to join up with these who erred so seriously in the past? She also had a problem with the reconciliation conference being run by individuals rather than by the church conference.

Some attendees were local Amish at the New Holland meeting, in April, 2005. A van load from Libby, Montana, and Bonners Ferry, Idaho, were present. Ben Girod was among them and others of their church leaders. They dressed as Amishmen, but having approved ownership of cars several years ago has probably put them in a different class. Ben Girod and Robert Mast both spoke publicly. Their low-key Amish style of speaking contrasted rather interestingly with their charismatic tendencies in the pew. I happened to sit in their section and tried to discern whether their standing to heighten their applause (as did many others) was fake or genuine. I eventually decided it was from genuine feelings of praise and gladness in the Lord.

I saw four Beachy men in attendance, none of which attended every session. I was absent Saturday evening. Horning Mennonites and the River Brethren were regularly

in attendance. I don't recall seeing any representatives from the plainer church groups that seceded from mainline Mennonite conferences. Total attendance ranged from 400 to 600 for the day sessions and up to 800 or more for the evening sessions, according to Lester Zimmerman.

Gradually I realized that most of the Scriptures cited were the great reconciliation themes of the Old Testament regarding Israel and God or else of Israel and the land of their inheritance. It didn't seem out of place. There also seemed to be more frequent references made to God's promises than to His commandments, which is somewhat uncharacteristic of historical, early Anabaptism. Mention was made of the early Anabaptists being against swearing of oaths and the use of

force. Quite appropriately, most of all the emphasis was on believer's baptism.

Each session began with one-half hour of praise and worship, led by a mature young man at the piano with a mike to carry his singing along with two young people with instruments and voice amplification. They were "dressed down." We remember when everybody "dressed up" to go to church. This feature was probably considered excellent by the planners. Somehow it came at the bottom of my list of conference appreciation. The Reformers seemed to try to accept the overture of this music, but the music seemed to fit with neither Reformed nor Anabaptist traditions.

(to be continued)



Fear is that little

darkroom where negatives

are developed.

marriages

Akins-Peachey

Bro. Jason Jay, son of Jerry and Betty Akins, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Monica Joy, daughter of Joe and Mary Peachey, Allensville, PA, on April 23, 2005, at Locust Grove Mennonite Church for Valley View A.M. Church by Eli B. King, Jr.

Bowser-Miller

Bro. Ben, son of Arnold and Rachel Bowser, Harrison, AR, and Sis. Sharla, daughter of Omar and Elsie Miller, Harrison, AR, on Oct. 15, 2004, at Eagle Heights Baptist Church for Cornerstone Mennonite Church by Elmer Gingerich.

Helmuth-Miller

Bro. Jason, son of Mervin and Barbara Helmuth, Arthur, IL, and Sis. Cassandra Marie, dau. of Alva and Elsie Miller, Arthur, IL, on April 9, 2005, at Sunnyside Mennonite Church for Pleasant View Church by Howard Kuhns.

cradle roll

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

Burkholder, Kendall and Glendora (Overholt), Etna Green, IN, first child and dau., Brenna Rose, April 23, 2005.

Yoder-Van Ammel

Bro. Conrad Jay, son of Paul and Edith (Beachy) Yoder, Poperinge, Belgium, and Sis. Rebekka Dorkas Ruth, daughter of Guido and Lydia (Deheegher) Van Ammel, Poperinge, Belgium, at the Poperinge Amish Mennonite Brotherhood, March 19, 2005, by David Yoder of Partridge, KS.

Zook-Zook

Bro. Daniel Mark, son of Jonathan and Julia Zook, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Karen Michelle, daughter of David and Arlene Zook, Belleville, PA, on April 2, 2005, at Valley View A.M. Church by Eli B. King, Jr.

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

Burkholder, John and Melinda (Yoder), Shipshewana, IN, second child and dau., Vivian Day, April 8, 2005.

Derkson, John and Miriam (Hershberger), Summersville, KY, fourth child, first son, Jeffrey John, April 13, 2005.

Gingerich, John Dale and Wanda Mae (Miller), Kalona, IA, fifth child and dau., Megan Jane, Feb. 15, 2005.

Knepp, Albert, Jr. and Loretta (Wagler), Montgomery, IN, seventh child, fifth dau., Kristalynn Grace, April 8, 2005.

Kuhns, Vernon and Carol (Kauffman), Sullivan, IL, second child and dau., Jodi Lynn, March 9, 2005.

Mast, Jason and Eunice (Troyer), Crossville, TN, third child, first son, Chadwin John, April 8, 2005.

Miller, Ben and Ruth (Nissley), Pleasant Hill, IN, third child, second son, Alex Riley, April 22, 2005.

Miller, Daniel and Cristine (Hostetler), Cottage Grove, TN, fifth and sixth children, fourth and fifth sons, Dale Lynn and Dean Wynn, Oct. 8, 2004.

Miller, Kevin and Linda (Zook), Red Lake, ON, fifth child and son, Shane Randell, Feb. 27, 2005.

Miller, Raymond and Darlene (Wagler), Paris, TN, second child and dau., Kendra Anne, March 24, 2005.

Neufeld, Andreas and Rhode (Van Ammel), Ieper, Belgium, second child and son, Joshua Jesse, Sept. 22, 2004.

Overholt, Michael and Darlene (Mullet), Franklin, KY, second child, first dau., Serena Brooke, March 13, 2005.

Peachey, Marvin and Martha (Yoder), Mifflinburg, PA, fourth child, second son, Kevin Samuel, March 14, 2005.

Sandoval, Juan and Julie (Yoder), Shipshewana, IN, fifth child, third son, Benji Alex, April 4, 2005.

Sharp, James and Joyce (Hostetler), Belleville, PA, first child and dau., Annette Rose, April 26, 2005.

Sharp, Joe and Martha (Zook), Belleville, PA, seventh child, fourth son, Jeremiah David, April 14, 2005.

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

Stoltzfus, Dave and Roseanne (Zook), Christiana, PA, fourth child, third son, Derek Lavon, March 25, 2005.

Swarey, Jacob and Marlene (Peachey), Pulaski, NY, fourth child, first dau., Linda Rebecca, April 2, 2005.

Wengerd, Andy and Dora (Brenneman), Paris, TN, twelfth child, fourth son, Philip Allen, Dec. 23, 2004.

Wengerd, Marlin and Orpha (Troyer), Cottage Grove, TN, second child, first son, Jordan Karl, May 1, 2005.

Wingard, Paul and Loretta (Schrock), Thomas, OK, third child, second son, Devon Custer, May 4, 2005.

Yoder, Joshua and Mary Ann (Yoder), Clarkson, KY, first child and dau., Maria Hope, April 20, 2005.

Yoder, Kenneth and Luella (Schrock), Arthur, IL, first child and dau., Makayla Rose, March 2, 2005.

Zook, Andrew and Wanda (Byers), Middleburg, PA, first child and son, Clayton Andrew, March 19, 2005.

ordination

Bro. Timothy Gerber, 30, Wellesley, ON, was ordained to the ministry to serve at Cedar Grove Amish Mennonite Church, on April 3, 2005. Preordination messages were brought by Leon Wagler from Paris, TN.

obituary

Overholt, Caleb Jon, almost 4, died in a drowning accident at his parental home March 15, 2005. He was born March 30, 2001, son of Paul Mark and Susan Darlene (Mast) Overholt at Whiteville, TN.

Surviving are five brothers: Mark David; Ronald Paul; Derek Alan; Josiah Evan; Micah Duane and one sister: Renita Dawn, all of the home.

At birth, Caleb was diagnosed with Down Syndrome. At three months, he was found to have a serious heart defect

The charge was given by Timothy's father, Arthur Gerber, assisted by Melvin Roes and David Peachey. Also in the lot were Clair Gerber and Wayne Gerber.

May the grace of God be upon our brother as he ministers faithfully. Let us pray for him.

which was repaired at seven months. From then, he was a healthy and happy baby.

Caleb was an affectionate child, shaking hands with everyone he could after church. He will be sorely missed by his family, and his brief life will continue to beckon us to follow him to heaven.

Funeral services were held March 19 at Whiteville Mennonite Church with Rudy Overholt and L.J. Helmuth serving. Tim Yoder served in the committal at Whiteville Mennonite Cemetery.

The possibility of a draft continues to be troublesome to some people. According to a spokesperson from the Selective Service office there is a continuing shortage of volunteers. But at present the military establishment continues to require extension of time commitments of volunteers. Since this is involuntary on the part of the recruits, it is being labeled a “back door draft.”



It is easy to find fault with our government. I find it even more disquieting when people with our background and teaching “loyally defend” U. S. military involvement in Iraq.

More important questions from my perspective are these:

- How well do we understand and practice Christian principles of peace and nonretaliation?
- Does it bother us that our “Christian” president is militarily aggressive?
- Do we make a clear distinction between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world?



In early March, a Church of the Brethren congregation hosted a meeting at Elgin, Illinois, to address concerns about a possible draft. The meeting was planned by MCC in conjunction with the Council of

Moderators and Secretaries (COMS). Representatives of the Society of Friends, Bruderhof and Church of the Brethren attended. These groups are not considered MCC constituents.

Lynn Diller, PA, Marvin Yoder, IL, Lyle Hostetler, MO, Daniel D. Bontrager, IN and I attended. While we were identified as Amish Mennonites, we were treated respectfully. There were, in fact, some warm expressions of appreciation for our presence.

Richard Flahaven and Cassandra Costley from Selective Service attended the above meeting. Mr. Flahaven, Chief of Governmental Affairs, assured us that there would be no draft. He said that the American public, the military establishment, and the President are agreed that there should not be a draft. But it is noteworthy that local draft boards scattered throughout the country suggest another possibility. Even the position of Ms. Costley to head alternative service seems to support the notion that a draft is indeed a possibility.

Attendees at the above meeting came from diverse backgrounds. There were certainly varied perspectives and emphases. But a common denominator there was that it is wrong for us to be involved in military endeavors. There was also the conviction that the rising generation may not be well-prepared to make

good choices in the event of a national emergency.



In early April, Mary and I attended a workshop at Faith Builders Educational Programs, Guys Mills, PA. The workshop theme was: Current Issues in Conservative Mennonite Thought and Practice. Attendees included a few Beachys, but many more from a variety of other conservative groups. A major concern that came through was the need to propagate biblical, historical awareness to our young people. One of the speakers mentioned that significant influence has come upon us from James Dobson, Bill Gothard and the ACE school curriculum.

It does not seem wrong to me to notice and appreciate the good things that come from such sources. But to accept the aforementioned input without discernment, seems to involve a serious compromise of biblical integrity. And this is true of Protestant, Evangelical and Fundamental mainstreams, as well. A major compromise would be the loss of Christian nonresistance.

It is not realistic to assume that our constituency is immune to such pressures from the larger church community.

Another prominent concern of the meetings was that we become more diligent and sacrificial in evangelism

and other Christian service.



There seems to be widespread concern that Anabaptists are being drawn into partisan politics—often on opposing sides. John D. Roth, historian and teacher at Goshen College, addressed such concerns recently at the college. (MWR, 4-18-05) Roth says he is troubled how in the recent national election, conversations among Mennonites about faith and practice seem to have been replaced with the conflictive, antagonistic political hype of the media. He says much more that I consider both perceptive and courageous. But his final appeal is that U. S. Mennonites take the initiative through conference leaders and ministers to commit themselves to a five-year sabbatical from affiliations with any political party. He said, “We should resolve to sit out the next presidential election and to consciously abstain from all effort supported by groups partisan to the Republicans or the Democrats.”

I personally consider this a welcome prophetic “voice in the wilderness” that calls us to loyalty to the kingdom that is eternal. Furthermore, it seems to me that to make the five-year sabbatical permanent would be an improvement. After all, the Lord is not Republican or Democrat, nor is He American. Let us keep our citizenship priorities in order.

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On April 12, Mennonite Church USA sponsored a dialogue in which more than 800 people listened by phone or the internet. The concerns of this dialogue are the same as those in the above item. It is the concern that we have a tendency to view our situation from the climate of fear rather than love and trust. The participants lament what is sometimes called illiteracy of the Scriptures on the part of many young people. If this is true, it reflects even more on the parents than the young people. Myron Augsburg says that too many people don't comprehend the fullness of Christ's teaching including those on non-violence. He says, "I find a lot of people who want to accept what Christ did...but not what He said."

Several persons spoke about serious conflicts that arise over war issues. One person said that the Word of God requires her to register concerns that not everyone in the congregation would be comfortable with. Another participant mentioned the importance of respect and humility lest our defense of peace sounds more self-righteous than peaceful. John Roth also participated in the dialogue. He is deeply troubled by the divisions in the church on issues of peace. Unifying language is needed in the midst of this polarizing situation.

J. Daryl Byler reported that the U.S. military is spending close to \$225 million per day in Iraq. (MWR 4-25-05)

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We would surely agree that for us to be well taught and prepared for whatever the future may bring is supremely important. But let us be reminded that the way of Christ is far more inclusive than abstaining from military involvement. May we catch a new vision of the way of Christ in our personal lives as we relate together in families and congregations.

We assume that this is expressed in many congregations in a satisfactory manner. But sometimes this is not the case. When things become tense and dysfunctional, it is often discouraging to young Christians to the point that they not only lose interest in the local congregation but in the Christian faith itself.

Our Lord's prayer reminds us that our forgiveness toward others is the standard God uses to forgive us. There are reasons to believe that unforgiveness is sometimes in short supply when there are serious church, family or other relational problems.

It is an awesome privilege and corresponding responsibility to model the way of Christ to those around us.

—DLM 

I'm Done With School!

Amy Yoder
Whiteville, TN

I'm done with school! Or, am
I done?

Has it maybe just begun?

I've read the books and passed the
tests

But God's not finished with me yet.

In looking back I well recall,
Of wondering, "Is it worth it all?"
I'd struggle through PACE after
PACE,
Yet always had those tests to face.

Sometimes I'd fail a test at first,
Which meant, Go back! Redo the
work!

But in those times when I was
down,
God gave me courage to go on.

And finally, I did get done.
The work was worth it in the end!

But now—my future I can't see,
God only knows what it will be.

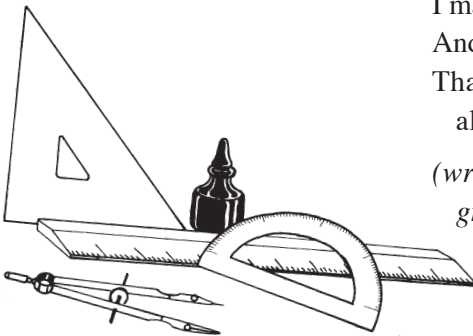
I don't know what He'll ask of me.
Or how hard His tests will be.
There may be days when I will
find,
That I've not learned what He's as-
signed.

Or times I feel like giving up
Because the work is getting tough.
But this I know, no matter what
My Teacher knows what He's
about.

He helped me through those high
school tests,
He'll also help me with the rest.
If I but trust, He'll lead the way
Until that final testing day.

My goal is this: That at life's end,
I may look back without regret.
And know, deep down in my soul
That yes, this work was worth it
all.

*(written upon completion of 12th
grade)*



Ministers' Meeting Messages—2005

Our annual Ministers' Meetings were held at Stuarts Draft, Virginia, on April 5-7, 2005. The mild weather, the heartfelt hospitality, the workshops, the business sessions and the inspiring messages all combined to make a divine visitation that blessed us significantly, as the Holy Spirit hovered over more than 400 of us.

Notes from the first two sermons follow.

In the months ahead, D.V., we shall bring highlights from the main messages. Warning: If you believe that the nearer we get to modern evangelicalism—the better, these messages will disappoint you. Further, if you believe that conservative Mennonitism measures up to apostolic purity and zeal, beware. Like the Laodiceans of Revelation 3, the tendency among us is to nestle into “easy believism” and self-sufficiency. Let us take these messages to heart. —PLM

1. Lessons from the Early Church *Lester Gingerich, Sarasota, FL*

Shortly before the church was birthed, Jesus said, “I will build my church.” The first use of the term “church” in the Bible occurs in Matthew 16:18. And yet

Stephen in his testimony in Acts 7, said how God led the church (Israel) in the wilderness. Jesus is the Head of the church.

In this study we see the centrality of Jesus in the church. Over and over Jesus asked, “What saith the Scripture?” And, “I speak nothing of myself.” This shows his respect for headship order and that He was careful to say nothing except what the Father commanded Him to say.

Note the simplicity of Christ. Someone has observed that 98% of His recorded words in Scripture are one-and two-syllable words. When the late Jake Hershberger came to our community in Plain City, Ohio, many years ago, we cleaned out a tool shed and had a service. When Bro. Jake made his opening remarks, he said that he thought that when you are feeding the sheep, you should put it down at a level where the “lambies” can reach it. I have no doubt that if the lambs can reach it, everyone can. Someone observed that people should bring their Bibles to church with them, not their dictionaries. It is impossible to give a Christ-centered message when we’re doing a show of our educational skills, by flaunting our vocabulary or however we might

do it. When we note the opening verses of John 1, we note mostly short, but profound words and well-loaded with meaning. We should try to bring a simply profound message in a profoundly simple way. Further, we don't need many disclaimers about our inabilities.

With the power of Christ resting upon us, that is enough and will bring glory to Him. If the power of the resurrection is in the message, men are rescued. In Peter's sermon at Pentecost, the resurrection of Christ was the act of God that demonstrated His power over man's dilemma, expressed by the audience when Peter spoke, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The way to release and apply that power was explained thus by the apostles: "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you, in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins. And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which promise is unto you and unto your children and as many as are afar off, even to everyone that calls upon his name."

This is followed by a very important verse, (Acts 2:40), "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." The result? The same day there were added to them about 3,000 souls.

What is the formula for church structure? There is much variation.

For example, take the matter of instruction class for baptismal candidates: *Martyr's Mirror* indicates that already in the first century A.D., there were instruction classes and examination of candidates. Early church standards speak of statements of faith and practice, to use our terms. But some in our time rise up and say that the early church did not have instruction class prior to baptism.

The 660-word sermon Peter preached at Pentecost is beautiful, educational, foundational, and inspirational. But note that with "many other words" Peter exhorted the gathered crowd. Why, I asked many years ago, are those many other words not recorded? God came to me one night with this answer, "Lester, I know how zealous you tend to be for detail. If those words had been recorded, then you would be one of the first to say, 'That's the formula for today.' Time brings changes." The early church dealt with issues like gladiators and we face issues today that they could not have been aware of. They made applications of Bible principles. That's how it still is. Applications change, but principles remain the same.

Harold S. Bender said that the Anabaptists believed the church is responsible to spell out what is right to believe and practice and what is wrong to believe and practice. That

is also what Peter was doing here in Acts 2:40, where God was asking Peter to teach the first instruction class. You are to spell out for My people what is right to believe and practice and what is wrong to believe and practice. If you want to join us, you may join us; you may join us on these grounds—or not at all. You are not required to; baptism and church membership are voluntary.

Those who gladly received the Word, were examined and invited to take the next step. “Will you meet us on these conditions?” The implication is: “Then they that did not gladly receive His Word, were rejected and denied baptism.” We are safe to assume that that happened.

The responsibility of leaders, the accountability of every member to the body, and church discipline is spelled out in the New Testament. Transgressions are listed as sins against the body. It also mentions what to do in each case. I believe that instead of gathering up all the teaching on church discipline and “baling them together” and giving them to one who is disobedient, we would do better to find a parallel case in Scripture and make appropriate application. Church discipline is addressed more than a dozen times in Scripture.

The church finds it hard to rise higher than its leaders spiritually.

When we go to Wendy’s or McDonald’s, we are given an option of upsizing. Let’s bring that into the preacher’s preparation. Let’s not just prepare for a devotional; let’s upsize. Let’s drink the Bible in—in big gulps!

Jesus never called His disciples “brethren” until after the resurrection. At first, when Mary wanted to touch His feet, He disallowed it. He said He had not yet ascended to His Father and her Father, thus making Jesus and Mary spiritual siblings. Further, she was to go and tell “My brethren” of His resurrection.

One of the dangers today is that with our large congregations, we tend to marginalize each other. If we go to “our own little corners,” and say to one another, “If you will come to my corner, we can have fellowship,” we weaken brotherhood. Brotherhood is a New Testament concept. In 1 Peter 3:2, Peter tells us “Love the brotherhood.” Instead of separating, the people in each corner must study the Word and thus draw closer and closer to the Lord, who is central. That’s how sectarianism dissolves and brotherhood emerges. As we thus get into the Word, we don’t need to ostracize each other and say, “I don’t need you, brother,” as we go our own way. We need to learn these things to keep us from fragmenting.

Charles Spurgeon once said, “Oh, I wonder what has happened to my good friend, Repentance. I haven’t heard much about Repentance lately. I hope he’s still well and alive.” Then he proceeded to address the issue at some length.

What does it take to get saved? What are the qualifications for baptism and church membership? Who may commune? What are the qualifications for entering heaven? At the foundation it’s all the same answer. There needs to be repentance indeed, and there needs to be faith indeed.

Why did Peter urge the crowd on Pentecost to repent and Paul at Philippi simply said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”? Sometime ago, Bro. James Yoder pointed out to me that Peter was confronting those who had taken Jesus by wicked hands and had crucified Him. They hadn’t yet repented. The Philippian jailor had already repented. In the depths of remorse, he was prostrate and asking earnestly, “What must I do to be saved?” But he lacked faith, so Paul said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Faith and repentance in the spirit is like the sperm and ovum in biology. Conception (new life) comes forth only when the two are joined. If a person repents and repents, over and over, but will not believe, he will never get saved. If a person dwells

on faith and more faith, and tries to bolster his faith and attend faith seminars and faith meetings and faith healing and whatever, that faith alone will not save. **There must be FAITH and REPENTANCE.** When those two come together, Bingo, instantly, life begins! [In the spiritual realm, conception and birth are simultaneous.] Paul said in Acts 20:21, that he preaches faith toward God and repentance toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 6:1 also mentions both repentance and faith, making them earmarks of a valid Christian experience, indicating that they are not to be repeated over and over.

In 1 Corinthians 9:1, Paul asks, “Are not ye my work in the Lord?” He refers to those to whom he had ministered. Paul did not mean that they were his “works.” It’s administration. It’s our way of leading the church. The “wood, hay and stubble” of chapter 3 is not works. It’s people. Gold, silver, and precious stone people are those who are born again. They will survive the fire of judgment. Those who are unconverted, are as wood, hay, and stubble is to the furnace. Preachers who take such members into the church will suffer loss. The word of consolation given is that he himself shall be saved (3:15).

The early church was very mission-minded. They believed in

reaching out, even at the expense of their lifeblood. Jesus prayed in His high priestly prayer, “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (John 17:18). Jesus also said to His disciples, as He spoke to them, face to face, “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21).

One of the purposes in offering salvation to men is to fill up the vacancies left in heaven when some of the angels fell and were expelled from heaven.

Another example of early church teaching is found in 1 John 5:8: “There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” The Spirit speaks of the new birth and is the witness inward, God-ward. The second witness is water baptism, saint-ward. It speaks of our testimony that we are taking our stand with the body of Christ, come what may. I commit myself to brotherhood. The witness of blood speaks of persecution and martyrdom. The blood of saints witnesses worldward.

The early church made much of the centrality of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see Jesus in Genesis 1:1, but He is in the shadows. In Matthew 1:1, He is the key figure in the family record of the Messiah, the Promised One. In John 1:1, all things were made by

him; He was co-creator with God. In the last verse of the Bible, He is there again. In God’s mind, Jesus is the key person in the human story. Jesus is to be central for each of us and for all of us.

2. Lessons from the Anabaptists

Chester Weaver, Grandview, TX

Even though God has chosen to be silent for most of the last 2,000 years, I believe He expects us to learn from the past. The written record of the past should inform us in the present.

First generation Anabaptism shook Europe to its foundations. It seemed to turn Europe upside down. It gave birth to the concept of separation of church and state. That was seen as an impossible idea to most people in the 1500’s. In time, this idea prevailed and today separation of church and state is considered right side up. Western civilization has held that principle dear for over 200 years now. Now the West is trying to help the Muslim world learn the concept.

Every Anabaptist young person should appreciate that fact, but many of them are not even aware of it. Furthermore, most of them have only a sketchy idea of what Anabaptism is. The ideas they do have, are often twisted and warped. Many disillusion-

sioned young people have concluded that modern Anabaptism is spiritually bankrupt, and so they look elsewhere for their ideals. It is sad and it's happening before our eyes.

Some present-day Anabaptists enjoy “flipping the gold coins” of their Anabaptist heritage into the air to watch them glitter and glint in the sun and then hear them go, “Plop!” The liberal Mennonites of our generation have either depleted their pile of “gold coins,” or their parents and grandparents had already done so. Basically all they have is the Mennonite name. Unfortunately, the sport of flipping gold coins is not limited to the liberals.

Many traditional Amish and Mennonites have done the same, with little or no concept of what brought their heritage into existence. Efforts to teach these people these principles are resisted. Basically, all they have is the Amish or Mennonite name and some fossilized practices that they consider sacred. What about us?

Brothers and sisters, we are **tame** Anabaptists. We are considered nice, even valuable people to have in a community. We are known for our quality craftsmanship, our quilts, and our good food. We work hard, are frugal and stay close to the soil. We keep to ourselves and do not make any trouble.

The first generation Anabaptists

were an entirely different sort. The Living Word, Jesus Christ, possessed them as a living presence. He moved them to insist that the Word of God is a higher authority than the church, or the state—or themselves. Menno Simons wrote, “We have but one Lord and Master of our conscience, Jesus Christ, whose Word, will, commandment and ordinances we obey as willing disciples even as a bride is ready to obey her bridegroom’s voice.”

Michael Sattler wrote, “They threatened us with bonds, then with fire and the sword, but in all this I surrendered myself completely into the will of the Lord, together with all my brothers and with my wife and prepared myself to die for His testimony.”

Hans Denck said, “No man truly knows Christ unless he follows Him daily in life.” And they set out to do just that! But such behavior was too radical and too convicting. One person said to an Anabaptist, “Why can’t you be bad like all the rest of the good Christians?” One reformer wrote of Hans Denck, “He has disturbed our church very much. His apparent sacrificial life, his brilliance, and his decent habits have wonderfully captivated the people.”

Conrad Grebel wrote, “I am full of words and the spirit of my belly constrains me. Behold, my belly is

as a new wine without a vent which bursts the wineskins. I shall speak and I shall breathe a little more freely. I shall open my lips and make answer.”

Speak and write they did until Europe was turned “upside down.” The only way the church and civil authorities knew to deal with this disturbance was to execute them. But the executions inspired more and more people to hold the same “pernicious” views.

I highly recommend the book by David Bercot, *The Kingdom That Turned the World Upside Down*.

In Psalm 78:1-8, passing on the faith is described. Brothers and sisters, we have not done very well. David Bercot is now writing a new book entitled, *How to Lose Anabaptism in One Generation*. Bercot’s first point is: **Do not teach Anabaptist history. Let your people be ignorant of the past.** That’s why God says what He does in Psalm 78. Some will ask, “Why not just be Christian? Why put the name ‘Anabaptist’ with it?” Well, so much is passed off as Christian that’s not really Christian and so much has been passed off as Mennonite that’s not really Anabaptist. Tonight, I’m using “Anabaptist” as a term to describe primitive, apostolic, New Testament Christianity, because I believe that it was recaptured by the Anabaptists of the 1500’s.

Let me highlight four important doctrinal positions taught by Anabaptists. Their message is so radical that for many, even among those who claim their faith heritage, it is being replaced with a much more comfortable message.

The Catholic church, even of today, teaches that the Bible and tradition are equal as the standard and practice. Protestantism says, “No, they’re not. The Bible is superior to tradition.”

Luther would have liked very much to have a godly people. But he didn’t think there would be enough people to make it work. So he seems to have dropped the idea. Somehow, however, when the Anabaptists set that high standard, people appeared who were willing to embrace it. It mushroomed all over Europe. Here are four teachings that distinguished them:

1. The supreme authority of the Scriptures.
2. Christianity is discipleship.
3. The church is a brotherhood.
4. The doctrines of love and non-resistance.

Harold S. Bender’s classic, 36-page book, *The Anabaptist Vision*, explains these last three points better than I can. Everyone should have one and read it carefully. Bro. Walter Beachy helped me see the need of mentioning the first point. In Ana-

baptist days, this was not a question. Everybody believed in the supreme authority of the Scriptures, so the Anabaptists did not need to make an issue of it. Today, however, it is an important issue. They assumed it, but today some Anabaptist descendants who do not believe in the supreme authority of the Scriptures challenge it.

The Bible is above the church and also above the state. It is above all human authorities. It is also above the individual. Everything must bow to what God says. That is a basic principle of Anabaptism. I think we probably hold this teaching the clearest in our “heads,” but I’m not convinced that we hold it clearly in our “feet.” The great word of the Anabaptists was not so exclusively “faith,” as it was for the Protestant reformers, but also “following.” Baptism to them signified their public commitment to walk in obedience to Christ, rather than the symbol of a past experience. Once they were baptized, they had crossed a line that made them targets of severe persecution.

God has a way of using two important principles and placing them in creative tension to make a truth that survives and blesses His people. Take doctrine and practice, or faith and works, or spirit and structure, as examples. One is not complete

without the other. If we have practice without doctrine, people will soon ask, “Why are we doing this?” Our young people should know why they’re doing what they’re doing from childhood. When it is done that way, it fits together like the pieces of a puzzle. It gives them something to live for. Doctrine and experience also must run together.

Anabaptists maintained that no man is in Christ apart from his brother. Thus, they applied 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and Romans 12 to real life. I don’t have it all, thus I must submit to my brother. Pardon me, but you don’t have it all, either. We need each other. This calls for humility. It will not work like it should with proud hearts. It takes much more spiritual energy to be accountable and interdependent than it does for everyone to simply go his own way.

The Anabaptists did not think the state churches were churches, because they did not deal with sin in their membership. If there’s sin in the state church, can you excommunicate it? When you excommunicate it, where does it go? Menno Simons said, “All the evangelical scriptures teach us that the church of Christ was and is in doctrine, life and worship a people separated from the world.” This is where it gets tough. We all like to fit in. But if others are

doing wrong, we dare not fit in. It takes Christian courage to step aside gracefully and not participate in the wrong.

It is just natural that when that happens, we find others who also step out and thus we have a united, separated witness. God wants to use us in the world, but He wants us to be in a close fellowship with others of like precious faith. Some well meaning Anabaptists have tried to isolate themselves to keep the faith pure. This is not biblical or right. How can such groups be salt and light to the world? That may reduce the pressures against separation, but if we are spiritually alive, we can by the grace of God, be separated even though we live in and among the world. That makes a powerful testimony. The logical concept of the separated body is the suffering body.

We seem to do better at loving our enemies than we do at loving our brothers. We have problems getting along with each other. We have problems in our families. We have husbands who do not love their wives and wives who don't love their husbands. We have parents who don't love their children and children who don't love their parents, yet we say

we believe in love and nonresistance. Something's wrong. This doctrine, of course, means that we do not practice the coercion missions, e.g., magistrates, police officers, or political office because of the coercion required. But it also means much more.

I want to say with humility that the Swiss Brethren did better longer with this teaching than did the Dutch. But Jakob Amman was influenced by some things going on in Holland, and he imported this idea of really strict shunning and brought it down from Holland to Switzerland. It created a grievous schism in Switzerland. It seems that with that schism, we got a "virus" that is still with us today. We have the virus of finding fault with other Mennonite groups. Mennonites today seem to be fractious and build walls to keep each other out.

Can you imagine an inter-Mennonite ministers' meeting in North America? Such meetings have been held now for a number of years among the conservative Mennonite brethren in Central America. This movement is growing larger every year. Praise God that they are addressing the virus. May God help us address it, too!



Everyday Missionaries

Phil Beiler

This message was preached at Woodlawn Amish Mennonite Church (Indiana) in January, 2004, soon after the tragic death of Lowell Mast. My thanks to Linford Bontrager, who sent the tape and encouraged me to use it for this column. It is condensed, revised and falls short in that fresh inspiration it had on the day it was given. Brother Lowell's devotion to his Creator and Redeemer and his quiet-mannered nature was like an aroma of sweet smell, well-pleasing to God. His testimony leaves with us a valuable legacy of a faithful "everyday missionary." —FS

We bring you greetings in Jesus' name and from Nathaniel Christian Fellowship in Romania. Our reason for being in the United States is because of having attended the funeral of Brother Lowell Mast in Arkansas. This experience was both sad and beautiful. It was sad because of the parting of a beloved friend and brother in the Lord. Yet, it is beautiful because of the assurance that Brother Lowell has gone to Glory.

What do you think of when you

hear the term "missionary"? Is it always someone who is going across the sea? Where does our world begin? It begins at our mailbox or, in other words, at the end of our driveway. Our neighbors may need the Gospel. From there our witness is to go on and on.

As I reflected on the passing of Lowell, there were a number of evidences at the funeral of the tremendous impact that the Mast family has had on their community. No one needed to say it. Their witness and influence was so obvious. The man he worked for said, "We have lost, not only an employee—we have lost a friend." Two ladies attended from a local bank. I noticed a man wearing an earring. *How disgusting*, I thought. Elsie (Lowell's wife) said you never see that man except in everyday clothes. That day he was dressed up. In fact, the family asked him to be one of the honorary pall bearers. If you would die, would you have a man like this to be a pallbearer? I do not mean this in a negative way. But it showed the kind of relationship that the Mast family maintained in their com-

munity in touching people's lives in simply being common, everyday missionaries.

Isn't there something we can learn from this? The man with the earring was deeply touched. He cared for Lowell and the family. Too often we do not want to associate too closely with disgusting people. But Jesus associated with the outcasts, the rejected, and the neglected people of His day. He was strongly criticized for it, even though He never became partner of their evil deeds.

Who is a missionary? A missionary is a witness for Christ. He bears a message. There are two things necessary for a message bearer. First, we must be in close contact with the Message Giver so that we bear His message and not our own. Secondly, we must have an undistracted commitment to bear the message.

How does one become an everyday missionary? In Deuteronomy 6:5-9, we learn three things that may help us:

(1) "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart." Practice an intimate personal relationship with God by daily Bible reading and prayer. This

basic, foundational exercise is so important! It is apparent that Brother Lowell maintained this exercise daily. His top goal was not making money. He was content with teaching school, because he felt that is where God had called him to serve.

(2) "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house..." In Romania the word "diligently" has the idea of making "an imprint that cannot be erased and destroyed." Are we faithful everyday missionaries with those we are closest to and with guests that we invite into our homes?

(3) "And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This passage is a progression. Now God is telling us to be everyday missionaries to the clerk at the grocery store, to the teller in the bank and so on. Abraham considered himself "a stranger and a sojourner" in the land of Canaan. Yet his neighbors (sons of Heth) considered him "a mighty prince." Abraham salted the community with a powerful testimony, especially in dealing honestly and with foresight in purchasing a burial ground for his descendants. He acted on principle and has the true characteristics of an everyday missionary.



A Tribute to Our Older Brethren

John E. Glick

Gap, PA

The hoary head [gray hair] is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness” (Proverbs 16:31). There are people among us who hold a special place in my heart. They are our older brethren. A few short years ago when I was young, they were bearing “the burden and heat of the day.”

Their vision and zeal helped make our churches what they are today. Their names will go down in history as men who had a positive influence on their generation. No one knows where we would be, had they not staunchly defended the faith. They have weathered the storms of life with their anchors still gripping the Rock of Ages. Confessing their imperfections, they lean hard on the grace of God.

Today much of the load of responsibility has been passed on to younger men. That, however, does not diminish the importance of our older brethren. They are examples of steadfastness and faithfulness. Their lives are testimonies of God’s power to carry us through all of life’s journey.

While they are still with us, they fill an important place in the church.

In some of our churches, they now occupy the pews closest to the pulpit. Their words of wisdom still help preserve the faith “once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Their stories of bygone years foster appreciation for our godly heritage. They are grandfather figures for tomorrow’s leaders. Only God knows how much difference their prayers are making in the church.

To me, they are an example, a challenge, and a blessing. I can go to them for counsel or correction, analysis or encouragement. Their lives make me want to hold fast to the end. They exemplify growing old gracefully. Their very presence is a blessing to the church. These are our dear older brethren who now have their eyes on yonder shore, anticipating soon seeing Him face to face.

We should honor them. They deserve our respect and admiration. A helping hand is in order when their steps falter. Words of thanks and appreciation are hardly adequate recognition for what they have done for our generation. Visits can bring cheer to them in their old age. When we take time for them, we may well receive the greater blessing.

Let us practice the Golden Rule, for in a few short years, if the Lord tarries, we will likely be where the older brethren are now. The instructions given in the Levitical law seem

to apply well in this day of grace. “Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:32).

Cheerful Words

*Marvin Eicher,
Freeport, OH*


“But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matthew 12:36).

The story is told of a teenage girl who became distressed when she read this verse. She loved to talk, and she knew that she spoke hundreds of words every day. How many of those were idle? She discussed the matter with her father.

The father was surprised that his lively, outgoing daughter was so troubled. “You aren’t one to gossip about other people, are you?” he asked. No, she wasn’t. “Do you do a lot of joking and foolish talking?” It wasn’t that either.

“I know you like to talk,” said her father. “But much of what you say is uplifting and encouraging. People enjoy being with you because of your cheerful words. And a cheerful word is not an idle word.”

Yes, we shall give account for every idle (empty, unprofitable) word. But does that mean we should try to talk less? Maybe so, but there is another possibility: We can specifically look for occasions to speak words that will benefit another person. Opportunities abound; and when we find one, let us speak freely and sincerely. How often have we ourselves been cheered when someone spoke just the words we needed!

No word is idle if it brightens the day for another person. 

TO GO TO HEAVEN, TURN RIGHT
AT CALVARY AND GO STRAIGHT.

The Power of Submission

Daniel Kauffman (1865-1944)

From Gospel Herald, April 23, 1914

There is a power that over-awes, and a power that wins.

As an example of the former, we think of God's manifestation of power in Mt. Sinai—so terrible that even the stout-hearted Moses confessed, "I exceedingly fear and quake." More glorious still is the manifestation of His power on Calvary. With lamb-like meekness the blessed Son submitted to all the indignities which His enemies cared to heap upon Him, though He had only to say the word that would bring down legions of heaven to His rescue. He died dishonored, discredited, disowned—yet His obedience to "the death of the cross" was the most powerful victory ever won, and millions in glory will sound His everlasting praise.

Many read the admonition to "obey them that have the rule over you" with an air of contempt, thinking it but an arbitrary interference with their liberties. But they do not know that it is but a bid for their freedom. It was Christ's submission

that made Him King. It is our submission to God that frees us from the shackles of sin and admits us to the power of heaven.

Did you ever see a really great and powerful leader in the church who was not loyal to the core, submissive to the powers that be, an even greater servant than he was a leader? It is they who have not yet experienced the grace and power of submission who are hampered in their labors by a leanness of soul. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it."

"He that is greatest among you, let him be servant of all." They who vacate self completely and let God take complete possession of their being are the ones who accomplish great things for God. Surrender to God, loyalty to His Word, submission to His institution, the Church, and unfeigned love and service to God and man is the key that unlocks the door to the throne and admits you to the realms of power with God and man.



Men of good judgment seldom rely solely on their own.

Honor Your Father

Mary June Glick

June is the month of Father's Day. It is a special day set apart to honor our fathers. Our fathers have helped shape our lives, for good or ill. They have affected the picture we have of our Heavenly Father.

For those married, it is a time to give special tribute to one's husband, the father of our children. God created us male and female and planned that man should be woman's protector and leader. Women honor men by allowing them to assume that role. We come alongside our husbands, complementing them with the unique strengths God has given us. A special day is a GOOD time for us to convey our love and appreciation to father and to husband. At the same time our daily actions are the best gauge of our love for them.

Mother has the awesome responsibility of teaching her son or daughter how to love and respect his or her father. At the same time, she is preparing her daughter to be a loving wife and her son to be a godly husband. Our children observe whether we love our husbands. The greatest gift we can give our children is a happy marriage. In this day of unstable homes, our children want to be as-

sured that we truly love each other.

Let's think of some practical ways of teaching respect for Father:

1. Make sure that Daddy's homecoming is a happy time. It is *not* the time to tell about the bad day or to expect him to punish a child. Never threaten them with what will happen "when Daddy comes home." Meet him with a happy smile. Encourage the children to pick up toys and have the house looking nice. "*Daddy's home!*"

2. Don't interfere with his discipline. This can be difficult because we may feel that he is being too tough with a child. Don't undermine his authority in front of the children; if necessary, discuss with him in private how you feel. Don't give them pity after Daddy has disciplined. Let them know you are together on the rules.

3. Express love to each other in front of the children, even giving hugs and kisses. Talk about him in a loving way to the children. Praise his good points. Never criticize him. If you have done wrong, let the children hear you asking forgiveness. They need to know that everything is okay.

4. Be a submissive wife and mother. That will teach volumes to your child and will make submission to

authority much easier for them.

How can you express love to your husband or father on this Father's Day?

1. Write a note or a card expressing what he means to you and tell him about the things you appreciate about him. Men need appreciation, too.

2. I suppose men are different when it comes to gifts. My husband is hard to buy for because he seems never to need anything (unless it's a new book!). He is content with what he has. Because my father loved flowers, I could always send him flowers.

3. I believe a gift of time means a

lot to an older parent. Offer to help with the yard or garden or just to spend the day with him.

Some of you may be saying, "But I have not had a godly father or a happy marriage, how can I honor someone whom I don't respect?" I don't have many answers, but I would encourage you, if possible, to talk with him about it, express appreciation for the good things, ask forgiveness where you have failed. Write a letter if it's hard to talk. Find help from a trusted person, and remember, **God loves you with an everlasting love.**



junior messages

God's Creation

Bridget Yoder, age 10

Red Lake, Ontario

The great, big majestic evergreens
Give me courage when I'm not bold.
The sun's bright yellow, happy beams
Warm me up when I'm feeling cold.

The little happy, chirping chickadee,
The great big white polar bear,
And the tiny, buzzing honey-bee
To the rhinoceros, so very rare,

The lakes and rivers, so very deep,
To the dark, rich, crumbly ground,
And the acorns that I may eat,
Show that God's love goes all around.



My Workhorse Named Charlie

*Dale Eby
Dundee, NY*

In the not-too-distant past, the faithful pen and typewriter were demoted as tools with which to communicate. Just as the slide rule in my 11th grade chemistry class was replaced by the calculator, so the instruments in making a home and business office function have been revolutionized since the 1970's. The computer has for two or three decades now become a most intriguing and sought-after gadget.

No question about it, a different "animal" has arrived. It has made its appeal to large numbers of the populace, finding a place in many homes and being used by most members of the family. This "horse" is so versatile that many things can be done in front of the screen: word processing, financial record keeping, studying most any subject (including the Bible), banner making, card making, data base processing, E-mailing, keeping track of calendars, price lists, phone numbers, printing of bulletins, and probably other things that have come up even more recently. With all these capabilities, there is for many a significant amount of time spent driving this workhorse.

I refer to my computer as my workhorse, Charlie. For me, Charlie has found a place to stay and is worth his oats. The ability to do word processing functions, and quick referencing to the concordance in Bible study, Greek interlinear, and the dictionary has given him important work for me in preparation for teaching and preaching. However, since Charlie is only one of my horses, not all my time is spent with him. He gets my attention only if he can do a job better than the other horses.

I am surprised, puzzled, and sometimes appalled at the amount of time some people spend "horsing around" with their computer. When I get to my study, it is to work. If I need Charlie for work, he is available; but if not, he gets to rest.

From what I've observed, people seldom go to the barn to play. They do not take a workhorse out of his stall simply to play with him. I have Charlie for specific tasks that will benefit my work in God's kingdom. A workhorse is not taken out of his stall to pull the broom down the barn aisle. That would be a waste of time and energy. When Charlie is

not useful, I ignore him. He doesn't seem to mind.

The mindset of computer companies seems to be that the computer should have more than one purpose. It should be used for work and play. For some of the same reasons we should not endorse television, we should not endorse inordinate amounts of time playing with the computer. Social, physical, and spiritual development is stunted by this isolated playing. Beside the questions about simulated violence on some games, it seems the question about matching quickness of reaction should be addressed. Games even five-year-olds can play teach a person that the one with the best reaction time wins. Our churches are in trouble if quick reaction time is valued more highly than deep thinking.

People find it easy to miss their personal devotions for any number of distractions. If there is no resolve about having this interesting animal for work only, there is going to be a ready temptation to play instead of meditating and worshipping. E-mail has much good potential, provided we don't become obsessed with getting and sending e-mail. When I was offered this service for my computer, I asked how much time it would take. I was told it would take about 30 minutes a day to be a good e-mailer. Perhaps some day it will benefit my ministry and then I will get it. I would

like to ask every faithful 30-minutes-a-day e-mailer how their daily Bible study time compares.

I confess I am far from an expert on computers and their uses, but I believe it takes little thought to see how dangerous and out-of-hand the computer craze has become. This is shown in how people continue to purchase equipment and software after they have what they need. Money that could be better used is spent to update, so the user can boast of impressive "horsepower."

Though it seems to me that Charlie is worth his oats, when the computer becomes a toy, and not a workhorse, it is time to put it away. One family testified to me that they had no real need for a computer, but finding one reasonably priced, they purchased it. No, it didn't need oats, but after a short time in their home, they parted with it, because of the negative patterns and attitudes they saw developing in the family. Since it did not become a useful workhorse, I applaud their decision.

I am open for counsel regarding Charlie. I want my brothers in the Lord to be free to ask how Charlie and I are working out as a team. Is the plow being pulled or is Charlie mostly just playing in the barnyard? As for me and my family, we shall use Charlie for work and not for play.



Youth Fellowship Meetings

July 22-24, 2005

to be held in the following communities,
the Lord willing:

Northwest District Arthur, Illinois
Otto Community Center

North Central District Holmes Co., OH
Maranatha Christian Fellowship

Northeast District Lancaster Co., PA
Weavertown A. M. Church

Southeast District Cross Hill, SC
Cross Hill Mennonite Church

Southwest District Auburn, KY
Plainview Mennonite Church

*.. Increased airplane fares seem to show
that the cost of going up is going up ..*



THOUGHT GEMS

Ingratitude curdles the milk of human kindness.



To be in your children's memories tomorrow,
you have to be in their lives today.



The powers that be were instituted by I AM.



You will likely make a mistake if you judge a
man by his opinion of himself.



People tend to overlook the faults of those who are kind.



Money will buy a fine dog, but it takes kindness
to make him wag his tail.



Things which matter most should not be at the
mercy of those things that matter least.



If you have knowledge, let others light their candles with it.



A friend is he who will tell me my faults in private.

(USPS 767-160)
Calvary Messenger
2673 Township Rd. 421
Sugarcreek, OH 44681

Periodicals