



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

Galatians 6:14

AUGUST 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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The Amazing Love of Jesus

*Martha M. King
Belleville, PA*

There's a love that is greater than our
human love,
A love that is gracious and kind;
Compassionate, caring, forgiving
and true.
In Jesus that love we can find!

There's a love far greater than
mortals can tell,
When Jesus left heaven above;
And our sin debt was paid on
Calvary's cross
Because of His wonderful love!

There's a love that was shown in the
Garden that night
When Judas betrayed with a kiss;
A love so great Jesus called him a
friend.
No love is greater than this!

There's a love so forgiving in the
prayer that He prayed
For those who tortured Him sore;
They spat in His face, they smote on
His head,
But His prayer was "Father,
forgive!"

There's a love so caring as He looked
from the cross
And beheld His dear mother there;
Even though he was writhing in
anguish and pain,
He thought of her comfort and
care!

"Love one another as I have loved
you,"
Is commanded by Jesus our Lord;
Is our love so unselfish, forgiving
and kind,
As the pattern we find in His
Word?



A Dark Spot

Recently my friend and brother John Plett from Boley, Oklahoma, lent me a good autobiography and testimony, *Why I Do Not Take the Sword*, by Isaac Tiessen. The author was born in Russia in 1904. He immigrated to Canada while yet a young man. His story was published 1991 by Pathway Publishers, Route 4, Aylmer, Ontario, N5H 2R3. This book is so good I'm getting ten copies to give to my friends.

Tiessen saw great suffering in the struggle that came upon Mennonites, as well as all of Russia, through World War I (1914-1918). He witnessed the violent death of his three older brothers in one attack. He also observed a weakening of the long-held conviction in his fellow Mennonites that it is better to die than to answer violence with violence. The Russian Mennonites' relatively brief time of taking up arms after World War I has been referred to as the time of *Selbstschutz*. (German for "self-defense")

I shall briefly note several events and conditions, described on pages 42-53, which led to the unfortunate development of *Selbstschutz*:

June 28, 1914—World War I was triggered when Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was assassinated. At that time, Mennonite colonies in Russia had become mostly self-governing and many Mennonites were quite wealthy.

August 1, 1914—After Russia had begun preparing for war, Germany declared war on Russia. Soon many nations around the world joined in the fray. Many men were taken from farms and sent to battle. Schools of the Mennonites in Russia were conducted in German and so were shut down.

March, 1917—The Russian populace suffered greatly in the war. They revolted against their national leader, Czar Nicholas II. This czar soon gave up his throne, without a long struggle, to Alexander Kerensky, a Socialist. The Russian people hoped a new day was dawning, free from German oppression.

October, 1917—Bolsheviks (Communists), led by Nikolai Lenin, wrested control from the Socialists. At first, the Communists gained support by encouraging peasants to seize land for themselves from wealthy landowners. (Later the government

seized and nationalized private property.)

March, 1918—Russia signed a peace treaty with Germany. Russia’s capital city was moved to Moscow. The Ukraine, home of thousands of Mennonites, became an area over which the two opposing forces—the Red Army (Communist) and the White Army (Socialist)—fought hard for control. To make matters worse, powerful bands of anarchists and bandits, roamed the countryside, raiding, plundering, and murdering with abandon. Thus for a brief time, German military forces defended the Mennonite colonies, increasing their safety.

November 11, 1918—Signing the armistice ended the war, which marked the defeat and final retreat of German forces. Soon Mennonite colonists again faced great uncertainty, but they possessed the “advantage” of an unusual situation. Before the German soldiers returned to their homeland, they had left weapons and considerable ammunition to the German Mennonites. About that time, Nestor Mahnko, a Russian terrorist who had earlier been a farm laborer on a Mennonite farm, led a ruthless band of cruel men who were bent on destroying and punishing wealthy land owners. Mahnko’s followers were fighters who at one time numbered an estimated 100,000 poor

Russian peasants.

Selbstschutz

As this unsafe and unstable situation developed, some Mennonites concluded that they would simply have to defend themselves. And for a time it appeared that anarchists and terrorists were getting what they deserved. *Selbstschutz* seemed to be working. Mennonite soldier boys were even noted as brave fighters.

Time, however, renders an unfavorable verdict on *Selbstschutz*.

These new “soldiers” were vastly outnumbered and many of them died. They had distrusted the time-tested, apostolic, nonresistant commitment of meekly placing their lives and fortunes into God’s hands.

At the start of the Mennonites’ move that began in 1792 from Prussia to Russia, they had requested from Catherine the Great, exemption from military service because of their conviction that nonresistance is biblical. Thus the reversal of belief in the wake of the war seemed to say that their long held refusal of military service might have issued in part from patriotism for Germany or even worse, cowardice. In the aftermath, many Mennonite soldiers died. Furthermore, many other Mennonites died, including some of those who sought to uphold historic nonresistance.

Tiessen soberly evaluates what

he witnessed first-hand those many years ago and comments, “Looking back after more than 70 years, it is my conviction that the *Selbstschutz* was a regrettable deviation from our confession of faith, which emphasizes nonresistance as a major principle. Under the pressure of the moment, we could not desist from grabbing the sword. Therefore, we need to confess our failure as a people to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The whole *Selbstschutz* affair constitutes a **dark spot** in Mennonite history.”*

Tiessen also comments about how their ministers figured into this defection: “...To my knowledge none of our leading ministers sounded the alarm. They failed to effectively warn the people. One of the ministers even decided to be the spiritual chaplain in the *Selbstschutz*, having the rank of colonel and on occasion wearing a saber...Had our ministers become ‘dumb dogs’? (Isaiah 56:10). Where do we as churches and as a denomination stand as far as nonresistance is concerned? In this world of violence there is a great need to teach and preach the way of peace and love.”*

Tiessen’s concern is valid, regard-

less of where—inside or outside—the Anabaptist family you find yourself. Today, in 2005, as intensified conflict spreads across the globe, our lives are less and less secure. Radicals in several religions are committed to killing Christians. But if we place our lives into His hands, ready to live or die, as He permits it, we are secure in His care. We are assured of inexpressibly great treasures in heaven if God wills that we die as martyrs. After all, we must all leave this earth at some time. Let us resolve to live for more than a nationalistic cause.

At Jesus’ arrest, He rebuked Peter for his well-intentioned efforts at protecting himself and his Master. Later, when Peter had embraced his Master’s values, he encouraged his fellow believers experiencing persecution and wrote, “For you have been called for this purpose, since **Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.** ...while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:21, 23 NASB).

(* page 46)

—PLM 

The worst boss anyone can have is a bad habit.

Paul,

I just wanted to let you know that the *Calvary Messenger* seems more interesting to me than it used to, and a big part of that is the Reader Response column. It adds an element of

discussion to the magazine.

Thanks for all your hard work.

Rose Mary Nisly

Oswego, KS



Forgiveness

David Gingerich

Hazleton, IA

Forgiving others is very light,
When my own sins come into sight.
And I see the pain and agony of the
One
Who submissively suffered, though
He was God's Son.

The seriousness of our sins He knew
well,
When reckoned with eternity in hell.
The righteousness of God He plainly
could see,
Therefore He sweated in great agony.

The spitting and mocking He did not
shun,
Silently He suffered, esteemed by
none,
Despised and rejected by men of
unbelief,
A man of sorrows, acquainted with
grief.

This was the price it cost for man's
fall,
On Him was laid the iniquity of us
all.
All the people who this can see.
Know a new meaning for humility.

Shall I place my faith and hope in
Christ?
Or shall I trust in some other device?
Only true faith which works by love,
Will please our God who dwells
above.

Diligently now search your heart to
see,
If the love of Jesus Christ there might
be.
Don't neglect this situation to face.
Go deep into the riches of God's
grace.



Beware of Falling Away

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.

For it impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and [tasted] the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Notice that the text speaks of those who were once enlightened, who had experienced the heavenly gift [divine grace], who had been partakers of the Holy Spirit, who had tasted the good Word of God, and who had [tasted] the powers of the world to come. Can anyone who is not in Christ be a partaker of the Holy Spirit? At least they were [are] more responsible and more accountable than those with fewer opportunities. That much seems reasonably clear. But the falling away and the impossibility of renewing them to repentance calls for serious study with prayer and fasting, lest we misinterpret God's Holy Word.

Some (holding the Calvinistic view)

raise questions about the word "if" (if they fall away). To them, the passage presents a hypothetical case. They say it is impossible for any born again believer ever to fall away and be lost. Would God and the Holy Spirit have invested sixty-nine words to warn us about a danger that could never exist? To me, the text seems to warn us about the danger of something that can and does happen, through neglect, unbelief, rebellion, or deliberate and willful violation of better knowledge. Luther's German version does not say "if" but "where."

According to Adam Clarke, the Greek participles in verses 4 and 5 are properly rendered in the past tense; *were enlightened, have tasted, and were made partakers*. Therefore he thinks verse 6, instead of saying "if," should say, "have fallen away." I have at least seven other English versions in which that clause is translated in the past tense.

Clarke concludes, "It appears from this [Hebrews 6:4-8], what ever sentiment may gain or lose by it, that there is a fearful possibility of falling away from the grace of God; and if this Scripture did not say so, there are many that do say so. And were there no Scripture express on this subject, the nature of the present state of man,

which is a state of probation or trial, must necessarily imply it. Let him who most assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall.” (*Clarke’s Commentary*, Vol. VI, 1832, page 725.)

We believe that security in Christ is conditional upon our willingness to abide in Him. It is certainly true, as Jesus said, that “no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand” (John 10:29). It is also true that man is created as a creature of choice, which makes us responsible to choose truth, grace, direction, and God’s protection. “therefore choose life” (Deut. 30:19). We must receive Christ by choice, and we must abide in Him by choice according to John 15:1-5. God will not hold us in His hand by force without our consent. Jesus said, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” (John 15:6).

Chapter eight of Romans was written to “the children of God.” In it we find at least 32 blessings provided for the Christian. In that same chapter, Paul says, “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Romans 8:12, 13).

There we have two “ifs” indicating that the Christian’s security is conditional. One is a warning, the other

a promise. Is that solemn warning any less certain than the gracious promise? If we deny the certainty of the warning, by what authority can we claim the promise?

You may wonder why it would be impossible to renew them unto repentance. It probably is for the same reason that “the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matt. 12:31b, 32).

Could anyone enlightened and experienced as those described in Hebrews 6:4 and 5 fall away without rejecting the wooing of the Holy Spirit?

We may not safely conclude when someone has fallen away beyond the point of no return. I like the little saying (I know not by whom):

There is a line by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God’s patience and God’s wrath.

In His high priestly prayer, Jesus said of Judas Iscariot, “Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition” (John 17:12). This verse is sometimes used to prove that Jesus only ever lost one. That one was among those given

to Jesus while He “was with them in the world.” It does prove that one of them was lost, and not by any fault, defect or weakness of Jesus! It was the result of some choices Judas made by his own free will.

Judas had been an apostle of Jesus for three and one-half years. He had heard a full course of divine teaching straight from the lips of Jesus, and had seen miracles He performed. I think He heard the warnings at the last Passover supper when Jesus said, “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). He probably knew whom Jesus meant when He said, “Ye are clean, but not all” (John 13:10b), and “he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me” (John 13:18).

Those warning signals must have beckoned Judas to repent of his treacherous plans. He knew right from wrong, but for thirty pieces of silver he chose to do what he knew was wrong. He ignored the tender warnings of Jesus, and chose to proceed with the evil he had planned. The next day he admitted, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood” (Matthew 27:4). The guilt gave him no rest, and surely the Holy Spirit pled with him. But Judas stubbornly rejected the Spirit’s wooing “and went and hanged himself”

(Matthew 27:5). He chose the course that sealed his destiny.

“Among the chief rulers also many believed on [Jesus]; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42, 43).

These rulers, too, were choosing destinies. Many were enlightened and convinced, but, like Joseph of Arimathaea, they feared to confess Him. Joseph, however, responded to his convictions when he acquired and buried the crucified body of Jesus. Fear was a very real motivator in those days. Religious persecution abounded. Undoubtedly, many denied Christ just to avoid being expelled from the synagogue. Fearful persecution and the martyrdom of Christians abound today in many countries. The danger of recanting under severe torture is very real!

Paul, before his conversion, persecuted Christians “and compelled them to blaspheme”

(Acts 26:11). He realized the possibility of falling because he saw it happen. Therefore, he took warning and kept his body and his carnal nature under, as he said, “lest by any means, when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

Beware of falling away!



Another Anabaptist Reconciliation Conference—Part Three

*Aaron Lapp
Kinzers, PA*

Conference moderator, Lloyd Hoover, said at least eight of his ancestors were martyred as Anabaptists. Featured in this issue will be public comments by the Swiss Reformed church people present in the meetings April 7, 8 and 9, 2005, at Petra Christian Fellowship near New Holland, PA.

Peter Detweiler, executive secretary of the Swiss State Reformed Church: “Spiritual renewal can only happen on the shoulders of reconciliation. The Anabaptists were fine families. We persecuted, executed, banned and banished them from Zurich. They never came back. Through this we lost much. We are twins; our forbears were born in the same decade, in the 1520’s. We were reformed (from the Catholics) and you were reformed (from us). We were enemies then, but are brothers now.

“It has only been of late that we learned about what our forbears did to yours, and that just in slow bits of information at first. Gradually, through inquiry, we learned more about our

regrettable past. We as persecutors tried to forget. We could not.

“We acknowledge the Anabaptists as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It is time for us to accept the Anabaptists as our own. We belong to each other, and to Jesus Christ, Who has reconciled us to God and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”

Three pastors went to the speakers’ platform and offered these comments: “We have nothing to offer to you, but to ask for forgiveness. Our ancestors left the Catholic Church in 1555. Our ancestors joined the State Reformed Church and persecuted your ancestors. Because of it we have not felt free in giving our all to the Lord. We need your prayers to get...into radical Christian discipleship. There is much contention behind the curtain of the official state church.”

A woman pastor who lives near Schleithem, the city where the first Anabaptist confession of faith was written in 1527, said: “In Exodus 7:21, Moses struck the Nile River

with his rod and it became blood, hence death to the Egyptians. The Reformation was as big as a river in the land. There was power struggle over the river. In our oppression, we drowned the first fruits (Anabaptists). Then God sent plagues among us, figuratively, of flies, insects, mosquitoes; our cattle died; our prosperity is taken away and darkness has descended upon us inasmuch as many pastors do not know the Lord.

“Please forgive us so we may be free from guilt and can be in line for God’s blessings in the future.”

Another pastor commented: “When parents come to ask for infant baptism, I explain the concept of biblical adult baptism. My church superior gave his permission to suggest a public service to bless the babies instead. Parents are usually cooperative. Sometimes it seems the young people wait too long to ask for believer’s baptism. When they do so, it is real.

“Sometimes our people go to markets and restaurants to seek souls for Jesus Christ. Some of these people do respond.”

One pastor said: “When I was a seminary student, I learned of the awful things the professed Christian church did to the Jews. I couldn’t go into the ministry without [seeking] a reconciliation with the Jews.

“Information on Anabaptists was

intentionally withheld from us. A footnote at the bottom of one textbook said the Anabaptists were a group of heretics who were appropriately removed from our midst.

“When we finally learned the facts, my wife and I were shocked at what our church fathers did to the Anabaptists. We confess our wrong. We need your forgiveness. We now also want reconciliation with you. We regret that we missed our spiritual inheritance.”

A pastor of 35 years commented: “Many people in our churches do not know the Anabaptist story. When they bring their infants for baptism, I try to tell them of adult baptism. They typically act interested, but are not sure it would be good to be like the free churches (Baptists, Pentecostals and such) whose pastors are supported by the congregation. State Reformed pastors are paid by the state through citizens’ taxes.

“When I expressed interest in going to Bible school to learn to preach, my father said I must go to the state university so I can do it right. When a person expresses personal insight in God’s Word, it is resisted with suspicion. We need to be delivered from such prejudices.”

Pastor Joseph _____, married, five children, 28 years a State Reformed pastor, council member in his local canton, offered this: “I am

not here as a representative of the state church. I am here because of the moving of God's Spirit upon me. I will tell you of some of my struggle and search. By it I made two mistakes as it relates to my State Reformed Church.

"Another pastor's wife called to say there are eight adults at their house asking for rebaptism. Her husband didn't know what to say or do. I confidently told her to send them to me—I know how to handle these kinds of people. State regulations clearly and strictly forbid rebaptism.

"But when they came, I found them true-hearted, convincingly filled with the love of God, genuinely committed to faith and biblical obedience. They proved themselves worthy of baptism.

"They were convincing me, a pastor, rather than me swaying them. I read my Bible in a new way. I found no instance [in Scripture] of infant baptism. I could not go further. I could not cop out by merely saying church law forbids it. The Spirit of God would not let me rest. My first mistake was my assuming I could handle their problem.

"My second mistake was when I put my new position on adult baptism in writing and sent it to the state church officials. They reacted by stating that adult baptism is not

possible.

"In our church, God desires the true reformation to come and take over.

"God gave us Felix Manz and Conrad Grebel and we violently took them away. We must replace Zwingli so the true reformation can proceed. I beg of you, **come over and help us** so we can follow the Lord and speak forth His message. We need to be healed. We need to be raised from the dead. We believe God is [doing] and will yet do great things. Without you we are too weak. Give us your tears—we desire healing. Give us your prayers—we need your strength. But, most of all, we need your visits, your fellowship and your teaching.

"Jesus gives the Great Commission to baptize and teach all things. This is the work that connects us. Our State Reformed Church is against us for our new position. They said to me, **'We don't want to commune with you.'**"

This Reconciliation and Healing Conference has two sides. One side is that someone is making a worthy response to their desire for forgiveness and brotherly reconciliation. These nominal Reformers are sincerely seeking biblical renewal.

The other side is, that while some readers would not approve (I also didn't) of everything that took place

at this historic meeting, we also are doing nothing in the form of communication or fellowship with these earnest seekers. The match, sure enough, is a curious one—we, who are plain people, and these ecclesiastical Reformers.

Were the Apostle Paul living today and were he to read about this in *Calvary Messenger* while sitting easily in his Lazy Boy recliner some Sunday afternoon, he might get to the end of the report, have a good yawn and say to himself, “I wonder if

these people are really sincere. They haven’t changed for generations. It might be good if somebody would take a little time during next winter’s skiing season in the Alps and check it out.” No way. I think he would bid that Lazy Boy a quick farewell and book passage to Switzerland at his earliest convenience—or perhaps his earliest inconvenience!

The Bottom Line is—living moments, set in motion by God, never fizzle out, shrivel up or otherwise die!



Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?

A. W. Tozer

Religion has become jolly good fun right here in this present world, and what’s the hurry about heaven anyway? Christianity, contrary to what some had thought, is another higher form of entertainment. Christ has done all the suffering. He has shed all the tears and carried all the crosses; we have but to enjoy the benefits of His heartbreak in the form of religious pleasures modeled after the world but carried on in the name of Jesus.

History reveals that times of suffering for the Church have...always sobered God’s people and encouraged them to look for and yearn after the return of their Lord. Our present preoccupation with this world may be a warning of bitter days to come. God will wean us from the earth some way—the easy way if possible, the hard way if necessary. It is up to us.

Selected from *The Best of Tozer*, p. 57.



Don’t count the things you do—

do the things that count.

marriages

Beachy-Overholt

Bro. Wendell, son of Alvin and Elsie Beachy, Plain City, OH, and Sis. Judith, daughter of John and Linda Overholt, Minerva, OH, on May 28, 2005, at North Canton Church of Christ, for Christian Fellowship by Leonard Overholt.

Beachy-Schlabach

Bro. Durlin, son of Ivan and Elsie Beachy, Free Union, VA, and Sis. Emily, daughter of Alvin and Irene Schlabach, Dade City, FL, on April 15, 2005, at Crittenden Drive Church of Christ, Russellville, KY, for Providence Mennonite Fellowship, by Ivan Beachy.

Byler-Yutzy

Bro. David, son of William and Erma Byler, Auburn, KY, and Sis. Sara, daughter of Norman and Rhoda Yutzy, Hutchinson, KS, at Cedarcrest A.M. Church on June 11, 2005, by Paul L. Miller.

Hostetler-Miller

Bro. Marvin, son of Norman and Anna Mary Hostetler, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Karen Sue, daughter of Raymond and Ada Miller, Uniontown, OH, at North Canton Church of Christ, Canton, OH, on March 26, 2005, by Homer Zook.

Miller-Border

Bro. Anthony, son of Mark and Faith Miller, Minerva, OH, and Sis. Sarah, daughter of Ronald and Ruth Border, Mi-

nerva, OH, on June 11, 2005, at Christian Fellowship by Leonard Overholt.

Miller-Schrock

Bro. Nathan, son of Levi and Sarah Mae Miller, Bloomfield, IN, and Sis. Marietta, daughter of Willie and Carolyn Schrock, Bloomfield, IN, at First Christian Church, Linton, IN, for Believers Fellowship, June 24, 2005, by Marvin Yoder.

Morrison-Thayer

Bro. Jim, son of Brian Morrison and Kimberly Fields, and Sis. Magdalena, daughter of Richard and the late Mary Esther Thayer, Tampa, KS, at Center A.M. Church, on June 16, 2005, by David M. Yoder.

Otto-Plank

Bro. Wilbur Eugene, son of Omer and Lorene Otto, Arthur, IL, and Sis. Bethany LeAnn, daughter of Merle and Linda Plank, Arcola, IL, on June 18, 2005, at Sunnyside Mennonite Church for Pleasant View Church by Howard Kuhns.

Yutzy-Miller

Bro. Jason, son of Alvin and Naomi Yutzy, Sarcoxie, MO, and Sis. Julia Ann, daughter of Fannie (now Mrs. Alvin Byler) and the late Joe Miller, Grove City, MN, at Evangelical Free Church for Believers Fellowship Church, Grove City, MN, on May 27, 2005, by Melvin Beiler.

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

cradle roll

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

Byler, Steve and Ruth (Wengerd), Sarasota, FL, first child and son, Jared Steven, May 11, 2005.

Esh, Emanuel and Miriam (Fisher), Lewisburg, PA, sixth child, first son, Jaydon Kyle, May 15, 2005.

Forrest, Tom and Holly (Greenawalt), Gap, PA, fourth child, second dau., Leah Anne, June 4, 2005.

Freeman, Homer and Martha (Graber), Bloomfield, IN, fourth child, third dau., Crystal Joann, June 17, 2005.

Gingerich, Nelson and Melody (Kratzer), Richfield, PA, thirteenth child, eighth dau., Honor Destiny, May 19, 2005.

Graber, Galen and Mary Jane (Graber), Greensburg, KY, eighth child, second son, Thomas James, June 13, 2005.

Jantzi, Derek and Janice (Gerber), Wellesley, ON, second child and son, Javon Daryl, May 4, 2005.

Kauffman, Richard and Mary Ann (Peachey), Rural Retreat, VA, first child and dau., Alexis Nicole, May 27, 2005.

King, Mahlon and Elsie (King), New Holland, PA, seventh child (one deceased), second dau., Kara Janae, June 16, 2005.

Lengacher, Galen and Esther (Miller), Greensburg, KY, first child and dau., Alisha Yvonne, June 3, 2005.

Miller, Conrad and Arlene (Weaver), Arlington, KS, third child, second dau., Victoria Rose, May 24, 2005.

Miller, Dwight and Karen (Troyer), Partridge, KS, fifth child, second dau., Emileen Ruth, June 9, 2005.

Miller, Galen and Edith (Hershberger), LaGrange, IN, second child, first son, Carson Andre`, June 25, 2005.

Nisly, Arlyn and Brenda (Nisly), Brooklyn, NY, second and third children, first and second daughters, Chalonna Corynn and Clarisa Honoree, June 4, 2005.

Nisly, Leland and Yvonne (Gingerich), Hutchinson, KS, second child, first son, Audric Rene, June 7, 2005.

Peachey, Johnny and Wanda (Yoder), Rural Retreat, VA, first child and son, Travis Craig, June 9, 2005.

Sommers, Jason and Miriam (Zook), Rural Retreat, VA, second child, first son, Marcus Allen, May 26, 2005.

Stoltzfus, Allen and Mary Ann (Yoder), Mifflinburg, PA, fourth child, second son, Judson Allen, April 25, 2005.

Stoltzfus, Jim and Angela Faith (Peachey), McVeytown, PA, second child, first son, Jordan Elmer, May 30, 2005.

Weaver, Ben and Sheryl (Stutzman), Auburn, KY, second child and dau., Elaine Hope, May 8, 2005.

Weaver, Levi Jr. and Glenda (Stutzman), Russellville, KY, second child, first dau., Kate Jennifer, May 27, 2005.

ordination

Bro. Matthew Peachey, 28, Lewistown, PA, was ordained to the office of deacon to serve at Valley View A.M. Church on May 8, 2005. Preordination messages were brought by Floyd Stoltzfus, New Holland, PA.

The charge was given by Eli B. King, Jr., assisted by John U. Lapp and Jonas J. E. Miller. Also in the lot were Mervin Peachey and Loren Yoder.

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

Wingard, Faron and Roselyn (Weaver), Montezuma, GA, fifth child, second dau., Melissa Dawn, April 15, 2005.

Yoder, Jonathan and Joyce (Miller), Dunmore East, County Waterford, Ireland, first child and son, Jonathan Patrick, May 12, 2005.

Yoder, Randall and Serena (Sommers), Middleburg, PA, first child and dau., Jennifer Dawn, May 30, 2005.

Zook, Jesse and Laura (Peachey), Mifflin, PA, seventh child, fifth son, Jeremy Lynn, June 14, 2005.

Your



day will

probably go

the way the

corners of

your mouth

turn.



obituaries

Mullet, Ida J., 84, died April 30, 2005, at Goshen, IN. She was born in Reno County, KS, Dec. 11, 1920, daughter of Jonas and Sarah (Schrock) Mullet.

She was a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen.

Surviving are three sisters, Tillie Miller, Yoder, KS; Martha (Mrs. William Yoder), Goshen; and Mary Metzler, Goshen; and one brother, Ervin (Bonnie) Mullet, Goshen.

Preceding her in death were her parents; step mother, Mary Ann Mullet; three brothers, Enos, "Pete;" N.J., "Bud;" and Henry Mullet; and two sisters, Leta Yoder Hodgekiss and Nina Ciot Gimmey.

Funeral services were held at Fair Haven May 4, with Wilbur Yoder and Cornelius Beachy serving. Burial was in the Thomas Cemetery.

Weaver, Elsie (Lapp) (Raber), 91, died at Hartville, OH, surrounded by family. She was born in Uniontown, OH, Sept. 22, 1913, daughter of the late John and Lydia (King) Lapp.

She was baptized in her youth in the King Church and was a member of Pleasant View A.M. Church.

She was married to Henry E. Raber on Nov. 28, 1935. They lived in matrimony for 36 years. He died on April 1, 1972. To this union were born seven sons and three daughters: Wayne (Kay) Raber; John (Ann) Raber, both Sarasota, FL; Alvin Raber, Phoenix, AZ; David (Amanda) Raber, Antrim, OH; Alfred (Edna) Raber, Hartville, OH; Leroy Raber, Columbus, OH; Verdon Earl (Sue) Raber, Atwater, OH; Lydia Mae (John) Miller, Middlebury, IN; Keturah (Paul) Sommers, Minerva, OH; Alice (Crist) Troyer, Hartville, OH. Also surviving are 39 grandchildren, 84 great grandchildren, and two step great grandchildren.

On July 30, 1978, she was married to Sam Weaver from Trenton, KY. They lived in matrimony 19 years. Surviving are two stepsons: Reuben and Samuel Weaver, and three step daughters: Elsie Coblentz, Frieda Stutzman, and Susie Yoder, and a number of step grand and great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by two brothers, Alva and Isaac Lapp; three sisters: Rebecca Overholt, Sarah Yoder and Ina Troyer. Surviving are one brother, Andrew Lapp and one sister, Rachel Raber.



*A poor appetite for good books
leads to intellectual malnutrition.*

observations

One reason that youth are such an important part of the church is not only because of their energy and idealism for the present, but also their future contribution as members of the body of Christ. The church without young people has a serious energy deficiency and a dismal future. The youth group whose ideals are not compatible with that of the larger body casts a dark cloud of uncertainty on that church's future. For me, this identifies and highlights an urgent need worthy of our serious attention.

Let us consider several possible results when there is a significant generation gap:

—If such persons continue the path of youthful independence apart from the larger body, they will very likely end up somewhere outside of the body of their upbringing.

—It is also possible that a congregation will respond to such a problem by accommodating youthful tendencies. When this is done without giving priority consideration to certain Bible principles, it results in finally blending into cultural surroundings with compromise of scriptural integrity.

Observation teaches us that this is not an unlikely possibility. Does it not seem clear that in both of the

above scenarios God's provision for a better resolution was somehow missed? Let us, by God's grace, pursue a better way. Generation gaps (or other gaps) are foreign language to the body that is "fitly framed together," and where every member is committed to the welfare of the entire body. And yet we know only too well that too often things are less than ideal.

Let us consider factors that contribute to unity and harmony in the body:

—Open communication and mutual trust and respect between youth and older members.

—A godly pastoral concern on the part of leadership for the spiritual welfare of all members.

—The freedom to raise honest questions on the part of the rising generation.

—The ability to discern between honest questions and rebellion and self will.

—An awareness of body functions and a commitment of loyalty to the body.

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The occasion for the above comments is partly the result of efforts on the part of our new Youth Editor, Ernest Eby. His findings indicate that only a minority of constituent young people read this periodical. This makes us very seriously ask

what we should be doing differently. Ministers who preach, teachers who teach and writers who write cannot reach people who “aren’t there.” This may well be part of the reason why there is sometimes a lack of closeness between members of different generations.

What better time to pause for serious evaluation and appeal to our young people than when a new editor with fresh energy and creative ideas is being introduced? As I visited recently with several unit leaders and parents, several things seemed clear:

Youth and older persons all tend to have busy schedules and interests that compete for our time. In several cases parents and leaders resolved to provide easier access for young people to pick up and read what comes to the home or service unit. If there are things that we could do to make *Calvary Messenger* more valuable and more attractive we would love to hear from you. If those who read *Calvary Messenger* can feel good about recommending it to others, especially young people, it would certainly be more helpful than if it’s not read.



The June 20, 2005, *Mennonite Weekly Review* gives prominence to a report of Mennonite population in the U.S. this includes a color-coded

map listing the number of members and congregations in each state. The statistics are based on the Anabaptist/Mennonite statistics project by C. Nelson Hostetter and *Anabaptist World*, co-authored by Hostetter and Donald B. Kraybill, Herald Press, 2001. Editor Paul Schrag says that statistics are current for 2005.

The report strikes me as being informative and interesting. Schrag’s editorial pertains to this issue. The map is accompanied by a list of 23 Mennonite groups. Total U.S. Mennonite census is reported at 236,084. Other U.S. Anabaptists include the following: Church of the Brethren, Amish, Brethren in Christ, and Hutterites. Their combined total is reported at 291,887. World population of Mennonite and related churches is just under 1.3 million.

How we respond to such a report may depend partly on our background and the choices we have made for ourselves. May we be open to learn whatever the Lord would teach us. Let us note the following:

—The following states each have more than 10,000 and are listed in order of their numbers: PA, OH, KS, IN, CA, VA.

—The new Mennonite Church USA is reported at 111,039.

—The Old Order Amish show 115,455. Eight sub-groups of Amish bring the total to 130,778. Beachy

Amish Mennonites are included as a sub-group at 8,265. New Order are reported at 4,029.

—Of the 23 Mennonite groups listed the following six have more than 10,000 members: Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Brethren, Old Order Mennonites, Independent Conferences, Church of God in Christ (Holdeman) and Conservative Mennonite Conference.

—Mennonite Christian Fellowship is not included as an Amish sub-group. Their number is reported at 1,146 in 23 congregations.

—I find it interesting that the report uses the terms Independent and Un-affiliated. These terms seem similar and yet not necessarily synonymous. It would be desirable if such groups were open to wholesome interaction and interdependence with similar groups.

• • • • •


It occurs to me that from these interesting listings some more general observations can be made:

—The larger numbers are those whose lifestyle and appearance is

integrated with contemporary culture and also those known as Old Order, both Amish and Mennonite. A much smaller number are a variety of groups that are neither Old Order nor mainstream. This includes many listings in the Mennonite column. To call them conservative Anabaptists would address their ideals of lifestyle and theology. They would number roughly 30,000.

—It makes sense from the broader perspective to make such a report on the U.S., but to have included Canada would more accurately reflect the census of our readership.

—To assume that we have arrived or that we are doing as well as we should is unrealistic. It is also a formula for drift and apostasy. We do well to acknowledge that we are not immune to such possibilities.

—May God guard us against an air of superiority or self-sufficiency or condescension. Let us remember that which is taught in the Christian Scriptures must never be considered optional. —DLM 

BE CREATIVE

an echo is pretty accurate,

but it does not add anything new.

Wars in American History

Guy F. Hershberger, (1896-1989)

[Some less known incidents in our country's beginnings are not comforting. What do the following facts of history do for your appreciation for the line in the patriotic song, "Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just; and this be our motto, 'In God is our trust.'"? —PLMJ]

The American Revolution

Each year pupils in all the schools throughout the land spend part of their time studying history. This is one of the important subjects in the curriculum and it has many valuable lessons to teach. But, like all other subjects, it must be studied with care if its lessons are to be correctly learned. A good illustration of this is the case of wars, which receive considerable attention in most history books.

War is a great evil and when taught as such has some valuable lessons to teach. Studied from this point of view the pupil not only learns of the great destruction wrought by war. He also learns that the causes of war are usually evil in themselves, and that if the persons responsible for these causes would do what is right there would be no wars. This means that wars are fought because someone does wrong. And then all who help

to promote them after they begin, do wrong likewise. But this is not what the history books have generally said. Instead they often say, or at least imply, that some foreign nation treated the United States in an unjust manner. Then the U. S. was forced into a war of self-defense. In this way most Americans get the impressions that our country was on the right side in all its wars, while the opposing countries were in the wrong.

Now, it is the writer's opinion that there was no absolutely "right side" in any of the American wars. In each of these wars the nation who fought against America can advance arguments as plausible as those of the USA to prove that it was in the right. Then when we place the two sets of arguments side by side one must generally conclude that neither was in the right. And in one or two cases, it seems to the writer, the United States was even less in the right than her opponent.

With this principle in mind, let us look at the American Revolution. This War for Independence has become so sacred in the minds of some people that they are horrified when it is suggested that the fathers of the country were wrong in some of the things they did. But if people would

only be less emotional on this point, and do a little more clear thinking, it might cause people to take a more reasonable attitude during present-day international difficulties.

One thing which caused the American colonies to revolt in 1776 was the British navigation laws. These laws regulated colonial trade. They required that certain articles must be purchased in England and not in other countries. Then some merchants in Boston and Philadelphia evaded these laws because they did not like them. They often brought goods in from Spain or Holland in violation of the law. This was called smuggling—a form of lawbreaking very much like bootlegging. What we call bootlegging today generally refers to buying and selling contrary to law. These Boston bootleggers or smugglers of the 1760's and 1770's bought and sold liquor and other articles contrary to law. They were law-violators. John Hancock, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was one of these smugglers. At one time he was sued for \$500,000 because of his smuggling activities. Now when the British government tried to stop this smuggling it was simply trying to enforce the law. Some people many not have liked the law, but this law was no more unreasonable than many of the tariff laws which we have today. And certainly

it would not be considered patriotic today to revolt against the government because of a tariff law.

Another cause of the American revolt was the British land policy. In 1763 the British government ordered that no more land should be granted to settlers west of the Appalachian mountains until there had been time to purchase the land from the Indians. The plan was to purchase the lands and induce the Indians to move further west. Then the settlers would be allowed to move in peacefully after the land was vacated. But many Americans were impatient and pushed ahead in violation of the law, even if it meant trouble with the Indians. So here Americans violated another law and stirred up Indian troubles while doing it. This was one of the causes for the trouble between England and America, and America's part in it seems very selfish, indeed.


The Stamp Act of 1765 was another point in dispute. Many people have an idea that this was a terrible tax levied solely for the benefit of England. This idea is erroneous. In the first place, it was not a heavy tax. In the second place, the proceeds of this tax were not to go to England. They were to be used to pay a part of the cost of maintaining an army here for the defense of the colonies against the French and Indians. Many of the colonists had earlier asked for

such protection. And now the British government felt the colonies should help pay for it by means of this stamp tax. But the colonies objected, saying they were opposed to taxation without representation. This objection, however, was not always an honest one. Many of the colonists objected because they were opposed to a tax of any sort, even though they may have approved the military protection provided for them.

The Boston Tea Party of 1773 is also supposed to have been a very patriotic act of the Bostonians. But what are the facts? It was observed that many colonists were opposed to duties and taxes. This was particularly true of the merchants in Boston. In 1773 the British East India Company was allowed to ship some tea to America without paying the regular duty in England. This enabled the company to sell tea in Boston at a lower price than ordinarily. The people should have been greatly pleased by this. But the company had special agents here to distribute its tea and because of the lower price they would have been able to undersell the local merchants. The merchants did not like this, so they organized a mob and destroyed \$75,000 worth of tea by throwing it into the sea. One might be able to agree that this competition was a

bit unfair, but who can justify mob violence which wantonly destroys the property of a competitor? And yet some people think this deed was one of the heroic acts of the Boston patriots in 1773. Instead it was an act of vandalism on the part of merchants who were almost constantly engaged in smuggling, an activity which all law-abiding citizens disapprove.

Of course, it may be argued that England was unwise in passing some of its laws. This can be granted, and yet it would be hard to prove that they were really unreasonable or that they caused hardship in the colonies. On the other hand, the British government thought they were reasonable enough. So we see there is another side to the story of the American Revolution. The American colonists were not right in everything they did and the Revolutionary War was not necessary. If they had been less selfish and if they had always been law-abiding citizens, and a little more reasonable, the war might have been avoided. This is true of most wars.

(Used by permission of Paul Hershberger, son of the late Guy F. Hershberger. Guy F. Hershberger also authored the classic, *War, Peace and Nonresistance*; Herald Press, which can be ordered through your local Christian bookstore.) 

Unity in the Unit

Floyd Stoltzfus

We refer to personnel as a “unit” in a mission or voluntary service setting. For those who have had experience in mission work or in a voluntary service unit, it is generally conceded that personnel problems among the workers are often the cause of greatest concern. These problems are also the most difficult to solve. My thesis is not that difficulties related to mission or Christian service are unavoidable or present in every such endeavor. No! Victory in Jesus is available for everyone everywhere.

From eternity past there has always been a perfect unity and full harmony in the Trinity of God. As a believer in Jesus Christ and a baptized member of the church we become a part of that eternal unity in the Triune God. We are to keep this unity of the Spirit and not to pump up some superficial, self-gratifying spirit of unity. Adin Troyer said, “Unity is a consequence of something that already has taken place in your life as a Christian. It is that which follows from the fullness of Christ having been forgiven of our sins through His Blood.”

It would be a great advantage and indeed a blessing if we as God’s

servants could learn early to put off the old man with its evil deeds and “put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Often unresolved conflicts and unsanctified thoughts, speech and actions travel with us to distant lands. Satan takes advantage of these in our weakest, most stressful times.

What are we to do when the schedule is overwhelming, or when the pressures of Christian service squeeze us into a strait and the demands of those within the unit “grind” us?

There may be disagreements and irritations which cause the cogwheels of the brain to turn furiously. Such friction and heat (really anger) develop a contrary thought pattern. This can result in quick-tempered, uncontrolled flare-ups causing great damage to the glorious body of Christ. There might be collisions of opinion, interest, or feelings about trivial matters that cause the carnal mind to sink into deep resentment and to rage in envious thoughts resulting in unkind remarks. It certainly does not produce the peaceable fruit of righteousness, but it does bring bit-


terness, resulting in an unforgiving spirit, and even self-pity.

Is there a better road? The Apostle Paul has excellent advice in Ephesians 4:1-3. These verses are like a sandwich: Verse one is the first piece of bread: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." "Beseech" indicates strong appeal. Paul is urging and pleading with us to lead a life worthy of the divine calling to which we are called. We are called "out of darkness into God's marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9); into the "grace of Christ," (Galatians 1:6); "unto holiness" (1 Thessalonians 2:7); "unto glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3). We have a high calling, a holy calling and a heavenly calling!

Verse two is the meat of the sandwich: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." First it is with lowliness (deep humility) that we are to walk as opposed to pride, arrogance and conceit. To experience "unity in the unit," it is important not to think of ourselves higher than we ought to think, but to think soberly. We are to esteem others better than ourselves. Someone has said, "Humility is that grace that, when you know you have it, you have lost it." It means knowing ourselves, accepting ourselves and living for the glory of God. Secondly, we are to exercise

love's strength (meekness) in our vocation. This is one of the most effective characteristics in maintaining the unity of the Spirit. Meekness is the spiritual strength to be submissive without retaliating. Meekness refrains from seeking private revenge. It yields quietly to God's will regardless of the consequences and without compromising with evil. Thirdly, it is with longsuffering that we are called to forbear one another in love. Love does not keep a record of wrongs done against it. Longsuffering is the ability to endure discomfort without fighting back. It rather bears with the other person's infirmities. It kindly encourages, blesses, and prays for the brother or sister who is difficult to live with.

Verse three is the final piece of bread: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This makes the sandwich complete and binds it together. "Endeavoring to keep" means being eager to maintain, or guard, the unity of the Spirit. It means to work at it with cautious, diligent care. [Luther's rendering: "Seid fließig zu halten die Einigkeit im Geist" indicates active eagerness. —PLM]

The spiritual unity of the home, the work place, the church, and the voluntary service unit in a mission program is the responsibility of each person involved and the job never ends. [Amen! —PLM] 

Ministers' Meeting Messages—2005

A set of eight tapes of these messages are available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA 20136, for \$40, plus S & H.

4. A Vision for Christ-Like Service

Dave Stoltzfoos, Leola, PA

My goal for this sermon is by God's grace to energize and motivate you to a deeper level of service and to go home to your congregations and motivate, guide and teach them with the motivation that you have received.

In the first part of this message, we shall look at the life of Jesus Christ. We shall note five areas of His service to individuals and to groups of people. In Matthew 4:17-19, are Jesus' first recorded words in public ministry. They were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then he said to two fishermen, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." In Acts 1:8, we have His last recorded words before He ascended: "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Between these two times of speaking, Jesus was thronged with lots of people on many

occasions. On other occasions Jesus broke away from the crowds and spent time with individuals from all segments of society. I've been drawn to the Savior's priorities. I believe He wants this for you and me. He wants us to relate to all kinds of people and to all cultures.

Jesus reached out to all people to invite them to change spiritually and to give them a message of hope. Even in rebuke, Jesus held out hope. Let us notice five ways He reached out:

1. Jesus was an Initiator. In Luke 14, when He was invited to heal the man with dropsy, He wanted to take it to the next level, the spiritual level. In Luke 19, in the case of Zaccheus, even though Zaccheus showed keen interest, Jesus could have ignored him. Today there are many people who desire an encounter with Jesus Christ, but they don't know where to position themselves to do this. They need someone to guide them. It should be our deep passion to be ready to help such people meet Jesus. We should be noticing, perhaps even looking for, those with a desire for a better look at the Master.

2. Jesus was a Master Conversationalist. In Luke 10, people were testing Jesus. In verses 25-29, a lawyer stood up with a question of

what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus gives him the story of the Good Samaritan. When he was asked such questions, Jesus did not just give them pat answers. Nor did He fill conversation about the weather and politics and current events. Often Jesus would respond to their question with a deeper question—a question that was closer to the heart of the matter. Of course, we are limited because we don't know people's hearts. But we can listen and we can gently ask questions and thus get a better understanding of what is on their minds. From there, we can better delve into the deeper, unspoken heart issues they face and seek answers for.

3. Jesus was able to go beyond religion, social standing, and wealth. Jesus talked to men and women; to Jews and Gentiles; to the rich and the poor. We tend to open conversation with men like Nicodemus, "You must be saved," or other 'you' commands. Even though what we say is right, it can reflect impatience. If we would do it like Jesus did, we might bring into the conversation word pictures and ask well-timed questions. He mentioned the need for the new birth. That caught Nicodemus' interest. He further spoke of wind and water, and later of the brass serpent Moses put on a pole to stop death in the camp. Jesus recognized that the rich young

ruler and Nicodemus both needed more than religion. In spite of their knowledge, they needed a Savior. Nicodemus rightly called Jesus a teacher; and the rich young man called him good master, but those acknowledgements do not save. It's not knowledge of the Bible that counts. It's not being a good person, it's not being influential, it's not being talented or wealthy or Amish Mennonite that saves. Those things may impress people, but they are meaningless to God, by themselves. The only thing that makes anything else of any value in God's sight, is being born again. That makes other things useful or meaningful to God.

4. Jesus was able to show His humanity. He asked the woman at the well for a drink of water to quench His physical thirst. It is in Jesus' humanity that we approach Jesus. If He had not become human, there would be no way for us to approach Him. That's how it was in the Old Testament. Hebrews 2:16 and 17 points this out. He did not take "on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." It's in Jesus' humanity that we relate to Him. It's the same for

unbelievers to relate to us. We should never, never forget what it was like to be lost! As we relate to people, a deep compassion should flow out of our lives for their lost condition. We should be transparent with our feelings, our sufferings, our wants and needs. If we believe we must be some super saints or some elite class of people, the lost will not be able to relate to us. It is less than honest to present ourselves in that way. We share a common ground with the unsaved. If there is a difference between us and the unsaved, it should not be because of our accomplishments, but because of God's work in our lives.

5. Jesus was able to break barriers. Throughout the Gospels, we see that pattern. Tax collectors (Jews who worked for the Roman government) were virtual outcasts. Yet Jesus ate at such a man's home. It is a reminder that being a good person does not get us into heaven, neither does having been an ungodly person necessarily keep us out. When a person repents and turns fully to God by faith in Jesus Christ, he is in the kingdom of God. That is the message of salvation for every person, of every race, of every walk of life. I need a better vision of that. I need a deeper realization that that's the truth. Christian fellowship gives us great encouragement and needed account-

ability in the body of Christ. Yet, in the early church we do not see true believers relating only to their own kind. They relate to people outside their circle. When we relate only to Christians, we do not mirror Jesus Christ. Jesus went to sinners and ate with them. Such exposure takes us out of our comfort zones, but it is a work that Jesus has entrusted to us. The only Jesus many in this world see is the Jesus that is reflected in me and you, His followers. Thus any encounter with the unsaved can turn into a divine encounter. Wherever Jesus went, He offered hope. The woman taken in adultery, the thief on the cross and many others all found hope.

All of us have stood by a body of water and thrown a stone into the water. When we did, the stone quickly disappeared, but a series of ripples went out from there that went on and on. It is like life. We must ask, "What ripples am I setting in motion because of my words and works for Jesus Christ?"

I am convinced that if our faith is to be transferable to the next generation, it will have to be a faith that supercedes teaching and education. The faith is passed on not merely by education, but by example. Paul taught this in Phil. 4:9, when he wrote, "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received and seen

in me, do..." We become assured of truth, when we see it lived. I am more and more convinced that faith that is transferable, must be seen in the lives of those doing the teaching. It is not passed along by dogmatic teaching, but in living. If there is one consistent theme in the complaints of rebellious youth, it is the gap between what is taught and what is lived. If the vision of service is not in your heart, it should not surprise you if it is missing in the lives of your people.

There is a common problem called the bystander problem. It is this: The greater the crowd of people looking at a need, the fewer there are that will help. As the number of bystanders increase, the assumption increases that someone else will respond to the need. As it pertains to missionary assignment and voluntary service, many of us ministers model bystanders rather than responders. For far too many of us, the call of God is muffled, so we find it hard to hear the needs of people either nearby or far away. We regress to thinking that our money is the chief need, and that if we can work hard and live the lifestyle of an upper-class American, we can serve God. Thus, if we're not careful, we pass the person who needs the Lord.

The tithe definitely applies to money, but it applies to more than money. How would it be if we would all give

10% of our time in service inside or outside the county we live in? That would be just over five weeks or 37 days a year, in which we would not work for wages. I think this should be a gauge for every Christian. I know of people who do this. They're not poor people and their businesses are doing fine. Our level of lifestyles should be dictated so that we can take off and serve people. This is not a time to serve ourselves, but taking off time to serve others. Or to look at it differently, how about tithing the years of married life? Thus a couple might give anywhere from three to seven years in service.

How about tithing 10% of your members for Christian service? Does a goal of 10% of your families in full-time service at all times sound like a feasible plan? How about your pastoral team? Would that not also be a good goal?

Why haven't these things happened? Maybe it's because we haven't had a vision for it. Thus we have not initiated or organized any programs along this line. I seriously doubt that anything like this will happen, unless you pastors get together and talk about it and make a plan. We can get it done, but we need a plan.

Another reason might be that we don't really want it, because it disperses our families and our communities. For some of us that could

mean that our children cannot attend the school, and our youth will not be able to participate in a large youth group and take part in youth activities. As pastors we don't want it, because it requires ordinations, and too often ordinations become a crisis. We should not think of ordination as an end of service away from home.

Another reason is that we have regressed to thinking that we need businesses, houses, properties and the "toys to go with it." But it may take years, decades, or a whole lifetime to accumulate those things. By the time we achieve such goals, our prime years are past. There is something about this emphasis on business success and financial security that leaves a real emptiness. The next generation may not fully identify it with words, but they see the emptiness.

Our ease of travel has allowed us to focus on lots of different things, rather than concentrating on one or two. For instance, going to Asia is not new. But now, we can get there in two days. Until quite recently, it took weeks and sometimes months to get to remote parts of that continent. If you've spent that amount of time, you won't quickly turn around and come home. Missionaries of 50 years or more ago tended to be focused on one or two things. And when they got there, they stayed.

In John 21:4-6, Jesus' last recorded miracle is given. It is a miraculous catch of fish. When some of the dispirited disciples went fishing, thinking Jesus' life had ended in failure, they returned to shore. Jesus called and seemed to say, "I see you didn't catch anything." That must have stung. He reminded these fishermen of their empty boat. These people had a boat, they had manpower; they had smarts and skills, they had equipment to catch fish, but they had no fish. A man on shore called to them and told them, "Throw the net on the other side and you will catch many fish." Theirs was not a wide boat. What difference does it make which side of the boat? I think this is a picture of Christian service.

Jesus is teaching them and us that success in ministry is not due to our eloquence, our skills, or any program we can devise, or our power of persuasion or anything else that comes from us. It is due entirely to His empowerment of us as we follow the Word of God. He does the work; we are simply His servants. He works through us. If we forget that, we can expect to spend many a night, rowing and toiling, catching no fish. It was not a matter of the left or the right side; the "right side" is where Jesus tells us to fish.

We must cast off everything that comes from ourselves. God cannot

fill us unless we're empty. Throughout the New Testament we are constantly reminded not to be wise in our own eyes, because if we're wise in our own eyes, we cannot expect the wisdom of God to fill us and guide us. One of the reasons we don't have more of God in our lives, is that we have so much of ourselves. We're filled with our own reasoning and our own methods of fishing. We fill ourselves with who we are and what we do and where we live and what we have in terms of "toys." There is nothing inherently wrong with these things, unless they push God out of the picture.

The greatest thing that happened

on the sea of Tiberias, is not what happened in the boat, but what happened on the shore as the discouraged disciples fellowshiped with Jesus. The primary reason for serving Jesus is not so we have some big fish stories to tell, but because of the command of God. Let us serve Him out of obedience to Him. The greatest times of fellowship with the Lord are those times when we are obedient to Him and are fishing like He tells us to fish. Too many people go to church, sing and pray and think they're having a good time, but they don't really serve. It's sad because they don't know what they're missing.



Communication—Old and New

Darlene Miller

Linn, MO

We wonder and marvel at this world
we live in.

We scorn new technology, but finally
give in.

We purchase new gadgets and think
they're just great!

But then we discover they're way
out of date.

Now what shall we do? Upgrade—
that's the key!

So many new choices, which one
shall it be?

We must have the best for good com-
munication!

We must stay abreast of what's new
in our nation.

We've come to depend on this man-
made communion

That links up the folks in all states
of the Union.

Just punch a few buttons, and stroke
a few keys;
To communicate now is really a
breeze!

Fiber optics and airwaves, we've
learned how to use them.

Though we must admit, many also
abuse them.

Still we laud the inventors of all this
great stuff

Who never will say that enough is
enough.

And we seem to forget, that since
time has begun,

The greatest of all is communica-
tion

That begins as a thought, as a need,
as a care,

Then ascends to our God on the
wings of a prayer!

This avenue surely exceeds all the
rest

For communion with God is the best
of the best!

We need no computers, and no CD-
ROM,

And we must not depend on three
W's dot com!

No cell phones to carry! No need to
download.

To get through to God, there's no
secret code.

The signal's not busy at the end of
the line.

He's ready to listen—any time suits
Him fine.

The reception is always the best it
can be

Whether you're up on a mountain,
or in deepest valley.

All you need is a heart that is broken
and soft

And those words that you whisper
are carried aloft.

The distance they travel is beyond
comprehension,

So far beyond reach of mankind's
invention!

It takes less than a moment from your
mouth to His ears,

For before you have spoken He al-
ready hears.

And so, fellow humans, let me kindly
suggest,

When those electronic devices put
you to the test,

When they've failed you once more,
and you're close to despair,

Try sending a message on the wings
of a prayer!



A Personal Question

Jerry Yoder

Auburn, KY

And [Saul] trembling and astonished said, **Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?**

And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6).

It burst from the lips of Saul, the destroyer, on the road to Damascus. At the preaching of John the Baptist, the common people, the publicans, and the soldiers all responded with the age-old question, "What shall we do?" We should ask that question, too.

Please be forewarned, however, that we do so at great personal risk. There is a tremendous effort in the cause of Christianity today to get people "saved." To get people saved is good, but the error lies in presenting a partial gospel. The emphasis lies in salvation alone. Many merely ask, "**Lord, wilt thou have me?**" with little thought given to discipleship, contained in Saul's question, "**Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?**"


For Saul discipleship came almost in the same breath with salvation. Note how dramatically his encounter with God changed his life. Besides a name change (the destroyer who

breathed out threatenings and slaughter) he was changed into a sacrificial nobody in heaven's kingdom, in his words, "less than the least of all saints" (Ephesians 3:8). He went from one who delivered death warrants, to one who offered life and love in 1 Corinthians 13.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" is no magic phrase to gain access to God. We cannot negotiate with Him. The servant-master relationship is implied in Saul's question. We find it to be an unequal bargain indeed. We trade our filthy rags for a robe of righteousness, pride for humility, darkness for light, blindness for sight. We leave the prison of despair for the confidence of freedom, the pigpen of this world for the Father's house, the sentence of death for eternal life, and a wretched hut that will perish for a mansion in glory.

All this is just cause to embrace this personal question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Salvation is the work of a moment; discipleship is a lifelong experience.

[From *Beside the Still Waters*, May 19, 2005. Used by permission.] 

A Simple Life

Mary June Glick

Several definitions of *simple* include *uncomplicated, plain, easy, modest and genuine.*

We see Jesus' response to Martha (Luke 10:39-42) where He doesn't rebuke her for desiring to serve a good meal, but for her attitude of frustration and her excessive concern about work that needed to be done. In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus tells us not to worry or fret about what we are to eat, or drink or wear, but to seek first the Kingdom of God and all these other things would be taken care of by the God who knows our needs.

The big question is, "How do we reconcile this teaching to our busy lifestyle in our fast-paced world?" I've been listening to this heart cry of women both young and old. Most of us feel we are too busy. We long for a simpler way of life. Are we willing to pay the price to achieve this goal? This subject includes many different areas of life that are unique to women. **I would like to look at these in the next several months and would be glad to hear from you for suggestions or ways you have been able to simplify.**

This might include tips on food

preparation, grocery buying, recreation for the family, and so on. I realize that some people may not need to worry about finances, but I am also very aware that many of you may well be struggling in this area. It is difficult to be contented when our budget barely meets our needs.

Several of us older women were discussing contentment and all agreed we find ourselves to be more content with life and what we have than when we were younger. We asked the question, "Is it part of growing older or is it a quality we have developed?" I believe contentment is developed. I also believe it is number one in choosing a simpler life. *We learn* to be content.

1. Contentment is not having what we want, but wanting what we have.


2. Contentment rests on a vital relationship with Jesus Christ, which includes a daily quiet time with Him.

3. Contentment comes from taking time to "smell the roses" which simply means learning to enjoy the everyday things of life, the songs of birds, or any of the joys of nature. Teach your children to watch for

beauty. Go on a walk with them; be observant as you drive, slow down and enjoy the sunset.

4. Contentment avoids peer pressure. Don't try to keep up with the Joneses.

5. Contentment comes when we remember we are stewards of all God has given us.

So take time to sit on the porch this evening and think of ways to simplify your life. 

junior messages

The Story in the Attic—Part Two

The Child

Anita Yoder

Ligonier, IN

[This story combines fact and fiction. It is based on letters of Jerome Segers and his wife, Lijksen, found in Martyr's Mirror, pages 504-522, took place in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1551-1552, A.D. —AY]

Henry discovers his inheritance in the attic. What all did his parents leave him? Just some old clothes and a pack of letters?

I had many questions as I continued reading. Sometimes I got up to stretch and look out the window. I was thinking: *Faith, it had to be based on Jesus. I understand that He died for me, but I don't understand how Mother and Father could die for that.* I made myself comfortable and picked up another

letter. Father had written:

I wish for you my dear wife, a true, genuine, godly love, a true unfeigned, penitent faith, which works by love, a firm hope and confidence in God, and a firm steadfastness in your faith towards God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

He who has begun this good work in you, will through His grace and power, also carry it out and finish it...

Oh, that I might suffer for you; I should gladly offer my flesh for you. I herewith commend you to the Lord. Don't be worried about the child; for our friends will take care of it, and the Lord will take care of the baby...

I stopped reading. I was born

before mother died—I knew that. Here in this letter they are referring to me. They loved me. Like never before, I ached to know them, to see them, and to touch them, but they had died before I was old enough to remember them. I felt cheated. What did they look like? I had no idea. If only I would have seen them for my memory’s sake—then I could picture them in my mind.

Now, fifteen years later, I was alive, but I could easily have died before I had a chance to be born. Surely God’s hand was on my life back then, and surely He must care about me now. I grabbed Father’s boots and stepped into them. My father’s boots! Hadn’t I been held in God’s hand all along? I reached for another faded yellow letter:

For I am very sorrowful on your account, because you have to be imprisoned so long; and I would fain wish, had it been the will of the Lord, that you had been released; but now the Lord has willed it otherwise, because He means to try you, and to reveal His power and strength against all those who resist the truth.

I have written this letter in tears, because I have heard that your grief is so very great. I pray that you will write to me how you are. Herewith I commend you to the Lord.

I couldn’t stop crying; they had such great grief, yet they had found

their strength in God. It must have been in what they believed about God. I already knew that Jesus was God’s gift to mankind for dealing with sin. I had a lot more to think about after I read the ending to this letter:

We shall be clothed in white robes. Herewith I commend you unto the crucified Christ for consolation and joy; that He will keep you, satisfy you with His divine Word, feed you with the bread of life and of understanding, and give you to drink the water of wisdom from the fountain of life. May He keep your soul unto salvation. Amen.

They must have also found Jesus and His Word to satisfy them. How could they be joyful in such grief? I sat for a long time, deeply occupied with my thoughts.

(to be continued)

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Dear Readers,

Hi! My name is Julia Erb. I am eleven years old. My birthday is December 3, 1993. My parents are Allan and Linda Erb. I have two sisters; they are Elizabeth (15) and Dorcas (14). I would like a twin or penpal soon.

Julia Erb

5670 Deborah Glaister Line,
Route 2

Wellesley, Ontario, Canada

NOB 2TO



Dear Youth

Ernest Eby · Mountain View, AR

*In last month's Youth section, I asked for your response to the question, **In your minds, what factors contribute to youth being bored with life?***

In this issue, I am submitting a writing that I think suggests one answer to what makes life boring. Perhaps as you read it, you will be stimulated to make adjustments that will allow you to experience a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

*This Month's
QUESTION*

In your minds, what factors contribute to youth being bored with life?

The Road of Life

Anonymous

At first, I saw God as my observer,
my judge.

Keeping track of things I did wrong,
So as to know whether I merited
heaven or hell when I die.

He was out there sort of like a
president.

I recognized His picture when I saw it,
But I didn't know Him.

But later on when I met Christ,
It seemed as though life was rather
like a bike ride,

But it was a tandem bike,
And I noticed that Christ
Was in the back helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was
That He suggested we change places,
But life has not been the same since.

When I had control,
I knew the way.
It was boring, but predictable...
It was the shortest distance between
two points.

But when He took the lead,
He knew delightful long cuts,
up mountains,
and through rocky places
at breakneck speeds,
it was all I could do to hold on!

Even though it looked like madness,
He would say, “Pedal!”

I was worried and anxious and
asked,
“Where are you taking me?”
He smiled and didn’t answer,
And I started to learn to trust.

I forgot my boring life
And entered into adventure.
And when I’d say, “I’m scared,”
He’d lean back and touch my hand.

He took me to people with gifts that
I needed,
gifts of healing, acceptance, and joy.
They gave me gifts to take on my
journey,
My Lord’s and mine.

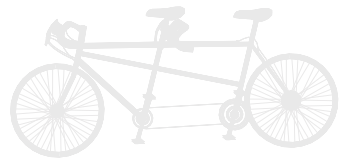
And we were off again.
He said, “Give the gifts away;
They’re extra baggage, too much
weight.”
So I did, to the people we met,
And I found that in giving I
received,

And still our burden was light.

I did not trust Him, at first, to be in
control of my life.
I thought He’d wreck it;
But He knows bike secrets,
knows how to make it bend to take
sharp corners,
knows how to jump to clear high
rocks,
knows how to fly to shorten scary
passages.

And I’m learning to keep quiet and
pedal in the strangest places
and I’m beginning to enjoy the view
and the cool breeze on my face
with my delightful constant
companion, Jesus Christ.

And when I’m sure I just can’t do
any more,
He just smiles and says... “Pedal.”



Consider this: Our society notices when youth are not embarrassed to live like Christ.

*Next Month’s
QUESTION*

“Why do you think that many youth are embarrassed about having people think that they are devout Christians?”

Please send your responses by August 20.

THOUGHT GEMS

Change is inevitable; growth is optional.



Life is 10% what happens to us, and 90% how we respond to it.



Our Lord does not open the windows of heaven to the person who does not open his Bible.



A bigot is a person who slams his mind in your face.



Mankind is the only species that blushes and the only one that needs to.



When God allows a burden to be put upon you, He will put His arms underneath you to help you carry it.



A man who is immersed in business all week should come for a breath of fresh air on Sunday.



Drive toward others as you would have others drive toward you.



Many people hate change that doesn't jingle in their pockets.

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