



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

Galatians 6:14

OCTOBER 2005

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OCTOBER 2005

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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Jesus, our Wonderful Savior

Martha M. King · Belleville, PA

JESUS—

Left the glories and splendor of
heaven,
Came to this sin-cursed earth,
Because of His love for mankind;
What a wonderful Savior!

JESUS—

Walked this world of sin and
wickedness,
Lived among men for thirty-three
years,
Was a perfect example for us;
What a wonderful Savior!

JESUS—

Was tempted in all points as we,
Yet without sin—blameless was He,
Is able to succour us who are
tempted;
What a wonderful Savior!

JESUS—

Gave His life so freely, so lovingly,
Suffered the shame and agony of
the cross,
To pay our awful debt of sin;
What a wonderful Savior!

JESUS—

Is able to keep us from falling,
To present us faultless before the
presence of His glory,
With exceeding joy, because He
loves us;
What a wonderful Savior!

JESUS—

Has gone to prepare mansions,
And some day return in the clouds
of glory,
To gather His faithful children
home;
What a wonderful, wonderful
Savior!



How to Help

One of the requisites to success is the rejection of irresponsible behavior. One must be firm in helping an inmate face up to his old lifestyle. If the M-2 [Match-Two] sponsor is so sympathetic to the excuses that he doesn't hold the inmate accountable for the past, present and future actions, the result is failure."

These words from a recent letter caught my attention. They were written to volunteers who pay monthly, one-hour visits to individual inmates in Hutchinson Correctional Facility. It was part of a letter from Gary Isaac, Director of Prison Ministries, which is an arm of Offender/Victim Ministries headquartered in Newton, Kansas.

Isaac further explains, "**The most kindly thing is to tell the truth, help the offender face up to his failures and encourage him in making the necessary changes. Real friends do not shrink from speaking truths that may be painful to hear, but that will provoke lasting behavioral change.**"

Such advice raises questions and comments: How does it sound to

you? Is it true? Is it tolerant enough? Is it good only for prison situations? Does corrective counsel require negative words? Surely it is true that positive words bring more desirable change than do negative words—or is it? Is he who gives corrective comments an adversary?

The Apostle Paul said: "Speak the truth in love." Apparently, two elements of worthwhile speech are truth and love. It seems I more readily choose the part about love than the part about truth. I tend to feel that I'm treading on private territory when I offer frank advice.

How do **you** resolve this issue?

How should we go about offering corrective comments we believe are needed? Can we balance truth with love, as well as love with truth? Is the order of positive and negative comments important? What understanding do we gain in this as we observe Jesus, the perfect Son of God?

Jesus often used stories to teach. Will you readers please do the same? A story, a personal experience, an incident observed, a testimony—any of these would be helpful! Send them my way.

I'd like to help this friend get out of prison as soon as he can handle it. While I gladly visit him every month, I wish I could help him make "new life in Christ" decisions that will go with him from this point on as long as he lives. The devil's lies he's believed in the past do not have to rule

his future. I am not his judge, but I think his eternal destiny hinges on changes Jesus desires for him.

How would Jesus have us give counsel that helps? Please write down your thoughts and send them to me no later than October 20. —PLM



Dreams or Reality?

Stephen Miller · Belle Center, OH

Life is so strange with its twists and its curves,
It dashes our hopes and frazzles our nerves.
All of our efforts are futile, it seems,
The castles we build are fleeting like dreams.

We long for the path that's straight and secure,
A life we call normal, so steady and sure.
We cherish those dreams where peace does prevail,
With visions of life where nothing does fail.

To gently go rowing our boat down the stream,
Such a peaceable life—a wonderful dream!
But life is not so, nor ever will be,

Nor would it be good for you or for me.

For how would we be, if life were all bliss,
And day after day, had nothing amiss?
Could I be patient, or living and kind
If everything went exactly on time?

Or there was no sorrow, with suffering pain,
Or dark rolling clouds with thundering rain?
I wonder how much I would cherish love,
If I never lacked it or felt a need of?

And all of my friends most precious to me,
Are those that have bloomed through adversity!



August: Editorial and Guy Hershberger Article

Thank you for the articles on non-resistance in the August issue. The editorial gives us insight of some facts of history where the principle of nonresistance was violated and the tragic results that followed. The fact that the principle was violated was tragic even if the end result had been more positive for those who abandoned the principle.

The article by Guy Hershberger reveals things that I never read in our history books. I don't see why it would have been so bad to be under the rule of England. Probably the colonies would eventually have gained their independence without the war and the loss of so many lives. Canada did not fight a war to gain their independence.

The Civil War freed the slaves, but brought more problems. The slaves would probably eventually have been freed, also.

Regardless what the nations of the world plan, God is ultimately in control and is in charge of history.

Elmer Beachy, Salisbury, PA

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MWR Map of Mennonites

I thought I would mention some inconsistencies I found in the numbers. They report BMA at 1,670 members. I recently went to the BMA convention and picked up a 2005 directory. Adding up the membership of each congregation...I found them to have a membership of 5,233. As for the Beachys, I previously did similar number crunching using the CLP directory from 2004 and found us to be at 10,038. The map reports 8,265.

Of course, statisticians are allowed a reasonable margin of error, but erring by 2,000 to 3,500 members, especially for groups the size of the Beachys and BMA, is a major statistical error. It makes me cast doubts on the statistical reliability of their other figures.

Cory Anderson, Harrisonburg, VA

[It might indicate that some of the numbers used were too old for reliability. —PLM]



Free advice hasn't gone up in price.

Beware of Drawing Back

Ervin N. Hershberger (1914-2003)

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Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Hebrews 10:38).

“There is none righteous, no not one... [we] are all gone out of the way, [we] are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Romans 3:10-12).

None of us is capable of attaining righteousness on our own. We can become righteous only as we live by faith in Jesus Christ.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:25, 26).

The “just” refers to those who are justified (made righteous) by faith in Jesus Christ. The Greek word *dikaïos* occurs 81 times in the New Testament. It is translated “righteous”

41 times, “just” 33 times, “right” five times, and “meet” once. So *righteous* is a biblical synonym for “just,” or for those who live by faith. Salvation cannot be obtained except by faith in Christ.

In Hebrews 10:38 we are confronted again with an “if,” which, according to some people, suggests that whatever follows is an impossibility. The German rendering has no “if,” but begins a new statement, firmly positive. This statement means to flinch, waver, abandon, slink away from, or, in this case, to abandon the faith that gives life. Of such God says, “My soul shall have no pleasure in him.” I see it as warning for the Christian to beware of giving up, of drawing back, of failing to continue steadfastly in the faith.

Drawing back and failing to trust God fully was the failure and undoing of Israel at the very border of the promised land. God had led them safely through the Red Sea on dry ground, and safely “through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water” (Deuteronomy 8:15). He had promised to drive out the inhabitants

of Canaan, and to give the land to Israel. Moses had said, "Behold, the LORD, they God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged" (Deuteronomy 1:21).

The Israelites had arrived at the border of the promised land. God meant to give them possession of the land by a series of miracles. But ten of the twelve spies shattered the faith of the people, and they drew back from God's plan and purpose. (Numbers 14) As a result, they had to wander another 38 years in the wilderness, until all their men of war except Caleb and Joshua had died. None of those who drew back ever obtained possession of the land God wanted to give them. They did not trust God to do what He had clearly promised.

We must remember that the Israelites' only claim to this land was merely by the goodness and grace of God. They had not owned it before, and there was no way for them to earn it. Even their father Abraham, to whom the promise was first made, and who had lived in it for nearly 100 years, had "none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on" (Acts 7:5). But as a token of God's infinite grace, the land wherein Abraham sojourned as a stranger was, and still

is, promised to his seed after him, for an everlasting possession. (Genesis 17:8; 48:4). Those who drew back at Kadesh-barnea died in the wilderness without obtaining it, but their children obtained it.

After Joshua died, "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD" (Judges 2:10). Because they drew back, turning away from God, He "sold them into the hands of their enemies round about" (Judges 2:14). Whenever they or their children sincerely repented, He sent them a deliverer. That happened seven times over, as recorded in the Book of Judges. The record describes seven apostasies, always resulting in dire straits for Israel.

In the days of Samuel, at Israel's request, God gave them a king in the person of Saul (ten years before David was born). By 931 B.C., the kingdom was divided. In 772 B.C., the Northern Kingdom was carried into Assyria, and in about 586 B.C., the Southern Kingdom of Judah was deported to Babylon. Jerusalem, along with Solomon's magnificent temple, was destroyed by fire. All of these sad disasters were the results of God's people drawing back from faithfully trusting and serving God.

But God, who always keeps his promises, brought them back again.

Jerusalem was rebuilt, the temple was replaced, and Israel was restored, all by the marvelous grace of God. In due time, God made good the first and most amazing promise of all times. He sent Jesus Christ, His co-eternal and co-equal Partner, the One “by whom also he made the worlds,” (Hebrews 1:2), and by Whom also, at the end of time, He will judge the world in righteousness and truth.

Jesus lived in the midst of the Jews for 33 years. He spent at least three years preaching and teaching the gospel to all the people. But the official religious leaders of that day drew back and rejected Him. They finally demanded, “Away with Him! Crucify Him!” He gave His life on the cross of Calvary, shedding His own blood for the salvation of whoever would place their faith in Him.

After all that, they still refused His teachings and martyred most of His apostles. Their massive rejection of Christ led finally to the second destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the dispersion of Israel throughout the whole earth, just as God had forewarned. But God is not finished with Israel. He never was and never will be defeated.

Jesus had come in a way entirely different from what Israel had ex-

pected. He who had always been “in the form of God,” the Architect and Creator of the universe (John 1:10; Colossians 1:16) came in the form of a helpless little baby. He grew to manhood in the despised little village of Nazareth, in that half-heathen country of Galilee, out of which they declared “arise no prophet” (John 7:52). [But Jonah and Nahum had both come from Galilee.]

They expected the Messiah to be the “Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting [eternal] Father, The Prince of Peace.” They had read it in Isaiah 9. Isaiah had even said, “The government shall be upon his shoulder...Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6b, 7).

Their evaluation was exactly right, but their timing was totally wrong! Isaiah did say all of that, and much more. Unfortunately, they had overlooked and totally ignored the first two phrases, which foretold His first coming: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.” They saw only what they were looking for and

wanted to see.

The two events foretold in Isaiah 9:6 are separated on paper by only a colon(:), but in time they are separated by more than two thousand years. We might ask ourselves which is worse: to overlook the first, or to overlook the last. Notice that the first is confined to 13 words, and the last consists of 75 words.

Notice also how Jesus respected that two-thousand-years gap in a similar prophetic passage. In Nazareth He went into the synagogue and read from Isaiah. In the middle of Isaiah 61:2, at a comma in mid-sentence, he stopped reading, closed the book, and started preaching. His theme is recorded in Luke 4:16-20. That passage spans most of the same gap covered by Isaiah 9:6, divided here by only by a comma in our Bibles, but divided by two thousand years in time. What He read from Isaiah 61:1,2, and then preached about, had to do with His ministry in the flesh here on earth. What He did not read, “the day of vengeance of our God,” perhaps referring to the great tribulation, and mentioned again in Isaiah 63:1-6, still lies in the future.

The rest of Isaiah 61 and 62 speaks mainly of future things, as do many other passages in Isaiah. Prophetic nuggets abound throughout Isaiah,

foretelling the future restoration of Israel. Of the 16 prophetic books in the Old Testament, only Jonah is totally silent about the future restoration of Israel.

In Nahum 2:2, the King James Version says, “The LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob.” Luther’s German says, “The Lord will bring again the splendor of Jacob.”

While we thank God for the scores of prophetic Scriptures already fulfilled in our day, let us beware of unwittingly rejecting scores of futuristic passages scattered from Genesis through the Revelation. Prophecies pertaining to His first and second comings are intermingled throughout the Scriptures. All that pertained to His first coming has been fulfilled to the letter. That should give us assurance that all the prophecies pertaining to His second coming also will be literally fulfilled.

We know of others who draw back from Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, saying that it is not intended for our day. Many more draw back from John 13, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, 1 Timothy 2:9-15, and similar passages that denounce the prevailing cultures of the day. But God’s Word has stood the test of the ages, and it will stand unchallenged throughout eternity.

Let us not draw back in disbelief just because we cannot fully comprehend it all. The faith by which we obtain salvation trusts the promises of God even when they surpass our capacity to understand. “That in the ages to come he might shew [to us more fully] the exceeding riches of

his grace” (Ephesians 2:7). Only then will we have the capacity to comprehend fully.

Beware of drawing back in unbelief.



The Outsider's Struggles

Cory Anderson · Harrisonburg, VA

Bless you, brother. I'm John Doe Yoder.”

“I'm Cory Anderson.”

“Who are your parents?”

“You wouldn't know them,” I say.

“They're not Mennonites.”

“Are you related to Steve Anderson?”

“No, you wouldn't know my relatives. I'm from a non-Mennonite background.” Further conversation ensues.

“You know, we need people like you in the church.”

“Thank you,” I say.

“People like you make us think.”

“Sure...okay.”

“What attracted you to the church?”

“Stuff like modesty and the head covering. I read about those in the Bible and my old church wasn't really teaching or practicing them.”

“So...how did you come into the church?”

As you can see, I am an NMB (non-Mennonite background).

Joining a Beachy church is quite an undertaking. Integration to the church and the culture has been happening ever since I started attending the church.

Because of apparent cultural differences, many “insiders” have an initial subconscious skepticism of the “outsider” in both the spiritual and social contexts. He may be a “time bomb,” just waiting to “explode” into self-righteous fury and leave the church. He may be a religious zealot, trying to reform the church. And he may be right sometimes, but who is he to come in here and tell the church what to do? Hopefully, the church has overcome the suspicion that he is a

CIA agent spying on them.

When we NMBs join the church, we are hoping to share fellowship with a group of Spirit-filled people who desire to uphold a life of discipleship. Many of us subconsciously expect near perfection. When this dream is dashed, some leave, others push on. I have stayed on.

The cultural barriers, however, are an ongoing burden to us, even for those who have been in the church for many years. I know others mean well when they say, “people like you,” but it hurts not to be accepted as “one of our own.” The phrase is discouraging. We NMBs joined the church to be inside the group, to be counted as brothers and sisters in Christ and the church—not an anthropologically autonomous group, good for making the church think.

The church should consist of many Spirit-filled people who challenge one another to live holy lives. While we were born in different cultures and with different traditions, nobody was born Beachy. Each of us made the conscious choice to join the church. It just happens that the majority of members in the Beachy church were born in the ‘insider’ culture.

NMBs are not a homogenous group: there is much diversity among us. It would be erroneous to say,

“NMBs do thus and so and think a certain way.” We NMBs, however, do share the common experience of joining a plain church and relating to one another on this issue. There is also variation—culturally, idealistically and preferentially—within the insider culture. True, an NMB has differences from an insider, but insiders have many, and sometimes even more, differences among themselves. God made everyone unique, so to think in terms of ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ invites stereotypes that aren’t helpful.

However, as in the case of this essay, it is sometimes helpful to think of the two groups. We must be realistic if we are to see the issues that NMBs face.

It is to be appreciated when an insider helps an NMB adapt to the culture and cultural aspects of the religion. Perhaps the best thing an insider can do is to make a sincere effort to understand the struggles the NMB faces: to show interest in his life and to be willing to share himself. An NMB involuntarily exposes his weaknesses and cultural differences the first year or two in the setting; it creates balance and trust when an insider offers to speak of his own personal struggles.

In addition, it helps when you

make a conscious effort in your heart to accept a brother or sister in Christ. The cultural gap that seems large is actually minute. We share faith in the same God; we have similar struggles, similar commitments, and similar desires. There will be no cultural disunity at the throne of God, yet what spiritual unity was cultivated will remain.

While insiders can do the aforementioned and other things to help us integrate, there is a flip side to the coin. NMBs must be willing to adjust and learn. We NMBs must accept that we may never be fully a part of the culture. We will not be invited to the large Miller or Troyer family reunions. We cannot play multiple rounds of the Mennonite game. We must have patience, and earn trust from fellow church members over time.

Early on, I had to learn the appropriate way to relate and converse socially with others. I also had to accept small differences, such as the fact that insiders' table manners are often not going to be up to par with my mother's instruction. More recently, I have learned that I should not be so preachy. I had to accept many changes so far. In years to come, I will have to accept more. But "I count all things but loss for the excellency

of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3:8).

And what a beautiful environment I have found to know Christ Jesus! In the end, membership in a church outweighs the struggles that accompany joining the church and culture. The body has instructed me, an individual seeker, along my way, and has blessed me time and again. I am now part of the body. There is much for which to be thankful.

I pray my expression will help bring about a stronger unity in the church, transcending differences between those of both different and similar backgrounds and upbringings. Let us meet at the throne of God as brothers and sisters, not insiders and outsiders.

[Welcome, Brother Cory! You have given good insights into the dynamics between "insiders" and "outsiders." May you continue to give and receive freely in this fellowship of believers. Let the more numerous insiders welcome the outnumbered outsiders. Let us all accept each other. When we move in various service and fellowship situations, we realize that newcomers to the church are not the only ones who sometimes feel they don't fit in. Let us all press on toward that great multitude assembled before the throne of God from all nations, and kindreds,

and people, and tongues, who will be clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and who all fit in because they all cry, "Salvation to our

God who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9, 10)
—PLM]



the bottom line

Covenant or Relationship?

Aaron Lapp · Kinzers, PA

Two ideas seem to be emerging on basic church administration. They are not opposites, but must be balanced. We give them priority and seek ways of balancing them, especially when issues of church policy and regulation come into focus. We operate from a base either of covenant or of relationships or a happy balance of the two.

The covenant concept holds historic regulations as a basis for action or decision making. Referring to the "decrees for to keep" helps decide points of contention. Our church covenant provides a safety zone of understanding regarding specifics of dress, recreation, business, amusements, technology and other extra-curriculars.

The covenant concept has a fairly high degree of predictability. Exceptions to the rules are frowned upon. Contrary to some people's beliefs, the covenant concept has an appreciable

degree of freedom about itself. The freedom to act and choose within prescribed limits should be welcomed.

The covenant concept also has a fairly high degree of stability. Change can be exciting. At the same time, change is often unsettling for a silent majority of the congregation. The proponents of change tend to accuse the leaders for their over-control of the church. Actually, those who advocate change need to be honest and careful that their intent for change is not from a concealed ego of fomenting change for the sake of increased control on their part.

Those with the gift of prophecy or teaching tend toward being stronger on covenant than they are on relationships, especially when it seems to be a choice between the two. Those who are strong on relationships tend to see that as the most important thing.

The relationship concept as a primary concern for brotherhood also

has some plus factors. People are drawn to those who cultivate good relationships. Easy bonding happens. Ideas flow easily. Appreciation is expressed with graciousness. Love is evident.

The relationship concept is not as predictable as the covenant concept. Surprises happen. Excitement grows. Joy is manifested. The freedom to choose and act comes with fewer restraints—all in a climate free of inhibitions.

The relationship concept doesn't seem to concern itself so much about stability and continuity. Change is welcome if it enhances relationships. Points of change can happily proceed on majority opinion. Popular opinion reduces church leadership control to a welcome level.

Those with the gift of administration and exhortation seem to be more apt to major in relationships. That is why having a variety of spiritual gifts in the plural leadership of the church works especially well for the sake of balance.

These two basic ideas are frequently in tension with each other. Ideally, these two should balance each other. Within our covenant responsibility is a need to continue interaction with all who have covenanted with us. Somehow a perceptible balance should be

sought and cultivated.

Group identities are forged by these covenant-relationship entities. Probably no one is more influential in our church structures than the bishop. Churches usually go in the direction leadership goes. If the bishop is strong on covenant, few changes in rules and regulations are entertained. Relationships are maintained to the extent that people agree and give support to him and his team. Relationships tend to suffer with anyone who disagrees. The purity of the church is often measured by people who conform to church standards.

Bishops who are strong on relationships tend to be weak on church covenant. This is just as true for others, but the bishop has more influence than anyone else and so that has a more noticeable effect. Such a person is susceptible to prevailing opinions and people pressures. Keeping the peace is always a delicate act. Accommodation to perceived preferences by the majority tend to be considered "God's leading."

Our Beachy churches are not organizationally formed under a conference. We are a fellowship of churches with general understandings of what the basic requirements are. The larger group of Beachy churches have related harmoniously for about 50 years

or two generations.

In recent years, some erstwhile Beachy churches have chosen to affiliate in a separate and closer covenant-oriented organization. The covenant concept of the church should somehow be maintained. These new fellowship groups of churches propose to do just that. This happens not only in our own Beachy constituency. The 2002 Mennonite church Information booklet has 20 relatively conservative groups of church conferences and fellowships. In these 20 church bodies, there are approximately 1100 ministers and many congregations. Many are small. Some of these work together, some do not. An additional group of churches is listed simply as unaffiliated, with 250 ministers serving 83 congregations.

The numerical growth of the plain churches is phenomenal. The Amish are growing faster than any other Anabaptist group. Practically all the plain churches are increasing in number. The presence of society-preserving “light” and “salt” is spreading. Think, though, of the additional mighty force for the witness of the Gospel if larger numbers of the plain churches would see each other as equals and work together accordingly. One step in that direction would be the biblical admonition to honor

others higher than ourselves. Another help would be to see the strengths and values of other church groups rather than focusing on their weaknesses.

Balancing the covenant-relationship issue may seem easy to some of us. We say we already occupy the middle-of-the-road high ground. It's others who need to change. We may see it too difficult to merit serious consideration. Or we are so bogged down with church problems that we see no way of change for the better. With that the concept of desirable change is dismissed as overly simplistic and unworkable.

Some of us should be giving more consideration to the value of maintaining church covenant. And some of us should give more thought to the value of relationships. Very likely some of you should be applauded for an ideal balance of covenant and relationships.

This article has **no bottom line**, unless it is that we will take this up for more discussion at Ministers' Week at Penn Valley Retreat Center on November 1, 2 and 3. See last month's issue of *Calvary Messenger* for the program. Hopefully, many of you, commissioned and ordained men and your wives, will attend.



marriages

Byler-Overholt

Bro. Joseph, son of William and Erma Byler, Auburn, KY, and Sis. Dianne, daughter of Robert and Martha Overholt, Franklin, KY, on July 16, 2005, at Franklin Mennonite Church by Brad Groff.

Byler-Rolan

Bro. Michael, son of John and Esther Byler, Mesopotamia, OH, and Sis. Sarah, daughter of Bret and Laurie Rolan, Mesopotamia, OH, at Meadow Ridge Farm, Huntsburg, OH, for Zion Christian Fellowship, Middlefield, OH, on July 30, 2005, by Laban Kaufman.

Fawcett-Miller

Bro. Ian, son of Floyd and Tina Fawcett, New Holland, PA, and Sis. Gloria, daughter of Eldon and Audrey Miller, Nappanee, IN, at Nappanee, IN, on May 28, 2005, by Jerry Helmuth.

Helmuth-Troyer

Bro. Darrell, son of Glen and Rosanna Helmuth, Belvidere, TN, and Sis. Regina, daughter of William and Edna Troyer, Huntland, TN, at Winchester First Baptist Church for Belvidere Mennonite Church on August 20, 2005, by Stephen Beachy.

Kuhns-Gingerich

Bro. Vernon, son of Howard and Edith Kuhns, Arcola, IL, and Sis. Christina, daughter of David and Edna Gingerich, Linneus, MO, on June 4, 2005, at Trinity

United Methodist for Locust Creek A.M. Church, by Howard Kuhns, the groom's father.

Schrock-Miller

Bro. Nelson, son of Levi and Katie Schrock, Shreve, OH, and Sis. RoseMary, daughter of Allen and RosAnne Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA, on June 11, 2005, at Pilgrim Fellowship, by Bennie Byler.

Stoltzfus-Lambright

Bro. Nathan, son of Levi and Lydia Ann Stoltzfus, Fairfield, MT, and Sis. Bonita Sue, daughter of Leroy and Barbara Lambright, Topeka, IN, at Fair Haven A.M. Church, August 13, 2005, by Wilbur Yoder.

Troyer-Mast

Bro. Titus, son of William and Edna Troyer, Huntland, TN, and Sis. Kathryn, daughter of Mervin and Erma Mast, Belvidere, TN, at Winchester First Baptist Church for Belvidere Mennonite Church on Sept. 2, 2005, by Stephen Beachy.

Yoder-Troyer

Bro. Lawrence Jason, son of Denver, Jr., and Betty Yoder, Lott, TX, and Sis. Janet 'Elaine,' daughter of Chris and Elsie Troyer, Lott, TX, at New Road Church of Christ, for Faith Mennonite Fellowship on July 9, 2005, by Elmer Smucker.

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

Beachy, Alfred and Juanita (Helmuth), Huntland, TN, second child and dau., Melissa Yvonne, July 19, 2005.

Beachy, Marvin and Elsie (Hershberger), Sebree, KY, tenth child, fourth dau., Wilma Fern, Aug. 8, 2005.

Beachy, Nolan and Ann (Garber), Lott, TX, fifth child, fourth son, Benjamin Dale, July 21, 2005.

Bontrager, Brian and Lois Ann (Miller), Chilton, TX, first child and son, Kyle Lynn, Aug. 1, 2005.

DeYoung, Bob and Miriam (Bender), Laurel, DE, third child, first son, Joshua Jay, August 11, 2005.

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

Hershberger, Joseph and Leanna (Miller), Hutchinson, KS, third child, first son, Lawrence William, Aug. 7, 2005.

Huston, Eli and Ruth (Miller), Cottage Grove, TN, fifth child, second son, Jared Eli, Aug. 20, 2005.

Kline, Jacob and Carol (Weaver), Millersburg, OH, fifth child, second dau., Kaylie Dianna, July 28, 2005.

Knepp, Jonathan and Marian (Stoltzfus), Leesburg, OH, first child and dau., Letisha Ryanne, June 18, 2005.

Mast, Mark and Pollyanna (Raber), Port-au-Prince, Haiti, second child and dau., Christy Ruth, Aug. 9, 2005.

Miller, Ken and Rochelle (Miller), Canon City, CO, fourth child, second dau., Alaina Sheree, Aug. 14, 2005.

Miller, Joseph and Connie (Nisly), Aroda, VA, (presently serving in El Salvador), third child, second dau., Kendra Dawn, March 19, 2005.

Miller, Nealie and Malinda (Miller), Sarasota, FL, seventh child, fourth dau., Amber Renae, July 29, 2005.

Peachey, Wilmer and Vera (Byler), Ellisburg, NY, ninth child, fifth dau., Rachel Elisabeth, May 13, 2005.

Peachy, Paul and Geneva (Yoder), Greensburg, KY, fifth child, third dau., Sheila Diane, Aug. 22, 2005.

Raber, Tim and Glorianna (Helmuth), Antrim, OH, second child and dau., Kalyn Hope, Aug. 5, 2005.

Schmucker, Robert and Elva Jean (Overholt), Quenemo, KS, (missionaries in Ukraine), third child and dau., Mari Alina, July 8, 2005.

Troyer, Joel and Loretta (Beiler), Leesburg, OH, first child and son, Joel Anthony, June 22, 2005.

Wood, Tim and Leslie (Factor), Quaker City, OH, thirteenth child, ninth son, Dennis Ariel, Aug. 10, 2005.

o b i t u a r i e s

Helmuth, Emily Sue, one day old, died from infection in her blood at Jackson-Madison County Hospital on July 6, 2005. She was born July 5, in her parents' home. She was the daughter of Ernest and Danelle (Helmuth) Helmuth, Whiteville, TN.

She is survived by her parents; a sister, Nicole Elizabeth, 21 months old; maternal grandparents: Raymond and Esther Helmuth, Whiteville; and paternal grandparents, L.J. and Rosemary Helmuth, Whiteville.

Funeral services were conducted by Clarence Yoder, Jr., Tim Yoder and Paul Overholt. Burial was in the Whiteville Mennonite Church Cemetery.

Miller, Elsie E., 62, died July 17, 2005, at her residence in Ligonier, IN. She was born Feb. 21, 1943, in Topeka, IN, daughter of the late Alvin M. and Annie

Yoder, Eugene and Jewel (Hochstetler), Aroda, VA, fourth child, second dau., Sharlene Dawn, April 29, 2005.

Yoder, Levi and Amanda (Gingerich), Belvidere, TN, sixth child, third dau., Abigail, Aug. 24, 2005.

(Mast) Miller.

She was a member of Woodlawn A.M. Church, where she participated in the first instruction class to be baptized in the new church. She was church librarian.

Elsie worked from 1990-1999 at Tiffany's Restaurant in Topeka. She provided child care for several area families and served in voluntary service in Sunnyhaven Children's Home at Plain City, OH, and Faith Mission Home, Free Union, VA.

She is survived by five sisters: Viola, LaGrange; Ada Mae, Nancy, Susan and Mary Ruth, all of Ligonier; and three brothers: John Henry, Mt Eaton, OH; Floyd Ray (Priscilla), Morrison, CO; and Omer Lee (Billie), Ligonier.

She was preceded in death by an infant brother, Kenneth.

Funeral services were held at Woodlawn Church, with Elmer Miller, Glen Miller, Steve Miller and Ed Yoder serving. Burial was in the Woodlawn Church cemetery.

Stutzman, Mary (Miller), 75, died Aug. 18, 2005, at Columbus, OH. She was born March 23, 1930, at Plain City, OH, daughter of the late Noah and Barbara (Helmuth) Miller.

She was a member of Canaan Fellowship Church.

On Feb. 24, 1955, she was married to Henry J. Stutzman. He survives. To this union were born six children, of whom five survive: Barbara, Plain City, OH; Andrew (Edna), Monroe, IN; Jonas (Renna), Lewistown, OH; Noah, Plain City, OH; and Reuben, Plain City, OH. Other survivors include two sisters: Esther Hochstedler and Rachel Miller, both Plain City, OH, and one brother, Levi N. Miller, Jamesport, MO.

Preceding her in death were one daughter, Rachel; four sisters: Clara Kauffman, Anna N. Miller, Emma N. Miller, and Mattie Miller and one brother, Andy N. Miller.

Funeral services were held August 21 at Canaan Church with Nelson Beachy, Vernon Miller, Robert Beachy and Paul Kauffman serving. Interment was in the Canaan Fellowship Church Cemetery.

Yoder, Samuel Jay, 58, died in a dump truck/semi tractor accident on U.S. Hwy. 6 in Elkhart County, IN, on July 30, 2005. He was born Dec. 24, 1946, son of David S. and Ada (Mast) Yoder, in LaGrange, IN. Two grandsons, Ross DeWayne Yoder, 10, and LaVern Jay Yoder, 8, died in the same accident.

He accepted Christ in his youth and was a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church. He was a church trustee. He had an excavating business and helped generously when the new church house was built.

On August 7, 1971, he was married to Patricia (Patsy) Yoder. Surviving are a daughter, Rachel Yoder and a grandson, Darin Yoder, age 7.

Surviving are his parents, three sisters: Susan (Melvin) Yoder and Mary Alice (Danny) Yoder, both of Middlebury, IN; Esther (William) Beechy, Topeka, IN; seven brothers: Melvin (Elsie), LaGrange, IN; Leroy (Rosa), Loganville, WI; Vernon (Marie), Smithville, AR; Elmer (Irene) and Dan (Ruby), both of Middlebury, IN; Ernest (Freda), Charlotte, MI; and David Wayne (Mary Kathryn), Homer, MI.

Funeral services were held at Fair Haven Church on Aug. 3, with burial in the Thomas Cemetery.

CHARITY

should begin at home and have outdoor exercise.

observations

Kenneth Taylor, 88, died on June 10, 2005. Survivors include his widow, 10 children, 28 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

He took seriously his responsibility to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He wrote numerous children's books. To make Bible reading more easily understood he began to re-phrase passages to use in family devotions. Eventually this led to a paraphrase of the New Testament called *Living Letters*, (1962) followed by the *Living Bible*. (1971) More than 40 million copies of this Bible have been sold. In 1996, the *New Living Translation* was published. I am told that this has been revised so that it can rightly be called a translation. It is being well received, having already sold more than 16 million copies.

This man is remembered as a person of vision and humility. To provide for his large family was not always easy. But he took the Bible warning against greed seriously. When he could have become very wealthy from the *Living Bible's* financial success, he wouldn't touch the money personally, believing it was God's Word and God's money. He continued to live sacrificially and donated millions toward spreading

the Gospel through the Word of God. (*Christianity Today*, 8-05)

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An interesting footnote to the above item is that Kenneth Taylor visited some New Order Amish in Holmes County, Ohio in about 1971. His contact seems to have been Bishop Levi R. Troyer. He attended their Sunday School and gave a talk to the gathered group. Later, he presented Bro. Troyer with an autographed copy of *The Living Bible*. That Bible is now in possession of Minister Dan Hershberger, a son-in-law of the late Bishop Troyer.

The people he visited perceived him as a man who loved God and His Word. He was very interested to notice that the Amish group that he visited greeted each other with the Christian salutation or holy kiss. He confessed that he was unaware that this practice was still being observed in this manner. He mentioned that he had taken the liberty to paraphrase that concept as instructions to greet one another with a warm hand shake or warm greeting. (*Courtesy Atlee Troyer*)

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When one hears the term "church discipline," it can evoke a variety of responses. The fact that the practice is sometimes abused can cause people to reject the whole concept.

To want to be left alone and not to be accountable to others has been known to cause persons to make choices accordingly.

Christianity Today, August, 2005, gives prominence to the issue of church discipline. Five different authors wrote articles addressing different aspects of this neglected practice. The following snippets are taken mostly from titles and sub-titles. Marlin Jeschke: How Discipline Died; What corrective love really looks like in the body of Christ. Mark Dever: Shaping Holy Disciples; Church discipline is not about punishment or self-help. John Ortberg: Spheres of Accountability; Breaking trust with anyone means breaking trust with all who trust you. Ken Sande: Keeping Lawyers at Bay; How to correct members while staying out of court. David Neff: Healing the Body of Christ; Church discipline is as much about God as it is about erring believers. In its eagerness to reach the lost, evangelicalism has taken a cue from discount retailing where prices are low and the customer is king. Dietrich Bonhoeffer called this "cheap grace."

The common concern of all five articles is that a valid and needful practice has been largely abandoned. The implication is clear that it should be revived.



It is doubtful that church discipline ever works perfectly. There are always fallible human beings involved, but having high ideals and falling short of those is far better than not having ideals and reaching them. The following thoughts seem pertinent:

- Effective church discipline involves the whole congregation. For persons who for reasons of age, position or status consider themselves exempt is to compromise the ideal.
- Ordained brethren should assume appropriate oversight. A pastoral, shepherd's heart of love is essential.
- If our manner of working is perceived as primarily preserving a lifestyle, it will make a proper response more difficult.
- This is not to say that lifestyle is not important. Failure in this area logically leads to allowing contemporary culture to dictate choices that will ultimately compromise scriptural integrity and church loyalty.
- To the extent that the whole body is united and committed to body loyalty church discipline can work well. Self-will and rebellion are not receptive to church discipline because it interferes with selfish pursuits.
- Even though no human situation is ever perfect, when servant/under-shepherd leaders and other members of the body are committed to the

Head of the church this combination provides a climate of warmth, security, and freedom that is conducive to growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18).

• • • • •

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is quoted as follows: “Have the courage to have your wisdom regarded as stupidity. Be fools for Christ. Have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world.”

One can appreciate this comment and commitment of courage from a person in such an influential position. In one sense all Christians should idealize such a commitment. Does it really matter what others think of us? Let us remember that not only is the Christian’s reputation at stake when we speak. It should concern us that our manner of speech clearly represents Christ to the watching world. The Apostle Paul expressed a prayerful concern that he could understand how he “ought to speak.” He instructs the Colossians (and us) to “walk in wisdom toward them that are without.” It is helpful to remember that our speech should always be “with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how we ought to answer every man.” (Colossians 4:4-6)

A commitment to such speech in

preaching and in discussion of serious issues is a worthy ideal.

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The article by Abner Riehl referred to last month includes appeal to consider our eating habits and body weight issues for accountability and even church discipline, when necessary. He mentions that the fact that the soda pop industry spends \$600 million annually for advertising is not reason enough for us to buy soda drinks. He can’t think of any good reasons why we should buy the product. Economy and stewardship of health would both seem to weigh in on the other side. Bro. Riehl says many of our people drink it regularly. He asks, “Does your local Christian school have a soda vending machine?” He does not object to casual exposure, but offers this appeal that we would “covenant together not to buy any soda.”

If such thinking seems a bit unsettling, could this indicate a need for us to re-evaluate some of our food habits?

I still have a good appetite and have never struggled with difficult weight control. I hope that fact does not disqualify me from encouraging temperate and healthful eating habits as worthy Christian ideals. —DLM



Who Should Witness to the Jews?

Floyd Stoltzfus

This is a large subject. Few Anabaptists have been involved in an ongoing, lasting effort to evangelize Jews. One exception is James and Fannie Bucher, whose ministry is written in Ida Bontrager's biography of the Buchers, called, *Under God's Arrest*. For many years, James and Fannie labored unselfishly in Portland, Oregon, among Jewish people.

The Buchers gained the Jews' confidence and respect by living among them, doing repair work and never charging much for their services. They showed love and friendship toward them in other ways. James learned how to tactfully, yet effectively witness to these dear people.

Many years ago a dedicated Mennonite minister from Pennsylvania, Abner Stoltzfus, visited the Jewish section in New York City several days a week. He boldly and kindly shared Old Testament prophecies concerning the first coming of the Messiah which were fulfilled at the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Lancaster Mennonite Conference in earlier years has also taken interest

in conducting church-wide Jewish evangelism classes which bore some fruit in several eastern United States' cities. May we be encouraged to make a start in an effective Gospel witness to Jews.

We must pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit and earnestly seek for receptive hearts among the Jews as Jesus sought for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Maybe we could ask questions and learn from them concerning life for their people in Bible times and today. "I sat where they sat" is still a good cure for prejudice, even as it relates to Jews.

Several months ago, Marilyn and I took the opportunity to visit the land of Israel through GTI Tours from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Our tour group of 56 flew on EL AL Israel Airlines. In preparation for the trip, we were given a booklet entitled, "All About Your Flight to the Holy Land." This pamphlet provided interesting insights on understanding Jewish thought that we found helpful. EL AL is Hebrew. It means "to the most high." Everywhere you go in Israel, you find associations with the Bible.

In Israel, the Bible isn't just religion. It's the chief history book of the country. So, back in 1948, when Israel needed a name for their new national airline, it was only natural for them to search in the Bible. They found what they were looking for in the book of Hosea: "They called them to the most High" (11:7).

EL AL Airlines respects their orthodox Jewish passengers. EL AL is the only airline in the world which flies just six days a week. They shut down from sunset on Friday evening, when the Sabbath begins, until Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ends.

EL AL adheres to certain rules of Jewish law, like *kashurt*. (kosher) Three thousand years ago, according to the book of Leviticus, God instructed His people in a code of rules for which foods are "clean" or "fit to eat," and which are not, or "unclean." In Hebrew, the word for "fit to eat" is "kosher." And the concept of kosher food is "*koshrut*." They use Old Testament verses as a basis for their practice. "To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten" (Lev. 11:47).

To be kosher, food must be prepared in certain ways. Kashrut also restricts what foods may be com-

bined with others. Dairy products may never be eaten with meat or poultry, but they may be eaten with fish. A kosher home always has separate dishes and separate dishtowels for dairy products and for meat. And, of course, so does a kosher airline. Aboard EL AL, all meals are strictly kosher and are, by the way, delicious. In fact, EL AL is the world's only airline with kosher food service.

They also don't fly on major Jewish holidays, like Yom Kippur (our Day of Atonement), Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year), and the first and last days of Pesach (Passover), Shavout (Pentecost), and Sukkot (Tabernacles).

Our travel information said: "Devout Jews are required to stop whatever they're doing, wherever they are (even 40,000 feet high) and pray three times a day: morning, noon and night. So there will be times, particularly as dawn breaks, when some of your fellow passengers will gather in the aisles or near doorways to hold a prayer service." We saw the observance of prayer times in action, the moving around on board, and the chattering during the flight. It was extremely fascinating, yet sad.

Toward the end of our 12-day tour, we visited the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. It was on a Friday evening

(the beginning of the Sabbath) and, of course, many people had gathered to offer their prayers. What do they pray? Many pray by quoting or reading from the Old Testament Scriptures. They pray for peace in their land and that the Messiah would come. One is reminded of the deep heart cry of the Apostle Paul, "...I have a great heaviness and a continual sorrow in my heart. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to

knowledge" (Romans 9:2; 10: 1,2).

Who should witness to the Jews? One reason why Amish Mennonites can well be involved in Jewish evangelism is because we have been a people who seek to live lives of separation from the world. Because the Jews' religion also separates them from the majority of humanity, we can better understand Jewish viewpoints. More than that, Jews need friends. This takes time. Genuine godly love is one of the strongest arguments in convincing the Jews to receive the Lord Jesus as their Messiah.



Ministers' Meeting Messages—2005

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

6. A Call to Spiritual Fervency

Duane Eby, Hagerstown, MD

Jesus "burned" with a desire to honor His Father. He never burned for a cause on earth, only for the things that fulfilled the will of His Father. Many people burn for things that didn't come from the Father. Jesus had a passion that the glory of God would be realized on the earth. He had a passion to see people come into the kingdom, so that some

day He could present them to His Father. Wherever He went, without making much noise, He blessed everyone, except those who rejected Him, of course. Here's what I have come to believe: If a man or woman is filled with Jesus, they will be fervent. They will not be lukewarm.

Fervency can be a dangerous thing. I fear that many are left scattered behind the fervency of people misguided. Probably many of the divisions that have occurred among professing Christians have come from people with passion, but who were not first under the lordship of Christ. We desire the fervor that flows out of

the eternal life of Jesus Christ and is born within a man and woman. It is lived out in everyday life—a life of substance. We get mighty tired and disillusioned with that which does not work. I believe that God brings revival through those who die to themselves and sell themselves out for God. Such are not “waves of the sea foaming out their shame” but are living a life that works.

In Isaiah 61:1-3, we find the nature and scope of His ministry. We find holiness unto the Lord depicted, like that found in the daily life of Jesus. We note the fervency in His public ministry. We see how He served others. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath me sent to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” The public life

of Jesus was an anointed life. If we are filled with Jesus, we don’t need to worry about whether we preach well enough. God will use us, if we have fervent desire to bring glory to Him. We should seek the fervency of Christ, which is an anointing for ministry. Such a ministry carries a message of life and healing for every circumstance of life with the power to make it reality.

Did Jesus ever meet a need where He couldn’t provide the solution to that need? I have been in evangelistic work for some 15 years now. One of the things that grieves me is the number of souls who once took an interest but later turned back. Those that turned back are not fruit that remains. While one of the men Jesus called to follow Him betrayed Him, many of them are described as “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.” That reflects fervency in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Fervency is not frenetic activity. It is not simply increasing the tempo. It is not empty motion. There is a place for sanctified emotion. There is something wrong when material things stir people’s passion while love for Jesus doesn’t. We don’t see in Christ an overly emotional person. He wept. He empathized and had compassion, but He was not a super

charismatic person. Nor did He impose Himself on others. Rather there was a life flow (virtue) going out of Him that spoke even when He was silent. That's the fervency we want. It's something that reaches out to people in their need.

Fervency does not embrace an individualism that shuts others out. It is not stubbornness in a personal cause. It is not insistence on having one's own way. As we keep going back, we are filled again and again with the Holy Spirit. God in His faithfulness meets those needs. It may send us crawling back to someone to restore brotherhood. So fervency is not me taking my favorite cause and crusading for it.

If you want to have a ministry God can use, set aside your carefully-formulated plans, and seek God's anointing. Even though I like good books, I say don't let good books crowd out the Holy One. Seek a fresh infilling of the life of Jesus into your life. When it gets there, you'll know it and your heart will "burn" within you.

My wife and I served for over 17 years with Mennonite Air Missions in Guatemala. We went through many spiritual struggles in the warfare of life, both personally and with the brotherhoods there. I especially appreciate the fellowship that a num-

ber of us developed in seeking the blessing of the Lord together.

When I came here, I knew almost no one here. I still don't know many of you. Tonight, before the service started, we prayed together. It was immediately clear that we had much in common and that we had *koinonia*.

While in Guatemala, we had felt for some time that the time for us to move back had come. A year ago, in February, we left Guatemala and came back to Maryland. I thought that some there would miss me because I had led out in the work for a number of years. Since we are back, I find that I miss their personal friendship, but I miss much more what they were to me spiritually. The time "back home" has been a time of sometimes floundering, and even of heading downhill instead of uphill. Some temptations intensified. He has been showing me some hindrances, weights, and adverse circumstances in my life. Recently, I was asking God to do a fresh work in my life. I asked Him, "God, just give me a fresh anointing." I have a long ways to go, yet, but the answer came and I know it's there. Anyone can get it—every time you need it.

Fervency fulfills the first commandment, "Thou shalt **love** the

Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”

We must believe. One of the greatest hindrances today is unbelief. The New Testament especially teaches the abundant life of Christ. You will find connectedness with Jesus Christ to be more than a get-by-by-the-skin-of-your-teeth provision. It is not a life of limited resources. It is abundant. From Matthew to Revelation we see the coming of Jesus into this earthly scene uniting us with His presence so that we have abundant life. We have rivers of water flowing. We have powers that go beyond imagination so that God is glorified through the church of Jesus Christ.

I fear that we get busy defending our positions and speaking of what we used to have. We fail to put enough emphasis on the Truth of the life that's in Jesus Christ. So there's not enough faith to lay hold on its efficacy. We profess it, but the reality of it is often weak. There are certain areas of truth that we often neglect. We must teach and model this truth: Christlike power is available for Christlike living.

In Acts 1, Jesus explained how He would do it. He would send His disciples into their homeland, into the neighboring province and unto the

uttermost parts of the earth. In his message at Pentecost, Peter explained that this promise not only applied to people everywhere, but it also applied to all time. In Galatians 3, Paul brings together the promise made to Abraham with what occurred at Pentecost. That promise is as real today as it was at Pentecost. We are children of promise. We have the right invitation and the right to lay hold on the power of God to live fervent lives.

If we think we must do more and pray more and preach more and so on, we will find it frustrating. But if we go to Jesus and drink, it will come from inside—then we can do more. It flows out. It's not a thing of trying so hard that you drive yourself crazy; it's coming to the Lord Jesus, and letting Him flow. In John 7: 37 and 38, Jesus told us this will flow from our innermost being if we come to Him with genuine thirst.

In Luke 11, Jesus told us the story of the man who went to his neighbor at midnight for bread to give food to an unexpected visitor. Rather than listen to persistent knocks all night, the man got up and gave him what he asked for. God is not hard to deal with, but Jesus was saying that if we believe to hold on, there is an answer. That answer is the Holy Spirit. This is not the original baptism of the Holy

Spirit, but the assets of the Holy Spirit needed to get the job done. When the disciples were beaten for preaching the Gospel in Acts 4, they prayed for power. Wasn't the outpouring in Acts 2 at Pentecost enough? Yes, it was good enough, but they needed a new outpouring when they faced persecution. So they called out again, and God answered again with a new outpouring of His blessed Holy Spirit. The place shook and they went out and preached with boldness. Our heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

The question that comes to you and me is, How does the Holy Spirit within us feel about the way we're living our lives? The Holy Spirit is pleased or displeased about our lives. He can bring the fervency of the life of Jesus within, only if we're willing to please Him above anyone else.

The Holy Spirit is interested in everything we do from the loaf of bread we purchase to how we use our spare time; from how we talk to our wives and children to how we treat our business partners; from what we do on our knees or not on our knees to when we're in church. That Divine Personage within has something to say about everything. If you and I would be fervent we had better find out what it is. We are no more

spiritual than we are holy. We are no more holy than we are obedient to the Holy Spirit.

What is spirituality? It's what you are when you're driving nails; when you're washing dishes. If you're not filled with the Holy Spirit when you're doing such mundane tasks, you won't be so when you're behind the pulpit. Normal Christian living is living like Christ in all of life. We must hit it hard enough that, like dynamite, it detonates. The life of Jesus Christ is a fervent life.

We need in our churches a culture of prayer. I thank God that we're a Bible-believing people, we're a Bible-teaching people, and we like to have it down in points 1,2 and 3; with sub-points with a, b, and c. We even hand out outlines, which is fine. I wouldn't want to do away with any of that. The more biblical we are, the more material the Holy Spirit has to work with in our life. The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Consecration to the cause of Christ is another thing that is needed. That will bring fervency. Do you want to see your young people stop being so fervent about volleyball and become more fervent about souls? Just let them get a glimpse of God's miraculous power in 2005, and it will begin to change their vision.

We once anointed with oil and prayed for healing for a Guatemalan in his upper teens for a chronic throat problem. He had been a Christian for about a year. He wept deeply and when we finished praying, he explained, "When you were praying, the pain left. Praise the Lord!" We praised the Lord, too. Sometime later he testified in church, "I thank the

Lord that He healed my throat and that He also healed my mind." Later I asked him what he meant by that, and he said, "Ever since I became a Christian, I have struggled to get rid of evil thoughts in my mind. When the Lord healed me, He gave me faith to believe. I've had victory in my mind since then."



The Anti-Attitudes

Simon Schrock · Fairfax, VA

Periodically my memory takes me back to when teen-age rebellion had a tight grip on my life. Those were the days when I thought I saw some things more clearly than some of my elders did. I wasn't alone in my outlook. We rebels made up a song that went to the tune of "The Old-Time Religion." It expressed our feelings toward our Amish upbringing. We sang it this way:

"Tis the Old Order Amish; 'tis the Old Order Amish,

And it's pretty tough for me.
It was tough for our fathers; it was tough for our fathers,

And it's pretty tough for me."

This song was an expression of attitudes rather than facts. Insight into Scripture and hindsight now tell

me my attitude was not right. I regret it. I believe I have repented and have God's forgiveness. It was an "anti-attitude" that was expressed against something. It saw the weak side and failed to appreciate the blessing side.

Sometimes I think I hear that attitude coming through expressions of older people and people in leadership. Maybe that's why my heart "ouches" when I think I hear it expressed by others, especially when it comes from the lips of older folks.

Being brought up in an Amish church, I thought Mennonites would be happy in their not-so-strict tradition. Years ago I was in discussion with a young Mennonite about re-marriage after divorce. My point was that the Scripture teaches against it. He referred to my position as being

“just Mennonite.” I discovered the anti-attitude was alive in the hearts of people from other backgrounds.

A friend expressed frustration over how some church brothers in his Mennonite congregation respond when they discuss certain issues they face. One of the strings they pull to relax a standard is the expression, “That’s just Amish.”

Because of the fellowship of believers I am a part of, I frequently hear the expression about some of our practices, “That’s just Beachy.” It comes from inside and outside our fellowship of churches. The expressions of, “That’s just Amish”...“just Beachy”...“just Mennonite” are expressions of attitudes. Actually, they seem like “anti-attitudes” to me.

What is the meaning behind these expressions? As I hear them, they often come with a slight tone of arrogance, the flavor of a sneer, the feel of contempt and criticism. The impression comes through that, “I’m fed up with the system; I know a better way. You are on the wrong track.”

When I examine my attitude when I sang the old song, it is clear that it reflected more rebellion and pride than a true desire to please God. It said, “I think I know what’s best.”

Why do I let you get a peek into the darker side of my history? It was

not a joyful time. It did damage to the church of God. It pains me now when I hear it, and I believe it pains God. Therefore, I will point to some good reasons to repent.

The anti-attitude closes the opportunities of fellowship with those you oppose. It hinders your freedom in fellowship.

The “anti” attitude closes the window of coming to a greater knowledge of the truth. The anti-Mennonite attitude about remarriage after divorce basically says, “You are wrong and I am right. Do not confuse me with the facts.”

The anti-attitude can be an expression of one’s own blind pride. It is veiled in such self-righteousness that the person comes to believe it is the right way. The Scripture reminds us that, “God resisteth the proud.” (1 Peter 5:5). If it has the taint of pride in it, expect God’s resistance.

The anti-attitude toward others does not bring you the blessings of the Lord. It does not make you the relevant church in the community. It doesn’t put you on the cutting edge of being God’s people in a mixed-up world.

A church brother did me a favor by reminding me that my anti-attitude would probably be picked up by my children. The anti-attitude usually

shows up in one's posterity. Your children will find it useful to turn it against you when it becomes convenient in order to get their own way.

The anti-attitude may have some blind spots in it. Could you miss seeing a biblical truth by writing it off as "just Amish,...just Beachy,... just Mennonite," or even "just the conservative way," or whatever your favorite "just" pet peeve may be? What is the chance of it being "**just the Bible way**"?

I made a note during John Smucker's winter Bible school teaching. "A people not at peace with their past cannot have a meaningful future." That says it well. I needed to repent of my attitudes toward my roots and my upbringing. The anti-attitudes were blocking my joy and my service for the Lord and the church. I now see my roots and stricter upbringing as

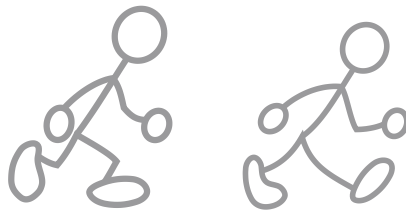
a positive influence on my service to the Lord and witness to the world.

If your mind is fogged over with resentment toward your strict upbringing and your attitudes have gone "anti," God would be pleased with repentance and an attitude that builds up all believers. I know that some methods of counseling people's problems places blame on how others treated you. I believe that must be balanced with what the Bible says in Romans 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

If you really want to help people, encourage others, build up the body of Christ, then repent of anti-attitudes. Remember, "**God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble**" (1 Peter 5:5).



If you share your brother's burden



you will both walk a little straighter.

Simplicity in our Daily Bread

Mary June Glick

Our daily bread” is a term Jesus used in the Lord’s model prayer when we ask God to meet our daily, basic needs. The children of Israel were given manna to sustain them for one day at a time. Later in Psalm 78:25, manna is referred to as angel’s food. The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, often mentions food. Jesus enjoyed special meals served by friends. He even ate fish with his disciples after the resurrection.

People in many parts of the world have just enough food to sustain life. Most of us have never experienced real hunger. I remember one time in Belize being asked how long I could go without food before I’d faint. I had to admit I had never experienced it.

Food is simply an important part of our lives. Not only does it sustain life but is usually part of celebration, family times, and is used to show friendship. It can also be used as ministry. We can invite our neighbors, people who are less fortunate and those with whom we want to share our faith. We invite women in for

tea or coffee and a time of fellowship.

Mealtime should be a happy time, with pleasant conversation and a cheerful atmosphere. It is a time to teach good habits to our children, not by nagging but with gentle prompting. Children should be taught to eat what is prepared without grumbling. They need to learn thankfulness for what they have—not just for what they like.

We have so many different foods at our fingertips that it is easy to lose the art of simple cooking. I remember my frustration in the late 70’s when we returned from Belize. A lot of new foods had been introduced that I wasn’t familiar with, such as sour cream, cool whip, cream cheese, canned soups, and grated cheese. Did you ever notice how many recipes use these ingredients? Please understand, I use and enjoy these as well as other new foods sometimes, too.

Let me share a letter I received from an older sister. She wrote, “I actually enjoyed learning to cook through the Taste of Home magazine because of the pretty pictures but

have also realized I'm buying more specialty things than I used to. Fruits and vegetables used to be seasonal. Now we can buy them any time and they're replacing home canning and gardening. This isn't all wrong but we do need to use self-discipline. For example, Mom taught us when something was in season you always used that. When planning showers, etc., use what is in season for the snack. Limit our spending in this way. Often when we plan fellowship dinners and ask people to bring types of food that are expensive, it puts pressure on young families to buy what they really can't afford."

I realize, too, that in the past the older generations used some rich products like butter, cream, and lard, but that was what was on hand on the farm. Now we can go with more healthful products. I believe we need to use common sense in our cooking to eat nourishing food. At the same time, we need to be conscious of the fact that many people don't even have enough daily bread for their needs.

Tips in simple eating:

1. Budget your weekly groceries. I find it helps to use a calculator when

I go to the grocery store. Don't buy groceries when you're hungry. Make a shopping list.

2. Instead of always fixing rich desserts, try baking cakes, cookies, cupcakes, fruit pies. Use low fat ingredients, one third less sugar in recipes, substitute applesauce for vegetable oil in some recipes. Puddings are cheap and good for you. Fresh fruit or canned fruit makes a good dessert.

3. Keep your company meals simple. Use recipes you are relaxed with, so you can enjoy your visitors. It's okay to serve soup. Serve it with a salad, a bread, and simple dessert.

4. Try foods from other cultures like Mexican, Asian, European or whatever, and you'll be surprised at how reasonably-priced these foods are. At the same time you will be teaching your children about other countries.

God holds us accountable for all that He has blessed us with. We are stewards of these possessions. This is an area where we women can honor Him.



Even freckles would make a nice coat of tan . . .
if they would get together.

Did They Win?—Part Four of Four

Anita Yoder · Ligonier, IN

Henry finishes reading the letters in the attic. Will he find a treasure?

I finished reading the last letter. *Where is my uncle? I need to talk to him!*

I took the steps two at a time, down the narrow attic stairs, and on downstairs. I ran out the back door to his shop. He sat at his workbench.

“Uncle, did they win, tell me, did they win? I need to know! Tell me, did you see them die? Did they stay faithful to the end?”

“Did they win?” Uncle put down his tools and motioned me to sit down on an overturned keg. “Sit down, I’ll tell you what you want to know.”

“Your father died faithfully on September 2, 1551. As for your mother, they held her a while longer. Passersby could hear her sing till prison officials made her stop. She gave a valiant testimony for Christ by doing so. The people of the village became attached to her beautiful voice and many would gather outside to listen. The authorities knew that something needed to be done before she converted the whole village. So they took

her out one morning between 3 and 4 o’clock and drowned her in the river. I saw them do it. A few of us felt we knew what would happen, and we hid ourselves. She walked voluntarily to the river and died bravely.” Uncle leaned back and sighed.

I felt a deep pain in my stomach. “I can take all that information, if I know that they won. Did they win?” I pleaded.

“Yes, it was the death of your parents and others like them that made the townspeople ask authorities why they killed these common people who did them no wrong. They won a great victory!”

I’ve had a hard time understanding how they could die for their faith. But now I see that they saw Jesus’ great love for them,” I admitted. “That’s why, isn’t it? It’s all about Jesus, and His death and resurrection.”

Uncle added, “Jesus is our Advocate; and He never fails us or leaves us.”

“By the way, who was that Henry? Father mentioned him in one of his letters. Did he die for his faith, too?” I asked.

Sadly Uncle answered, “Yes, he

died the same day your father did. He was a great friend of mine.”

“So was I named Henry because of him?” I asked eagerly.

“Yes, your mother and father thought a lot of Henry, and his faithful testimony. You’re his namesake,”

he added warmly.

“What a great heritage I have,” I stated. “I want to live by that same faith.”

“You did find the treasure in the attic!” Uncle declared. “I’m so glad you did!”

The End



youth messages

God’s Embrace—Part Two

By a reader

[The writer was lonely and unfulfilled. She went away from home. While there she cast about for solutions to her problems. With her desire for masculine companionship unfulfilled, she unwisely opened her heart to a young man who was not a Christian.]

He became the object of my dreams. But, you know, I still wasn’t really at rest.

Finally, I had had enough—again. I knew there had to be more to life than this. I needed help, and this time I found more than help. I found God. I found God in a way I never had before. And it was awesome. I mean really awesome, not just the way we casually use that word, but breathtaking. One evening I broke down and cried out all my pain to Him. He knew all about it already,

yes, but I was finally admitting it all to Him and giving it away, giving Him my dreams—and my dreams were precious. It was scary. What would He do with them? Would He smash them? I didn’t know if I could bear that. Would He simply ignore them?

You know what He did? He embraced me. Me, the one who for so long had just pushed Him back. The one who didn’t trust Him with dreams and longings. The one who wasn’t sure who she was. The one who wasn’t even sure she could be loved by God. Yes, I had heard all my life that God is a God of love, that he loves me, but it wasn’t real to me. It wasn’t an intimate love. It was more a “He’s got the whole world in His hands” kind of love. But that night I sensed His presence in such a real way. I felt I could literally reach out

and touch Him. I knew His love was real. His love was REAL! And with His loving embrace came rest. Total rest. Peace. Calm. The frantic search for acceptance was over. I had found God. Maybe I had just quit searching for Him in all the wrong places.

God hasn't smashed my dreams. No, He's allowed me to keep dreaming. I've learned, though, to give those dreams to Him. His dreams for me are bigger and far better than mine ever could have been.

He's also given me new friends. Good friends. Precious friends, indeed. My relationships with others have a whole new depth. Yes, I'm still single and farther on the old side of young, but life is good because I'm resting in God's arms. It's the safest place I've ever been. And best of all, His love for me will never, ever end. Not on this side of eternity or the next. It's forever.

That knowledge is rest.



Youth Editor's note:

Dear Youth,

Thanks to each of you who responded to the August question. Our communities and cities are desperately in need of young men who are not just separated from the world, but also separated unto God. Some time in life, the earlier the better, each of us needs thoughtfully and honestly to decide whether "I and my house are going to serve the Lord," regardless of the choices of my neighbors and friends.

If we really want to live and progress in the midst of a passive and unbelieving society, we need to become persons whose character and integrity influences those around us to make changes for God. The impact that our lives have on the kingdom of darkness does not depend so much on "where we are" as it does on "who we are." A person who truly loves the Lord and loves his neighbor will be involved in "ministry" all week long.

God bless you this month as you continue growing and developing into the image of Christ!

—*Ernest Eby*

This Month's
QUESTION

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

r e s p o n s e f r o m o u r r e a d e r s ...

Perhaps at the root of such embarrassment is a heart issue involving pride. The person wishes to blend in with so-called Christendom, and therefore is unwilling and embarrassed to be called a follower of Jesus.

Bird-in-Hand, PA

• • • • •

I think it is because they aren't really devout, and maybe a little scared that they will be classed as fanatics. Besides, how could a devout Christian be embarrassed about his beliefs and godly lifestyle?!

Ligonier, IN

• • • • •

I think that when young people are

embarrassed to be known as devout Christians, it is because their focus is wrong (earthly) and their love for God is not as deep as it should be. If their love for God was authentic, they would not be ashamed.

Harrison, AR

• • • • •

I believe that we've become too comfortable with the world. We don't want to stick out. Though we hate to admit it, I think the root issue is being ashamed to be associated with Christ. It really does take courage to be zealous for Christ and not care what others may think of us.

Youth reader from Iowa

Next Month's
QUESTION

If God would come to you and tell you to ask for anything you wish, what would be your request?

Editor's note: Just a reminder that these comments need to be sent by the 20th of October. We apologize for the error in the date given in the September issue.

THOUGHT GEMS

Conceit is nature's compensation for inferiority.

• • • • •

Keep your face toward the sunshine and
it will have fewer shadows on it.

• • • • •

Children raised during the Depression often
got only two food choices—take it or leave it.

• • • • •

It's difficult—if not impossible—to have faith in God,
if a man has too much faith in himself.

• • • • •

There is more hope for a confessed sinner than for a conceited saint.

• • • • •

You must first be a believer if you would be an achiever.

• • • • •

To know what is right and not do it is as bad as doing wrong.

• • • • •

The best tranquilizer is a good conscience.

• • • • •

You can pick out an egotist by the glazed look that comes to his eyes
when the conversation wanders away from himself.

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