



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

Galatians 6:14

NOVEMBER 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 Victory Is Won


Janelle Erb · Milverton, ON

For many years I struggled along
 To conquer o'er my sin.
 Discouragement grabbed hold of me,
 When I could never win.

I tried with vain attempts to win
 The victory I sought;
 But never could I reach the place
 Where I'd come out on top.

And one day when I read the Word
 I found out I was wrong,
 To struggle for the victory—
 It was already won!

For Jesus Christ was crucified,
 But rose to live again.
 He conquered sin and death for us.
 Therefore, the vict'ry's won.

So now when I am feeling down
 About my awful sin.
 I claim the vict'ry that is won,
 And then have peace within. 

When God Opens Heaven's Windows

Have you noticed the Apostle's Paul's instruction that an offering was (is) to be lifted each Sunday morning? (See 1 Corinthians 16:1-4). I fear that too many professing Christians tiptoe around those instructions. Getting us to give is one of God's ways of teaching us to trust Him for our own needs. Furthermore, when we give generously we can expect greater adequacy for our own use than if we try to keep everything possible for ourselves.

Before Christ's incarnation, God required a tithe from His people. They were to give the first fruits of their crops and herds to the worship and service of the Lord. If they did this, God promised that they would have enough for their own needs.

God desires, I believe, to go into business with each of His children. His willingness to appoint us as stewards is quite an honor! Let us step forward and take Him up on it. Paul wrote, in 1 Corinthians 3:9, "... we are laborers together with God."

The tithe reminds us that it is by God's gracious provision that we

have the privilege of earning money to provide for ourselves and our families.

Tithing does battle with the selfish feeling that seems to say, *I earned what I have with no obligation to share it!*

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6:33 changes giving from an **obligation** into a **privilege**, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Just before that, Jesus had listed typical anxious thoughts of the unbelieving, as, "What shall we eat?" and "What shall we drink?" and "Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" If we keep first things first, He will provide for those needs. What gets my attention here is that I, too, have asked those worried questions. Jesus assures us that if we put our lives and fortunes into God's hands, He will provide for us.

It's easy to have these truths slip away from us when the going gets rough. As I noted in my September editorial, Paul was tested on this, too. On his last visit to Jerusalem, Paul was assured by God that He wanted

him to testify for Him in Rome. (Acts 23:12) But then Paul promptly lost his freedom and went to Rome as a prisoner. After that, I think he clung to God's promise that he was going to Rome. But he was like a man thrown out of a boat, hanging on to his life jacket. Paul saw no way to get his freedom by his own efforts, so he simply rode the waves of adversity on the promises of God, instead of thrashing about.

Paul was a man who changed the things he could, who accepted the things he couldn't change, and who called on God for wisdom to know the difference. In prison in Rome, he wrote triumphantly to the Philippians and to us, "I can do all things through Christ which [Who] strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Then to encourage those who were (and are) having a hard time of it, he held up this truth: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (19)

William Allen White (1868-1944), a newspaper editor (*Emporia Gazette*) and a man of some wealth and influence who lived at Emporia, Kansas, liked to say that every dollar has three "kicks" in it:

Kick #1. When you **make money** that comes from honesty and diligence.

Kick #2. When you **save money**, instead of letting it slip through your fingers.

Kick #3. When you **give money away**, which gives the best "kick" of all.

Let's learn to trust God for all our needs—present and future.

Let's not make the mistake of the rich man who had poor Lazarus lying at his door. He took less interest in the sore-covered beggar than did the neighborhood dogs, which soothed his sores by licking them.

Let's learn to give to worthy causes. Not every one who asks for an offering is worthy of our trust and our hard-earned dollars. A worthy charity upholds the Word of God. Above-board accountability requires that stewards of other people's gifts regularly provide well-prepared financial reporting to donors.

Let's help the poor the best we know how. The best way to help those who suffer misfortune is to help them get on their own feet, then nurture in them an attitude that says, *We will do for ourselves what we can!*

Let's learn to give cheerfully! Paul said, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7b). Some translations state this in such a way that it can be taken either of two ways: Either the cheerful giver loves God or God

loves the cheerful giver. Surely both are true!


Note the prophet Malachi's invitation to eager and honest giving. He asked, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings...Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and **prove me now herewith**, saith the Lord of hosts, **if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it**" (Malachi 3:8, 10).

.....

Several ordinations for bishop are pending:

—Zion congregation, Thomas, OK, Dec. 4, 2005.

—Ebenezer congregation, Malta, OH, Dec. 18, 2005.

Remember these undertakings in your prayers. Attend if you can. As we know, wider brotherhood support in such times is valued. May God guide in these situations for the benefit of these congregations and for the glory of His great name. —PLM 

reader response

From Tasmania, Australia

Dear Bro. Paul,

Greetings in our Savior's name from Tasmania, Australia.

My wife, Carolyn and I, are part of the Australian Christian Brotherhood and have been associated with the Montezuma Mennonite Church for some six years. We regularly receive your publication, the *Calvary Messenger* through Jason Kauffman who is our minister here in Australia.

We notice that you source your articles from various brothers and sisters of like mind and would like to express our appreciation for their

input. It is a blessing to us to read the *Messenger* as we do not have a fellowship where we live and rely fairly heavily on the printed word and phone/e-mail/letter contact with other brothers and sisters both in Australia and the USA.

Occasionally I do some writing and produce a monthly publication for the Australian brotherhood with articles from various sources....

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Joseph van Loon,

Deloraine, Tasmania, Australia

.....

Regarding Reconciliation

Conference—Part Four

I commend the Swiss and Reformed churches for leaving behind their false doctrine of infant baptism and other false doctrines of their state churches.

However, I am very concerned about how the article mentioned there was a *woman pastor*, because in the Scriptures it says that a woman should be silent in the churches. (1

Cor. 14:34-35).

I believe it should have been mentioned in the article that this is wrong and that the Swiss churches and the Anabaptists can't be united while they are not repenting of this and *all* other non-scriptural practices.

Sincerely in Christ,

Carol Barbar, Sydney, Australia

Announcement...

2006 ANNUAL MINISTERS' MEETING

The Beachy churches of Holmes County, Ohio, will be hosting the annual ministers' meeting and extend an invitation to all ministers and their wives. The dates set for this are April 4, 5, 6, 2006, D.V. Invitations and more details will be sent out later.

The theme for the meetings is "*Be In Health*," taken from 3 John 2.

We wish to allow time for all committees and boards to report who request it. All those who desire a time slot, please contact Bill Mullet at wmullet@precisionentry.com or call 330-852-4711 (day) or 330-852-3231 (evening).

With your request, please give an estimate of the time you require to make your presentation. Kindly make your request by April 1.

Beware of Not Hearing Jesus Christ

Ervin N. Hershberger (1914-2003)

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See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Hebrews 12:25).

This reminds us how the children of Israel refused to hear God when He spoke from Mount Sinai. When they heard the thunder and the trumpet, and saw the lightning and the mountain smoking, they were gripped with awesome fear. So much so that "They said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19).

They had committed themselves to do all that the Lord had spoken. But within forty days, while Moses was still on Mount Sinai, they violated their commitment and broke God's commandment by worshipping the golden calf. They not only declined from hearing with their ears, but disregarded what they very well knew in

their hearts. Out text suggests it may be even more serious for us to turn away and not hear when God speaks from heaven.

Today, in addition to the Old Testament, we are fortunate to have the New Testament, with a written record of the life and ministry of Jesus. Furthermore, we have much additional information, for in the New Testament God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things..."(Hebrews 1:2)

Because of this, we are more accountable than the scribes and Pharisees were.

The scribes and Pharisees, and many other sophisticated leaders among the Jews, rejected any teaching that threatened their personal preeminence. Luke 6:16-30 records the first sermon that Jesus preached in Nazareth, His home village. He used Isaiah 61:1 and the first clause of verse 2 as His text. It was a most appropriate passage for the occasion, a prophetic revelation of Jesus' ministry in the flesh, which was just beginning. He did not include the second clause of verse 2, which has to do with His Second Coming. His

message and the portion He read spoke of things which that day were being fulfilled in their ears.

The people were amazed by His teaching. “And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?” (Luke 4:22).

But in the next five verses Jesus revealed truths that hurt, and they felt threatened. Then they were “filled with wrath, . . . thrust him out of the city,” intending to throw Him over a cliff. Miraculously, He escaped out of their hands, and “passing through the midst of them went his way.” No wonder Jesus pleads with us to hear!

I am forcefully reminded how frequently Jesus warned us to hear when He speaks. Eight times the synoptic Gospels quote Jesus’ plea, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Eight times in The Revelation, speaking from heaven, He said, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” It was the heart cry of Jesus that we should beware of not hearing (or not accepting) New Testament revelation. After all, the New Testament substantiates and clarifies what had been prophesied and foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

Jesus illustrated much of His

public teaching with parables. His disciples asked, “Why speakest thou unto them [the general public] in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matthew 13:10, 11).

The word “mystery” (singular) occurs 22 times and “mysteries” (plural) five times in the Bible, used only by Jesus and Paul. A mystery is truth “which in other ages was not made know unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (Ephesians 3:5,6).

“...because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matthew 13:13-15).

Jesus yearned for their conversions,

but because they were neither willing to hear nor to be instructed, He dealt with them according to their deceit. Free grace must be received willingly.

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:3-23

The three synoptic Gospels all quote portions of this parable, which is also a parable of the soils. Matthew 13 is the most extensive, and includes more analysis, as well as several other parables. Repeatedly, in verses 9,13-23, and 43, Jesus warns His audience to be attentive—to hear.

In this parable, Jesus identified neither the sower nor the seed. The sower may be a mother teaching her child at home, a Sunday school teacher, a Christian teacher in the classroom, an evangelist or pastor in the pulpit. The sower could also be anyone passing out Gospel tracts, witnessing on the street, to a next door neighbor, or to a fellow laborer on the job. The emphasis, however, seems not to be on the sower or the seed but the condition of the soil (the heart of the hearer). This determines the yield.

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

Matthew 13:24-30

In this case a certain man sowed good seed in his field. But while men (like us) slept, the enemy sowed tares. Jesus identified Himself as the Sower, the field as the world (of teeming humanity), the good seed as the children (people) of the kingdom, the tares as the children (people) of the wicked one, the devil as the enemy, the harvest as the end of the world, and the reapers as the angels. While drowsy Christians sleep away, the devil hastens to the prey.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:31, 32.

This parable apparently speaks of the same Man and the same field. It seems to picture the phenomenal growth of the early Christian church, springing from seed that Jesus had planted. But later there was an invasion of things that should find no place in God's church. The birds of the air that come and lodge in the branches thereof sound much like the description of Babylon—"a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Revelation 18:2). I take the latter part as a warning against the apostate church of the endtime sheltering a wide variety of gross immorality. It is happening right in our midst today.

The Parable of the Leaven

Matthew 13:33

Jesus sowed no leaven, but He warns us of that “which a woman took and hid it in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” The woman typifies the church, and leaven in the Scriptures, usually, if not always, denotes evil. There was a leaven of the religious Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:6, 11, 12), of Herod (Mark 8:15) and of malice and wickedness (1 Corinthians 5:6-8).

“Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known” (Luke 12:1b, 2).

Three measures of meal (proper ceremony and conduct) can neither compensate for the damage nor conceal the leaven that a woman took and hid. Hidden leaven in a church is like a cancer in the body. It may be hidden for a while, but it is never harmless. State churches have martyred Christians by the thousands. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Beware of hidden leaven in the church!

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

Matthew 13:44

We must let the Scriptures inter-

pret the Scripture, or we will miss the point. Christ is not hid in a field. “The field is the world.” And “God so loved the world [of human souls] that he gave his only begotten Son” to save whosoever will hear. Christ is the Man who bought that field at a price which no other can match. The Bible also identifies the treasure hidden in the field that Christ has purchased with His own sinless blood. Having bought the field, Jesus became the legal Heir to all the treasure therein.

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

Matthew 13:45, 46.

I realize some teach that the pearl of great price is Christ Himself, and that we must sell all we have to buy Christ. But the Bible says salvation is a gift that cannot be bought. “Wine and milk” is offered “without money and without price” in Isaiah 55:1.

The Bible also teaches that Jesus paid the full price for our redemption with the only currency that heaven recognizes, His own sinless blood. We cannot buy Christ by being good, for “there is none good but one, that is God” (Matthew 19:17). “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6).

The Bible reveals Christ as the true merchant man. He came to earth in human flesh for the express purpose of obtaining goodly pearls. When He had found one pearl of great price, He went to Calvary and gave all that He had, yea, even His very life blood, and literally bought “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

The Parable of the Net

Matthew 13:47-50

The Gospel net “was cast into the sea [of humanity], and gathered of every kind.” It is possible to enter the Gospel net and become a church member without the new birth. But be not deceived, no one gets into heaven without being born again. The angels shall separate the wicked from the just to be punished.

Counterfeits may be smuggled by here on earth, but there will be no smuggling at the judgment bar of God.

The Test of Salt

Luke 14:34, 35

Salt may be heated red hot [I have seen salt heated in an iron kettle until it shone red, for quick curing of pork hams. —ENH] or dumped in water and still retain its savor. But its value

can be destroyed by dilution (compromise) or filthy contamination (corruption). A Christian testimony always suffers when there is spiritual compromise or moral corruption.

The Conclusion

The six solemn warnings given in the book of Hebrews warn us, as they did the Jews in Paul’s day, to beware of the six major sins that Israel committed while Moses fasted and prayed on Mount Sinai. Neglect (of their commitment), unbelief, falling away, sinning willfully, turning back, and not hearing God (inattentiveness to Him) all were involved. Not only then, and not only during the next forty years as they journeyed, but for centuries in the promised land, they violated their commitment repeatedly, grieving God intensely. Professing Christians have done the same.

No doubt the Jews’ greatest sin was their rejection of the Messiah when He presented Himself bodily in their midst. They had studied the Scriptures, knew He was coming, and for generations had waited, looked, and prayed for His coming. Finally, He came, lived among them, taught in their synagogues, and preached throughout their land. Then they rejected His message, declared Him an imposter, and crucified Him as if

He were the vilest of criminals.

The Revelation substantiates and further clarifies many of the mysteries mentioned by Jesus in the Gospels and by Paul in the Epistles. Five of the seven churches described in Revelation 2 and 3 are warned to repent. Repentance is imperative for every adult, “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Let us beware of not hearing this all-important mandate of God. Repentance is as essential in shaking off our sinful past as faith is in laying hold on the promises of God.

Was it not to professors of faith that Jesus said, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”? Because there is no man that sinneth not, we do well to close each day with a penitential prayer for cleansing from any unwitting sin of omission as well as any sin of commission. Having thus committed everything to God, we can then by faith be assured that God will hear the prayers of all who diligently hear Him.

Beware of not hearing Jesus Christ!



Hey, My Pastor

Arthur Nisly · San Salvador, El Salvador

(From e-mail correspondence)

From a letter from an English-speaking Christian friend in China:

“I would love to correspond with you.

Could you please tell me why does not God eliminate Satan right now? And why did God create a lot of sin and pain?”

Dear Brother,
Good evening, brother!
Your question asking why God didn't immediately destroy Sa-

tan is a good one. I am not sure that I understand God's thoughts. No, I am sure that I DON'T understand God's thoughts (Isaiah 55:8, 9).

Your question is similar to these other questions, isn't it?

—Why did God put a tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden and then tell Adam not to eat from it?

—Why did God allow Satan to be in the Garden if there was the possibility that man might disobey God?

I believe that the answer to your

question as to why God did not immediately destroy our enemy is because He was going to use our enemy to bring great glory to Himself. God created man and wanted man to *serve Him of his own free will*. That means that man must have another apparently valid choice. For example, is it a valid choice if I agree to do what someone says under threat of death, while holding a pistol to my head? No, it isn't. Would our choosing to serve God have been noteworthy if there were no other alternatives? No. If the choice to serve God were *obviously* the best choice it wouldn't mean that much either, would it?

Apparently, God even went as far as to allow our enemy to have the power to deceive so that Satan's suggestions *would appear more logical and reasonable than God's commands*. It seems that God wants it to be obvious that those who choose to serve God are clearly taking a step of faith to serve Him. Many times Satan offers immediate gratification (or at least the appearance of it) to those who choose his way, instead of having to wait. Of course, you and I both know that soon after someone chooses to follow our enemy, they begin to harvest the horrible consequences of their wrong choices.

Ephesians 1:18 says that God has

an inheritance in His saints. The first two chapters of the book of Job make it plain that God delights to "brag" about the faithful service of His servants. Satan complained by saying that Job is serving God because of what he gets out of it. He implied that Job didn't really love God or have faith in God, and that Job was serving God because God was blessing him. God knew Job. He knew that Job would be true to Him under extreme pressure. Thus Satan's premise was destroyed and God was glorified.

I believe that what looks like an unfair advantage to our enemy is part of God's majestic plan that will silence all opposition and all excuses from Satan. At the end of time God will put everything "on the table" and it will become clear that His glorious plan is as clear as it can be for finite beings. Both fallen and faithful spirits, together with all humans will bend the knee and confess that Jesus is Lord for the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:11).

As for your question about why God created sin and pain—**He did not**. God allowed for the *possibility* of man choosing sin, thus playing into Satan's scheme which resulted in pain. This demonstrates how eagerly God longs for man genuinely and

freely to choose to enter into a loving, trusting relationship with Him!

What joy it is to obey God even when we have to do so through tears, when everything within us feels like we are losing so much by serving God or that He isn't worthy of our

trust. Just remember that when we are faithful God has another reason to “brag” about His servants before a watching spiritual world!

I hope this helps you.

Sincerely, Arthur



the bottom line

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Aaron Lapp · Kinzers, PA

The prospect is exciting! Next to being saved, no subject, doctrine, or idea is more elevating. The whole realm of Bible teaching and doctrine is fabulous. But the doctrine of our Lord Jesus coming again stands as a “Mt. Everest” of biblical mountain peaks in the finished and current work of Christ.

But Christians in the western world seem to be “down at the beach.” Seldom are the mountains brought into view. Even then, the controversial Mt. Everest seems to be too far inland to be clearly seen. “Contending for the faith once delivered to the saints” seems to be excluding future things.

The Jews are readily faulted for being so naïve and actually unbelieving about Jesus’ first coming. We say the prophecies were so clear; how could

they miss it? As a people, they literally missed Him, because they didn’t literally believe. Somehow, what we see for them, we cannot transfer with the same clarity for ourselves.

The burden of Bible fulfillment lies with its Author. The Second Coming has been much maligned—all the way from the excesses of unbalanced emphases to the fanciful philosophies of both saved and unsaved persons. It is not so much a matter of sincerity, as it is a basic matter of faithful and standard interpretation of Scripture.

In a visit to the large mural at Behalt, near Berlin, Ohio, where Anabaptist history is depicted and explained, we saw a special chair and heard about “White Jonas Stutzman.” Jonas was an Amish man who lived to old age, who had a definite

expectation of Jesus' coming in his lifetime. He prepared himself by wearing white clothes and is depicted standing on two white horses, calling earnestly to Christ that He should come because "all things are now ready."

Jonas made an oversized chair. The mural shows the chair on two horses, with Jonas standing behind it, beckoning with upraised hand, imploring Christ to come and sit on the specially-prepared chair, which is now on display at Behalt.

William McGrath writes in his book, *Contentment*, page 69, of the "hermit Johann Kelpius, who came to the new world to await the second coming of Christ. Kelpius' followers had erected a high tower from which they could watch for the Second Coming!" Jonas and Johann not only felt that Christ *would* come soon, they even thought He *should*.

The Thessalonians in Paul's day got a bit carried away with the prospect of Jesus' coming soon. Working right up to that day didn't make sense to some of them, so they stopped working.

In the mid-1980's, a pamphlet, "Eighty-eight Reasons Why Jesus Will Return in 1988" received wide circulation. That date came and went. At least a few Beachy Amish felt it

had been good to sound the alarm because of it someone became saved. We rejoice when one is saved, but doubt that the great enterprise of evangelism benefits in the long-term by false alarms.

Then there was the Great White Brotherhood, based in Ukraine, which believed the world would end on November 14, 1993. They even had their own messiah, a woman, Maria Devi Christos. They predicted that on that day, 144,000 faithful souls would ascend to heaven. (*U.S News and World Report*, Nov. 15, 1993)

In Israel, many dead are buried on the side of the Mount of Olives. The area is so crowded, there is scarcely room for those buried there. Our guide told us that devout, or at least, sincere people from all over the world pay dearly for a burial plot on this—the small piece of real estate to which they believe the Lord Jesus will return, in a great victory celebration over His enemies. Their thought is that those buried there will be the first of the dead raised to life to see Him and be with Him. Even in death, as in life, apparently there is nothing quite like being first!

Russell Krabill quotes William M. Arnett in an article in *Gospel Herald*, Jan., 1972, "All but four of the New

Testament books refer to it, with a total of 318 verses in which it is set forth within 216 chapters of the New Testament. A broad approximation is that one-fifth of the Bible is prophecy, that one-third of prophecy relates to Christ's return, and that one-twentieth of the New Testament deals with the subject. Another approximation is that it is mentioned twice as much as the atonement, and eight times as much as Christ's first coming."

I have a question: What would awaken our interest in our day for our generation in the second coming of Christ? My answer: A standard interpretation of all Scripture.

Brothers, when will we face it? The allegorical method of interpretation fails to stir us. To know Jesus is coming for us is all that matters, some say. Our eschatology goes so far as to preach on heaven and hell. But that's about it. There is vastly more about the signs of Jesus' coming, the judgment and God's dealing with a wicked world. Future things are scarcely addressed in pulpits when preachers don't know what to explain allegorically and what to proclaim literally. Not only does the switching back and forth from the literal to the allegorical not sound right to the listener, it also doesn't feel right to the speaker. To avoid confusion, some

skip the Second Coming entirely or make scant mention of it. Passion for God's Word arises out of a preacher saying "Thus saith the Lord."

The Old Mennonites of 50 years ago preached with passion and with power. They were plain people in that day. Whole weekends were devoted to Biblical Prophecy Conferences. Evangelism and missionary activity was strong. Young people responded with zeal for the work of the church. The church was on the move. The end could be soon. The time to act was now, they concluded.

Soon it will be Christmas time again. The month of December will take up various themes about the birth of Christ. The story never gets old. Hallelujah! Jesus Christ is born. The excitement catches from generation to generation. May it continue perpetually—until Jesus comes again!

Could we not do similarly with Christ's second coming? The doctrine of future things and its implications could easily provide texts and messages for six months (yes, 25 Sundays) without exhausting the subject. One place to begin is to honestly ask ourselves as ordained men, "What does the Bible say?"

Preach the Word, Brother. Don't touch any commentaries on this

vital subject for a change. Preach the Word. Don't go into books and files. Preach the Word. Let the meanings, the exhortations, and the warnings come out of the text. Be free in Christ. Be bold in His Word. The Living Bread has life.

Each of the ministers on your team could/should preach on future things one Sunday every other month. Somewhere, sometime, host a Bible Conference Weekend in your church. We can do this without having it become someone's pet subject or an individual's hobby horse if we all participate.

The Bottom Line is that whereas the Bible speaks eight times more

on Christ's second coming, than on His first coming, and that whereas we might go through a whole year without preaching on this vital subject, and that whereas Jesus Christ is coming quickly and/or soon, we therefore propose to preach the word about His coming, and to do so with quickness (fervently) and to do so soon at our church, along with the details and personal implications of Jesus' coming the second time "without sin unto salvation."



He who has the habit...

of smiling at the



CASH REGISTER

rather than the customer,

.....

...won't be smiling long.

marriages

Burkholder-Wagler

Bro. Michael Ray, son of Raymond Burkholder, East Earl, PA, and Sis. Laura Mae, daughter of Thomas and Judy Wagler, Hartville, OH, at Maranatha Bible Church, Akron, OH, for Pleasant View A.M. Church, Hartville, OH, on July 13, 2005, by Raymond Burkholder.

Nisly-King

Bro. L. Bradley, son of Larry and Barbara Nisly, Hutchinson, KS, and Sis. Rosa Joy, daughter of Edna and the late Steven King, Hartville, OH, at N. Canton Church of Christ, for Pleasant View A.M. Church, Hartville, on Sept. 24, 2005, by Homer Zook.

Peachey-Beachy

Bro. Joseph, son of David and Emma Peachey, Auburn, KY, and Sis. Andrea, daughter of Joseph and Joanna Beachy, Auburn, KY, at Crittendon Drive Church of Christ, for Providence Mennonite Fellowship on Aug. 16, 2005, by David Yoder, Jr.

Yoder-Yoder

Bro. David Emanuel, son of Millard and Mary Yoder, Hartselle, AL, and Sis. Glenda Marie, daughter of Elvin and Barbara Yoder, Hartselle, AL, at Danville Baptist for Emanuel Mennonite Church on May 21, 2005, by the groom's father, Millard Yoder.

Yoder-Yoder

Bro. Millard Lewis, son of Millard and Mary Yoder, Hartselle, AL, and Sis. Carolyn Joy, daughter of Marvin and Miriam Yoder, Belvidere, TN, at First Baptist Church for Belvidere Mennonite Church on Sept. 23, 2005, by the groom's father, Millard Yoder.

Zook-Yoder

Bro. Nathaniel, son of Wilmer and Esther Zook, Rural Retreat, VA, and Sis. Celena, daughter of Reuben and Mary Ann Yoder, Free Union, VA, at Pilgrim Christian Fellowship, Stuarts Draft, VA, for Faith Mission Fellowship, on Sept. 2, 2005, by Ivan Beachy.

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

You may not get much done
unless you go ahead
and do it before you feel ready.

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Daniel and Salina (Kanagy), Richfield, PA, (presently serving in Paraguay), third child, first dau., Emily Rose, June 21, 2005.

Beachy, Kenneth and Mirta Elisa (Montania), New Holland, PA, first child and dau., Sophia Claire, Aug. 24, 2005.

Bontrager, Darlton and Rose (Troyer), Kokomo, IN, second and third sons, (one deceased), Trevor Vitaly, Sept. 16, 2000, Cameron Vladik, July 16, 2002, received from Russia for adoption Aug. 2, 2005.

Bontrager, Lamar and Joanna (Kinsinger), Topeka, IN, fifth child, third dau., LaShonda Jo, Sept. 22, 2005.

Coblentz, Glenn and Abigail (Brumbaugh), Decatur, IN, second child, first son, Isaiah Carter, July 5, 2005.

Coblentz, Nathan and Regina (Hochstetler), Hicksville, OH, second child, first son, Bradon Ray, Sept. 16, 2005.

Detweiler, Lester and Lena (Detweiler), Tuscola, IL, fifth child, second son, Marcus Raymond, Sept. 11, 2005.

Farmwald, John and Katherine (Miller), Crossville, TN, first child and dau., Char-

lonia Diane, Sept. 21, 2005.

Fisher, Michael and Verna (Peachey), Rural Retreat, VA, third child and son, Austin Kyle, Sept. 10, 2005.

Hochstetler, John and Rosemary (Yoder), Arthur, IL, first child and son, Robert Lynn, Sept. 25, 2005.

Hostetler, Delbert and Lavera (Herschberger), Kokomo, IN, second child and son, Brayden Tyler, July 22, 2005.

Jones, Floyd and Carolyn (Byler), Linneus, MO, eighth child, fourth dau., Katrina Rose, Sept. 12, 2005.

Knepp, Adin and Miriam (Stoll), Loo-gootee, IN, second child, first dau., Grace Nicole, Aug. 31, 2005.

Kuhns, Tim and Joan (Schrock), Arcola, IL, third child, second son, Titus Jamin, Sept. 11, 2005.

Lapp, LaMar and Faith (Beachy), Quaker City, OH, seventh child, fifth dau., Ashley Renee, Sept. 2, 2005.

Miggiani, Wolfgang and Lori (Martin), Garden City, KS, have recently adopted more international children. Their present family is comprised of eight biological and adopted offspring (four boys and four girls). They are: Sebastian (9), Bethlehem (7), Seth (7), AnnaMiriam (6), Hadassah (6), Ezra (5), Nehemiah

(4), and Magdalena (3).

Nisly, Wayne and Sharon (Brenneman), Hartselle, AL, second child, first son, Edward Daniel, July 11, 2005.

Otto, Marcus and Wende (Graber), Bunker Hill, IN, first child and son, Brady Daniel, Sept. 7, 2005.

Petersheim, Mark and Mary Lois (Schnupp), Dryden, ON, third child and dau., Emily Joy, Sept. 19, 2005.

Raber, Gary and Lois (Overholt, Kauffman), Freeport, OH, sixth child, third dau., Radiance Joy, Sept. 14, 2005.

Ropp, Matthew and Sheila (Erb), Milverton, ON, first child and son, Christopher Matthew, July 29, 2005.

Rutt, Curtis and Donna (Kauffman), New Holland, PA, second child and dau., Megan Ralene, Sept. 7, 2005.

Stoltzfus, Mervin and Rose (Esh), Points, WV, fifth child, third son, Landon Kade, Sept. 23, 2005.

Stutzman, Galen and Rhonda (Gin-

gerich), Plain City, OH, (presently serving at Faith Mission Home), third child, first son, Adrian Clark, Aug. 8, 2005.

Stutzman, Owen and Wanda (Greenauer), Hutchinson, KS, first child and son, Matthias James, Sept. 18, 2005.

Wagler, Lester and Lois (Overholt), Lyndon, KS, first child and dau., Brooklyn Gail, Sept. 16, 2005.

Wagler, Travis and Renee (Marner), Odon, IN, fourth child, first dau., Adrianna Leigh, Sept. 21, 2005.

Wickey, Brian and Darla (Yoder), Hutchinson, KS, first child and dau., Alaina Breanne, Sept. 24, 2005.

Yoder, Floyd and Betty (Swartzentru-ber), Clarkson, KY, eighth child, third son, Micah Seth, Sept. 2, 2005.

A blush

is one thing that *cannot* be

counterfeited.

ordinations

Bro. Gareth Yoder, 43, Grandview, TX, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of minister on Sept. 25, 2005. Peter Baer, Lolita, CA, brought preordination messages.

The charge was given by Marlin Kreider, assisted by Elmer Mast and Roland Ulrich.

Bro. Wendell Miller, 27, was ordained as deacon to serve at Rosewood Fellowship on Oct. 2, 2005. Preordination messages were brought by Glen W. Miller, Middlebury, IN.

The charge was given by Glenn Yoder, assisted by Wade Burkholder, and John Miller. Also in the lot were Tim Miller and Marvin Weirich.

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

obituaries

Burkholder, Linda Sue, 25, died close to Nashville, TN, as the result of an automobile accident June 14, 2005. She was born Aug. 25, 1979, at Salem, IN, daughter of Ernest and Delilah (Troyer) Knepp.

She was a member of Whiteville Mennonite Church.

On May 20, 2000, she was married to Marcus Burkholder, who survives. To this union were born two sons: Cameron Marcus and Chandler James.

Other survivors include seven brothers and three sisters.

Funeral services were held on June 17, with Lavern Eash, L. J. Helmuth and Paul Overholt serving. Elmer Mast served in the committal. Burial was in the Whiteville Mennonite Church cemetery.

Stoltzfus, Emma S., 81, of Leola, PA,

died August 22, 2005, at her residence after a lengthy illness. She was born in Leola on Nov. 7, 1923, the only child of the late Moses B. and Rachel (Smoker) Stoltzfoos.

She was a homemaker and a member of Summitview Christian Fellowship, New Holland.

She was the wife of the late Benjamin L. Stoltzfus, who died Nov. 18, 1995.

Surviving are five sons: Samuel (Hannah) Stoltzfus, Pine Grove, PA; Moses (Rhoda) Stoltzfus, Denver, PA; Sylvan (Mary) Stoltzfus, Cherry Tree, PA; Leon (Wilma) Stoltzfus, Lebanon, PA; and Alvin (Leona) Stoltzfus, Romney, WV; four daughters: Rachel (John) Lapp, McVeytown, PA; Sadie (Jess) Stoltzfus, Wickenburg, AZ; Ruth (Marvin) Stoltzfus, Leola, PA; Verna (Melvin) Beiler, Munnsville, NY; 65 grandchildren, and 54 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by two

grandsons: Micah and Jadrian. Funeral services were held at Summitview Church with Leroy Lapp and Wilmer Stoltzfoos serving. Burial was in the adjoining cemetery.

Zook, Linda, 85, died Sept. 2, 2005. She was born June 6, 1920, a daughter of Samuel and Arie (Peachey) Yoder.

She was a member of Mine Road A.M. Church, Gap, PA.

On Dec. 5, 1940, she was married to Amos Zook. He survives. Also surviving are five daughters: Marie (Emanuel) Yoder, Dundee, OH; Rhoda (Moses) Stoltzfus, Denver, PA; Esther (David) Glick, Gap, PA; Dorothy (Elmer) Glick, Augusta, WV; Lillian (Gary) Burkholder, Rochester, IN; six sons: Edwin (Ruth Smoker) Zook, Gap, PA; Roy (Kate

Glick) Zook, Willow Street, PA; Ray (Rae Lynn Callahan) Zook, Conestoga, PA; Paul (Miriam Miller) Zook, Abbeville, SC; Mark (Fannie Mae Beachy) Zook, Burgettstown, PA; Elvin (Diane Ash) Zook, Akron, PA; 38 grandchildren and 55 great grandchildren. Other survivors include one brother, Paul Yoder, Kinzers, PA; and two sisters, Mary (Mrs. Ben Lapp) and Elsie (Mrs. Sylvan Smoker), both of Christiana, PA.

Preceding her in death were a son, Samuel, on Mar. 6, 1958, and a daughter, Julia Ann on May 30, 1981, also a brother, Christ Yoder.

Funeral services were held Sept. 4, at Weavertown A.M. Church with Elmer Glick, John Glick, and Alvin Stoltzfus serving. Burial was in the Weavertown Church Cemetery.

observations

California governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, signed into law a bill addressing the growing problem of childhood obesity. He said, "California is facing an obesity epidemic. And more and more children are becoming part of the problem." Beginning next July, elementary and high school students can no longer buy soft drinks at school vending machines. They can buy only water, milk, and some fruit and sport drinks that have limited sweetness. (A.P. *Hutchinson News*, Sept, 19, 2005)

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The above item lends support from a secular perspective to the concerns raised by Abner Riehl. (See items in this column, Sept. and Oct, '05)

The following comments are gleaned from Bro. Riehl's much longer article: What are we saying with our lives? What about eating out regularly in fancy restaurants? This is expensive and may well add to the already high health care costs. Our lives are lived before a watching world. Overeating is not an effective way of witnessing.

A reader finds it troublesome that it sounds like church discipline is needed when someone eats excessively. (See October issue, page 21) Though my comment was not meant as a proposal for specific action, let us be reminded that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are not our own. To build group conscience in this area seems in order, and may be more needful than we realize.

The entire article is available by contacting Abner Riehl, 3287 Hwy 201, Due West, SC 29639.



Food should be regarded as one of God's good gifts. We need not feel guilty for the enjoyment of wholesome foods. (1 Tim. 6:17b) If we remember that we are to eat to live, not live to eat, it may help us to choose healthful foods and to be temperate in all things.



During World War 2, an immigrant family who had recently arrived from Russia lived at Duchess, Alberta. They had a son who was of draft age. They experienced considerable financial hardship, but appreciated the privilege of the freedoms of Canada. Mastery of English was coming and the young man is remembered as a sincere, likeable person.

When he faced the draft, he was

unsure what position to take. His family and the church leaders urged him to take a conscientious objector's stand. But another person who was influential convinced him that such a choice would be unwise. He was urged to choose the military, because then he would receive valuable training. He would have a good future. The young man accepted this advice.

He went into military service as a non-combatant soldier, but did not return home. He was reported missing in action. There was no word about what had happened to him. Many years later, less than ten years ago, a lone hunter in Burma came upon scattered parts of an airplane and human bones. In the wreckage a watch was found with his name clearly engraved on the back.

A teenage peer, Jake Friesen, who later became a respected bishop in the church, had strongly urged him to choose the way of Christ and God's Word.

Obviously wrong choices can have long term effects. A good future should be considered from the perspective of eternal implications rather than only temporal considerations. To give misleading counsel is very serious business. (Courtesy: Howard Torkelson)



Enos D. Martin, 61, has been a bishop in Lancaster Mennonite Conference since 1987. He is also a psychiatrist, who has worked extensively and successfully with homosexuals, recovering substance abusers and prisoners.

He is presently in the process of leaving the conference. The network he hopes to establish with others will be called New Testament Fellowship of Mennonite/Anabaptist Churches. Martin says he wishes to maintain a Mennonite identity. He indicated that he will not try to persuade other congregations to leave the conference. He says, "God will bring the churches He wants to a given network." Martin says it was a difficult decision, but he feels the MC-USA will result in a "toned-down Gospel." He hopes the new network will be a "sprout and not a splinter."

Conference moderator Keith Weaver said it was disappointing and painful to see Martin leave, but "we wish him the Lord's blessing in his pursuit." (MWR, 8-29-05)

A telephone conversation with Brother Martin is the basis for this further comment. He's not interested in creating an "Enos Martin" movement. He does not wish to discredit the conference that he is leaving. After considering the var-

ious factors and earnestly seeking God's guidance, he strongly felt that this is what he needs to do. In light of the urgent needs of "the last, the least, and the lost" he does not feel right about wasting precious time and energy debating issues that seem clearly settled in the Scriptures. He wants this transition to be defined in terms of what he feels called to do rather than what he is leaving.



The Mennonite (9-6-05) has an article on Medical Malpractice Litigation. Controversy surrounding these issues is highly partisan. Trial lawyers, Democrats, and many consumer groups favor unlimited right to sue. Medical interests, insurers and other business interests support Republicans seeking limitation on lawsuits. Few victims collect anything. Most of the money awarded in malpractice cases goes to lawyers, insurers, and others. The article refers to an obstetrician whose malpractice insurance costs \$160,000 per year. Aside from Christian teaching that clearly forbids Christians to initiate litigation, there are other good reasons for us not to pursue such action.



Hurricane Katrina devastated the city of New Orleans and did untold damage over a wide area. Beaumont,

Texas, seems to have received the major brunt of Rita, while the larger cities of Galveston and Houston were spared major damage.

Storms such as these are forceful reminders of God's awesome power in nature. It is perhaps part of what is described in Romans 8:22b, which says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now." The message of the larger passage is that we live in a fallen world. But God has plans to change His creation from the "bondage of corruption." While

there is much about this that I do not understand well, it is clear to me that when we belong to the family of God, lesser things are not very important.

It is not for us to decide whether this was God's visitation of judgment on a city in which there is much wickedness. We should rather search our own lives in willing repentance where needed. (Luke 13:1-5) —DLM



Ministers' Meeting Messages

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

7. Christ-likeness in Money and Possessions

Elmer Gingerich, Mountain View, AR

Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). It seems to me that Jesus was unabsorbed in and unattracted to money. He made profound statements about money and possessions. He said one can be rich toward

God. He spoke of a foolish man who planned to tear down his barns to build bigger ones. He indicated that that is the way it is for everyone who lays up treasures on earth and is not rich toward God. He observed that where one's treasure is there will his heart be also.

My wife, Lavina, and I were married on February 14, 1964. Within two weeks after that, we had moved to Denver, Colorado, in 1-W service. For the next two years, we lived very simply in a rented house. After that, we moved back to Indiana where I took a job at Coachman RV factory.

We were open to outreach, because it seemed unnecessary to us that so much “salt” should be piled on one spot. One day, some ten months later, Bro. Abe Schwartz came to visit me on the job about moving to Arkansas to help in the fledgling work there.

Eventually, after we had received our parents’ blessing, we moved to the rural Mountain View area and bought a 40-acre parcel of ground for \$4250. That was my entrance to the big world of money and possessions. We didn’t have the money to pay for it, but some kind brothers from Woodlawn, our home congregation came up with the money and lent it to us. To this day, I don’t know who all the brothers were.

Actually, I had developed some values and ideas about money from my father. He had conservative values and didn’t buy fancy things. He was careful about debts. If he had money, it went onto debts. I don’t remember my dad ever sitting me down and teaching me about money. But I caught it, even though I wasn’t taught it.

We have some cattle at home. With the cows is an extra large, black Angus bull. I’m careful when I go into the pasture, because I know bulls are dangerous and I can’t run as fast as I used to. That bull has never done any-

thing bad, but I am extra alert when I go to the pasture. I think that is something of the feeling we ought to have toward money and possessions. That feeling of the dangers in money was given to me by my father. The reason to fear the bull in the pasture is different from the reason to fear money. I fear the bull because it is big. Money and possessions are mostly neutral things. The danger lies in our hearts more than in money itself.

We once had a Chevy Cavalier with many miles. If you stepped on the gas, you could make the transmission slip a bit. We knew it was time to do something. So we decided to trade the car. The boys went with me. We spotted a car at a small used dealer’s place that we were interested in. We looked at it and he looked at ours. Then we went for a test drive in our car. To my shame, “I held my breath” for fear the transmission would slip. I sighed with relief. (I’m not sure what all was in that sigh.) We traded.

At that time, we were raising broilers and the broiler business was lagging. Just before the car incident, we had just sold a batch of broilers, and the returns were not good. It was not a total loss, but we were definitely disappointed. Lavina and I knelt with the check in hand and gave the situation to God. The

troublesome thought of what God's purposes are in financial disappointments came rather strongly to me as I drove through Mountain View soon after that. It seemed to me that God brought this thought to me as I drove: *If you want to make sure by yourself that you have enough money, I will let you do it yourself.*

My mind went to the car incident. That night in our family circle, I reported how God had dealt with me. We prayed and I asked God's forgiveness and we, together as a family, figured out a way to make it right with the dealer. As we prepared to go to bed, one of the boys said to me, "Dad, I wondered why you didn't just tell him." Yes, our children are watching us and learning from us.

We learn in several different ways about money. Tough experiences with money teach us some things about money. I know about the dangers of money in my head, but how I live, shows how I handle it in my heart. The magnetism we have toward money and possessions shows the dangers they pose for us. I could tell you other personal experiences, but I won't. Perhaps if you spoke, you would have stories of your own that would show that I'm not alone in this magnetism toward money and this struggle.

We don't read much about Jesus' standard of living. Once when He wanted to pay the temple tax, He sent Peter to go catch a fish, take the coin out of its mouth and pay for it. Once when a man came and said to Jesus, "I want to follow you." Jesus told him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head."

What was it that made His eyes turn away from money and possessions? It was His drivenness and His understanding that He had a mission to fulfill. The sacred trilogy of our purpose in life is to love, serve and give. When heaven uses us to do heaven's things, that's called laying up treasures in heaven. Jesus teaches us "to treasure up for ourselves treasures in heaven."

Singleness of vision is an advantage. Jesus is saying our lives must be driven by one treasure. Furthermore, whatever we treasure will master us. Jesus said we cannot serve God and mammon. Covetousness is idolatry. That's the result of establishing our worth on the basis of our material possessions. We have only a reasonable obligation to lay up treasures. It does not depend on us solely. God will partner with us. We should put forth reasonable effort for our livelihood. Our families look to us for care,

and if we don't do that, Paul observed that we have denied the faith and are worse than infidels.



Jesus IS Coming Soon!

Suzie Oatney · Partridge, KS

When we first moved to our farm in Ohio, I had come to Christ but my husband had not. Our family was young and growing. I had an empty picture frame and decided to use it to make a motto to encourage myself.

On a piece of paper, I wrote: *Jesus IS coming soon*. I had some flowers that I had pressed in a book until they were dry. These I carefully glued around the words as a border. When it was finished, I hung it where I could see it whenever I left the house or when I came in, and I could see it throughout the day from the kitchen where I was working.

That has been more than 25 years ago. More six years ago we moved west and made our new home in Kansas. It seems almost in some other lifetime that I made that motto. Many things have happened through the years. My husband became a Christian a few years after we moved to our Ohio farm. Now our children

are all grown, and most of them are married and are at the stage with their families that I was in when I hung up the motto.

Today, the motto hangs over the desk in the living room. The flowers are so faded that I scarcely remember the color they originally had. Yet, I still see it every day and the words are still true, even though the color has faded.


When I think back to the day I first hung it up, I felt sure that before the end of the week Jesus would come and take me home. He has not, but the words are still just as true as they were then.

Jesus IS coming soon.

I don't know when, but He WILL come! Just because dust collects on my motto and I have to tidy it up—I am not discouraged. I think when I dust it off, He has given me another day to live for Him, and I still comfort myself with its truth.

For the Lord himself shall descend

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together

with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. **Wherefore comfort one another with these words.** (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). 

mission awareness

“Little Is Much When God Is In It”

Our marvelous Creator, the Lord Jesus, sees the sparrow fall to the ground. Nothing escapes His watchful eye. In Christian service, Jesus notices the little deeds, the small gifts. He observed the poor widow’s devotion as she cast in her gift of two mites in the temple treasury: “Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had” (Luke 21:3, 4).

The faithful will not go unrewarded in being good stewards with the few things given to them by the Lord. Just to hear these words by our blessed Redeemer, will be deeply rewarding: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

May the following stories—kind acts

of Christian service—motivate our hearts and hands to love the Lord with joyous devotion and not grow weary in well-doing.—FS

Everyday life—we all experience it. Some of us are home, some are on the job, some are active, some are ill, but everybody is somewhere, and that is where God wants us to serve Him today.

“A lot of times it’s some small thing you say or do that ignites something in another’s heart,” says Ronnie, who came out of nominal Christianity into a full commitment to life and service.

“You don’t need to do some big thing,” he says, “A neighbor man brought us a basket of peaches and said, ‘We’d love to have you come across the road and worship with us.’ He didn’t say, ‘Go to church,’ but he

said, ‘worship with us.’ That spoke to me.”

When the family needed help, the church people across the road helped. Ronnie says he kept wondering, “What do they expect in return?” But they had no ulterior motives and “It kept speaking to us.”

Scriptures were presented in a quiet way, and God’s Spirit brought conviction through such verses as “the wages of sin is death,” which kept coming up. He says, “I didn’t know what I wanted, but I knew I didn’t want to die.”

Everyday life begins at home—with spouse and children, brothers and sisters, or roommates.

Our children or unbelieving adults may be attracted to Christianity or turned away from it as a result of little things they observe in our everyday lives.

Are we pleasant to be around? If home is an unpleasant place, our families will not want to be there, and they will likely reject our way of life. Someone said, “The poorest representative of Jesus Christ is the Christian who doesn’t know what it is to enjoy life.” Many of us are so glum we look as if we were on the road to hell instead of heaven. The only people in the world today who are in a position to laugh and rejoice are

those who are secure in Jesus Christ!

What is the atmosphere in our homes? One non-Christian commented to her Christian friend, “Every time I come into your home, it seems so quiet and peaceful. I can even feel it when I’m talking to you on the phone. That’s why I hate to hang up.”

Although we may never contact the masses, do we minister in small ways on a one-to-one basis?

A minister’s wife bakes once a month, then takes a baked gift to one of her non-Christian neighbors each week. This gives her an opportunity to witness for the Lord and invite the neighbors to church. A teenager, sensitive to others’ needs, often leaves baked goods and a note of encouragement in the car of hurting friends. Burdens seem lighter when someone else understands and cares.

One housewife sometimes includes a tract or two in books returned to the public library. When she pays bills, she may include a tract with this note, “A Gospel tract for whoever opens this envelope. May it be a blessing to you and yours.”

Even shut-ins can reach out to the needy by phone, pen, or prayer. When D. L. Moody’s first revival occurred in London, he had actually gone to England for a rest but agreed

to preach one Sunday. Of that morning service he said, "I had no power, no liberty; it seemed like pulling a heavy train up a steep grade." He asked to be released from preaching that evening, but the pastor would not consent. Moody said, "I went to the evening service with a heavy heart. The house was full and people were outwardly respectful, but there was no interest and no response. I was having a hard time again. About halfway through my talk there came a change. It seemed as though the windows of heaven had opened and a bit of breath blew down. The atmosphere of the building seemed to change. The people's faces changed." He and the pastor were overwhelmed by the hundreds who responded to the invitation that evening. That was the beginning of a 16-day revival.

In reporting what happened, Moody said the point of the whole story is not what happened, but what brought it about and he was privileged to hear it directly from those involved:

There were two sisters in that

church, one of whom was bedridden; the other one heard me that Sunday morning. She went home and said to her sister, "Who do you suppose preached for us this morning?" When the invalid could not guess, her sister told her. She turned pale and said, "What? Mr. Moody of Chicago? I have read of him in an American paper and I have been praying God for nearly two years to send him to London, and to send him to our church. If I had known he was to preach this morning I would have eaten no breakfast. I would have spent the whole morning in fasting and prayer. Now Sister, go out, lock the door, do not let any one come to see me, do not let them send me any dinner; I am going to spend the whole afternoon and evening in fasting and prayer."

Pray she did, and God heard and answered.

(From Alight, March-April, 2000. Used by permission.)



Children learn to like reading if they get their start while sitting on a parental lap.

Simplicity in the Kitchen

Mary June Glick

One's kitchen can be a place of joy as we provide for the needs of our family and others. This month's subject is a continuation of simple food preparation, using tips some of you shared with me. I realize I am writing to women from various geographical locations, different cultural backgrounds, and diverse stages of life.

Some of you are newlyweds, some are busy mothers, others are grandmothers, and some are single. The time you spend in the kitchen varies and you cook according to your situation. You may be trying to fill the stomachs of growing children with nourishing meals and a full cookie jar or you may be cooking for just two people. This will also make a difference in the type of meals you will be serving to guests.

We have been blessed by single women who have served us exotic foods on elegantly decorated tables and we have also been blessed by simple home cooking in a home with hungry, happy children. Whatever your situation in life may find you,

use what you have in your hands to bless your family, friends and strangers.

Now for some practical kitchen tips for simple food preparation:

1. Buy large amounts of hamburger, turkey or chicken when on sale. Cook the meat and divide it in small packages and freeze. That way it's easy to thaw and use on short notice.

2. Make your own white sauce instead of buying canned soups; add seasoning accordingly. Cook larger amounts of dried beans and freeze the extra amount.

3. Cut up and freeze those bread crusts or aging bread, then use them to make dressing, bread pudding, and so on, or put it through a food processor for bread crumbs. Process cereals, cookies, and such leftover items to use instead of graham cracker crumbs.

4. Prepare several casseroles at a time; freeze the extra for a quick meal. Bake cookies, rolls, pie crusts to put in the freezer.

5. For quick company meals use instant mashed potatoes. (If you are

buying potatoes, the instant variety is cheaper.) Also add mashed potatoes to your bread or rolls, to keep them soft.

6. Pack lunches in the evening to keep your mornings from becoming so hectic. You can prepare a week's supply of sandwiches at one time and freeze them.

I hope these few tips will give you some ideas and also spark enthusiasm to enjoy cooking within your means. Try using what you have

without going to the store that week. I remember the times when I needed to do that, and one of our sons told me he enjoys those meals because I needed to be more creative.

We are blessed with food in our pantries and freezers, while many people in the world have only enough for one day at a time. May you find joy and bring blessing to others through your kitchen!



junior messages

Follow Me

Anita Yoder · Ligonier, IN

Do you remember the song, “Peter, James and John had a little sailboat”? All Jesus asked them to do was to cast their net on the other side. That seems like a big fish story! They caught 153 fish, but there’s more to the story than a great catch.

Jesus had died and resurrected, showing Himself to his disciples several different times. He had appeared to Mary, to the disciples in a room and to Thomas. We are not told that

Jesus had yet spoken directly to Peter after Peter had denied Him.

It seems that Peter had decided to go back to his fishing business, but when morning came, they had fished all night, and caught nothing. It brings us many questions: What was Peter thinking? Was he thinking they had actually lost their skill at fishing? Had they become so busy discussing all the happenings of the recent past that they hadn’t noticed their empty nets? Did Thomas voice his feelings

about seeing Jesus' nail prints in his hands and feet? Did Peter struggle with guilt?

It was morning and a stranger called to them from the shore, asking them if they had a good catch. When they reported that no fish had been caught, He told them to throw the net on the right side. Did that really make sense? If they were above a school of fish, wouldn't there be fish all around them? They did as they were told and got a net full of fish.

As they got to the shore, they recognized that the stranger was Jesus. He had built a small fire and had fish and bread ready for them to eat.

What would you have done had you been in Peter's shoes? Hang your head?

Jesus turned to Peter and asked him three times, "Do you love me?" Jesus could have condemned Peter for his actions, or at least reminded Peter of his mistakes. He could have said, "Peter, I told you so, remember?" Christ didn't do that; instead He gave Peter an invitation, "Follow me and feed my lambs."

Jesus served Peter and showed him acceptance and love. As our sacrifice, Jesus shows us that He loves us, too. The invitation is still ours. Let's follow Jesus!



youth messages

One At a Time

Andrea Mast · Santa Ana, El Salvador

As I was sorting medications at the Clinic of Good News, a rural El Salvadoran clinic where I volunteer occasionally, a woman brought in her sick baby. This in itself was not unusual; many women bring their babies to the clinic, but this one had diarrhea and was dehydrated. The baby really needed IV fluids; our clinic, however, was

not set up to provide that. The doctor, Jana Nisly, came to me, deeply concerned and told me the woman's story. She had lost another baby from the same causes and Dr. Jana didn't want to risk another death.

"Would you be willing to take her to the hospital in Santa Ana?" She asked. I paused to consider and to gather up my courage before answer-

ing. Santa Ana lay an hour's bus ride away over a rough dirt road. The idea of being responsible for someone else and finding a place I had never visited before was intimidating, but I agreed. Seeing Dr. Jana's concern for the baby's health helped me overcome my hesitation. The burden I felt to help this woman and her child engraved the memories of the day clearly in my mind.

I managed to get mother and baby off the bus at the correct stop and then through the narrow streets to the hospital. Finally we arrived at the emergency room.

As I sat in the waiting room, I had time to observe the patients. The scenes at the hospital saddened me. So many sick children and worried parents, so much hidden tension and fear and love simmering beneath the noise of babies' cries!

How strange that I remember the other patients more vividly than the woman I accompanied! Yet her image remains with me as well. I couldn't tell her age. Her hair was still dark and her face unwrinkled, but her eyes held sadness and fear. She had had a hard life. Her white blouse was snagged and worn at the collar; the soles on her green sandals were thin; and her hands were calloused from making tortillas, washing clothes,

and hauling firewood. Her baby kept coughing and crying, his thin arms flailing the air. He wore red socks—a superstitious custom intended to ward off the evil eye. Several other babies did, too.

Just ahead of me in line was a young woman, with her two children. I offered to watch them while she waited her turn. Little Katerin, barely two years old, was tiny and pixieish. She couldn't sit still for long. When she wandered outside to explore, I followed her to bring her back. Her independence was strong, but whenever her mama advanced too far in the line, she wiggled down from her seat and followed her. Her brother looked sick, but he had a bright smile and an intelligent face.

A fat woman entered who was worried about her son. He looked about eight or nine years old, with light brown hair, pale complexion, and a chubby face. He whimpered and leaned against the desk while the doctor listened to his heartbeat and swung his feet while his mother waited in line.

A young couple brought their baby. She was just a girl, petite and round-faced; he was dark, with black hair and a scraggly beard. Later I saw him looking for his wife. A nurse must have taken the baby for treatment.

He wandered aimlessly, peering into rooms, visibly pushing down his worry. His face was young, bewildered, and frightened; yet he had to be a man, to be strong for his wife. It almost made me cry.

At last the woman from our clinic was called to bring her baby up to the examining desk. I accompanied her as the doctor checked the little boy.

The doctor and staff seemed careless and unconcerned—even impatient. Instead of loving service, they gave preemptory commands. They had seen so many sick children that they all looked alike to them. They had no heart for the patients. A student nurse, a bleached blonde, personified the attitude of uncaring flippancy that pervaded the place. She skittered across the floor, reminding me of a water strider darting over the water, if anything that big could resemble something that small.

The secretary taking data couldn't have cared less about the people. Intent on getting her job done, she had no time for uncertainty or foolishness. The doctor who examined the child was brisk, cold and businesslike. No one *cared!*

They fell short of the standards of the Clinic of Good News.

But despite the dismal and un-

loving atmosphere, the baby was admitted to the hospital to receive the life-giving fluids that would restore the luster to his sunken eyes, health to his thin body, and hope to his mother. At last I was free to return home.

The next day I was still thinking about my experiences of the day before:

Am I judging them too harshly, Father? I suppose I can't expect people who don't know You to really love and care for those who are hurting, like Dr. Jana and the other workers at the clinic do. It's so easy to take their self-sacrificing love for granted. I hope I spread some of Your love there to the woman, Katerin's mother, the ones I smiled at. They needed it.

I probably will never know if my smile or words helped someone yesterday. But You know, don't You? And You remember. Little things—a smile, a touch, a gentle word—are the things that count.

I would like to do something noble and great, to make a difference in the world. But if I wait for a chance to do some heroic deed, I will miss these opportunities to share Your love in small ways—for truly, these are the things that change the world. One smile, one touch, one word at a time. You are redeeming the world.

Youth Editor's note:

Dear Youth,

This month's Youth Section centers on, **"Youth being disciples for Christ."**

It is not easy being a disciple of Christ. Just ask Jesus' 12 original disciples. One day you are criticized for being too legalistic—the next day you are criticized for taking too many liberties. That's the life of a disciple.

But somehow in the midst of criticism, in the midst of pleasant and unpleasant experiences, and in the midst of the shame of the cross, God expects us to be able to hear His voice, to follow Him and to learn from people around us.

The story in this section is one youth's first hand experience of what discipleship meant for her. Discipleship may mean something entirely different for you, and yet the call for all of us is the same—*Hearing and Following the Voice of the Shepherd*.

Thanks to each of you who responded to the questions that have been posted each month.

I think the responses to the "September question" are very much on target. These responses have made me stop and think. Perhaps they will do the same for you.

Any of you are invited and encouraged to write responses to each month's posted question, as well as to submit questions for which you would like response.

Thank you for your continued contribution to this section!

—Ernest Eby

This Month's **QUESTION**

In a sentence or two, "What is your mental image or description of a youth who is a 'Disciple of Christ'?"

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

Disciple of Christ—A person whose driving passion in life is to, above all else, become more like

Jesus.

Nelson Beachy, Winfield, PA

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When I think of a person who is a disciple of Christ, I picture someone who's walking in the footsteps of Christ. Christ is his Master, and he cares *only* for what his Master thinks. He is not distracted by the world, because he lives before an audience of one.

Maria Petersheim, Narvon, PA

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In my mind a disciple of Christ is one whose life-consuming passion is to daily know and obey Christ with an open mind, even if it costs him personal sacrifice and self-denial. Therefore in Christ he finds his approval, acceptance, fulfillment, wisdom, direction, courage, and ALL he needs as he *depends* upon his all-sufficient, all-knowing Master.

Eunice Miller, Suceava, Romania

•••••

Disciple of Christ: the ideal Disciple will exhibit, will showcase, the

very character of Christ.

All who wish to be Disciples *must be working* toward this ideal.

Eric Hershberger, Stuarts Draft, VA

•••••

The first mental image I get is someone walking down a shining path into a bright light, holding a Bible...

Description: Someone who is willing to make sacrifices for his/her faith. Someone who isn't afraid to stand up to the crowd, but not a "holy roller." Someone who is in touch with God.

Shanna Byler, Huntsville, AR

•••••

In my mind, A Disciple of Christ is one who loves God wholeheartedly to the point of not compromising when in a tight spot. The "Beatitudes" are the guide for his or her life.

Dorcas Yoder, Free Union, VA

Next Month's
QUESTION

There are people among us who believe that to spend or invest borrowed money is to use money that God has not yet given to us. There seems to be some wisdom in this caution. What wisdom can you see in this, especially as it applies to people your age?

Please send your response by November 20.

THOUGHT GEMS

What you view, becomes a part of you.



A sermon is usually not too long, if it is helpful.



A real Christian is one who is as
horrified by his own sin as his neighbor's.



For every sin, Satan is ready to provide an excuse.



Be sincere with your compliments.
Most of us can tell the difference between sugar and saccharine.



When leading in public prayer, pray loud enough to be
heard of men, and sincere enough to be heard by God.



Science is only a tool. The harm or good
it does comes from how men use it.



Hot words never indicate cool judgment.



We are never too old to learn,
but that's no excuse for putting it off.

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