



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

Galatians 6:14

DECEMBER 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.

Calvary Publications, Inc., is a non-profit organization, incorporated in the State of Ohio, for the purpose of sponsoring, publishing, and distributing Christian literature. The board is elected, one member annually, by the ministers of the Beachy Amish Mennonite Churches, at their annual spring meeting.

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Editorial correspondence for CALVARY MESSENGER, marriages, births, obituaries, and general articles—send to the EDITOR. MISSIONS/YOUTH/JUNIOR MESSAGES—mail to their respective EDITORS.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, renewals, changes of address, etc.—mail to CIRCULATION MANAGER. WHEN YOU MOVE, please notify the Circulation Manager one month in advance, giving your old and new address in full, so that your mailing label can be properly corrected and your credit be kept in order.

CIRCULATION MANAGER/TREASURER
 Mark I. Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624
 markbeachy@characterlink.net
 330-852-2982

EDITOR

Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd.
 Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paullmiller@mindspring.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Elmer D. Glick
 RR 1 Box 47-C
 Augusta, WV 26704

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

David L. Miller
 P O Box 73
 Partridge, KS 67566

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Simon Schrock
 Enos D. Stutzman

MISSIONS EDITOR

Floyd Stoltzfus
 186 Skyline Dr.
 New Holland, PA 17557

YOUTH MESSAGES EDITOR

Ernest Eby
 4812 Hwy. 5
 Mountain View, AR 72560
 ernestebey@emypeople.net

JUNIOR MESSAGES EDITOR

Mrs. Anita Yoder
 10393 N 1100 W
 Ligonier, IN 46767

HELPERS AT HOME EDITOR

Mrs. Mary June Glick
 10351 Fayetteville Rd.
 Bealeton, VA 22712

Calvary Messenger (USPS 767-160) is published monthly by Calvary Publications, 2673 TR 421, Sugarcreek, Ohio 44681. Subscription rates are: 1 year (U.S.) \$7.50, 3 years (U.S.) \$21.00. For congregations using the every-home-plan, \$6.00 per year to individual addresses. Second class postage at Sugarcreek, Ohio. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvary Publications, Inc., 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW, Dundee, OH 44624.

The Cloud

Arnold Skirseth · Blooming Prairie, MN

I saw a cloud this morning across the eastern sky,
 It was dark, foreboding; although it seemed quite nigh.
 But right behind the cloud the sun shone bright and fair.
 It cast a silver lining; sunbeams shot from here and there.

Without the cloud the beauty would never have been seen
 It seemed like earth touched heaven with glory in between.
 And so in our lives come clouds and sometimes rain
 It causes us frustration and sometimes even pain.

But behind the cloud stands Jesus,
 God's eternal Son so fair,
 He casts a silver lining with blessings rich and rare.
 It makes the clouds we're facing much easier to bear.

The cloud I saw this morning soon passed beyond my sight,
 Revealing all the glory of the sun so strong and bright.
 So, too, the clouds we're facing will pass beyond our view,
 Revealing Christ the Son of God, His glory shining through.

[In 2000, Bro. Skirseth was informed that his wife, Leona, had cancer. Just how severe it would be and whether effective treatment would be found was not known. As it turned out, she was given treatment and the cancer went into remission, but has since recurred but was driven back yet again with further treatment. Those who have faced such a trial, whether it came to them or to a loved one, can identify with these comforting thoughts. — PSM]

The Cost of Stewardship

Daniel R. Horst · Altamont, TN

Does good stewardship cost or pay? Good stewardship, in the sense of proper care of the things we manage, normally results in gain, even though wise management of our possessions and affairs requires some time, effort, and expense. Maintenance is less costly than repair or replacement, and makes good business sense, whether we speak of a machine, a garden, a building, or an organization.

Similarly, Christian stewardship offers great rewards—treasure that is eternally secure. But the Christian’s understanding of good stewardship runs far deeper than well-maintained equipment, weedless gardens, or thrifty business moves. He manages his affairs with a perspective of eternal values, realizing he is but a steward of possessions and responsibilities that belong to God. Biblical stewardship does not always make good business sense, and sometimes it involves some significant costs.

Christian stewardship has been known to motivate people to sell their possessions and give away money. “Sell that ye have, and give

alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not” (Luke 12:33). See Acts 4:34,35.

Christian stewardship denies some the comforts and conveniences that others enjoy; yes, even necessities sometimes. “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality” (2 Corinthians 8:1,2).

Christian stewardship might dampen the fun of a shopping trip, take the ease out of buying on credit, and ruin the pleasure of accumulating wealth and possessions. “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare” (1 Timothy 6:9). “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).

Christian stewardship can wipe out savings accounts, and close the doors to some very profitable investment opportunities. It can limit financial


success and keep one from business expansion. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19,20).

Christian stewardship has been known to wear out equipment and burn up resources that could have meant more gain to the steward if he had used them differently. "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matthew 5:42).

Biblical stewardship is not the neglect of our own needs, nor a hap-

azard or careless use of God's trusts, whether material or spiritual. But it is a deliberate use of all for the glory of God that will mean sacrifice for the steward and blessing to others, while laying up heavenly treasure.

Yes, Christian stewardship pays in eternal rewards. But if our treasure in heaven is related to the cost and sacrifice we bear in a benevolent use of temporal things, how large is our account?

From *The Timely Truth*, Oct., 2005.
Used by permission. 

reader response

Re: Anti-Attitudes (Oct. 2005, p. 29)

Dear brother/friend, Simon,

We are in Australia with Jason Kauffmans living in a motor home here at Gympie, Queensland and, having a little time to myself, I picked up the October issue of *Calvary Messenger*, and was blessed with your Anti-Attitudes article...

We are planning to leave by car for a three-week tour of visiting contacts, encouraging and being encouraged by others. We will be visiting folks in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania...

Keep on the good work of writing,

preaching and living for Jesus.

Sincerely, with all our love,
Eli (and Naomi) Kauffman

• • • • •

Re: Editorial: "How to Help"
(Oct. 2005)

I am a student and sympathizer of Anabaptism. I believe the original Anabaptists got it right...

Before responding to your question, I want to say that *CM* is a very good publication. It presents a solid Anabaptist perspective and has some good explanations...

You have opened a huge door and

there are various opinions about it. Here are my comments:

1. Jesus Christ never forced His views/beliefs on anyone. He understood human nature. (John 2:24-25). He knew you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink...

2. The person who told you to "hold the inmate accountable for the past, present, and future actions" is dead wrong. Jesus specifically condemned that type of thinking various times. (Matt. 7:1-2; 9:13; and 12:7; and of course John 8:1-11)

3. Love and truth are not opposites. Paul wrote that "love rejoices in the truth."

4. Without getting off the subject of "tough love," the specific subject you are dealing with I have seen literally hundreds of times during my 25 years of incarceration, is succinctly this: The best you can do is to say, "How can I help you?" If the individual responds with a reasonable request, you should comply. His/her response to your question will tell you a great deal. Genuine concern normally makes a good connect.

5. It is an elementary rule of physics that positive actions produce positive results and negative actions produce negative results.

6. A change of scene does not change one's character. Not yours—

not a prisoner's. People who view prisoners as different from themselves are short of understanding.

7. As Aesop pointed out in a couple of his didactic fables including, "The Ass Eating Thistles," giving advice is tricky. One man's meat is another man's poison.

8. The best book ever concerning misnamed criminal justice in America is your fellow Kansan's *Whatever Became of Sin?* by Karl Menninger. (1973)

Candidly, in this country, 98 out of 100 prison ministries are, in fact, Barabbas ministries. [What's that? —PLM] Others are worse. None of them are interested in the innocent prisoner, which statistically is about 2%. But with a prison population in the U.S. of over 2 million, the innocents would number about 40,000. Jesus was very interested in innocence. (Matt. 12:7; John 18:23, etc.) And so is God, Who sent His innocent son to die on a cross.

You are doing well with *CM*. Keep on keeping on.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Zani

No. 328938, Michael Unit

P.O. Box 4500

Tennessee Colony, Texas 75886

• • • • •

I have found that inmates who are willing to assume responsibility for their bad choices do not typically blame others. Some inmates I have known in my work as chaplain have said that they were not guilty exactly as charged, but without exception those who truly repent of their sins and want spiritual help, are hungry for the Word of God.

We have given out just plain Bibles and also Life Application Bibles and found a definite hunger for the Word of God.

Eli E. Miller
Salem Amish Mennonite Church
24800 Township Road 250
Newcomerstown, OH 43832



My personal experience concerning “How to Help”:

From my youth, I had the habit of being outspoken, blurting out whatever thoughts came into my head. I was rather severely criticized for that by a teacher and a supervisor at work, but resented their comments and retaliated by refusing to say much of anything.

In my late 20’s, I was working for a ministry where I admired my boss very much. When she finally met with me privately and spoke “the truth in love” to me about the

way I expressed my opinions, I was absolutely devastated. I cried “all weekend.” But—and this is the key—I believed her, because I trusted her, and I immediately set out to do whatever I could to change my behavior.

I acknowledge that she did me the greatest favor I’ve ever received by being willing to lovingly tell me the truth about myself. As I look back, I can see that the reason I was able to “hear” her and not the others was because I already had a good relationship with her and I knew that she had my best interests at heart.

I hope my testimony will encourage others.

No name, please



The enclosed papers were copied from ones we received from Bro. John Coblentz at Deeper Life Ministries at Plain City, Ohio. We have found this approach to be so helpful with our children and think it could certainly be used with others as well. The master Teacher used questions again and again in relating to others.

Why is it important to turn statements into questions?

- A statement causes the listener to evaluate your thoughts.
- A question causes the listener to evaluate his own thoughts.

- A statement made before knowing all the facts is folly.
- A question asked before knowing all the facts is wise.
- A statement indicates that you have come to a conclusion.
- A question indicates that you are still considering the matter.
- A statement indicates that it is time for a decision.
- A question guides the listener to a decision.
- An inaccurate statement causes the listener to reject you.
- An inaccurate question allows the listener to instruct you.

How to turn statements into precise questions:

- Instead of saying, “You seem to have an attitude of pride,” ask, “Would you say you have an attitude of pride?”
- Instead of saying “Your clothes are not appropriate for this occasion,” ask, “Are your clothes appropriate for

this occasion?”

- Instead of saying, “You are angry,” ask, “Are you angry?”...

Sincerely,
Jason and Rosy Bontrager
Chilton, TX



Re: Covenant or Relationship?

(Oct. 2005)

Dear Paul,

Concerning the article on page 12, I share the concern of Bro. Lapp, on the need of a more unified front.

I have a question: “Is it possible to have [good] human relations under the canopy of God’s blessings without covenant?”

I ask not to incite debate, but much more that we may be “Labourers together with God” (1 Cor. 3:9).

Eli Graber

R. 5 Box 214 · Bloomfield, IN 47424

A realistic approach to parenting

might be to acknowledge that

SOUND TRAVELS SLOWLY.

What you say to your child when they’re **15**

might not reach them until they’re **25.**

Whose Day?

J. Mark Horst · Heralds of Hope · Breezewood, PA

Which day is meant for rest and worship—Sabbath or Sunday?” Periodically, we receive this question in letters from people in other countries, and occasionally, from someone in North America. We’ve encountered this question often enough that we’ve developed an essay titled, “Sabbath or Sunday?”

While there are legitimate issues surrounding this question, the purpose of this writing is not to discuss them. The Creation principle is one day of rest for six days of labor. So, whether we observe that day on Saturday (the Sabbath) or Sunday (the Lord’s Day), we must ask: “What does the practical application of a biblical ‘day of rest’ look like?”

Jesus was with God in the original creation. As part of the Godhead, He knew the Father’s intentions for the day of rest. The record of His earthly ministry gives us understanding from His vantage point.

On more than one occasion Jesus healed someone or performed a good work on the Sabbath. The Pharisees then accused Him of breaking the law. He pointed out how their

“narrow” interpretation of the law showed more concern for animals than for their fellow human beings. As much as God cares for sparrows, we know He cares even more for man, who is made in His image. Jesus reminded them that “the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” That’s a foundational principle we must keep in mind.

Today, much of modern Christianity has reduced the concept of the Lord’s Day to a couple of hours spent in a formal service on Sunday morning. Many grudgingly give God “His” two hours and then head off to spend the rest of the day as they please. In their minds, they’ve fulfilled their obligation for the Lord’s Day. This is their understanding of Jesus’ words, “the Sabbath was made for man.”

But what did God really intend to be the focus of our day of rest? Or doesn’t He care about how we honor Him on this day? Isaiah 58:13 outlines some clear principles we can use to evaluate our observance of the Lord’s Day.

Several things are to be avoided:

1. Unnecessary work
2. Activities primarily for pleasure

3. Pursuit of temporal knowledge

Likewise, several things are to be intentionally pursued:

1. See the day as “delightful”
2. Observe the day as holy
3. Honor the Lord

It can be pointed out, and rightly so, that as followers of Christ we observe every day as holy and honoring to the Lord. That is certainly true. However, the creation principle of one day of rest for every six of work indicates that the Lord’s Day calls for special observance. Not in a slavish, legalistic way, but in a genuine expression of gratefulness for God’s knowledge of our needs and His provision for them.

There are certain guidelines we’ve established for our family’s observance of the Lord’s Day. I have no desire to force those upon you. They are applications we feel God wants us to have for our family.

What I do want is for you and your family to consider the principles I’ve laid out in this article. It is quite possible that your applications will differ from ours, because we all find ourselves at different places in our walk of faith. However, I will give you some areas to consider that might

provoke your thinking, without telling you my answers.

- What about going shopping or out to a restaurant?
- Is it OK to mow the lawn or weed the garden?
- What about eating the largest meal of the week and then spending the afternoon snoozing?
- How about spending several hours surfing the ‘net’?
- Can I fire up the four-wheeler for an afternoon on the mountain?

Obviously, there are many more questions that could be asked. The ones I’ve listed I cannot answer for you. Some of them you may not have considered before. My goal is not to find fault or nit-pick, but to help us begin to think and act biblically instead of taking so many of our cues from the world.

If we acknowledge the Creation principle and say this one day belongs especially to the Lord, do our words and activities validate our claim? As others observe our choices, whose day might they think it is?

Selected by the editor from “Hope Horizons,” July, 2005. Used by permission.



A PROUD man’s talk makes him seem to STRUT
even when he’s sitting down.

Freedom From the Frenzy

Simon Schrock · Fairfax, VA

It's that time of year again! Finish up the leftovers from Thanksgiving and enter the frenzy of getting ready for Christmas. We say it's the birthday of Jesus, but too often it's the frenzy of Christmas! Actually, it's pretty much what we make of it.

I often walk alongside of others in their frenzy—like being in a store and hearing, “Here Comes Santa Claus” over the sound system, followed by “Away in a Manger.” Then there's my neighbor who went “all out” last year. His entire house and porch was outlined with a string of lights. Even the porch posts were lit up. The shrubs in front of the porch and the trees along the street were covered with bright lights. A big, red candy cane about 15 feet tall really stood out. What really got my attention was two clusters of lights that were somehow supported about 30 feet above the roof with approximately a hundred lights in each cluster. In amazement at the time and work it must have taken, I wondered how it was ever raised up so high above the house. It must have taken several Saturday's chores to do all that ladder climbing and roof crawling.

Christmas. It's about the birth of Christ—at least that's what we say.

But what does all the frenzy have to do with His birth?

I'm glad we don't have church rules telling us to go to all that trouble! Oh, I'd gladly do it if there were some New Testament passage instructing us so. I'd gladly join in the frenzy if Jesus had taught His disciples in the Upper Room to do all this in memory of the day of His birth. I know of not one single Scripture that supports that idea.

This is the time of year the culture surrounding us gets into the Christmas frenzy. Starting in the summer, merchants have been stocking up for a good season of retail profits. Ninety-degree temperatures outside do not prevent the Christmas card displays from taking shape inside. Promotional letters announce the news that it's time to “rake in the cash.” On Friday morning after Thanksgiving shopping centers are crowded with people looking for the advertised specials. Credit card accounts will go up with the burden to pay coming in the mail about ten days after the holiday is past. In Choice Books, we think we see an increase in sales of the book, *How to Win Over Depression* soon after the holiday season.

Many activities are required to get ready: parties to plan, programs to attend, and along with that, plenty of concerts, dramas, live nativity scenes to fit into our already crowded schedules. Ho-hum, is this really about the birth of Christ?

Am I totally anti-Christmas? Not quite! When I was a child, my oldest brother made a comment that maybe Christmas should be like Thanksgiving where we go to church in the forenoon, then come home and have dinner together. I did not like that idea, because I didn't want to give up the little gifts we received, even though it may have been merely a candy bar, a pair of gloves, and an orange.

I'm for having the family come together for a special time of remembrance. I put the cards we receive on a string in a most used area of the house. It's fine with me to grace the table with some of our finest foods. I'm for a family tradition that makes good memories for years to come. Yes, I want to go to the school program my grandchildren are involved with, the church's night of caroling in the community and the special dinner at work. Even that sounds busy. May I call it, "Christmas in moderation"?

I am concerned when we who

claim to be disciples of Christ gradually slip into the frenzy of the world to celebrate Christmas. I get a pain in my spirit when I see homes where parents practiced a modest Christmas and have passed on to be with the Lord, that the next generation seems to adopt the ways of the surrounding culture. They light up the house with lights, tinsel and trees like the secular world does. They have traded the simple life of their parents for the trappings of secular culture.

Years ago, I wrote an article entitled, "Let the Heathen Destroy the Trees," (*Calvary Messenger*, Dec. 1976). I still see it that way. I find no hint in the Bible that calls for followers of Christ to cut down trees, bring them into our houses, and light them up in remembrance of Christ's birth.

Jeremiah warned, "Learn not the way of the heathen." Then he describes what some of those ways are: "For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." (See Jeremiah 10:2-4) I can almost hear the argument coming: *He was not referring to the Christmas tree.* That may be right. However, the same principles apply.

The Christmas tree has no biblical foundation. Such vanity comes from the customs of popular culture. Even so, believers attempt to Christianize the tree with decorations that are to represent Christ.


Here is a point of deception: Our culture does not consider itself to be heathen. Many Americans still consider America to be a Christian nation and culture. Are we saying that since America is not heathen, Jeremiah's warning does not apply? To call some of these vain practices into question receives response similar to the religious leaders of Jesus' day when He declared that He had come from the Father.

Let us recognize that "Christian American" culture is not the same as Christ's call to discipleship. That is a call to deny daily what self desires and to identify with Him. It's a call to present our bodies a living sacrifice to Him. I believe it's a call to suffer for His cause. It's a call far beyond that coming from the lukewarm Christian American culture. It is best understood as a call to, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

As I said, I am for Christmas in moderation and special family traditions that make good memories. I'm also for experiencing the freedom from the bondage of a secular culture. Freedom from the traditions of this present world. Freedom from having to spend days decorating with lights, tinsel and trees—then days un-decorating.

Christians rejoice in having been set free from the ceremonial law of the Old Testament era. We are glad we no longer need to practice its rites and ceremonies. The New Testament teaches us to, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

While we have been set free from the ceremonial law, we tend to drift into entanglement and bondage of the world's customs. I'm thankful to live in the time of God's grace and freedom from the ceremonial law. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Jesus is the truth. I'm for experiencing a relationship with Christ that also gives me true freedom from the bondage of vain customs of the world and the frenzy of Christmas that does not honor the Lord Jesus. 

marriages

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

Bontrager-Miller

Bro. Wayne, son of Salina and the late Joe Bontrager, Kalona, IA, and Sis. Linda, daughter of Dennis and Verna Miller, at Fairview Mennonite Church, August 27, 2005, by Delmar Bontrager.

Herschberger-Yoder

Bro. Darrel, son of Willard and Edna Herschberger, Arthur, IL, and Sis. Maria, daughter of Harry and Susan Yoder, Aroda, VA, at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, on Aug. 6, 2005, by Tim Miller.

Kuepfer-Ropp

Bro. Darryl, son of Steven and Mary Kuepfer, Newton, ON, and Sis. Rosetta, daughter of Stephen and Rosemary Ropp, Brunner, ON, at Cedar Grove for Fellowship Haven, Sept. 4, 2005, by Laverne Ropp.

Lapp-Yoder

Bro. Daniel Steven, son of Daniel and Orpha Lapp, Kinzers, PA, and Sis. Constance Faith, daughter of Reuben and Mary Ann Yoder, Free Union, VA, Oct. 29, 2005, at Landmark Tabernacle, McGaheysville, VA, for Faith Mission Fellowship by Ivan Beachy.

Stoll-Overholt

Bro. Jeffrey, son of Steve and Nancy Stoll, Odon, IN, and Sis. Faylene, daughter of Donnie and Nancy Overholt, Aroda,

VA, at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, on Sept. 17, 2005, by Tim Miller.

Stutzman-Miller

Bro. Ethan, son of Jerry, Jr. and Laura Fern Stutzman, Roodhouse, IL, and Sis. Julia, daughter of Norman and Martha Miller, Roodhouse, IL, at First Baptist Church, White Hall, IL, for Rehoboth A.M. Church on Sept. 7, 2005, by Marvin Yoder.

Swarey-Yoder

Bro. Maynard, son of Mark and Barbara Swarey, Mifflinburg, PA, and Sis. Cynthia, daughter of Nathan and Doris Yoder, Free Union, VA, at Pilgrim Fellowship, Stuarts Draft, VA, for Faith Mission Fellowship by Ivan Beachy.

cradle roll

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

Beiler, Jesse and Fannie (Zook), Leola, PA, eighth child, fifth son, Jonathan Shawn, Aug. 28, 2005.

Erb, Daniel and Ruthann (Erb), Milverton, ON, second child, first son, Jordyn Daniel, Sept. 18, 2005.

Geban, Ronald and Sharlet (Tejeda), Cayo, Belize, second child, first son, Kahlon Darius, Aug. 23, 2005.

Gerber, Joseph and Rhonda (Kuepfer), Shakespeare, ON, second child, first son, Kyle Joseph, June 26, 2006.

Gingerich, Michael and Edith (Glick), Plain City, OH, third child, second son, Trevor John, Aug. 13, 2005.

Hochstetler, Norman and Norene (Miller), Roodhouse, IL, fourth child and son, Wyman Jay, Sept. 5, 2005.

Hostetler, David and Miriam (Yoder), Howe, IN, first child and son, Conrad Lee, Nov. 7, 2005.

Hostetler, Eric and Shannon (Stoll), Martinsburg, OH, second child and dau., Reagan Marie, Oct. 2, 2005.

Hostetler, Glenn and Kristina (Mast), Cottage Grove, TN, first child and dau., Michelle Faith, October 22, 2005.

Jantzi, Arnold and Rosemary (Wagler), Wellesley, ON, ninth child, fifth son, Jamin Omar, Sept. 21, 2005.

Lapp, Arlen and Lourdes (Lanza), Cayo, Belize, first child and son, Caleb Mervin, Sept. 12, 2005.

Mast, John and Marie (Otto), Arcola, IL, fourth child, third dau., Marita Janell, Oct. 19, 2005.

Miller, Emanuel and Anna (Yoder), Roodhouse, IL, fourth child, second dau., Sarah Lois, Sept. 22, 2005.

Miller, Ferman and Denise (Yoder), Sugarcreek, OH, second child, first dau., Kristi Nicole, Oct. 12, 2005.

Miller, Nelson and Ellen (Nissley), Burr Oak, MI, second child and son, Jordan Ray, Nov. 7, 2005.

Miller, Ronnie and Anne (Kuepfer), Quaker City, OH, seventh child, sixth dau., Patricia Charmaine, Oct. 6, 2005.

Miller, Steve and Karen (Miller), Harrison, AR, second child and son, Tyler Daniel, Sept. 25, 2005.

Miller, Timothy and Vivian (Kauffman), Orange, VA, seventh child, fourth dau., Miriam Elizabeth, Oct. 28, 2005.

Miller, Wendell and Darlene (Hostetler), Shipshewana, IN, third child, second son, Grant Andre, Oct. 9, 2005.

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

Overholt, Timothy and Joyce (Troyer), Adairville, KY, third child and dau., Jacqueline Kate, Aug. 4, 2005.

Peachey, Nathaniel and Pauline (Zook), Belleville, PA, first child and son, Jeremiah Benjamin, Sept. 8, 2005.

Schmucker, Marvin and Ellen (Kauffman), Roodhouse, IL, fourth child and son, Travis Lynn, Aug. 30, 2005.

Stoltzfus, Chester and Cindy (Kauffman), Leola, PA, third child, second son, Chad Eric, Nov. 1, 2005.

Stoltzfus, Paul and Marlena (Riehl), Bird in Hand, PA, second child, first son, Soren Tate, Oct. 7, 2005.

Troyer, Tim and Ann (Yoder), Huntland, TN, third child and son, Caleb Eugene, Oct. 19, 2005.

Yoder, Anthony and Rosetta (Stoltzfus), Cedar Creek, TX, third child and dau., Brielle Rose, Oct. 25, 2005.

Yoder, Martin and Esther (Kanagy), Holmesville, OH, second child, first dau., Rosemary Grace, Aug. 30, 2005.

Yoder, Michael and Miriam (Dueck), La Estrella, Costa Rica, third child, second dau., Abigail Lydia, Oct. 16, 2005.

Yoder, Nathanael and Ruth (Byler), Dunmore East, Co., Waterford, Ireland, first child and son, Niall Eli, Sept. 15, 2005.

Yoder, Titus and Hannah Beth (Graybill), Lott, TX, first child and dau., Cassandra Grace, Oct. 7, 2005.

ordinations

Bro. Rogelio Guiterrez, 23, was ordained to the office of minister on Oct. 16, 2005, at Cayo Christian Fellowship, Cayo, Belize. Earl Peachey, Lester Gingerich and Edwin Weaver served in the ordination meetings.

The charge was given by Lester Gingerich, assisted by Edwin Weaver. Two men who served the church for several months as the selection process was underway were Arlen Lapp and Ronald Geban.

Bro. Devon Miller, 42, Millersburg, OH, was ordained to the office of deacon to serve at Mt. Olive Christian Fellowship on Oct. 9, 2005. Daniel Yoder, Mon-

tezuma, GA, brought preordination messages.

The charge was given by Mose Miller, assisted by Paul Chupp and Nathan Yoder. Others in the lot were Linus Troyer and Titus Yoder.

Bro. Nathan Yoder, 37, Fredericksburg, OH, was ordained to the office of bishop at Peniel Christian Fellowship on Sept. 11, 2005. Preordination messages were given by John Mast, Crossville, TN.

The charge was given by Mose Miller, assisted by David Borntrager and Marvin Yoder. David Miller was also in the lot.

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

obituaries

Detweiler, David H., Sr., 76, died Sept. 26, 2005, at Reedsville, PA. He was born at Allensville, PA, Nov. 26, 1928, son of the late Samuel Y. and Lizzie (Hostetler) Detweiler.

He received Christ in his youth and was a member of Valley View A.M. Church.

On Nov. 16, 1950, he was married to Katie Zook. She survives. They had five children: Samuel Detweiler (Salome),

McVeytown, PA; Barbara (Mrs. Mark Swarey), Mifflinburg, PA; Joseph Detweiler (Leattha), Winfield, PA; Sara Anna (Mrs. David Sharp), Milroy, PA; and David H. Detweiler, Jr. (Ruth), Middleburg, PA. Also surviving are 29 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. Other survivors include four brothers: Noah H. Detweiler (Katie), Rockville, IN; Joseph B. Detweiler (Susie), Sara B. (Mrs. Jonas B. Zook), Samuel Y. Detweiler, Jr. (Annie), all of Allensville, PA; and Jesse H. Detweiler, (Fannie), Mill Creek, PA.

Preceding him in death were a daughter-in-law, Lois Detweiler.

Funeral services were held Oct. 1, with Eli B. King, Jr. and David S. King serving. Earl Peachey served in the committal at the Locust Grove Cemetery.

Hochstetler, Joe J., 84, Middlebury, IN, died Oct. 25, 2005, after a one-year bout with cancer. He was born March 10, 1921, son of the late John D. and Jemima (Detwiler) Hochstetler at Nappanee, IN.

He accepted Christ as his Savior in his youth and was a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen, IN.

On Feb. 6, 1947, he was married to Mary Glick, who survives. They had eight children: Maynard (Laura), Middlebury, IN; Marvin (Arlene), Hochstetler, Topeka, IN; Barbara Etta (Laban) Mast and Edna Fern (Gordon) Bauman, Goshen, IN; Irene (Daniel) Marner, Constantine, MI; Linda (Marvin) Yoder, Dade City, FL; Treva (Aaron) Bauman, Monterey, TN; and Carolyn (Allen) Miller, Port

Elgin, ON.

Preceding him in death were one daughter, Joanna; six brothers: Levi, William, Rudy, Harvey, John and Solomon Hochstetler and six sisters: Salina Schmucker, Barbara Troyer, Lydia Mae Miller, Mahala Schwartz, Malinda Troyer and Katie Hochstetler.

Funeral services were held at the Fair Haven Church on Oct. 22, 2005, with Wilbur Yoder serving. Burial was in the Thomas Cemetery.

Mast, Margaret Elizabeth, 47, Bloomfield, MO, died peacefully on August 22, 2005, at her home after a brief illness of cancer. She was born March 4, 1958, daughter of the late Joseph and Mary Ann Overholt, of Franklin, KY.

She was a homemaker and member of Crowley's Ridge Mennonite Church.

On May 7, 1977, she was married to Jonathan Mast. He survives. Also surviving are nine children: Forrest (Genevieve) Mast, Summersville, KY; Holly (Mrs. Jason Troyer), Crossville, TN; Gail, Robin, Melody, Dale, Lily, Wade, and Dustin of the home. Other survivors include five grandchildren; seven brothers and five sisters. She was preceded in death by two sisters and one brother.

Funeral services were held at Cedar Springs A.M. Church, Clarkson, KY, with Melvin Troyer and Jim Yoder serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

observations

A California-based group of churches has announced plans to begin the process of withdrawing from the American Baptist Churches USA. The movement involves about 300 churches. The board of the Pacific Southwest believes the denomination has not enforced a resolution that states “the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.” (Mennonite Weekly Review)

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Merle Nisly, president of Impact North Ministries, mentions a number of sins that create serious social problems. He says that Jesus planned that the local church should be relevant. Not that the church should fix the world, but He does desire that needy people would touch Jesus in meaningful ways through His body, the church.

“It is our passion and vision that the local church becomes much more than a comfortable meeting for like-minded people. Let’s help be the church that Jesus prayed and cried and gave His life for that all may live—abundantly, to the full.” (Newsletter, 9-05)

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North America is one of the few continents where biblical Christianity is not growing faster than the population. Church attendance is declining at about 20% in the US and 7% in Canada. “The church must be viewed as God’s people and not just a place to go on Sunday. The church must make disciples, not just add members.” (Norm Nicklaus in FCM Informer, Sept./Oct., ’05)

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Saving money is a common problem in the United States. In recent years with the housing market at unprecedented levels, people are borrowing money against their homes. Planners are concerned that a sharp drop in the housing market and a rise in interest rates will leave many borrowers so deeply in debt that they will be unable to meet basic needs. (Roth Report, 10-1-05)

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Rob R. Schlachach writes for *Family Life* (10-05) tracing the development of the church school movement of the last 50 years, especially among the Amish. Up to the middle of the 20th century church schools among the Amish were rare. Gradually textbooks became more neutral in terms of moral and religious content. The push for consolidation was a move-

ment away from the one-room rural schools, which were usually within walking distance of patrons' homes. Athletic programs, gymnasiums, and school buses were seen as not friendly to some basic family values. Now church schools have become very common in Amish circles. It seems to me that the absence of church schools in the wider conservative Anabaptist communities is now also the exception rather than the rule.

The home school movement has become a very significant feature of concerned Christian parents. Sometimes such parents do not have access to a satisfactory Christian school.

Bro. Schlabach mentions that earlier there were serious conflicts when the Amish were at odds with trends and attendance requirements of public education, but today that conflict has subsided. He says that the Amish schools, which operate with a budget of approximately 10% of public school budgets, actually save Holmes County, Ohio, taxpayers a lot of money.

He is concerned that the pressures of non-farm vocational involvement and interest in sports does not once again erode Christian simplicity and threaten the integrity of the Christian family.

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Ura B. Miller (1926-2005)

I have had the privilege of serving on the Calvary Publication Board with Brother Ura at its founding in 1970 until 2003. In about 2000 he had requested to be replaced by a younger man. He nominated Mark Beachy as his replacement, who is now filling that place well.

I remember Bro. Ura as one who took his Christian life and commitment seriously. He shared the lot for ordination numerous times. He found channels of useful service that ordained brethren would have found difficult to balance with ministerial duties. To do something half-heartedly or almost right was foreign to Ura's way of life.

Ura had a vision for providing hands-on experiences for the Faith Mission Home children during his tenure as administrator, 1971-79, a time of considerable expansion of facilities. Later, after leaving FMH, he worked for Christian Aid Ministries and was instrumental in starting the orphanage in Suceava, Romania.

The book Bro. Ura wrote, *101 Bible Stories*, is faring well:

- Work is being done on translating it into the 28th language.
- Many favorable reports have come back on the book's impact.
- While it was written for children,

a number of adults have come to faith in Christ through reading it and noting its excellent pictures.

- It has been translated into Hebrew and Arabic and has been accepted quite well in Israel.

- In China, it has received a good reception. One Chinese reader commented that whoever reads this book will get saved.

- Bro. Ura wrote this book over a period of several years, much of it while his travels were curtailed, since at that time he was caring for his invalid wife, Clara.

[Some of this information was gleaned from Vesta Miller (Ura's widow), CAM personnel and Marie Yoder. May I also remind readers of a poem by Bro. Ura, published in January, 2003? It is entitled, "Swallowed by a Whale," giving a rather graphic description of some experiences of Jonah, God's reluctant servant. —PLM]


Ura was a person of decided convictions and priorities. He expressed himself with clarity. He was also sensitive and considerate of others. I have only good memories of my association with him in his 30-plus years on the publishing board.

On September 4, 2005, Mary and I attended the funeral of my brother-in-law, Eli C. Miller in Holmes County. Eli was born there, was married at

Kalona, Iowa, but lived in Florida the last years 20 years.

Our time in Ohio was very limited, but I expressed the desire to visit two, long-time friends, namely Yost H. Miller and Ura. Ivan Schrock, where we were staying, offered to go with us on Sunday evening which was much appreciated. The visit with both brethren was pleasant. Bro. Ura expressed a concern that we do well to hear. He was concerned that our people, especially young people, do too much reading of secondary material and too little reading of The Book, which is after all, primary. He felt the ultimate result would lead to unsound doctrine and practice. Ura was also known for the remark he often made, "It's amazing what the Lord can do when no one is seeking the glory."

Let us remember that the issues which divided our forbears from the mainline reformers are still with us today. Any reading that we do is sound only if it does not compromise God's Word of truth.

I feel fortunate to be among the many people whose lives Bro. Ura touched and influenced. May the truth for which he stood and the Lord, Whom he so faithfully served, continue to lead us in paths of righteousness. —DLM 

What is God's Pattern?

Floyd Stoltzfus · New Holland, PA

A.W. Tozer, the gifted leader and writer from the Christian and Missionary Alliance was fully committed to missions. He made this thought-provoking point: "We commonly represent God as a busy, eager, somewhat frustrated Father hurrying about seeking help to carry out His benevolent plan to bring peace and salvation to the world. Too many missionary appeals are based upon this fancied frustration of Almighty God." Tozer feared that through our efforts to inspire action in missions we diminish worship of the Almighty. Missions are not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship and obedience are. Missions exist because true worship and obedience to the Word are missing. We want to discover in the life of a godly man how worship is the fuel for his mission in life.

Meet Simeon in Luke 2:25-35. Simeon followed God's pattern. He waited (v. 25, 26). He worshipped (27-32). He witnessed (34, 35). The occasion was divinely arranged and appointed. In the previous verses we read of three different rituals

connected with the birth of Jesus. 1) Circumcision when the baby Jesus was eight days old (21). 2) Purification of Mary when Jesus was 40 days old (22a, 24). 3) Dedication of Jesus at 40 days old (22b, 24). Joseph and Mary were careful to bring up Jesus in strict accordance with Jewish law. They aimed to live in total submission to the plan of God.

At the temple, six-week old babies were normally received by the priests. They apparently did not know who Jesus was, but two elderly saints recognized Him and joyfully welcomed Him. Simeon, the devout old man was one whom the Holy Spirit had told that before he died, he would see "the Lord's Christ." Little else is known about Simeon, but that he was "just and devout." He was righteous before God and man and respectful and reverent toward God.

Harold S. Martin states: "Conditions in Israel at the time of Jesus' birth were very dismal. Israel was occupied by the Roman armies. There was the cruel King Herod. The scribes and Pharisees had externalized religion. The Sadducees

were worldly-minded leaders. It is encouraging to note, however, that even in the midst of all the darkness and despair, God had always had some who were devout followers." Like Anna, Simeon probably invested valuable hours in prayer and fasting for the spiritual condition of his people. Passion for God in waiting and worshipping should always precede witnessing.

1.) Simeon waited. He looked for the "consolation of Israel." The Jews spoke of the Messiah as Consolation. As a devout Jew, Simeon likely knew by memory many prophecies, like Isaiah 40:1, 2; 49:13, and 52:9. The Messiah would bring comfort and consolation to His people. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isa. 66:13).

2.) Simeon worshipped. At the precise time when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple Simeon was prompted to come and worship. "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word." Martin continues, "It was then that Simeon offered praise to God, in a song which is often known as the 'Nunc Dimittis' (Latin: 'Now you are dismissing.')

The word translated "depart" literally

means "release." Simeon, having seen the Messiah, was asking to be relieved of his earthly duty and the heavy burdens of life."

Simeon's heart overflowed with praise, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." His prophetic insight saw far beyond the average Jew who understood that "The Anointed One" would end bondage to the Romans and bring national independence to Israel. This devout old man saw the Savior as bringing salvation for all people. The Greek word "laos" is especially referring to Israel in distinction to the Gentiles. (Vine's) However, Simeon concludes his remarkable prayer with recognition of Jesus as "a light to lighten the Gentiles..." "Ethnos" refers to all people groups of the world. Revelation 5:9 describes it this way, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, tongue, and people and nation."

3.) Simeon witnessed. He witnessed boldly by his prayer when he mentioned Gentiles in a Jewish temple. No wonder that Joseph and Mary marveled. He witnessed in his reference to the Rock. (Psa. 18:2; Deut. 32:4). The Messiah would be a rejected cornerstone. (Psa. 118:22; Luke 20: 17, 18). Many people would stumble over Him (Isa. 8:14; Rom.

9:32, 33). Fortunately, after stumbling over the stone, it is possible to rise to newness of life.

True worship and biblical obedience are the ultimate—not missions, because God is ultimate and absolute—not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before

God, missions will be no more. Missions are a temporary necessity, but worship and obedience abide forever.

[Quotes from, "Lessons from the Lives of Simeon and Anna", by Harold S. Martin. Used by permission.]



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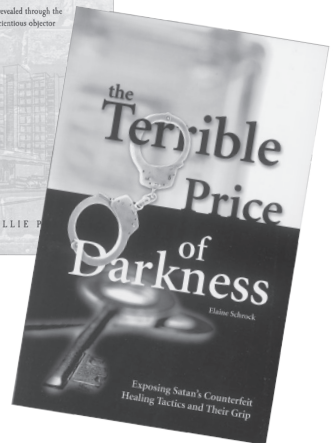
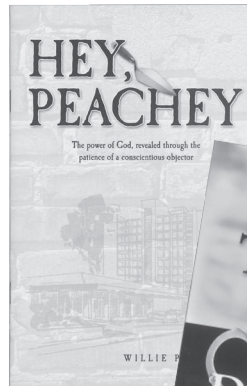
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God Got My Undivided Attention

*A Soul Set Free**

The last place on earth I ever expected to be was a patient in a “psych” ward. But God met me there. It was at that low point that God found me willing to acknowledge my desperate failure to manage my own affairs. On that ward, I finally reached out to God and to those who could help me.

I was a “preacher’s kid.” I grew up in the church and knew very well how to “do church.” Making a profession of faith as a child, I grew up very active in the local church. I married the love of my life at 20 years old, and God blessed us with five healthy children.

After being married for a few years, I totally lost out spiritually. After that, for many years, I lived a life of immorality and debauchery. For about 15 years, church was something for my wife and children, but I almost never went. I was a professional in the health care field and that became my life—to the exclusion of my wife, children and family. I succeeded in my profession, but failed in things of lasting importance.

In the mid 1980’s I made an attempt to resume the faith of my youth and returned to the church where my father was pastor. For the next

16 years, I was outwardly a Christian.

Active in the church and in several para-church organizations, I even joined the Gideons, and became president of the local camp, serving on committees at the area and state level. If there was ever an example of being “double-minded,” I was that example.

During all these years, I was living a lie. I continued to live in immorality—being repeatedly unfaithful to my wife. The guilt I carried made me a monster to live with at home. My wife and children feared me. One of my sons slept every night with a club under his pillow, in case he needed it to protect his mother from my rage.

Our oldest son grew up, and in God’s divine plan, became our pastor. Yet, even then, I went on living a lie.

In February, 2002, everything came crashing down around this carefully constructed edifice of dishonesty. I was caught in flagrant immorality by my own son. In 12 hours I lost my wife and children. My responsibilities in the church and other Christian organizations were immediately terminated. I felt trapped and pled for forgiveness and understanding. As a master manipulator, I desperately

tried to manage “damage control,” feeling that somehow I could head off the horrible results of my sin and duplicity.

In the next two weeks, I spiraled down into deep depression and self-pity. The price to pay for my many years in sin seemed too high ever to pay. At first, reconciliation with my wife and family was out of the question. Our children and their families insisted that I get help—extended and “tough” help. This I was unwilling to do.

I lost weight because I had all but stopped eating. Sleeping was in the fetal position on the couch for a few scattered hours in the middle of the night. Work at the office was my escape, but when the day was done, the horrors of the night reappeared. Over and over, I contemplated suicide, with plans finalized as to how I could/would kill myself—if I could work up enough courage to carry it out.

I tried counseling with a local Christian counselor on an outpatient basis. Conferences with several local pastors clarified only that the price for sin was very high. Since I was seeking a simple way to “solve” this problem, I found no real answers.

In desperation I made an appointment with my personal physician. Although not a Christian, he was

very kind and professional. In his office, I “lost it.” Since he had known me for several years in the health care field, he was alarmed and immediately tried to determine my emotional state. When he discovered that I had definite plans for suicide, he insisted on immediate admission to the local hospital psychiatric unit.

Transfers to psych units are generally not by ambulance. Usually family members or concerned friends take their loved one to the psych ward unless it is a police matter or recent violence has occurred. My physician could not find a family member to transfer me across town to the hospital, so he asked me if I could drive myself there, and made me promise to contact him immediately to inform him that I had arrived safely.

Upon arrival at the hospital, I was admitted through the emergency room as an emergency admission to the psych ward—as a suicide risk. I was processed on admission by being asked to remove my belt (so I couldn’t hang myself) and then was shown to a semi-private room. I had not counted on sharing a room with someone “crazy” and vigorously protested that I deserved a private room. I was gently reminded that in my condition, I really couldn’t demand anything. So I reluctantly agreed to

accept my room.

My roommate was a man about my age. He had clearly visible tremors of both hands and had difficulty walking. As we became acquainted, I discovered that he had had several admissions to the psych ward over the years for depression and schizophrenia.

As I prepared for bed at about 9 that evening, my roommate informed me that he always read from the Bible before retiring. I was dumbfounded. I had professed Christian faith for many years, and this poor, “crazy” roommate was offering to share a Bible with me. We looked for a Bible and found a Gideon Bible in the bedside stand. In one of the lowest points of my life, I, former president of the local Gideon camp shared a Gideon Bible with a schizophrenic roommate—reading in the Psalms, as I recall, by the light of that hospital room.

But God met me there!

God will always meet us when we feed on His Word and realize how desperately we need Him. I resonate with the story told by Larry Gatlin once when he returned to his home church as a successful country Gospel singer. Larry was not living for the Lord at that time and an elderly saint in his church said to him, “Lar-

ry, know this one thing for sure. Sooner or later, God will get your undivided attention.”

The road back was long. I entered a church-sponsored, intensive, counseling program for about six months. While I was there, I celebrated my 55th birthday in that Christian men’s rehab center. I finished the program at home with homework and accountability to the director, as well as several shorter visits back again in the following year.

My pastoral team gives me high marks for my willingness to be accountable to them and to keep them informed of my progress and my plans. That was one of the keys to my deliverance. I knew I should be accountable, because all the time I had been failing spiritually I had had a very independent attitude.

But God is good! He forgives. He has graciously restored our marriage and our family. Now my primary desire is to share God’s Good News with others, who think that they can fool everyone. You can’t fool God.

God may even come to us with humor. He knew my independent stubbornness and pride. Is that why He got my attention by having a schizophrenic roommate invite me to read the Bible we Gideons had placed there?

*[*If you need to, this brother is willing to communicate with you. If you ask for it, I will give you his name and phone number. —PLM]*



helpers at home

Enjoying Simplicity in Christmas

Mary June Glick

Christmas is a time to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. It is also a time of celebration—of honor, as in a special religious ceremony or special day. In the Old Testament God reminds the children of Israel to remember those special occasions when He revealed Himself to His chosen people. On this side of the cross we too have much to remember and to celebrate.

Christmas is much commercialized today and brings the question to the Christian, “How should we celebrate?” I believe it can be a joyful family time, filled with meaning and special memories. Children especially enjoy relating to the beautiful story of the baby Jesus. It is true that He came to die, but we also celebrate His lowly birth into the world, a story filled with the great love of God. We realize the date may be incorrect, yet this is the time set apart to cel-

brate His birth. We Christians can be a light to the world as we worship Christ at this special time.

Christmas is a time for family—to teach our children and grandchildren godly values and give them happy family memories that will draw their hearts toward home. Choose the ideas and traditions that best fit you. Make it be a time of sharing with others around you.

Here are some ideas to help make this Christmas a joyful celebration of God’s great gift to mankind:

1. It is a time of giving. Emphasize to your children the idea of sharing with others.
2. Give gifts to those not expecting them. Make meaningful gifts with the message of Christmas to give to the checkout person, the gas attendant, and whoever.
3. Remember the aged and lonely. You could give a coupon for a special

service for the year, like shoveling snow or mowing the lawn.

4. Include the children in your baking. Let them help you wrap cookies or loaves of bread to give to others. Special gifts could be a pie in a new pie plate wrapped and tied with a cookie cutter or a dozen muffins in a new muffin pan.

5. Go caroling as a family or with your church. Older people enjoy seeing children.

6. Adopt a family. It could be a needy family in your community or a missionary family away from home. I know it would mean a lot to a missionary family to receive a package with a gift for each child and some special baking supplies not available in their country.

7. Let the children design your Christmas card. Give them a verse or a theme and have them draw a picture to portray it. Then make copies

of it on the computer.

8. Our family enjoys a nativity scene. When the children were small they played with it acting out the Christmas story. Some families celebrate advent, which is the four Sundays before and including Christmas day. Each day you light a special candle with a prophecy of Christ's coming to earth as a baby.

9. Don't allow Christmas to be a time of stress for you, but a time to refresh your own spirit so you will be able to share with your family the true joy and meaning of Christmas. I like to read the story of Mary in the weeks before Christmas and am always blessed as I see her willing spirit to be of service to God. So as you serve those you love this Christmas, think about Mary as she declared "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord." Choose to be a willing servant.



Laughter...

is a little like changing the baby's diaper:

*It's not a permanent solution,
but it certainly improves things*

FOR A WHILE.



Pen Pals

Maria Yoder · Oakland, MD

It seemed like a dream come true. Finally I would get to see Edith Bontrager face to face! We'd been pen pals since second grade, with each passing year drawing our hearts closer together. Occasionally we exchanged pictures and dreamed of the time we'd actually meet in person.

And now Edith had just phoned me, excitement ringing in her voice. "Guess what! Mom and Dad will be in your area in a few weeks and they said I could come along to visit you!"

So plans were made, the calendar date circled, and the days seemed to crawl by ever so slowly. But, the week before Edith's arrival, suddenly a dark change came over me. I began surveying our house and yard from top to bottom. What would Edith say? Would she think that my family isn't up to date or that we were hillbillies? Would she think my little brothers were dirty and disgusting? Certainly we were a happy family but couldn't we get the porch replaced and get new carpet for the living room? The floors in our old house sagged.

I began complaining to Mom about it. She'd just give me a look and say

firmly, "You know we can't afford making all those improvements right now. Besides, Edith is coming to see you and as long as everything is clean and you two have a good time, that's all that matters."

Yet I was not convinced! Edith, who lived in a stately brick house on a pleasant lawn. Edith, with her artistic flairs and fresh, creative ideas. Edith, with her shimmering, interesting dresses and musical voice, beautiful hair, and exquisite eyes. And me? I was a common country mouse! I was Maria who, even at the "grown up" age of twelve, loved running free in the wild outdoors. I was Maria who lived back in the hills in an old house that needed paint. I was Maria, with the tangled brown hair, huge grey eyes, and calloused bare feet.

And so, the much anticipated date finally arrived. Sure enough, there stood Edith, neat as a pin. We shook hands and smiled rather awkwardly at first, then began laughing as if we'd met a hundred times before. But still, an uneasy feeling churned in my stomach. What would Edith think about everything?

Edith eagerly wanted me to show her our house, garden, yard, and the woods behind the house. To my amazement, she viewed it all as very interesting. When my little brother showed her a snake skin and a raccoon's tail, she laughed with real delight and said, "Why you're a real live Daniel Boone!"

By day's end we were tired and so we relaxed in the backyard, watching the sunset over the mountains. Through the open kitchen window we could hear the sounds of my brothers laughing and could smell the aroma of popcorn and fresh apple cider drifting through the air. Edith smiled at me and said, "I wish I could live here. You don't have to worry about what people think; you can just be you!"

"Really?" I exclaimed. "I was almost sure you'd think we're backward or something. Do you mean it?"

Edith nodded fervently, "I know I'm young yet, but I think I want to be just like your family. Where I live, there's so much competition and peer pressure. You have to have the newest stuff like new clothes, cars and even furniture. Sometimes when we sing that song in church, 'I Need No Mansion Here Below,' I feel so sad!"

I swallowed hard. I'd never heard of someone talking like this before,

not to mention my pen pal, Edith. I laughed a little at the new thought and replied, "You know, I think you're probably right. I guess Jesus never really had a rich life either!"

"He was born in a barn!" We said in unison and burst out laughing.

Just then we heard the sound of an approaching vehicle. "Well, it looks like I've gotta go, Maria. How can I ever thank you enough? I've had so much fun with you all."

I grinned and said, "Edith, I need to thank you. You're a great pen pal!"

• • • • •

Dear Readers,

Hello, my name is Krystal Miller. My birthday is August 15 and I am 11 years old. My parents are Richard and Mary Miller. I have 4 sisters: Grace (12), Dorcas (8), Jemima (4), Rachel (1), and one brother Andrew (6).

My hobbies are biking, reading, sewing, skating, and swimming. I would like a twin or penpal soon.

Krystal Miller
6176 McLain Rd.
Oriskany Falls, NY 13425



Dear Youth,

Youth is a time of dreaming. It is the time of life when we dream about perfect relationships, perfect churches, perfect times with God. To say it simply, we dream of a perfect world. Youth is a time of life when we want the best and we see no reason why the best can't be there for us. Youth is the time of life when we look around at life and at people. We see what's wrong with the world and we decide we want something different. We don't like it when people are imperfect, insincere, and incompetent.

You were created to want a perfect world. There is nothing wrong with desiring perfection. Without your dreaming, many older people would quit trying.

It is sad but many people stop dreaming when they come face to face with the imperfectness of our world. As a result, they become satisfied with poor and mediocre relationships. To imagine perfect love is too hard. For many of us, we have discovered that it is easier to cope with life if we are not constantly disappointed. Yet some of us have discovered that a heart stripped of its dreams is a dry and lifeless heart.

Don't let anyone take away from you your desire for the best. Behind any good thing in life are someone's dreams. Yes, there was a time in my life when I quit dreaming; and, yes, my dreams have needed to be adjusted as I face the realities of life. Yet, the goals, dreams, and desires of my youth provide the foundation for the dreaming and decision-making that I do now.

Have you decided what you want more than anything else?

It is my belief that what we want the most is to do what we were created to do. I think we were created with the desire to worship God with all of our being. Can you connect with that? You may want to think about this the next several days as you go about your work. As our many "wants" point to that all-encompassing "want," we will be able to dream the dreams of God.

As you read over the replies of the October question, you will see "wishes" that point to this desire that we worship God with all of our being.

God bless you this coming month as you desire and seek to worship God with all of your being. This is a perfect dream that will never need to be adjusted.

—EE

This Month's
QUESTION

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

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

I would probably say, “Lord, I know I can’t ever thank You enough for what You’ve blessed me with already, but if it is your will, I would like to grow to be more like You in every area in my life, and if trials and testings come my way, I know You will never leave me or forsake me.”

Wendell Sommers, Haiti

• • • • •

I would wish to be drawn so close to Him that while I am on this earth I would fully comprehend His will for me, so that I can most effectively reach out and show His light to others.

Dorcas Kuepfer, Kenya, Africa

• • • • •

I would ask for wisdom in discerning His will as I keep on maturing and growing in the Lord. Growing older means new responsibilities, decisions, plans, etc. I would ask for His help in those things.

Matthew Yoder, Hartville, OH

• • • • •

That I would know how to receive God’s love in such a way that it would

have a “cutting edge” on my life.

A reader from Free Union, VA

• • • • •

I would ask God to clearly make His presence known to me whenever I need Him and call out to Him.

J. Michael Yoder, Bluffton, IN

• • • • •

I would ask God for a life full of meaning and purpose; and to be able to give that kind of life to others.

Jeffrey Miller, VA

• • • • •

I would say, “God, I ask that You would grant me a Christlike spirit, that I would be confident and bold in claiming my position in Christ (Phil. 2:6), that I would have a servant’s heart—humble, meek, and devoted to You (Phil. 2:7-8). I ask for a bold spirit that would not cringe at Satan’s attacks, but stand up for the cause of Christ in the face of adversity, for a meek spirit that would not inflate with pride, but humbly serve You and give You the glory.”

Cornie Friesen, Belize

• • • • •

My wish is that I would always know beyond the shadow of a doubt what God's will is for me in every situation.

Virginia

• • • • •

I would be totally filled with the Spirit, so that every area of my life would be in complete harmony with God's will and His desires for my life. His presence would change my entire being, and it would be the most awesome thing that could ever happen.

A 16-year-old girl, Mifflinburg, PA

• • • • •

I would say, "I want a walk with You that fills every minute, a relationship with You that will give me joy and peace, a love for You that would cause me to be willing to do anything for You, and an understanding of You and Your will for me that would give me the courage to do the 'anythings' for You."

A youth reader, PA

• • • • •

My Request

Diana Riehl, Lewisburg, PA

If God to me in a dream should appear,
And grant me whatever I request.
My heart would thump and quake
with fear
How can I humanly choose what for
me is best?

I would request God's love to fill my
life
That I might minister to those He has
placed in my care.
My students and my friends are filled
with strife.
To them God's love I will freely share.

I pray for wisdom to look into their
eyes
And know if they need a smile, a kind
word,
Perhaps a listening ear or a pleasant
surprise
To release their burden so they can
soar like a bird.

God's love in their hearts will heal
their pain
And they, in turn, can help others.
Yes, my request for God's love is still
the same
So I can minister to my sisters and
brothers.

*Next Month's
QUESTION*

According to Galatians 5:16 and Romans 8:5-10, isn't the "filling of the Spirit" something that is "achieved" and not something that just "happens"? If I am correct, how can we achieve that filling? —From a reader in PA

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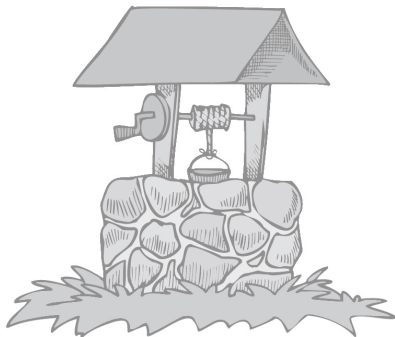
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*When you're thirsty,
 it's too late to start
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United States Postal Service
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title Calvary Messenger	2. Publication Number 10-17-03	3. Filing Date 10-17-03
4. Issue Frequency monthly	5. Number of Issues Published Annually 12	6. Annual Subscription Price 6.50
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4) 2673 Township Road 421 - Sugar Creek, Ohio 44681	8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) 2673 Township Road 421 - Sugar Creek, Ohio 44681	
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank) Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) Calvary Publications - 2673 Township Road 421 - Sugar Creek, OH 44681 Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Paul L. Miller - 7809 S. Heinen Road - Partridge, KS 67566 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Erwin Henkeberger - 732 St. Paul Road - Meyersdale, PA 15552		
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of all individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a government entity, give its name and address.) Full Name Complete Mailing Address Calvary Publications 2673 Township Road 421 - Sugar Creek, OH 44681		
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check this box <input type="checkbox"/> None		
12. Has this publication been published during the preceding 12 months? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "No," state reason: (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of the organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes. <input type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)		

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (See instructions on reverse)

13. Publication Title Calvary Messenger	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below November 2005
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	4535 4303
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 1 through 5)	4006 3983
1. Paid in Advance (Include advertiser's proof and other nonreturnable copies)	89 99
2. Paid in Advance (Include advertiser's proof and other nonreturnable copies)	401 419
3. Paid in Advance (Include advertiser's proof and other nonreturnable copies)	0 0
4. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0 0
5. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 1b, 2c, 3d, 4e, and 5f)	4496 4301
c. Free or Nominal Rate (Include all copies of this publication that are not sold at the full subscription price)	0 0
1. Outside-County as Stated on Form 3841	0 0
2. In-County as Stated on Form 3841	0 0
3. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0 0
4. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0 0
d. Total Free or Nominal Rate (Sum of 1c, 2c, 3c, and 4c)	10 4
e. Total Distribution (Sum of 1b and 1d)	10 4
f. Copies not Distributed	4526 4305
g. Copies not Distributed	29 5
h. Total (Sum of 1a and 1e)	4535 4310
1. Printed and/or Mailed Circulation (Sum of 1b and 1d)	99.77% 99.91%
2. Publication of Statement of Ownership (If publication required. Was printed in December 2005 issue of this publication.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Publication not required
16. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner	Date 10-17-05

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- If the publication has periodic publications in the general or consumer publication, the Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
- In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published. Item 17 must be signed.
- Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.

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In the Master's Vineyard

Lois Yoder · McVeytown, PA

One day the Master beckoned to me,
His vineyard I should come and see.
He must have seen my puzzled look,
As with gentle hand my hand He took.

We walked among the living vines,
Then paused by one unusually fine.
I exclaimed at the vine's lovely grace,
But a sorrowful look came to His face.

As I watched with increasing dismay,
He began to cut and trim away.
Soon the vine's lovely leaves were gone.
They lay on the ground to be walked upon.

The stock was reduced to a bare stub;
Its leaves against my shoes did rub.
The vine's misery made my heart ache,
But the Master gave me a hand to take.

We continued on, then paused once
more;
I beheld another vine—much fruit it
bore.
I wondered what would be the fate,
Of this lovely vine, with its luscious
grapes.

With gentle smile and loving look,
The Master of some fruit partook.
I thought that before He hadn't cared,
But t'was more to ask than I had dared.

And as we left the vineyard behind,
The Master explained what was on His
mind.
"Did you notice the first vine bore only
leaves,
No fruit was there a friend to please.

"The second vine's branches had been
scarred,
But its bounty and fruit were left un-
marred.
The scars were from prunings received,
And are marks of my ownership, you see.

"So, my dear child," He gently explained,
"When your hopes are dashed, your
heart is pained,
Thus my plans and work begin,
To produce more precious fruit within.

"My thoughts and ways are not like yours,
Give me your plans so I can do more.
And if through it all your mind is stayed
on me,
In My perfect peace you will safely be."



THOUGHT GEMS

The church offers you something you simply cannot get anywhere else.



If the church neglects the children, we can expect that the children will neglect the church.



The coating of civilization is so thin it often comes off with a little alcohol.



One big mystery of human history is the argument that wars are fought to save civilization.



When a man finds no peace in his own heart, it is useless to seek it elsewhere.



A new era of peace will begin when somebody invents a way to get all the axes on the grindstone at the same time.



Heads, hearts and hands could settle the world's problems better than arms can.

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

Periodicals