



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

Galatians 6:14

MARCH 2007

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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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## I AM

*Rachel Kuepfer, Partridge, KS*

For you today, I Am.  
I hear your heart, I know your soul.  
I see the great, unfettered whole—  
But you, my child, cannot unroll  
Tomorrow.

For you today, I Am.  
Your fears and doubts, of what will be—  
Your dreams and longings, give to Me.  
My child, I gently oversee  
Tomorrow.

For you today, I Am.  
I Am in happy days, and gray—  
I Am where'er your path will lay.  
But child, I'm only in today—  
Lay down tomorrow!

For you today, I Am.  
The past is Mine to understand.  
I hold tomorrow in My hand.  
All these I gently carry and  
I'll lead you. 



## *United We Stand*

I appreciate Youth Editor Ernest Eby's work. Bro. Ernest seems to know what he thinks, but he also wants to know what others think. So he's been asking youth for their input and has been getting some very good testimonies and contributions.

Let us do something similar. Let us together address a problem.

### **The Problem**

Is there a growing restlessness among us? I think there is. It seems to me that several decades ago we might have heard of one or several families moving to a new location when they were not satisfied with their church situation. Thus they sometimes—and sometimes not—brought a Gospel testimony to a new community. Now much too often, the dread sound of splintering crackles, and lo, a new group appears! The late Ervin Hershberger once observed wistfully that we conservative Anabaptists seem to be like hickory wood—we split easily.

I know, however, that Amish Menonites are not the only ones with this problem. Other denominations have splits, too. But it impacts us less when it's "out there."

Is it true, as some assert, that we

Anabaptists have an inborn inclination to split? We are, after all, the faith descendants of major church upheaval in the 1520's and following. Not only did our Anabaptist forefathers reject what Roman Catholicism had to offer, they also pulled away from the mainline reformers—Reformed and Lutheran. Some 160 years later, another less understood division occurred: the Hans Reist-Jakob Amman division of 1693. Even though these former and latter faith forbears were all fallible and quite human, their decisions to separate seem justified. They did not split over trivial matters.

A little disunity over a matter of interpretation is not of great consequence. Too often such matters have been the cause of division. On the positive side, I believe there's often more basic unity present among Christians of differing persuasions than it seems. We certainly appreciate other professing Christians, even when their practice is somewhat different from ours, if they seem gracious and genuine.

God wants Jesus to get the prominence due Him in our churches. He would have us lift up Jesus for all the

world to see. God's plan is that every local body of believers spreads salt and light in their neighborhoods.

Jesus also is deeply concerned about how well we get along with each other. He prayed thus about it in John 17:21, "That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee...that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Here are questions I'm asking:

—How would God have us maintain biblical unity in our churches?

—How does Christian peacemaking impact brotherhood relationships?


—How is one to resolve the tension of changing the things you should, accepting the things you cannot change and finding God's wisdom to

know the difference?

### **The Solution**

**If you were to write a 300-word (or less) analysis and vision of the need for biblical unity in our congregations, what would you write?**

I want to print some of your responses and testimonies in June. For that reason, you need to be quite prompt. You have only several weeks in which to do this. Send me your thoughts by April 20. Write it for Reader Response!

Note the young people's willingness to write to Youth Editor Ernest. Let youthful example "provoke you to love and good works." Thank you! God bless you! —PLM 

## **reader response**

### **Re: Psalm 73 Paraphrase**

It was with tears that I read, "Comfort from Psalm 73" (Dec., 2006, p. 22) about my niece, Verna Yoder, and how she cared for her mother, Edna. I am also moved about how Verna now has to suffer. It was certainly selfless of her to leave her home for those years to care for her mother.

I'm reminded of something I noted at sister-in-law Edna's place about how people respond at a viewing. Some talk until you almost wish they would move on. Some don't have

anything to say. And some give a soft hand shake with tears.

It reminds me of an account of two families who lived side by side. Each family had a little girl. These little girls often played together. Then one little girl got sick and died. It left her parents and the little girl's playmate brokenhearted. One day the surviving girl was missing for a while. When she returned her mother asked, "Where have you been?"

The little girl replied, "I went over to comfort my friend's mother."

“What did you say?”

“I didn’t say anything. I just sat on her lap and cried with her.”

*A little child shall lead them.*

### **Rosa Parks**

In 1955, down in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks, a black woman, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus to a white man. For 382 days, (from Dec. 5, 1955 to Dec. 20, 1956) many blacks found other ways to go to work, including walking for some of them. It ended when the U. S. Supreme Court ruled segregated seating unconstitutional.

Some whites and many blacks joined in to make the protest work by offering rides to black workers. *Mennonite Weekly Review* called it Kingdom living when a brave white girl walked right past her scoffing friends and family and joined the blacks who were singing. I call it compassion in shoe leather.

### **Memories**

Many memories flood back of people in Kansas, the place where I was born. In later life, I always enjoyed taking my Dad to Kansas to see some of his old friends and neighbors: Dick Evans; Fred Miller (though he was blind, if Dad arrived and spoke from outside the door to him, he said, “Mose, come in!”); and David J. Miller, with his daughter caring for him.

Here in Holmes County, there were a number of different homes I used to visit: Cousin Sarah Stutzman, who was lovingly cared for by her daughter; Earl Crilow, a school mate of mine; Roman Stutzman caring for his father-in-law Al Mast (Roman was formerly pastor of Martins Creek Mennonite Church, who lived to be 90, his daughter, Joann Kandel cared well for him); next on C.R. 189, was my oldest brother Allen, who though he was busy, always laid down his work to visit; and brother Levi, whose wife passed away last June.

I also think of Davy Kline, who reminded me of what was once said about a very good horse, “You can’t hitch him wrong.” Davy too was good at anything that needed to be done. When his Catholic neighbor was sick one spring, Davy and his neighbor sowed the man’s oats before they sowed their own.

Last, but not least is another person, my wife Anna, whose first husband Jake was in a mental institution for years. She cared for both her parents for many years. That too was compassion in shoe leather.

The list could go on and on. It makes me think of Hebrews 11. Many of these have passed on and I miss them so. Before long, I too shall pass on.

—Eli M. Yoder, 88 years old

Millersburg, OH



# *A Cordial Invitation to :* *Ministers and Kingdom Workers*

C O M E F O R F E L L O W S H I P

Annual Ministers' Fellowship Meetings | April 3-5, 2007

*Hosted by the Amish Mennonite Churches of Reno County, Kansas*

## **THE WAY OF CHRIST IN HUMAN RELATIONS**

**Tuesday Evening:** *The Minister's Relationship to God*

1. "Christ's Cross and the Christian's Cross"
2. "The First Commandment"

**Wednesday Morning:** *The Minister's Relationship to his Family*

1. "Lessons for the Minister and his Wife in Family Relations"
2. Workshops for men and women to discuss the topic presented

**Wednesday Afternoon:** *The Church's Relationships within the Constituency*

1. "Wholesome Inter-congregational Relationships"
2. Introduction of the newly ordained
3. Business session

**Wednesday Evening:** *Healthy Relationships within the Congregation*

1. "Developing Strong Intergenerational Relationships"
2. "Developing Strong Relationships with Minorities in the Church"

**Thursday Morning:** *The Minister's Relationship to his Co-Ministers and the Local Church*

1. "Goals and Pitfalls for the Minister in Relating to his Co-Ministers and the local Church"
2. Three Respondents: Deacon, Minister, and Bishop

**Thursday Afternoon:** *The Minister's Relationship to the World*

1. "The Minister's Relationship to the World"
2. Business session

**Thursday Evening:** *The Christian's Relationship to Civil Government and Truth*

1. "The Christian's Relationship to Civil Government"
2. "The Christian's Relationship to Truth"

Services will be held at the Yoder Mennonite Church (One mile north of Yoder, KS)

For lodging needs before you arrive, if you haven't made other arrangements, call:

*Vernon and Lena Miller | Home phone: 620-662-1584 | Cell phone: 620-727-5718*



## Discovery Yields to Diligence

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The model we are proposing in these seven articles is an endeavor to pursue keys to understanding the workings of the kingdom of God which will take us from mystery to reality in seven steps:

1. Imagination yields to curiosity.
2. Curiosity yields to inquiry.
3. Inquiry yields to discovery.
4. Discovery yields to diligence.
5. Diligence yields to faith.
6. Faith yields to doing what is right.
7. Doing what is right yields to reality.

Here now we proceed with the character building that should arise out of the first three stages. This phase is exciting!

Discovery in itself holds promise. Promise means there is improvement. Improvement suggests a future. The future holds reward. The quest of discovery carries its own reward. Interest and strength rise according to one's effort.

Children love treasure hunts. Treasure hunts have all the dynamics of a discovery-reward situation. The

tangibles are all there—the clues, the instructions, the next note, and the “Whoopie!” of the find. Look at the glee, the wide eyes, the triumph. That's life.

*Discovery begins with questions*

Help the child as he begins “to get his feet wet in the pool of inquiry.” There are no stupid questions for a sincere learner. Our secular world, from lower grades to higher learning, has many more ridiculous answers than ridiculous questions!

It is the child's own treasure hunt to ask questions of adults. Like children, we adults like new things, too. We all have some questions. The child knows less and has many more questions. Asking questions is an indicator of mental health. Being *able* to answer questions shows mental maturity. Being *willing* to answer questions indicates social maturity.

Many later adolescents and young adults have quit asking real questions, because they are unaccustomed to getting real answers. Our goal in these series is to get back on track as we go from mystery to reality.

The actual life of the worldling



and sinner is shrouded in mystery. That mystery has overlays of pleasure seeking, sensuality, guilt, carnality, selfishness, greed, pride, rebellion, anger, bitterness, jealousy, and other forms of godlessness. The Apostle Paul wrote to an early church stating that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work” (2 Thess. 2:1). That mystery has many questions and no good answers except those given in God’s Word.

Parents should give concrete (real) answers to their children. Some parents do just that. But when we are unwilling or unable to do so, it may well be because we never made satisfactory inquiry and discovery in our growing-up years.

*Discovery is exciting.*

The Mennonites and Amish didn’t discover Florida—Ponce de Leon did. All they seem to do is inhabit Pinecraft! Columbus discovered America, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark discovered an overland passage to the Pacific. Benjamin Franklin made some discoveries about electricity. Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. Edison took out 1093 patents on his inventions. His inventions came about through inquiry and discovery.

Mr. Edison created nothing. He merely combined resources put here by our Creator God. Once he tried

10,000 experiments on a storage battery and failed to produce the desired result. A friend tried to console him. “Why, I have not failed,” he said, “I’ve just found 10,000 ways that don’t work.”

As a boy, Thomas Edison asked more than the usual number of questions. Later, he acknowledged his renown as an inventor. But he said he could not create even the simplest form of life. Yet, Edison was not a believer in Christ. That’s sad, isn’t it? He made many great discoveries, and yet never discovered the highest and greatest find of them all: salvation in Christ.

*Discovery is meant to be shared.*

In a healthy church, discoveries in the Word are found and shared. A mature church is where ideas for nurture can be shared without immediate censure. A flourishing church is where the desire for mission endeavor can be expressed without automatic reproof. Did you ever wonder why our people put so much of their vision and energy into the pursuit of material things? It is one area where a man can give his vision all the thrust he has without having someone hold him back.

*Discovery is insight.*

Discovery encourages diligence in appropriate responses. Where one finds something desirable, there he

looks for more. Discovery is fun, but it also brings us face-to-face with decision. Knowing precedes doing. Application precedes having. Diligence means growing up and getting with it. Laziness is out; busyness is in.

Diligence does not require that every step needs to be explained or understood for action. Diligence hearkens to command. Diligence is one step ahead of the ultimatum. Diligence is the happy fruit of discovery.

Discovery is the eye opener that uses sight and foresight. Discovery is seeing the right path, diligence is walking in it. Discovery is turning on the floodlight; diligence is promptly venturing forward in its beam. Discovery opens the eyes; diligence engages the feet.

*Discovery is progress.*

Diligence in German is *Fleisz*, from which is derived *Fleißig*. That means being busy, being industrious, being a doer. Not simply bare minimums, my brothers. *Our discoveries in God's Word are too few when our diligence is lagging.* "Not slothful in business," (Romans 12:11) Luther's German expands the meaning with, "Seid nicht traeger in dem was ihr tun sollt." Transliterated into English, that is, "Don't be draggy (lethargic) in that which is your part to do."

The anti-action word I choose is

*draggy*. Is that in the dictionary? Actually, it is. Along with *draggier* and *draggiest*. Three classes of draggers! (This is no drag race!) By *draggy* I mean slow-moving, lethargic, dull, boring...*stop!* We might indict too many people.

It is shocking when I look at where I am compared to where I could be in Christian maturity. "Draggy?" Oh, Lord, forgive!

Discovery is not an end in itself. Discovery is the central component of this seven-point outline. Discovery is the keystone of the grand arch. It accelerates the flow toward God's design of finding reality in life—the life of Jesus Christ Himself.

Discovery provides no parking lot—no hitching rack. It certainly brings more than a junk yard full of relics, signifying the end of life's journey.

*Discovery is fascinating.*

I've recently discovered that I'm past retirement age. Sometimes I wish I didn't know that. Inspirations for writing come faster than I can utilize them. I've been discovering fascinating things others have written. I've recently discovered several biographies of Mennonite church men of 100 years ago. I know of no one today who matches their sacrifice and zeal for the church.

Recently I became aware of some

of the story of the amazing arch at St. Louis. I also read several books on the Holocaust, Hitler's men, and the amazing Jewish intelligence and response. In recent years, we took a trip to Alaska. It has a rich history of how countless thousands of people became poor when they joined the Gold Rush of 1898.


I'm on a strong quest for information with a purpose. Some of what I read is too small. Reading takes time. While it is often rewarding, I find it produces no cash. But it does enrich life. My discoveries are fascinating, but I have only limited time, strength and intelligence.

*Discovery has purpose.*

Discovery is intended to inform.

Information calls for response. Response engages direction. Direction meets opportunity. Opportunity facilitates multiple blessings that expand life's richness.

*The Bottom Line* is that *discovery* places before us opportunities that enrich life and broaden our usefulness. *Discovery* is exciting and is meant to be shared. *Discovery* is fascinating and has a high purpose that brings a distinct uplift and places us above the fallen world of imperfections, setbacks, and defeat. *Discovery* is meant to make us *diligent*.

Discover God's best for you; then diligently give yourself to it. Rise by choosing the high road of God's approval. 

## *In Prison and Ye Visited Me*

*Betty Troyer, Bedezyanka, Ukraine*

**J**acovich, a young man from Nicoli sat behind the bars in a Ukrainian prison thinking about his life. He was hundreds of miles from home; near the Polish border. There was plenty of time to think for this was his third sentence. This was a time of persecution for Christians. He grew up in a Baptist home but his offense had nothing to do with being good. He was in prison for doing wrong.

How his Christian parents prayed for his soul! He had heard their earnest prayers and knew of God's great power for those who pray. But he had gone long and far away until now he was in the "pig pen." But he longed to return to his father's house.

He thought back to his first offense at age 16, when he first darkened jail house doors. Now, nine years and three offenses later, he sat in this prison far from home, thinking of the

faithful visits of Pastor Oleg. Jacovich knew that his parents had called the local Baptist pastor and asked him to visit their wayward son in prison.

Jacovich finally gave his heart to the Lord in 1990, at age 25. He spent another year in prison during which time he read and studied God's Word with the help of Pastor Oleg.

Some time after his release and after he was back at his father's house, he met and married a Baptist girl. Over a period of time, they had nine children, whom they are raising for the Lord—a very evangelistic-minded family.

Time has moved on and in 2005 Jacovich moved his family from Nicoli to our community. He and his wife are now members of the Bedezyanka Evangelical Mennonite Church.

In 2006, Jacovich was asked by Wayne Hursh to drive for him on a trip to investigate self-help projects near the Polish border. When Jacovich realized they were going to the city of Lutska, memories of the past flooded in. Lutska was Pastor Oleg's

home town! It had been over 15 years since he had seen Pastor Oleg. When he asked Wayne where they would be staying in Lutska, Wayne said, "At the pastor's house."

Questions churned in Jacovich's soul. *Would Pastor Oleg still know him? What would his reaction be to his becoming a conservative Mennonite? Would he still be accepted as his "spiritual son"?* Many questions nagged at his mind.

But Jacovich need not have worried. When he walked up the path to the house, Pastor Oleg recognized him at once and with a cry of "Brother Jacovich!" he opened wide his arms to embrace his "spiritual son." What a glad reunion; what tears of joy and thankfulness to God for His faithfulness and keeping power!

"...I was in prison and ye visited me..."

*The Lloyd Troyer family is currently serving in the small, isolated village of Bedezyanka in Ukraine, with Master's International Ministries.*



There is more power  
in the open hand  
than in the clenched fist.

## marriages

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

### **Bender-Kinsinger**

Bro. Derrick, son of Robert and Alice Bender, Accident, MD, and Sis. Cynthia, daughter of Shirley and the late Marvin Kinsinger, Grantsville, MD, on July 29, 2006, at Cherry Glade Mennonite Church, by Barry Maust.

### **Gingerich-Miller**

Bro. Jared Wesley, son of Harry and Betty Gingerich, Utica, OH, and Sis. Larita Sue, daughter of Dale and Sue Miller, Newcomerstown, OH, at Maranatha Fellowship Church, on Oct. 21, 2006, by Roman B. Mullet.

### **Graber-Coblentz**

Bro. Sanford, son of Roman and Mary Ann Graber, Bloomfield, IN, and Sis. Deborah, daughter of Wallace and Ruth Ann Coblentz, Unionville, MO, at Unionville Christian Brotherhood, on Sept. 8, 2006, by Marvin Yoder.

### **Miller-Stevens**

Bro. Tim, son of Ervin and Ruth Miller, Titusville, PA, and Sis. Lisa, daughter of Guadalupe and the late Gilbert Stevens, Hattieville, Belize, at Kings Park Church of Nazarene, on Nov. 25, 2006, by Lester Gingerich.

### **O'Neil-Nissley**

Bro. David, son of Sean O'Neil, Catlett, VA, and Sis. Bertha, daughter of John and Susanna Nissley, Catlett, VA, at Pine Grove Mennonite Church, on Jan. 6, 2007, by Eli Yoder.

### **Petersheim-Yoder**

Bro. Nathan, son of Fred and Amelia Petersheim, Oakland, MD, and Sis. Misty, daughter of Jonathan and Charity Yoder, Farmville, VA, on June 3, 2006, at Farmville Firemen's Sports Arena.

### **Swartzentruber-Yoder**

Bro. Ronald, son of Abner and Miriam Swartzentruber, Oakland, MD, and Sis. Lisa, daughter of Michael and Delores Yoder, Grantsville, MD, on July 1, 2006, at Maranatha Assembly of God for Mt. View Mennonite, by Jerry Yoder.

### **Yoder-Yoder**

Bro. Michael, son of Menno and Nona Yoder, Salisbury, PA, and Sis. Lynette, daughter of Marvin and Mildred Yoder, Meyersdale, PA, on June 24, 2006, at Maust Memorial Retreat for Mt. View Mennonite by Jerry Yoder.



*Happiness is...*

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE,

A GRATEFUL SPIRIT,

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE, AND

A HEART FULL OF LOVE.

## cradle roll

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

**Beachy**, Leon and Edith (Miller), Belvidere, TN, first and second children, twin daughters, Rachel Marie and Rebecca Faith, Jan. 19, 2007.

**Burkholder**, Owen and Katherine (Hodgden), Sagertown, PA, first child and son, Landis Bruce, Jan. 7, 2007.

**Erb**, Allan and Linda (Gerber), Wellesley, ON, fourth child and dau., Charity Dawn, Nov. 21, 2006.

**Garcete**, Fransisco and Susan (Zimmerman), Crossville, TN, fifth child, third dau., Darlene, Nov. 16, 2006.

**Kauffman**, Vincent and Rachel (Peterheim), Weldon, IA, first child and son, Josiah Elliot, Dec. 20, 2006.

**Kensinger**, Caleb and Jessica (Yoder), Newcomerstown, OH, first child and son, Cedric Daniel, Nov. 28, 2006.

**Kuepfer**, Darryl and Susan (Gerber), Millbank, ON, eighth child, fourth dau., Amy Marie, January 13, 2007.

**Martin**, Jeremy and Elizabeth (Yoder), Oakland, MD, fourth child, third son, Nicholas Derrick, Nov. 3, 2006.

**Mast**, Michael and Ruth Anne (Overholt), Auburn, KY, fifth child and dau., Michelle Joy, Dec. 27, 2006.

**Miller**, Kristen and Rhonda (Brenneman), Knotts Island, NC, first child and son, Michael Theodore, Dec. 2, 2006.

**Miller**, Matthias and Cynthia (Schrock), Bloomfield, IN, second child, first dau., Jolisa Rachele, Nov. 2, 2006.

**Miller**, Myron and Linda (Shetler), Sugarcreek, OH, fourth child, second son, Shawn Tyler, Jan. 2, 2007.

**Mullet**, James and Donna (Hess), Newcomerstown, OH, third child, first dau., Heidi Noelle, Dec. 11, 2006.

**Nissley**, Eddie and Loretta (Miller), Clarkson, KY, seventh child, fourth son, Jeffrey Alan, Dec. 9, 2006.

**Schmidt**, Peter and Tabitha (Beachy), New Philadelphia, OH, second child and dau., Raquel Jolee, Jan. 18, 2007.

**Stoltzfus**, Dwayne and Lois (Troyer), Plain City, OH, first child and dau, Hadassah Shalom, Nov. 29, 2006.

**Thayer**, Matthias and Martha (Kauffman), Free Union, VA, second child, first dau., Bernadine Viola, Dec. 14, 2006.

**Troyer**, Kenneth and Sharon (Byler), Stuarts Draft, VA, sixth child, fourth dau., Kendra Ranelle, Jan. 8, 2007.

**Troyer**, Philip and Rachel (Miller), Sugarcreek, OH, third child, second dau., Alexa Marie, Jan. 4, 2007.

## obituaries

**Weaver**, Lonnie and Evelyn (Glick), Freeport, OH, first child and son, Dante Lee, Dec. 7, 2006.

**Wingard**, Loren and Marsha (Wagler), Washington, IN, fifth child, third son, Ryan Andrew, Nov. 30, 2006.

**Yoder**, Mervin Dale and Jenell Rose (Beachy), Salisbury, PA, third child, second dau., Lauren Hope, Jan. 10, 2006.

**Yoder**, Paul and Ann (Stoltzfus), Harrison, AR, sixth child, third dau., Brooke Lanae, Nov. 30, 2006.

**Yoder**, Sanford and Jolene (Yoder), Partridge, KS, sixth child, fifth son, Jeremy Alan, Jan. 10, 2007.

**Yoder**, Terry Lynn and Linda Irene (Yoder), Grantsville, PA, first child and son, Braden Lynn, April 28, 2006.

## ordination

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

**Bro. Steven Miller**, 40, Auburn, KY, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of deacon at Plainview Mennonite Church, on Nov. 12, 2006. Preordination messages were brought by Mervin Graber, Lyndon, KS.

The charge was given by David Yoder, Jr., assisted by Melvin Troyer and Rudy Overholt.

**Beachy**, Fannie N. (Hershberger), 96, of Grantsville, MD, died Oct. 6, 2006, at the Goodwill Mennonite Nursing Home. She was born Feb. 13, 1910, at Grantsville, MD, daughter of the late Noah and Savilla (Yoder) Hershberger.

Fannie, a faithful member of Mt. View Mennonite Church, was a homemaker; and a loving, caring mother and grandmother. Being concerned for the welfare of her family, she prayed daily for them. She was active in the sewing circle for many years and served as secretary for her husband's feed business for many years. She stood faithfully by his side during his time of illness till his death on Jan. 18, 1998.

On Oct. 16, 1932, she was married to Noah S. Beachy. Surviving are five children: Sarah Marie (Henry) Tice; Simon D. (Martha) Beachy; Martha (Raymond) Yoder, all of Grantsville, MD; Miriam (Eli) Yoder, Seebree, KY; Marvin (Dorothy) Beachy, Elizabeth, PA; 21 grandchildren; 69 great grandchildren and 3 step great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Noah; two children, Homer Alvin and Mary Lois; three brothers, Simon, Elmer and Ervin Hershberger; and four sisters, Annie Hershberger, Sadie Schrock, Vernie Lichty and Lydia Beachy.

Funeral services were held Oct. 9, 2006, with Menno Yoder and Jerry Yoder serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.



**Byler, Katie** (Bontrager), 87, of Plain City, Ohio, died at her residence Dec. 18, 2006. She was born Nov. 12, 1919, at Dodge City, KS, daughter of the late Ezra and Sovilla Bontrager.

She was a member of Haven A. M. Church. While healthy she delighted in helping others, giving a wonderful example of a servant's heart.

On Feb. 2, 1943, she was married to David Byler, who survives. Children are: Millie (Paul) Hershberger, Plain City, OH; Martha (Willie) Miller, Richmond, MO; Alma Byler, Plain City; Lydia Mae (Jonas) Gingerich, Plain City; David (Wanda) Byler, West Jefferson, OH; Laura (Melvin) Wengerd, Plain City; Sovilla (Jim) Williams, Columbus, OH; Mary Ellen (Brian) Mahoney, Sarasota, FL; Wayne (Mary) Byler, Norton, KS; Arlene (Anthony) Yoder, Quito, Ecuador; Regina (Ernie) Yutzy, Plain City, OH; 32 grandchildren, and 34 great grandchildren. Other survivors include, sisters: Amanda (Joe) Byler, Dover, DE; Lovina (John) Yoder, Seymour, IA; Lydia (Merle) Emerson, Greenwood, DE; and Millie Byler, Middletown, VA.

She was preceded in death by sisters: Mary Felty and Fannie Stoltzfus; brothers: Sam Bontrager, Eli Bontrager and John Bontrager.

Funeral services were held at Haven, with Lonnie Beachy and Mark Beachy serving. John Hostetler was in charge of the committal at the Haven Fellowship Cemetery.

**Lebold, Jacob**, 89, died at Health Care Centre, Tavistock, Ontario, on Dec. 30, 2006. He was born Feb. 17, 1917, son of the late Joseph and Barbara (Boshart) Lebold in Wellesley Twp.

He was a member of Cedar Grove A.M. Church.

On Dec. 16, 1943, he was married to Fannie Schmidt, who survives. Their four children are: Kenneth (Mary) Lebold, Earlton, ON; Wanda (Mervin) Wagler, Wellesley, ON; Wayne (Shirley) Lebold, Millbank, ON; and Floyd (Kathy) Lebold, Lucknow, ON; 18 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren. He was the last surviving member of his family.

Preceding him in death were one brother John Lebold; and five sisters: Leah Wagler; Sarah Gerber; Fannie Jantzi; Laura Gerber, and Annie Schmidt.

Funeral services were held at Cedar Grove on Jan. 2, with Arthur Gerber serving. Burial was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

**Tice, Mary Irene** (Yoder), 54, of Grantsville, MD, died Dec. 13, 2006, at her home. She was born Sept. 5, 1952, at Meyersdale, PA, daughter of Lydia (Yoder) and the late Lloyd Yoder.

Mary Irene was a member of Mt. View Mennonite Church. She loved singing and enthusiastically sang with Mountain Anthems for many years. For two years she battled cancer, and while she did not welcome this, she said she was glad that she and not some other member of the family was sick. She never complained but kept her radiant smile and was always

thankful for the things done for her.

On July 13, 1996, she married Aaron Tice, who survives. She is also survived by four brothers: Menno E., Springs, PA; Herman S., Raymond G., and Glenn L. Yoder, all of Grantsville, MD; two sisters: Shirley Kinsinger and Glenda Yoder, both of Grantsville; 19 nieces and neph-

## observations

**K**athleen Kern, writing in *Mennonite Weekly Review*, 1-8-07, cites some startling figures relative to poverty and wealth in developing nations.

Dictators and other ruling elites have defrauded their countries by funneling huge amounts of untaxed revenue into foreign banks and tax havens.

The British government estimates that half of the world's trade passes—mostly on paper—through tax havens. Augusto Pinochet, past dictator of Chile who died recently, seems to have been a classic example of ruthless power, corruption and unbridled greed.

The need for aid to developing nations would diminish considerably if they could keep the wealth inside their countries.

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It is good to remember that greed, which the Bible calls covetousness,

ews and 37 great nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a brother-in-law, Marvin Kinsinger and a great niece, Kimberly Bender.

Funeral services were held Dec. 15 at Mt. View Mennonite Church with Jerry Yoder and Menno J. Yoder serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

can frustrate God's purpose among believers. A church building project can be a test of the spiritual maturity of the group. There should be a climate of openness and willingness to listen and to share. It is highly unlikely that everyone sees things exactly the same. Differing views should be seen as a way to reach better conclusions than if there were no variety. When all parties concerned are committed to the way of Christ, they will not be left with unresolved ill feelings.

A major issue is funding. Remembering the following principles will help a building project to proceed in a God-honoring manner:

—“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” –Jesus

—God loves generosity and cheerfulness in giving. To give as God has prospered would in many cases assure adequate funding.

—It is helpful to remember that to

need more room or a new building is a thankworthy blessing.

—To be armed with the mind of Christ, (1 Peter 4:1), is helpful protection against the designs of the enemy.



It seems to be a fairly common practice that workers who are working under a mission agency are expected to generate their own support. I can see that this relieves the board of this necessary role. But is it fair to the worker? I have yet to discover a worker who enjoys that part of the assignment.

Often such workers have left secular employment where they were free to apply themselves to the work, not having to concern themselves with support. Should a church-related employer do less? Maybe some reader can offer an explanation that will help me to see that having Christian workers raise their own support is right after all.



The abandoned Partridge Grade School was purchased by the Plainview Mennonite Church. It is now called King Street Center. It is in plain sight from where we live.

Workers have just finished putting a steel gable roof on a portion of the sprawling building. The truss rafters used were 71 feet long. To move these

rafters and put them in place was difficult. The rafters were unwieldy. One worker compared it to handling wet noodles.

Individually these rafters were not only useless, they were an inconvenient nuisance. Securely joined to others they make the unit stable and useful. But even so, the rafters are not capable of protecting the building from rain or snow. In fact, their usefulness is realized only as the rafters can no longer be seen. They are now covered with painted steel that will serve its purpose because it has been fastened to something solid.

Which is more important, the rafters or the steel? Really, is there any difference?

Let's suppose that the rafters could refuse to be involved simply because they are not visible or prominent. Or what if the steel would refuse to cooperate with the rafters? In either case, the purpose of shedding the elements would be defeated.

The church is a building fitly framed together...in whom we are also "builed together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21,22) Our usefulness does not depend on our prominence or visibility, but rather on our willingness to be faithful in the place God calls us. A Christlike willingness to acknowledge our interdependence

with other members assures our usefulness. We have not been created to walk alone.

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For 26 years there was a “Secret Santa” who would randomly hand out money, often hundred-dollar bills, to those who appeared to be needy.

In December, 2006, he gave out \$100,000 to strangers in Kansas City and Chicago. Four individuals trained as Secret Santas gave out an additional \$65,000. When this person discovered that he had cancer that would likely be terminal, he decided to reveal himself to inspire others to take random kindness seriously. This person, Larry Stewart, from Lee’s Summit, MO, died at 58 on January 15, 2007. Over the years, he had handed out 1.3 million dollars.

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I assume that readers of this column are committed to the way of Christian nonresistance. We may be inclined to think of this as a uniquely Anabaptist teaching. A kind friend, Leon Zook, sent me a book that is pertinent to these thoughts. The book is *Blood Bothers* by Elias Chacour, with David Hazard, published by Chosen Books.

It is an inside view of the peaceful co-existence of Jews and Palestinians before 1948, when the state of Israel

came into being. At that time, Chacour was an 8-year-old lad, youngest in a Palestinian Christian family.

His father and their family welcomed the arrival of the Israelis with a special meal. When the soldiers came they were armed. They were polite, but cool and distant.

Later, they manifested heartless cruelty in a variety of ways. The thing that impressed me was how the father, a son of Ishmael, was so steadfastly non-resistant, and so forgiving under extreme circumstances.


When the fig orchard that he had planted and carefully nurtured was taken and sold to a foreign investor, he was very hurt. But this is what he said: “Children, if someone hurts you, you can curse him. But that would be useless. Instead you have to ask the Lord to bless the man who makes himself your enemy. And do you know what will happen? The Lord will bless you with inner peace—and perhaps your enemy will turn from his wickedness. If not, the Lord will deal with him.”

Young Elias was sent to an orphanage where he could have learning opportunities not possible in the stressful conditions at home. His father’s admonition included the following: “You are not being sent away to be spoiled by privilege. Learn all you can...If you become a true man of

God, you will know how to reconcile enemies—how to turn hatred into peace. Only a true servant of God can do that.”

We would all agree that we need to be concerned that the young men of draft age are thoroughly taught and grounded in the way of Christ.

Whether young or old, we do well to pray that we might be teachable from others who have been tested under extremely trying circumstances.

It is our privilege and divine obligation to live by this guiding principle in all of life’s inter-personal and church relationships. —DLM 

## *Ministers’ Meeting Messages—2006*

*This is a condensation of several messages given at the annual Ministers’ Meetings, April 4-6, 2006, at Sugarcreek, Ohio. The set of eight cassette tapes with 11 messages is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$40; or a set of 11 CD’s for \$45, postpaid.*

### **9. A Healthy View of Technology**

—Samson Eicher, Butler, IN

**T**his topic need not be divisive if we diligently apply the principles we have been taught in these meetings. It can be a blessing that allows us to work together and realize God’s will rather than dividing us. God’s mission for mankind is given in Genesis 1: 27-31. God gave man the *mission*, the *means* and the *motivation* to carry out the tasks He gave him.

I believe technology is a gift. Technology is more of a *discovery* than a

*creation* of man. Without technology, we could not sustain the current population on earth. Satan attempts to destroy the good gifts God makes available through technology. For this reason, discretion and caution are needed. But there is a big difference between involved caution and detached skepticism. Naturally, when we don’t understand something, we fear it.

Technology is the application of physical principles. Examples of this are the internal combustion engine, the printing press, communication satellites, improved food production, improved medical technology, improved transportation, work conditions with less drudgery, increased quality and length of life, (infant deaths in the United States in 1911—135 per 1,000, in 2000—6.7 deaths per 1,000; in 1900, life expectancy—47 years; 1990—76 years).

These are blessings from God but they have sometimes also been abused by mankind. An atheistic history professor of mine acknowledged that while he dislikes Christianity, he believes Christian people were the ones who were unafraid of subduing the earth and thus they helped usher the world into the modern age. Pagan people were afraid of spirits that lived in the woods and wherever, so they shrank back. I find that an interesting admission from an atheist.

We can feed the world better today than we did in the 1960's, despite the dire predictions then of widespread starvation by the year 2000.

Contrary to Greek scientists who once confidently declared that there are 3,000 stars, today's estimate is 70 sextillion, which equals 10 times as many stars as there are grains of sand on earth. I have only a little idea of what that means, but He is the God of might and strength and awe!

Some feel that modern technology violates Christian simplicity. My understanding of simplicity's use in the New Testament is *single-mindedness* rather than *simple-mindedness*. *Simplicity* in Romans 12:8 refers to generosity.

Does Satan use technology to try to corrupt us? Absolutely! Satan is not a creator, he perverts what God has created.

Satan tries to use every good thing for our destruction. Take, for instance, sexual intimacy. In marriage it is a blessing, but Satan has perverted it to bring about all sorts of deviations from God's design. Other examples are Satan's twisting of such things as *eating* and *ambition*.

Some of the dangers of technology, especially the internet, I see:

1) **Private access:** We are only as spiritual as we are when no one is looking over our shoulder.

2) **Accessibility:** Much good and much evil is available at our fingertips.

3) **Addiction:** Proper use doesn't cost time, it saves time. Addiction indicates evasion of responsibility.

Is there protection for these hazards? Yes there is! Scriptural principle is not rendered obsolete in any age. Jesus is not scratching His head and wondering what to do about it.

Let me mention three things that relate to this problem:

1) Christ's presence is with us. As we know the Holy Spirit well, we will detect the counterfeit.

2) Accountability to and interaction with the brotherhood. In monthly men's meetings, for instance, we should hold each other accountable.

3) Awareness of what is out there that could benefit us. Use without

abuse or over-use.

Colossians 2:14 cautions about going back to observing Jewish law, then in verse 18, “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.” Thus it warns against going back into the Mosaic law.

In chapter 3, we have that beautiful antidote to that problem: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth...”

Many electronic devices, such as filters, are designed to help us. I used to keep a complete list, but there so many now, that I will give only several:

1) Software filtering: These scan a website for certain words.

2) White listing and black listing: Approved and disapproved sites.

3) *Characterlink* is one of the safest, but is also very restrictive.

4) *Covenant Eyes* has both accountability and filtering programs.

5) And many more.

It’s good to leave a trail of where we’ve been.

What’s coming up in technology? No one knows. There tends to be an integration of technology. Because

the internet has become the backbone of communication, many of the separate pieces of technology will be integrated. It might be helpful to say it this way: The internet has become business-safe and business-friendly. Furthermore, it appears that we will be able to buy services rather than individual pieces of technology.

This is consumer-driven, so it is in the best interests of these companies to give us choices. It appears that we will get the services we pay for. Hence, we will not be confronted with public television programming, even though we use some of the technology that uses the “communication backbone.”

We can still make the right choices just like our brothers and sisters did in apostolic times. In the times of our Anabaptist forefathers the choices were hard, but they could choose to do right and we must do so, too. The potential of this technology is great. Let us use it for God’s glory.



## 10. Health Care Ethics

—Nolan Byler, D.O., Mt. Eaton, OH

To see what Paul had to say about life and death, let us turn to Philippians 1: 20-26: “According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also



Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all..."

This passage blesses me. We know that we all have an appointment with death, unless Jesus returns first. We must be realistic; we must look at death—and think and talk about it.

Paul said that death would have been better for him, but he was willing to stay for the sake of others around him. To die in Christ is our gain, but if God has a work for us to do, we need to be willing to remain here. To leave this world and its temptations would be better, but it is important to let God decide when life is over for you and me. He gave us life and He reserves the right to take it again.

We hit our physical peak at about 26 years. After that, our strength starts diminishing.

We are created in God's image. He created us with certain characteristics that He has. We have personality, spirit, an everlasting soul, which is different than all the rest of creation. Life is circumscribed by God. It

comes from God; the end also is determined by Him. As we face the issue of death, we must acknowledge that God is sovereign.

1 Corinthians 3: 16-17 explains that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, which we must not defile or God will destroy us. In fact, we don't have a right to life. People would like to say we do, but life is a gift, not a right. Neither do we have a right to die. The whole "rights" movement is very strong, whether it be majority rights, minority rights, right to life, right to die, gay rights, or abortion rights.

The Christian's life is not made up of rights. When we become Christians, we give our rights over to God. We are not our own. Romans 14:7 says: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die we die unto the Lord, whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." God has divine ownership in matters of life and death. Man has tried to take God's sovereignty away, but he cannot do it.

Here's a question for you: *Under what circumstances, if any, can a person righteously exercise a choice in the timing of and/or mode of his death?* There is no one right answer for all situations, but here are three

principles to go by:

1. You need the right standard: God's Word vs. man's reasoning.

2. You need the right goal: to bring glory to God vs. one's own glory.

3. You need the right motive: love for God and others vs. love for self.

Death situations range from suicide to self-sacrifice. There are a number of positions with regard to death we can take. In 1 Chronicles 10:3, 13, Saul was mortally wounded in battle. He asked his armor bearer to kill him. He refused, so he fell upon his own sword. He went against the word of the Lord. Did Saul have the right goal? No! Did he have the right motive? No! His motive was to avoid humiliation and torture at the hands of the enemy. He was selfish and proud. He was abandoning his nation; he had already abandoned his God. He failed all three criteria. So also did Judas Iscariot (Mathew 27:3-5). Apparently he was sorry, to some extent, but did not forgive himself.

As to foregoing medical care and thus allowing natural death to come, here is my understanding: It is permissible according to the Bible. (Genesis 49:33; Luke 2:25-32)

As to self-sacrifice, we have the example of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, Acts 7. It is noble and is highly commended in Scripture.

Euthanasia means literally "good death." It is misnamed, because it fails the criteria noted above. It is also called "mercy killing" or "active euthanasia," as opposed to withholding medical care, which is "passive euthanasia." It is causing a person to die on purpose with an injection or an overdose so that they die painlessly.

Mercy killing is approved in Oregon. It has been common in Holland for some time. It has come to this that when people get old in Holland, it is commonly understood that they should arrange to be put away. Cultural pressure is upon them to do so. When will it become common in the United States? I don't know.

Who would have thought that *Roe vs. Wade* (1973) would have resulted in millions of babies being aborted? It has happened. What is to keep a similar thing from happening if we go down the slippery slope of euthanizing older people? The reasoning is that older people are not productive and are a hindrance to society. Why not just eliminate them? That way we don't need to feed them and pay for their care anymore. Active euthanasia fails all three of our criteria. It is like a slap in the face of God and rejects His sovereignty.

How should we prepare for our end of life? We have so much medical

sophistication that we can keep the lungs breathing when they would shut down. We can keep the heart beating when it wants to quit. The list goes on and on. These decisions make it desirable to have a living will or assign durable power of attorney for health care.

I don't promote the living will any more, because the living will may make your decisions as soon as you are very ill, but not necessarily near the end of life. For that reason, I think durable power of attorney for health care is preferable. By this you give someone else the power of decision-making for you when you're incapacitated. So you brethren could assign to your wife that power. Later in life, you might need to assign this decision-making power to a younger person, perhaps your adult child.

In today's legal climate, medical personnel will not always listen. For example, if your husband has pneumonia and is unconscious, you can ask that he be given antibiotics. Likely he would recover. A living will would not protect you as well in such an eventuality as would durable power of attorney, which covers a wider range of health care situations.

The person with durable power of attorney should speak with the person they represent, to know what they want when end of life decisions

must be made. This person must not be timid but must be able to speak up clearly and confidently.

Dr. Terrill once said, "If we use our own resources or those of others to prolong physical life in any and every situation—no matter what—we handle physical life as our highest value. As such, it is an idol, for only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ makes possible our final freedom from physical and spiritual death." We must come to the place of allowing God to be the sovereign judge on this matter. We must not put physical life above spiritual life. The Bible says that the death of saints is precious in the sight of God. Death is God's prerogative.

What about hospice? I approve of it. Hospice provides that medical care is given to one in your home for six months or less. After all, when the decision is made not to do all one possibly can to prolong life, this does not mean to stop giving health care. Such persons still need support and comfort care. Instead of abandonment, we must stick with someone with a terminal illness to the end.

Don't just talk to people—talk to God. Let Him speak to you, perhaps through people. Let us remember that Paul said "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." So, if He wants to take us to heaven, let us not dig in

our heels. Let us let Him do what is far better for the child of God.

Organ transplantation: Somewhere around 100,000 people are waiting for an organ. About 67% need kidneys; about 15% need livers; about 7% need hearts; about 5% need new lungs; the rest need pancreases and combinations and other lesser things. All of these vital organs are needed for the sustenance of human life. When a vital organ gives out and nothing is done, we die. Modern medical technology has made it possible to transplant from one human being to another and thereby extend life.

The body tends to reject this foreign organ, but medicine holds down the immune system so that it doesn't reject the donated organ. That makes one more susceptible to getting other diseases. Nevertheless, these medicines have made that survival rates in transplantation are vastly improved over several decades ago.

There are positives, but let us step back and note some negatives in transplantation. With kidneys, we were given two kidneys, but we need only one. So we can share one with someone else. Self-sacrifice is commendable. Probably many of you have given blood at some time. That is similar and is commendable.

In the case of donating a heart, the donor must be brain-dead, but not

really dead. John Kerstine, an expert in organ transplantation, said, "We have to take the heart from a physically-living person." We say, *Wait a minute; how could that be?* Well, you see they're brain-dead, but their heart's still beating, their lungs are still respiring; and they're still warm. "Brain-dead" has been changed to meaning something radically different from really dead. They have a flat EEG, which means that there are no brain waves. Are they dead or alive? I'm conservative; I think they're still alive.


A heart can survive for only about five hours without the profusion of oxygen-rich blood. Thus when surgeons remove a heart from a brain-dead person, they cool it down to about 39 degrees F. so that it slows down the metabolic processes so that they have a little larger window of opportunity to place it into the recipient.

For transplantation, doctors require that the patient's EEG has been flat for two days, then they wheel him into the operating room (dependent on the breathing machine) and open him up, stop the heart with a potassium iodide solution, quickly remove the heart, and rush it over into the recipient patient.

I am not opposed to transplantation, as such. But if you take a liv-

ing organ from a living person that leaves him dead—that is different. Three systems of the body (nervous, circulatory and respiratory systems) are required for life. In the case of brain-death, the nervous system has shut down, and the respiratory system is being assisted, but the circulatory system is still working well. There is a vast difference between a person who is dying and a person who is dead. Physicians who honor the sanctity of human life must wait

for the completion of dying before they transplant.

In organ transplantation, all that is useful to technical success must take submission to that which is ethically permissible. If a proper respect for life's sanctity precludes the best conditions for some transplants and perhaps forbids others—so be it! God's law is higher than man's law and must always be heeded if we expect God's blessing upon our lives. 

## mission awareness

# *Principles in Church Planting—Part 3*

*Floyd Stoltzfus*

**I**n transplanting a young tree, we place it into other soil for growth to maturity. Should we not as God's people endeavor to plant the hearts of the ungodly into other soil? Yet, only God can do this. He says, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26).

God, however, partners with you and me to prepare the soil and sow the seed. In home gardening or farming, it is good to know your soil and to properly prepare the soil for best production. The farmer or

gardener can learn which fertilizer elements his soil needs, by sending soil samples to a laboratory for analysis. In church planting, it is important to learn about the people of the community you seek to reach with the Gospel.

Hosea pled, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up the fallow ground..." (10:12a). Breaking up fallow ground is the rigorous work of heart plowing. The flesh talks back to truth. It likes to rationalize and find a way to justify itself when it does wrong. The flesh does not die easily, but spiritual plowing is profitable.

Yes, church planting entails sacrifice, hard work and tears. Missionaries sometimes experience years of little visible fruit for their labors. The people whom we seek to reach may appear to be sleeping. But God commands us to be faithful in preparing the soil, sowing the seed and watering the plant. By and by there will be a harvest.

In previous articles, we examined seven principles in church planting from Acts. These are: 1) The **Promise** of the Father; 2) The **Prayer** of the disciples; 3) The **Partnership** of the believers; 4) The **Power** of the Holy Spirit; 5) The **Personal Work** of the 12; 6) The **Preaching** of Peter; 7) The **Probing** of the Holy Spirit. There are several more foundational truths that stimulated growth and blessing in the early church:

#### 8. **Profession**

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...” (Acts 2:41a). To profess is to make open declaration of one’s belief. Likely not all who believed were baptized that day. Apparently an examination of some sort was applied by the apostles, because we read, “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (2:40). This included only those who were humble and teachable. In church planting

each convert needs care and serious biblical instruction before baptism. Water baptism publicly identifies the new believer with Christ and His church.

#### 9. **Pattern**

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). A pattern is a regular, unwavering way of acting or doing. It follows a predictable or prescribed route. It seems that churches flourish best under a comfortable pattern that has predictability and does not go from one extreme to another. This does not preclude all change. Practical change can be undertaken under Christ’s lordship, where His ministers reach consensus with the body of believers. The pattern that emerged was regular worship in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, which resulted in a sense of awe and reverence upon every soul. The result was daily growth to the church.

#### 10. **Purging**

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back a part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost...?”


(Acts 5:1-3). Nelson's Study Bible comments that communal sharing was still practiced some weeks after Pentecost, but it was totally voluntary. Ananias' sin was not in keeping back part of what was sold, but his hypocrisy about it. Apparently he and his wife had planned together to make an impression of generous giving. But oh, the bitter reaping of sin!

This principle must not be overlooked, if the church is to receive the blessings of God. We are aware that discipline and excommunication can be misused, but to avoid it altogether is to set our feet on slippery slopes of apostasy, from which few turn back. Lester Gingerich comments: "The root word for discipline and its varying forms is found only once in the Old Testament, but 280 times in the New. Scriptures make it clear that loving, though firm, discipline exercised under godly leadership

and laity is a mark of a God-glorifying, Bible-honoring fellowship of believers." (Used by permission: *The Church A Theocracy*).

God was just and righteous in judging the sin of Ananias and Sapphira. They had listened to Satan. They lied to the Holy Spirit. They made it appear that they had given all when in reality they gave only part of the total proceeds of the sale of their property. And God dealt decisively and quickly! The result? "Great fear came on all the church" (Acts 5:11).

This action of discipline did not stifle church growth, for we read in the next chapter: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith" (6:7).

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21). 

## *Bible Teaching on Material Possessions—Part 1*

*Paul Kline, Millersburg, OH*

**T**he number of Scripture verses dealing with the subject of finances should tell us what an important topic this is. But even more, our Lord tells us that unless

this area of our lives is under God's authority, no other area can or will be. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also



in much, If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke 16:10-12).

### **Some Statistics—Biblical and Secular**

*(Some statistics were taken from the writings of Lester Miller, with permission.)*

-Jesus said more about finances than about any other subject except love.

-Two-thirds of the parables refer to money or possessions.

-There are over 2,000 verses in the Bible on money and possessions.

-Jesus commands His own to seek God's kingdom first.

-90% of all Christian marriages experience financial difficulties.

-Internal Revenue Service calculates the average filer spends more than ten times as much money paying off interest on debts as he gives to charity.

-60% of all 65-year-old couples still owe more than they own.

-80% of all Americans owe more than they own.

-From 1985 to 1991, the average American couple annually spent 10% more than their income.

The conclusion to these conditions should be obvious: It is time to turn our backs on the American dream of unlimited material prosperity. It

is time to trade in our own material dreams for the dreams of the Risen Christ.

### **Wealth—What Is It?**

According to the dictionary, it is an abundance of material or worldly things that men desire to possess:

Tangible things, such as land, cattle, horses, bank accounts, houses, etc.

Intangible things, such as life, salvation, eternal life, family, relatives, friends, etc.

### **Source of Wealth: God Owns All**

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1).

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine" (Ps. 50:10,11).

The Christian is to live a balanced life-style, based on God's Word.

### **God Gives.**

"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deut. 8:18).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

### **We Manage.**

"Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

We possess, we occupy, we use, but we never own. The parable of the tal-

ents in Matthew 25:14-30 bears this out, also the parable of the rich man in Luke 12:16-20. His sin was not wealth, but he didn't ask God how to use it. He had wrong motives.

### **Some Teaching on Wealth**

"Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps. 49:16,17).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl. 5:10).

"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for your body, what ye shall put on" (Luke 12:22).

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:33,34).

We are stewards and servants. God has rights; we have responsibilities. A steward is one who manages another person's property. We are merely caretakers of God's property while

we are on the earth. He can choose to entrust us with as much or as little as He desires.

### **Some Attitudes About Wealth**

1. "...the love of money is the root [one root—Luther's German] of all evil" (1 Tim. 6:10).

2. Money can replace our trust in God.

3. Why, when we know everything we possess must be left behind, do so many of us struggle to accumulate excessive possessions?

4. Some people think that poverty is spiritual. "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of God in vain" (Prov. 30:8,9). "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up" (1 Sam. 2:7)

5. Wealth is neither moral nor immoral. It's not the lack of abundance that makes you spiritual. God has people on every financial level.

6. Money is not evil in itself, but it is dangerous.

7. God does not condemn the wealthy. God condemns the misuse of wealth, not wealth itself.

### **God's Purpose for Wealth**

1. To Provide: Food, clothing, and shelter necessary to maintain life.

“But my God shall supply all your need...” (Phil. 4:19). “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content” (1 Tim. 6:8). “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11). This prayer teaches us the need for dependence on God.

2. To Direct: God uses the supply of money or the lack of it to confirm direction. The supply or lack of finances should in some measure guide our decisions in purchases we make.

3. To Share: Our generosity will determine how much spiritual light we have within our being. “Distributing to the necessity of saints...” (Rom. 12:13). “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:18,19).

4. To Demonstrate His Power to Provide for His Glory: “But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant, which he sware unto thy fathers...” (Deut. 8:18).

### **Managing Finances**

Four Foundational Principles:

1. Recognize ownership of God.
2. Spend less than you earn.
3. Avoid the bondage of debt. Regardless of how it may seem today,

we believe debt should be avoided, as much as possible.

4. Reserve money for emergencies.

### **More thoughts on managing our money:**

1. Hold firmly to biblical values.
  2. Put God’s work first.
  3. Recognize your partner’s strengths and weaknesses.
  4. Live on one salary, not two.
  5. Establish a budget based on your income.
  6. Include savings in your budget.
  7. Wait and pray 30 days before purchasing any large item.
  8. View time as an asset, not a liability.
  9. Don’t go into debt for any purchase other than a home, a farm, or a business.
  10. Set up your mortgage payments so you can make payments twice a month.
  11. Don’t overextend yourself to buy a home; obtain a 12-15 year fixed mortgage.
  12. Assets should always exceed liabilities by 30% or more.
  13. Be content with what you have.
- Contentment is not getting what we want, but being satisfied with what we have. It is a spiritual issue, not a money issue. Contentment is learned, not earned. If we are

not content with what we have, we will never be content with what we want.

### **The Need To Generate Profit Or Increase**

(Matt. 25:14-30)

A. By being diligent: "...the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. 10:4). "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat" (Prov. 13:4). "The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness..." (Prov. 21:5).

B. A diligent lifestyle: Note the example of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31.

C. Avoid slothful habits: "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger" (Prov. 19:15). "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing" (Prov. 20:4). "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down" (Prov. 24:30,31).

D. Consider the ant: It has initiative and perseverance. It respects the seasons and prepares for them. It plans for the future, lays in store, and is community conscious. (Prov. 30:25).

### **The Virtue Of Saving Biblically**

Reasons for having available reserve: "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up" (Prov. 21:20).


1. To build community.

2. To maintain finances within the brotherhood.

3. To avoid interest money going out of the community.

4. To save and avoid future debt; plan ahead with a trust in God. (Prov. 24:27).

5. To provide and care for our families. "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just" (Prov. 13:22).

The foundation of a godly generation is to pass on a valuable heritage. When families are spiritually and financially stable, basic social needs of the community are met. Families are to care for their own finances of home, medical, and elderly, as much as is possible. "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home..." "But if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:4,8). Capital investments for homes, equipment, and so on, should be financed within the family as much as possible. 

## The Joy of Gardening

Mary June Glick

**G**arden catalogues arrive in the mailbox already in January and give us time to dream about planting.

When March arrives, we are ready to buy the seeds and start putting them in the ground. Melvin and I are both avid gardeners and always look forward to this time of the year. I do confess that, as my energy wanes, some of my enthusiasm wanes with it. But I still find it a source of enjoyment.

The Bible mentions the first garden in Genesis 2:8 with: “and the Lord God planted a garden.” Then in verse 15, it says, “God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” I can’t imagine the delight of working in the garden without thorns and thistles; just soft, warm soil with no weeds to mar the beauty. It is interesting to note that this work was not a part of the curse. I believe God planned for work to bring fulfillment and joy to man (or woman).

Working still brings fulfillment. I realize we are individuals who enjoy different things, so not everyone en-

joys gardening as much as I do. Not only does gardening provide enjoyment but also it provides provisions for the table. It gives our children the privilege of watching things grow. They learn the responsibility of caring for it, then helping with picking and processing the vegetables that are harvested.

Some of you may be excited about planting a garden for the first time. You may be newly married and this is your first time gardening on your own. Maybe your background is not Anabaptist and you have become a part of an Anabaptist church. Perhaps you feel you need to garden “like everyone else.” First, let me assure you that gardening, canning, etc., does not make you a better Christian. It is *not* something you need to do to be a Mennonite. It is a common part of Amish and Mennonite life. We have long been known as people of the land. But it is part of our culture—not our faith!

Personally, I find closeness to God when I am working with the soil, but that is a part of who I am—part of my love for the natural world.

God reveals Himself to us in many other ways. Those of us with agricultural backgrounds must be very careful not to assume that those who choose to join us must accept all of the things we have done for a livelihood that identifies us with our culture. On the other hand, let us not hesitate to pass along and encourage things that people would like to learn, such as gardening.

Let me share a few tips about gardening:

1. Plant things that grow well in your location and climate. For instance, peas, lettuce, rhubarb, root vegetables, cabbage, and cauliflower grow best in a colder climate. In the south plant them early in spring or in the fall. Okra does best in the south and it grows better if the seeds are soaked overnight in water before planting. Green beans grow almost anywhere; we even grew them in Belize.


2. Learn which plants need to be started before you put them in the ground. Many things like corn, beans, peas, beets, carrots, squash, and cucumbers can be planted by seed. Tomatoes, peppers, and cabbage can be started either from seeds

(which takes longer) or seedlings, which are available for a price as bedding plants.

3. Prepare the soil, hoe it, mulch around the plants, then water and weed them. A garden is a lot of work, but well worth the effort.

4. Start small. It is tempting to try everything when you are looking at the seed catalogues, but much better to begin with what you can handle then add more the next year.

5. Harvest your vegetables when they are young and tender. I find it so much easier to can and freeze a little at a time, rather than doing large amounts, but this will vary with time and energy. Don't be afraid to ask for advice. Don't be discouraged if something doesn't turn out the way you hoped. That happens to experienced gardeners. Enjoy what you're doing.

Our hearts are like gardens. God wants to cultivate and prune our lives. We need to allow Him to get rid of the sin that would choke the good plants: unkind words, a critical spirit, jealousy, pride, and unforgiveness. He wants to fill our gardens with the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. 



*No person is so poor that he cannot give a compliment.*

## *The Holy Child*

*Author unknown*

There was once a little child,  
Not like us so rude and wild.  
But He was gentle, meek and mild; ‘Twas Jesus!

He never spoke a hasty word.  
Though many angry ones He heard;  
He would not hurt a little bird; ‘Twas Jesus!


His parents always He obeyed,  
Of naught but sin was He afraid;  
And good for evil He repaid; ‘Twas Jesus!

When twelve years old, He taught the wise,  
He of great heaven, above the skies,  
Though little above us in size; ‘Twas Jesus!

His mother sought Him three long days;  
And when He met her anxious gaze,  
“I have been grieved for you,” she says; ‘Twas Jesus!

For Jesus, though a little boy,  
Yet found in God’s own house His joy;  
His father gave Him this employ; ‘Twas Jesus!

“I must about the business go,  
Of Him who gives me work to do;  
Yet I will come along with you.” ‘Twas Jesus!

[From the book, *Children’s Life of Jesus*, 1907.] 



## Dear Youth,

Some of you have been faithful readers of this column, and I hope that the thoughts that are shared here each month are aiding you in your walk with Christ.

There are many ways that people have influenced others by seeking to live like Christ would live.

Some time ago I read a story about a man who decided to attend church one Sunday morning. He entered the auditorium and made his way up the center aisle looking for a seat. Soon he was at the front of the church and there were no empty seats, so he sat down in the aisle. (What would you do if you attended that church?) Well, in this case an old deacon began slowly making his way to the front where the young man was sitting. Everyone expected him to usher the young man to the back of the church where he could be seated on a chair. But to everyone's surprise, the deacon with great difficulty lowered himself to the floor right beside him.

Is this what you would have done,

had you been there? It seems that perhaps God had been preparing that old deacon all through life for this opportunity, and he had passed the test.

Opportunities such as these are around us every day, but we may miss them.

Some of you know Ronnie Miller from youth retreats at Penn Valley. A few years ago, he was reading his Bible during lunch hour at work. Some of his co-workers made snide comments about it. Ronnie made use of the opportunity and offered to bring them some of his wife's cookies if they would listen to him read from the Bible the following day. They agreed to his terms. The next day Ronnie read them the story of the Prodigal Son. The men listened intently. One middle-aged man sat there with tears trickling down his face. It was the first time in his life he had ever heard that Bible story.

This month's writers tell some more ways to live the life of Christ. The opportunities are unlimited.—EE

### *This Month's* QUESTION

*Sometimes we can get stuck in a rut and isolate ourselves from others, and forget about our responsibility to live the life of Jesus in everyday life.*

**What are some practical things that you have done or that your friends have done to touch others with the life of Jesus?**

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

*Touching others with the life of Jesus is the most important thing that Christians have ever done. A way that my mom really helps me remember Jesus is when she sings. For me, it is so easy to go through my day without thinking too much about Jesus, but then I hear Mom hum a tune, and I am made to think about the words.*

—Katrina Gingerich, Harrison, AR



I'm sure Jesus smiled at widows and hugged children while He was here. So many people around us are wounded, hurting, lonely...perhaps we fall into this category, too. Our responsibility is to be discerning and sensitive and reach out to these people with God's love and cheer.

Give a friendly smile and you can light someone's candle for the rest of the day. Perhaps they need a sympathetic listener to "unload" to. If you have a song in your heart, sing it! It may greatly affect the outcome of someone's day. Give liberally of your time and be sincerely interested in others. After all, something as simple as satisfying a toddler's thirst is the same thing as doing it for Jesus.

—Renita Friesen, Grandview, TX



*A while ago some friends and I went around to local gas stations and asked*

*people filling their vehicles with fuel if we could give them \$10 to help buy their fuel. Inevitably they would ask (somewhat suspiciously) why we're doing this. When they did, that gave us a perfect opportunity to tell them about everything we've been given and why we want to share that love with others.*

—Shane Iwashige, Partridge, KS



I come from a third-world country where formality and extreme politeness between friends and neighbors is just plain thrown out the door. Everyone shows friendliness and somewhat of a nosing into each others' daily business. Nothing goes unnoticed. In fact, they'll come nosing around and paying visits until you have no choice but to become friends with your neighbor!

I think America has somewhat lost the spirit of neighborliness. In earlier times, neighbors would lean over their backyard fences to catch up on the latest news; neighborhood children ran up and down the sidewalks, howling with delight; mothers eased each others' workload, freely sharing in the good and bad. Those were days when you could depend on your neighbor.

Why are our neighbors virtual

strangers? Don't we care about each other anymore?

I realize there could be many different answers to those questions. Industrialization, for one, has led to busier lives. With busier lives we tend to forget those around us as we focus on winning the rat race.

Is there something that can be done about this or is it simply the way it is? I think we need to relive the dream of those bygone days. Jesus commanded us to reach out to our neighbor, but can we reach him when we don't even know him?

I might be completely off my rocker, but I think Children's Clubs could be a small start to addressing this problem. Children attending our clubs week after week would learn a lot of good about our Lord. Children talk; and eventually older siblings and parents would hear a lot of what their child is learning.

Parents need not learn only from their children. We ought to visit these parents. These children will give you one foot in the door, when otherwise they might be wary of you.

Involve parents in child/parent activities whenever workable. Invite parents to bring children to your church. I think these children will be a big step in helping you become associated with your neighbors. Everyone shares somewhat of a common ground when it comes to children.

Even if the discussions center on children, visit your neighbor. Take them food when they are sick. Take them shopping when their vehicle gives out. The options are limitless. Show interest in them. Learn what they are interested in. What makes them laugh? What makes them weep?


Even if these people never become Christians, you have done your part. You have won a friend, and you are an effective witness to the community. Make sure the Holy Spirit is at work in your life. It is only through Him that our testimony is effective.

This might sound like a farfetched plan to you. But I have seen something similar working, and it works! It really does.

—Eden Yoder, Kyle, TX

*Next Month's*  
**QUESTION**

**What are some unhealthy influences and pressures that are facing today's youth? What are some weapons that can be used against these threats?**

*Please respond by March 20.* 

# THOUGHT GEMS

Too much cheerful giving stops with giving advice.

• • • • •

A person going nowhere can be sure  
of reaching his destination.

• • • • •

The Golden Rule may be old, but it  
doesn't seem to be wearing out.

• • • • •

Dizzy spells don't come from having people do good turns.

• • • • •

The measure of a truly great man is the cour-  
tesy with which he treats lesser men.

• • • • •

Men with clenched fists cannot shake hands.

• • • • •

The worst boss anyone can have is a bad habit.

• • • • •

We drive more safely when highways and drivers are dry.

• • • • •

Ideas are funny things—they never work unless you do.

• • • • •

No Christian is strong enough to carry his  
cross and a prejudice at the same time.

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