



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 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 Savior;
 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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Editor: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paulmiller@mindspring.com

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 RR 1 Box 49-C, Augusta, WV 26704

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

Contributing Editors:

Simon Schrock
 Enos D. Stutzman
 Aaron Lapp

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus
 186 Skyline Dr., New Holland, PA 17557

Youth Messages Editor: Ernest Eby
 4812 Hwy. 5, Mountain View, AR 72560
 ec.eby.ar@gmail.com

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

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:

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

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Thorn in the Flesh

(from 2 Corinthians 12:1-10)

Craig Eicher, Butler, IN

A shadow falls across my life, imposing its cruel power,
I sigh; I know it well; it's with me every hour.
A hindrance, an obstacle, and a cruel pain has taken its toll.
The pain! The pain! I cannot bear it—I cry and lose control.

I ask my Lord to vanquish it lest I should die in vain;
I ask Him once; I asked Him thrice; His words to me are plain.
“My grace is sufficient for the day, My strength in weakness glows,
As in your pain you serve Me still, in you my power grows.”

A shadow falls; it pains me still, yet cannot kill my joy,
Despite the grief that Satan brings with all he can employ.
I'm saved by grace; on my way home and Christ's power rests on me;
All Satan's power—this shadow, too, was nailed upon His tree.

This shadow falls by God's decree lest pride should lift its voice,
Though once I struggled 'neath its weight, I bear it now by choice.



The Church's Charter

Jesus, in His first appearance in the synagogue in Nazareth, chose a text from Isaiah 61:1-3: “The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; ...to comfort all that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ...”

Paul wrote copiously about God's design for the New Testament church. The design he described in Ephesians 4:1-6, includes these words: “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ... There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all.”

This month I shall let feedback to the March editorial provide insights on how God's provision and our need are to come together. This month we

combine the editorial and 13 reader responses:

Re: United We Stand, (March, 2007, page 2)

I invited “an analysis and vision of the need for biblical unity in our congregations.” Thank you, Readers, for the following insights and responses. —PLM

Dear editor,

This issue seems to have complex human problems, and yet the Scriptures have answers. This aspect of human relations is a challenge. Difficult situations arise, yet we as Christ-followers are the ones to set an example for those who do not know God.

I believe if we would read The Martyrs' Mirror, we could soon see the type of issues that are split-worthy. Let us rise up with Bible-based vision and work together for the sake of Christ and for the sake of community.

We need leaders who are dedicated to the idea of working together. Apart from this concept, our marriages would also develop problems.

“When the elephants fight, the grass gets trampled.” Leaders, when you come to a red light, STOP! Don't flip on the flashing blue and red lights

and go on through the intersection. An example of this comes to mind: I once heard of a pastor getting up and apologizing to the congregation on behalf of his ministerial team. The team was in favor of changing from traditional coverings to hanging veils. The congregation, however, was not ready and felt that the leadership team was pushing the issue. The leaders could have pushed harder. Instead, they backed off. May God bless them for this kind and honorable example!

We have different preferences and ways of looking at issues. You can't strip a man of his opinion and keep him honest. This does not mean his opinion is good or bad, but that he is entitled to it. I heard an older man say, "We can get along if we really want to." (See Romans 12:1; Philipians 2:3-5).

Often it seems an unforgiving spirit is present when people part ways. I wish I were mistaken about that. If it's true, it leads me to this question: Are people of unforgiveness useful in Kingdom work? Do the scars, the pain, and the pride run so deep that reconciliation is not an option? Is the distance so great that coming back together again should not be considered? Just like a broken marriage actually getting re-united, it would be a wonderful victory over sinful strife. (John 17:21-22)

Oh, Man, Redeemed—Fold to thy heart thy brother! Seeing answers on paper is good but seeing them in real life is better!

A brother,

— Gabriel Beachy, Cedar Creek, TX

• • • • •

Jesus prayed that we all would be one as he and his Father are one. (John 17:21) He asked that this would extend to being one in him and his father so the world would also believe. This puts a heavy premium on "oneness." Is Jesus' request for "oneness" the same as our quest for "unity"? What is our concept of unity? Is it only an outward conformity of all members dressing and doing the same? Certainly, appearance is important, but perhaps that is too often the scapegoat for the lack of deeper unity of our hearts.

Could it be that in the absence of the true-hearted oneness Jesus was praying for, we have sometimes turned toward outward appearances as the evidence of unity? If it is an outward unity only, it will hardly stand the test of crisis.

How much time are we spending on our knees as Jesus did, begging the Father for the oneness that comes only from abiding in Him and He in us? Is it our daily practice to immerse ourselves in the Word and allow

it to cleanse us from our bigotries and intolerances of each other as we meditate on its principles “day and night”?

Are we willing to discipline ourselves and courageously listen to each others’ hearts? It is our only hope for success and an end to divisions.

— Eldon Hochstetler, Aroda, VA

• • • • •

I believe that a pastor who pours himself into 12 other men, and helps them mature in the faith, then ordains them, duplicating that order in others, will accomplish far more for God’s Kingdom than by “building bigger and bigger barns” for himself...

Cultures and customs vary! Not all of those who held Jewish customs could relate to the “Gentiles.” Many of the Jewish Christians had some very strong convictions in food, clothing, holidays and other customs. They just could not stomach the changes God was making in the world, so God raised up Paul for the task.

Sometimes our convictions and cultural biases keep us ineffective in a changing world, so let us be honest about our limits and invest in others who can adjust to the changes and continue the work of God in these diverse cultures. Let us not force our convictions on them, like the Judaizers did.

Let us encourage the “Pauls” to work

with the Gentiles and let us back their work without name-calling like, “Did ya hear they went liberal?” Such gossip and slander squelches productive change, making us ineffective, and divides the body of Christ, giving Jesus a black eye! Oh, let us repent!...

Why not let the biological family teach us? God created us to get married and have children... We expect our children to go from the bottle to solid food and learn how to assume more and more responsibility, some day growing up and getting married and having children of their own. Even though our roles change from being parents to grandparents, we are still our children’s parents and grandparents. It is healthy for this to happen. It is normal for my authority to decrease so my son’s can increase. It is normal for me, as a grandfather, to have a guiding role in my adult children’s lives, and help them to be better parents, but it would not be normal for me to be Daddy to my granddaughter! So it is with the church!

If the early church had not invested in the young and expected them to grow up (“by now ye ought to be teachers”) and if when the first bishops got persecuted and martyred, and the church would have not have replaced them, they would simply have capitulated and died out. God’s church is designed to grow. Growth can only

take place when a lot of people do their share (according to the many talents God allotted to the church). Church leaders must help make mature followers of Jesus, letting the younger men grow up to elders and assume leadership roles

—Jim Sawyer, Perkins, OK



It has been said, “If the water gets low enough, every frog will have his own puddle.” That seems to be the direction we are going. The Word of God, however, points in a different direction.

Paul writes in 2 Cor. 4:7, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.” In the New Testament epistles, in history and abundantly around us today are these earthen vessels. It seems that we tend to be blind to our own faults and too proud to have forbearance with our brothers.

If we are to gain anything in this area, it will probably have to start in the leadership. We read in Zechariah 12:6, “In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf.” Was this fulfilled in the time of the Apostles or the Anabaptists? How is it today?

Too often we seek to lift up the church and the ministers in our ef-

forts to maintain order and unity, but fail to realize that humility and repentance are the only way to bring the power of God into our lives. In my role as father, I can more easily see my children’s errors than my own. How can I minister repentance to my children who can see my faults easier than I can see my own?

Why are we dividing into liberals and conservatives—into churches with standards and churches without standards? Is God partial to any of these?...

Jesus did not only tell us to be born again, but He also said that we must become like little children, or we would not enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:7) It seems that few of us who profess to be born again actually tremble at His Word...

God in His mercy is allowing disunity and splits into our experience to humble us since we have not humbled ourselves, so that we will not be condemned with the world....

Beloved brethren, I have sought the Lord concerning this and I believe I can tell you the answer. He has given us His glory. We can only receive it as a gift of God as we repent of self and pride, because the glory of God is the humility of Christ...

I’m afraid that we are not conscious of how proud we are. Nothing comes more naturally to these earthen ves-

sels than pride, which hinders every good thing I would do...

If we think we are alright, then the veil that was on the Jews' hearts is coming over our own hearts again...

I believe we are in the last times, brethren. Have we washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? Pray for me.

A brother,

— Ezra Miller, Sugarcreek, OH



I am a member of the Lyndon Amish Mennonite Church and my family and I have been in an Amish Mennonite community for only seven years. Although I have not been in a plain setting very long, I am becoming more and more aware of how important it is to strive to have true brotherhood.

True brotherhood is more than "kin" deep or superficial. That is where brethren have unfeigned love and openness, and really care for one another. As you are aware, if we were obedient to the command to love our brethren with a pure heart, we would have far fewer church problems and splits ...

— Bruce Files, Lyndon, KS



*J*esus' prayer, "that they may be one" should be our prayer as we face unity problems. Pray for the

mind of Christ and a humble spirit so that God can be glorified.

The commitment to love my spouse in marriage should be much like my commitment of love and loyalty to the church. As we think of the church being the bride of Christ, we should do our utmost to adorn the bride with godly virtues for the approval of the Groom. It is spiritual adultery to allow the worldly ways (tastes, fashions, and styles) to affect my choices. It also undermines biblical unity in the family of God.

As leaders, we should help our people to support the local body, even if it means helping them find one they can support. To help start a new group in a setting of disunity shows a poor relationship among us who are to be responsibly leading and feeding the flock.

God has answers. Let us pray for His help. Let us seek until we find His answers.

— Clayton Weaver, Bastrop, TX



*T*o promote church unity we must analyze current trends working against it. The growing restlessness among us comes from a growing sense of individuality and a lessening sense of community.

Educationally, people are going farther in the educational process—even into non-Christian colleges. The home

schooling movement is leading to less dependence on the church community and promotes independent thinking.

Recreation and our ready access to the media, the cell phone, the internet, and ease of travel are making us more vulnerable to the world and its pleasures, lusts and pride.

Financially, people have differing occupations, and therefore, exist in differing business environments.

Socially, we tend to live greater distances (physically, emotionally, and relationally) from the church and each other.

Combining this lifestyle with the ecumenical attitudes infiltrating our churches leads to more restlessness. Governmentally and doctrinally, we may be independent, [congregationally autonomous] but spiritually, we are becoming intra-dependent. When one congregation makes a "liberal" move, it is harder for another congregation to "hold the line." Protestant doctrines are adopted by undiscerning individuals challenging Anabaptist doctrine and tradition. Modern concepts of church programming are expected as Christian "religion" becomes homogenized.

This confusion of lifestyles, doctrinal tradition and religious practices leads to disunity. The church becomes optional. People consider themselves members of the universal church rather than a local body of believers.

We still use the terms "brothers and sisters in the Lord," but live and think like we are accountable only to God.

"Take my yoke upon you," Jesus says as Head of the church, "and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29). I promote restfulness when I become accountable to the church standards, church counsel, and ministerial authority where Jesus has placed me and where I have taken membership vows.

—Steven R. Kooistra, LaGrange, IN

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I have more questions than answers. In fact, I don't have answers to any of the questions you asked in the editorial...

While I don't know much about divisions in the Beachy churches, my impression is that most, if not all, of the divisions have been unnecessary. I wonder how many of the divisions were on doctrinal issues. My opinion is that they were usually concerning application of the principle of nonconformity... Many times the changes that are desired show what direction the church is going. Sometimes what seems to be insignificant change has more far-reaching effects than meets the eye.

Do we as a group of churches have accountability to each other? It seems

that our churches are not organized to require accountability. When the issue of divorce and remarriage is [considered to have gravity] similar to deciding what color of carpet to install in the auditorium, we have a serious problem. Why are we then asked to be tolerant? What does it take to place us on the slippery slope of apostasy?

Sometimes I feel like I am invited to gravitate to the lowest common denominator for the sake of unity. There are two extremes among us. One extreme is very rigid, saying we should make no change or compromise. The other extreme is replacing the unity of the Spirit with a spirit of...tolerance and compromise. This would mean that we accept perverted life styles, have no standard of nonconformity, accept people as members who are in the military, accept those who accept and teach the theory of evolution as science, deny the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of Christ and other basic doctrines of the Christian faith. And that means we would also need to accept those who are divorced and remarried.

While I don't know anyone [in my brotherhood] who would accept all of the above, the thinking patterns seem to lead in that direction. There seems to be the thinking abroad that if we love each other, we will be able

to tolerate anything on doctrine. Many, it seems to me, can tolerate anything except division or a more conservative position. People are free to believe whatever they want to, it seems, except conservatism.

What is a person to do who finds himself in a church that's sliding toward apostasy? Is it wise for a small group of people to join a neighboring church in the community, instead of starting another group?

I find myself in a situation where many changes have come that I did not approve. I have tried to voice my objections kindly. I felt none of them justified division. They did not directly violate Scripture, even though I considered them to reflect poor judgment. Now we are facing a situation in which what was written in our Constitution and Statement of faith and practice is basically being ignored with little concern.

Could the Beachy churches put something in place to require more accountability from each other? Should we organize into a conference?

I'm not sure why I'm writing this. I suppose I just wanted to express some of the things that come so forcefully to my mind.

May God bless you in your responsibility as editor. I appreciate the *Calvary Messenger* and read it

from cover to cover, except for the obituaries and births.

—Name withheld by request

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Dear Bro. Paul,

I appreciate the question. One of the basic elements of the original Anabaptist Vision is the ethic of love and nonresistance. We have done reasonably well with loving our enemies for 500 years, but loving our brothers? That's a different story. When we ought to be experts at reconciliation, we need someone to teach us. Are we ready to learn?

I have learned that the "unity of the Spirit" and the "spirit of unity" are entirely different entities. The first rallies around truth and love in the Person of Jesus Christ, the other may rally around some other common denominator. That common denominator is often something quite different from Jesus Christ. The resulting unity is also quite different.

Unfortunately, we often confuse "sameness" with unity. Actually, "sameness" is an impossibility. No two persons are the same, let alone two hundred. It seems that the New Testament teaches harmony instead.

Harmony is illustrated by one song sung by two genders and two parts per gender. With four separate sets of notes producing one unified, beautiful piece

of music, the experience provides rest to both listeners and singers.

Lord, teach us how to harmonize!

—Chester Weaver, Grandview, TX

• • • • •

If we would truly think as Jesus thinks, how would this affect our church relationships?

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (Phil. 2:5)

1. The purity of the church would become our highest goal. ...a glorious church,...holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27)

2. Sin and gray areas of compromise would be unacceptable. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)

3. Confusing issues would melt away under the love and power of the Holy Spirit. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. 14:17)

4. No church leaders would consider running over the work of other ordained brethren. ...with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. (Rom. 12:10)

5. Disobedient and disciplined members would not find sympathy and support from other church leaders. ... Brethren mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned;

and avoid them. (Rom. 16:17)

6. Attitudes toward other Christians we differ with would reflect the love of God even if we can't fellowship freely. *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. (John 10:16)*

7. Our greatest delight would be to do the Father's work. *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me... (John 4:34)*

8. Grudges and bitterness would be nonexistent. *...forgiving one another (Eph. 4:32)*

9. Partiality, case-building, undermining, slanted reports, gossip and all their relatives would be extinct within the church. *But the wisdom... from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle...without partiality, and without hypocrisy. (James 3:17)*

10. We would enjoy our walk with God and our fellowship with each other so much that everyone around us would hear about it. *That which we have seen and heard and declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: (1 John 1:3)*

Desiring to grow in the mind of Christ,

— Tim Yoder, Whiteville, TN

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Greetings Paul,

You are correct; splits have become a problem in most groups and denominations in the last several years. As you also indicated, this has gone on for centuries but does seem

to be becoming more prevalent for “smaller” matters. You are also correct that this seems true especially in Anabaptist churches... In my Church of the Brethren faith, there have also been many splits...

I believe God would have us maintain biblical unity in our churches by standing firm on established biblical doctrines. But this seems to be the greatest source of disunity.

Christian peacemaking has a very great impact on brotherhood relationships. But I have found attempts at peacemaking are, more often than not, seen as compromise by dissenters. I had to confess (because of the Holy Spirit, not my church) bitterness towards our young people and their trends. I have not changed my mind about the dangers...

What changes to accept (and what not to) is a very difficult problem. We certainly need God's wisdom...

The modern-day “house worship” has come out of this dilemma. The belief that all denominations are apostate and that God has given up on them is a fast-growing movement.

In Christ,

— James M. Hite, Palmyra, PA

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The Christian's desire to be part of a good church is normal and noble. That is what seems to be taking people from one church to

another. To come to the end of our lives and discover that we had never found a perfect church would be sad indeed.

If we are to find satisfaction in our churches, I believe we will have to accept the following facts:

— The church is a gathering of Christians that I join myself to because I need fellowship. It is a privilege rather than a right, or something I deserve. Too often we are serving the Lord because we are in the church, instead of being part of the church because we belong to the Lord.

— Satisfaction in church life comes not from having everything just the way we want it, but from giving myself to the organization. No one—not even the bishop--can have everything to suit himself. The Bible command to submit to one another does not exclude the ministering brethren. It is possible to agree to and support an issue without it being exactly as I would have wanted it.

I believe if we would all involve ourselves in daily Bible study and prayer and live by the Christian virtues of meekness, humility, submission, service, love, forgiveness, kindness, and unselfishness, coupled with penitence and a deep love for God and His church, our churches would be delightful places.

I hesitate even to submit this be-

cause I am not one who has attained my goals, but have great need in these areas.

“Men didn’t love Rome because she was great, but Rome was great because men loved her.”

— *Tim Mast, Crossville, TN*



I have a few thoughts on unity. My first thought is a question, “Are we thinking of unity or uniformity?” While a certain degree of uniformity is desirable I don’t think that is necessarily the biblical unity of the Spirit. Uniformity can be mandated from the top down, but unity of the Spirit is an inner work of the Spirit in the hearts of God’s people. Where there is a genuine work of the Spirit in the church, I believe there will also be a good degree of uniformity...

When the eyes of our understanding are enlightened then we shall know the hope of his calling for the church. When we see the glory of His inheritance in the saints, then Christ will be given His rightful place as the head of Body in the local church. The Spirit working in the local body will build the church into a holy temple and God will be pleased to make it His dwelling place...

Those who are called to lead need to be “Pierced Ear Servants.” (see Exodus 21:1-6) They are servants, first

to Christ and second, to the church. We all need to strive earnestly to keep the harmony and the openness given to us by the Spirit. When we all walk in lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and forbearing one another in love, only then will peaceful unity become a reality. Without that atmosphere, unity becomes a mere external veneer. Is such unity possible in our human

experience? It is possible only as we look to “Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly, above all that we ask or think.”

—Reuben J. Kaufman, Edcouch, TX

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Thank you all and may God abundantly bless you for writing!

—PLM



the bottom line

From Mystery to Reality — Part 8

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Doing What is Right Yields to Reality

The biblical injunction to obedience has fallen on hard times. The great revivals of 50 years ago pivoted on being serious about obeying God. The impetus came from dynamic preaching against sin. In tandem with that was a new call to repentance, followed by sanctification, followed by consecration.

All of this took place under a canopy of obedience. A new life in the Spirit was evoked by a new sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Repentance, sanctification, and consecration were seen within the parameters of obedience to God. We were told that

revival always happens when people line up their lives with the Word of God. Amen!

Today these human responses are emphasized within the parameters of *faith* rather than *obedience*. Repent—as a matter of faith. Receive sanctification—as a matter of faith. Experience consecration—as a matter of faith. The difference is substantial. Faith-based responses allow much more latitude, requiring varying degrees of repentance, or sanctification, or consecration, depending on the circumstances.

When obedience was the plumbline, the marks of repentance, sanctification, and consecration were much more evident and identifiable.

It showed up in how people lived and what was important to them. It was conspicuous by that for which they would sacrifice, how they spent their money, and how they used their time. It was measurable.

Now since faith is the main criterion, church members are much freer to do as they please without jeopardizing their faith. Faith is largely subjective—how I give myself to it. Obedience is largely objective—measurable in what I do. The book of James deals very practically and seriously with the life-changing dimensions of faith and obedience (works).

The very gradual and subtle shift has come over a span of two generations in which many folks now see faith as primary and obedience as secondary. Many say any disparity between faith and obedience is made up by grace. Their claims of faith seem to supercede the need for obedience. Faith-based responses are promoted which are guided by personal preference and individual likes and dislikes. The attraction to this approach is strong.

Doing what the Bible specifies is always right. Doing what is right is one of the surest signs of faith in Jesus to salvation. The fourteen people cited in Hebrews 11 for their demonstration of faith are all held up as models

of faith for what they did, not merely for what they claimed.

The seven progressive steps in this series suggests that doing right is on a higher plane than faith itself. Certainly doing what is right needs to rise out of faith toward God. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). “for whatever is not of faith is sin ...” (Romans 14:23).

The evidence of one’s faith is demonstrated by what he does. Doing what is good and right is always an eloquent endorsement of a robust faith. What one does is always well ahead of what one says. Faith gives rise to obedience. Acts 6:7 says that “a great company of priests were obedient to the faith.” An obscure statement in Romans highlights the mystery of Christ and ties it to obedience arising out of faith. “Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but is now made manifest...according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of the faith” (Romans 16:25, 26).

Romans is a great treatise that sets forth a clear and convincing proposition of righteousness by faith.

The foregoing statement is a mighty declaration of obedience arising out of faith. Luther's German states it as a banner, hoisted up to call special attention to several canopy-like ideas: the power, the preaching of Jesus, the revelation of the mystery, the commandment, and the obedience of faith, as a fitting conclusion to righteousness by faith as declared in Romans.

How one lives impresses an unbelieving world in ways which the charisma and hoopla of a message alone cannot do. People of faith in Christ have already made great progress in pleasing God. Those whose faith causes them to additionally do what is right have gone much farther and higher in godliness.

Doing what is right as a step above faith is a rather new concept to this writer, but somehow it rings true to the Bible's message as a whole. Modern Christianity makes great claims of faith. Faith is held up as the high point of individual response. But why, for instance, is the divorce rate as high for evangelical Christians as it is for non-Christians? (Actually, some statistics indicate it as a slightly higher percentage.) Other specific sins identified in the New Testament are glossed over by much of professing Christendom.

The test of true faith has always

been how it is exemplified in life. Making excuses and exceptions to God's clear Word dilutes pure faith. Compromise to God's specifics will eventually offset faith itself as far as God is concerned. And even the world is not impressed.

The shooting of ten girls, execution-style, in the one-room school in the Nickel Mines area on October 2, 2006, received world-wide publicity. It made big, front-page headlines every day for two weeks. The parents of those students expressed and showed immediate forgiveness. Five of those students were killed, the other five were hospitalized, three of them in critical condition for quite some time. The forgiveness factor made a major impact on the news networks world-wide.

The facts of this case want to shout how unreasonable and unthinkable this crime was! Many evangelical Christians speak highly of the forgiveness overture. But will it reduce, say, the number of lawsuits that "Christians" will now pursue? Many people speak highly about what these Amish families have done. Will these admirers also now be more willing to forgive others when they are wronged much less than the Nickel Mines parents were?

Doing what is right is one of the world's greatest needs! Many Chris-

tians disagree over what is right. Whole church conferences are in perpetual tension over the problem. Even within the local congregation there is often discord over what is right. Here and there a Sunday School class goes Sunday after Sunday in endless debate. It comes up in homes between parents and children. It even comes down to me as an individual. Doing what is right is a big issue of stratospheric proportions!

Last fall, millions of dollars were spent in political election campaigns. The senator in our area spent \$425,670 in his bid for re-election. His opponent spent \$244,947. Nationwide, candidates were wildly spending money in the hope for re-election. Why? To be a part of the legislative process that makes laws that compel people to do what is right. Police, magistrates, and judges are paid to judge and enforce what is deemed right.

Schools, businesses and other institutions have their own interests in ethics and morals, generally for political, humanitarian or economic reasons. Daily inspections and judgments are made in almost every sector of life in regard to codes, rules, and guidelines of all kinds.

The life of reality that we focus on here is that which rises from our re-

lationship with God in Christ, not for monetary reward, or political advantage, or humanitarian advancement. We are zeroing in on the abundant life now and eternal life hereafter. The broad scope of this manifold life is not by force of law or judgment, but only by a *voluntary yieldedness*; doing what is right does yield to real life.

The abundant life is imparted by the new birth, nurtured by the Word of God, appropriated by our yieldedness to God, and energized by the Holy Spirit unto the praise of His glory. Our part is continually to choose what is right. The whole development of the Gospels and Epistles is toward maximizing that life within us in a fuller measure of reality.

The steps introduced through this series of eight articles are hopefully an aid in identifying the finer aspects of God's work to bring about a heightened appreciation of the reality of life. Our individual appropriation to the outworking of the mystery of godliness can be advanced by our cooperation with God. The details of God's manifold grace and power are endless in scope and experience.

It is the writer's hope that each of you will be in the mainstream of His divine will, doing what is right.

That is the bottom line.



marriages

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

Coblentz-Eicher

Bro. Lamar, son of John and Amanda Coblentz, Hicksville, OH, and Sis. Angela, daughter of Samson and Wilma Eicher, Butler, IN, at North Leo Mennonite for Hicksville Christian on Mar. 24, 2007, by Willard Hochstetler.

Schmucker-Bontrager

Bro. Levi, son of Joe and Carol Schmucker, Hutchinson, KS, and Sis. Angelene, daughter of LaVon and Mamie Bontrager, Arlington, KS, at Yoder Mennonite Church for Arlington A.M. Church, on April 28, 2007, by David Yoder.

cradle roll

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

Beiler, Jethro and Rosie (Raber), Grove City, MN, second child, first dau., Kaitlyn Rose, April 28, 2007.

Brenneman, Jonathan and LaRonda (Kuepfer), Virginia Beach, VA, third child, second son, Bryan Dean, May 1, 2007.

Eash, Marvin and Dorothy (Yoder), Hutchinson, KS, seventh child, sixth dau., Rhoda Joy, April 24, 2007.

Swarey-Peachey

Bro. Amos, son of David and Katie Swarey, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Louella, daughter of Lewis and Rebecca Peachey, Belleville, PA, at Locust Grove Church for Valley View A.M. Church, on April 24, 2007, by Eli B. King, Jr.

Yoder-Stoll

Bro. Keith, son of Earl and Mary Yoder, Whiteville, TN, and Sis. Julia, daughter of Fred and Kathy Stoll, Montgomery, IN, on April 7, 2007, at Bethel Mennonite for Mt. Olive, by Martin Kemp.

Yutzy-Schrock

Bro. Leon, son of Freeman and Erma Yutzy, Winchester, OH, and Sis. Nora Mae, daughter of Edwin and Fannie Schrock, Maryville, MO, at Brookfield, MO, on Sept. 30, 2006, by Rudy Overholt.

Hochstetler, Randy and Lavertta (Miller), Grabill, IN, fourth child, second dau., Aubrie Kierra, Mar. 23, 2007.

Jantzi, Allen and Linda (Gerber), Wellesley, ON, first child and dau., Alexis Marie, March 8, 2007.

Kauffman, Jason and Melody (Helmuth), Gympie, QLD, Australia, eighth child, third son, Josiah David, Feb. 26, 2007.

Knepp, Abraham and Janelle (Wagler), Montgomery, IN, second child and son, Evan Dontae, May 1, 2007.

Mast, Joseph and Anita (Miller), Crossville, TN, first child and dau., Larisa Ruth, April 24, 2007.

Mast, Timothy and Anna Joyce (Troyer), Crossville, TN, sixth child, fourth dau., Heidi Edna, April 19, 2007.

Miller, Myron and Fern (Beiler), Goshen, IN, second child and son, Parker Grant, April 22, 2007.

Miller, Philip and Joanna (Yoder), Millersburg, OH, first child and son. Loren Philip, April 18, 2007.

Nissley, Gary and Christina (Lengacher), Shipshewana, IN, third child and dau., Shianne Victoria, April 9, 2007.

Peachey, Mervin and Lois Ann (King), Belleville, PA, ninth child, eighth dau., Candace Faith, April 8, 2007.

o b i t u a r y

Mishler, Leatha, 84, died at Goshen, IN, March 31, 2007. She was born June 22, 1922, daughter of the late Ezra and Sarah (Kauffman) Miller in Nappanee, IN.

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

On Nov. 13, 1941, she was married at Nappanee, IN, to Harvey J. Mishler. He survives. Children surviving are four daughters: Arlene Hershberger, Elkhart, IN; Sharon (Verton) Coblentz, Goshen; Betty (Joe) Borkholder, Goshen; Carolyn

Rissler, Daniel and Sara (Yoder), Ruthersford, TN, fifth child, third son, Nathan Wayne, Feb. 27, 2007.

Schmidt, Thomas and Rosetta (Wagler), Crossville, TN, second child, first dau., Eriana Rose, April 21, 2007.

Stoltzfus, Nathan and Martha (Byers), Mifflinburg, PA, fourth child, third son, Wendall Jay, March 26, 2007.

Troyer, Joel and Loretta (Beiler), Leesburg, OH, second child, first dau., Amber Naomi, March 16, 2007.

Wagler, Jason and Dena (Knepp), Loogootee, IN, second child, first dau., Sierra Brooke, April 23, 2007.

Yoder, Calvin and Rhoda (Sommers), Fairview, MO, first child and son, Jaydon Henry, Mar. 23, 2007.

(Enos) Yoder, Middlbury; four sons: Lamar Mishler, Goshen; Wayne (Mary Ellen) Mishler, Goshen; Sam (Roberta) Mishler, Syracuse, IN; Stephen Mishler, Plymouth, IN; 14 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. Also surviving is one brother, Tobias (Joann) Miller.

Preceding her in death were two sisters: Orpha Heckaman and Cora Wert; two brothers: Paul and Orville Miller.

Funeral services were held at Fair Haven on April 3, with Wilbur Yoder serving. Burial was in the Thomas Cemetery, Goshen.

observations

As Anabaptist Christians who subscribe to nonresistance, it is important to remember that nonresistance is not negative, but positive; not passive, but active. To love our enemies and overcome evil with good is not a typical human response.

The following incident is a powerful illustration of this principle. While many older readers have heard this before, I am concerned that the memory is preserved for the rising generation.

The scene is in Ephrata, PA, during the Revolutionary War. The main characters in these events were Peter Miller, a Christian who had just translated the *Martyrs' Mirror* from Holland Dutch to German, and Michael Whitman, who operated a tavern.

The Christian group of which Peter was a part (Ephrata Cloisters) brought help to wounded soldiers. In 1777, they opened their cloister to more than 500 soldiers. Some 300 were nursed back to health. Whitman's sympathies were more with the British than with the "rebels." One day when Whitman was standing outside his tavern awaiting the arrival of a stage coach he saw Peter Miller with a wheelbarrow load

of paper coming past where he was standing. Whitman felt such antagonism toward Miller that he spit in his face. Miller continued on his journey thanking the Lord that he had been spared physical injury.

Eventually Whitman became more vocal in his British leanings. Two spies frequented the tavern and heard firsthand his Tory leanings. He was arrested for his disloyalty and sentenced to death by hanging.

When word reached Ephrata, Peter Miller set out on foot some 60-70 miles to Philadelphia to intercede for Whitman's life. When Miller had presented his plea, General George Washington told Miller, "I will not spare your friend's life. He is a traitor." Miller replied that this was not his friend. He then related the spitting incident.

The general was astonished. "You walked more than 60 miles through snow to save the life of a person who did that to you. That puts things in a different light. I will grant Michael Whitman's pardon."

Miller was still 15 miles from West Chester where Whitman was to be executed. He arrived just in time with the pardon to save Whitman from death. The two men walked back to Ephrata together. (*Plain Interests*)

• • • • •

"In this country Christianity has

migrated from doctrinal and narrative components to a focus on religious experience that doesn't require a knowledge of the Scriptures... American Christians concentrate on loving Jesus rather than learning what He taught." (From *The Hutchinson News*, 4-7-07)

The article from which the foregoing quote is taken deplores how woefully ignorant many Americans are about the Bible:

— Only half can name one of the four Gospels.

— Only one third know that Jesus (not Billy Graham) preached the Sermon on the Mount.

— Most Americans think Jesus was born in Jerusalem.

— Some college students actually assume that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife.

This list could be lengthened a great deal. These things are at the same time amusing and sad. But to want to understand how this condition may have developed is the part of wisdom.

Praise and testimony time has become an increasingly important part of Sunday morning worship. In some cases, there is corresponding decrease in the prominence of corporate Bible study and preaching. Let us idealize the following:

— Jesus Christ is central and su-

preme throughout the entire Bible.

— To profess to know Him without a hunger for the Word is at best strange, and very likely impossible.

— Sunday School did not originate in Anabaptist circles, but for people who are committed to church loyalty and have interest in serious Bible study, Sunday School has proved to be a blessing. This blessing to individuals ideally becomes an asset to the entire church.



Cost of health care has become a significant item in a typical family budget. There are probably two reasons why this has changed dramatically during the last 40 years. Our local Center Aid Plan was organized in 1961. A recent review of earlier medical costs was very interesting. Average per member cost for the first nine years was \$33.93. From 1971-1984, the average annual cost was \$59.41. The upward trend continued in the following decade averaging \$573.33. Twice during the first six years of this decade, the annual per member cost has exceeded \$1,000. The average shows \$875.56.

One of the reasons for this trend is that the medical profession is continually upgrading various medical procedures that are sophisticated and costly. It is ironic that in spite of all the medical advances, this coun-

try has a high incidence of chronic health problems. I read recently that the average weight per person has increased 20 pounds since 1960. Annual sugar consumption is said to be 150 pounds. Most of it comes in soft drinks. Many contain caffeine which encourages habitual use.

A mother of teenagers told me that she is concerned that eating habits of youth groups are typically more contemporary than healthful. She also observed that this has changed noticeably since she was a teenager.

We would agree that all of us are ultimately subject to the frailties of the flesh. Good health is truly a gift of God. Let us also agree that a sensible diet and appropriate exercise is better than to assume that this is not important. Just maybe it could also lower our corporate medical costs. A medical doctor wrote to *The Hutchinson News* making such an appeal. His idea seems to be that preventable health problems should not become a needless expense to the patient. This would also free doctors to intervene in needs not caused by a careless lifestyle.



We all believe our youth are an important part of the church. The ideals that they hold have important implications for the future. Their idealism and energy can be a tre-

mendous blessing. Because of this awareness we leaders are sometimes fervently admonished to listen to our young people.

It is instructive to notice how this seems to work out when such a concern is not tempered by other pertinent considerations. When this becomes the all-important consideration, it can quickly redirect worship patterns and lifestyles of an entire congregation. It is God's design that the various age groups in the body of Christ blend together, each bringing its valuable contribution.

To listen to our young people becomes valuable as this listening becomes a climate of open communication in which all parties are eager to hear each other. It is important that we consider the youth as an integral part of, rather than a separate entity in, the body. Competition does not belong in the body of Christ. We are ideally laborers together, allies with compatible goals and ideals. Having said all this, I appeal to fellow leaders that we seek to be the kind of servant whom sincere young people will feel free to bring honest concerns and questions. Sometimes young people appreciate when we initiate opportunities for personal, informal sharing.

After sharing the above lines with several trusted peers, it seems needful that I make sure that these

concerns are clearly communicated. Hence, the following points:

— When there is an emphasis on the need to hear from our youth without a corresponding concern that they are willing to hear the concerns of those with more experience, a situation can quickly become unstable. Furthermore, this philosophy would allow for changes as rapid as

any youth group turnover.

— Older people, especially leaders, should cultivate an openness and relationship with youth to promote mutual confidence, trust, and freedom of communication. Informal conversations over a meal can be helpful in strengthening relationships and understanding.

—DLM 

Ministers' Meeting Messages—2007

This is a condensation of a message given at the annual Ministers' Meetings, April 3-5, 2007, at Yoder Mennonite Church, in rural Hutchinson, KS. The set of eight tapes or CD's with 10 messages (plus three sermon responses and a men's and women's session on tape) is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$45, postpaid.

1. Christ's Cross and the Christian's Cross

—Verlynn Yoder, Grove City, MN

We read of accident accounts. A 19-year-old is killed in a rollover. An 80-year-old dies in a head-on collision. A bus carrying a basketball team takes an exit ramp at highway speeds and kills the driver and five players. Five children are killed in a head-on collision. When we hear about such

accidents, but aren't there, we soon forget, and life goes on for us.

But bring us up close. Be the first one at the scene of the accident. Be the one to see the last muscle spasm of the lifeless body lying in a pool of blood. Or go with Jesse Hurst, from British Columbia, who wrote in *Beside the Still Waters* just a few days ago how he looked into the heap of twisted metal and saw nothing moving. Steam was puffing out from under the wrecked vehicle's hood. He reached in and felt for a pulse in the first wrist he found and there was none.

Such scenes are probably etched in many of your minds. They are in mine. We don't forget them. The account of Christ's cross is a familiar one. You have preached it often, I trust. We must bring the cross to people often. Is it possible that we

miss the importance of Christ's cross? The same thing happens with news items that grip us at first, then become commonplace. Paul was concerned that he would never forget. He said in Galatians 6:14, "...God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Bring us up close to the cross. The Scripture gives us a detailed description that we should not forget history's most tragic event. John 19:17,18 say this, "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."

Death will come to all. It is never nice or easy. It comes hard in different ways. Most people would choose the easiest way possible to die, with dignity—in their sleep, if they could. Death on a cross is far from any of this. It was painful. Jesus dreaded it. He endured the cross. Because of the joy that was set before Him, He could endure it. He saw the finish line. He was passing from the Old to the New, and yes, He had us all in mind. "Thank you, Lord!"

When He was in the Garden of Gethsemane with His friends, He

wasn't just saying, "Good-bye; I'll see you in a few days." No, three times He prayed, "Let this cup pass from me!" In that cup Jesus saw physical suffering, along with all the spiritual weight of the sins of the whole world. I find no words to describe that weight. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we are told what God had in view, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The cross was the cruelest known way to die. It was worse than hanging or beheading; worse than modern forms of execution: the electric chair, the gas chamber, or the firing squad. The cross was an instrument of extreme torture. Tendons were stretched and snapped; joints were pulled apart; nerves quivered in agony; cries and groans of pain escaped the bravest souls; they push upward to grab the next breath of air; the throat gurgled and gasped for air; limbs knotted up in cramp; and after days, the bodies eventually went into shock—quivering, wrenching, and convulsing. Finally, the eyes glazed over, and the head slumped forward and they died.

Those who go to the cross know they go to die. Jesus knew there was no way out. It was no accident—it was all intentional. It's no wonder that the women were weeping. Scrip-

ture says “His visage was marred more than any man” (Isaiah 52:14). This is but a glimpse of the physical suffering, apart from the emotional and spiritual aspects.

The cross for Christ was *lonely*. He was forsaken by His friends who had promised loyalty. Then His Father, God, left Him, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He cried. He endured it because He loved you and me—and all the people that you shepherd. “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...”

The cross for Jesus was *shameful*. It was for the minds that plot evil, for the mouths that spit out filth, for the hands that commit violence, for the sin-blackened heart, and for the worst sinner who would not change for anyone, or cease from crime. Yet the innocent Son of God was treated like one of the ten most wanted criminals.

His innocence was well-known. The Jewish rulers knew He was innocent or they wouldn't have tried Him against their own law. Judas knew He was innocent, for he said, “I have betrayed innocent blood.” Pilate knew He was innocent, for he said three times, “I find in him no fault.” Pilate's wife knew He was innocent so she said to her husband, “Have thou nothing to do with [judging]

this just man.” The thief on the cross knew He was innocent. He said, “This man hath done nothing amiss.” Add to this shameful treatment all of the mocking He endured.

The cross of Christ had greater impact on history than the two World Wars and the attack on the Twin Towers. The cross was the climax of the work of Christ. It represents the pinnacle of his ministry. He knew that's why He came to earth as a human being. Even as a 12-year-old child, He told his parents, “I must be about my Father's business.”

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” In the heart of man lies sin. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9) Before sanctification can begin, the gap separating sinful man from God must be spanned. Christ's cross is that bridge. The exceeding sinfulness of the heart of man demands a cross. Our sins demand a barbaric solution: the cross.

The Christian's cross is different.

Many who claim Jesus as their Savior do not want to carry their cross. They say Jesus died for their sins, but don't want the cross. Oh, they may display a cross. They may hang

around their neck, put it on their ear, set it up as an object of worship or have it as a good luck charm. They may even sing about the cross. But what Jesus taught about salvation is found in the death and resurrection of Christ and living in the Kingdom of God is what Jesus taught about the cross.

Jesus died for us on the cross. Some may actually think they are free to sin, thinking that they are no longer under bondage to the law. Though they would not recommend sinning boldly, but sin, as they see it, just happens. Jesus said, “Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Jesus also spoke of His people as sheep, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). That’s one thing sheep do, *they follow*. I believe He wants us to understand that whoever does not follow the Good Shepherd is not a sheep. Yes, salvation is free, but we dare not coast along afterwards.

Jesus taught His disciples, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). The Christian’s cross is not exactly like Christ’s cross. Christ saw His cross when He looked into that cup in

Gethsemane. Part of the Christian’s cross begins at the strait gate—the entrance of the narrow way that leads to eternal life. Matthew 7:13,14 says, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

The cross is the forsaking of the broad way—the easy way. Going the way I want to go, doing what I want to do, buying what I want to buy, laughing at what I think is funny, watching what pleases me, cheating when I think it’s necessary, and climbing to the top by stepping on others—that’s the broad way.

Cross bearing is not necessarily the difficulties that we and unbelievers have come upon us in this world. Those come to all. But how we choose to respond to these difficulties may be our cross. James tells us to count it all joy. Cross bearing is what we decide to take up as we follow Christ. It’s our choice, we could try to evade it, but we can’t avoid it. The narrow way is the way of the cross. In the way of the cross, we identify with Christ and not the world. We do what is right when others don’t. We try to discern what issues from self will. We seek to do the will of the Father as Christ did.

We humble ourselves before others; we endure wrong and return good for evil; we share the Gospel of the Kingdom in the face of opposition, and we do not complain but rather patiently bear it when trouble befalls us, to mention just a few things about cross bearing.


Here are some things about the cross of the minister: He is to shepherd faithfully his sheep, watching for their souls. I would say that consistent shepherding of the flock will in the long run benefit the flock more than mere repeated appeals for revival. The way of the cross for the minister is to give time to careful sermon preparation. It means that he must give an account so he must feel the weight of responsibility for men's souls. It means to continue serving when not properly thanked or appreciated—or always liked.

As leaders, we may be the first to suffer if and when persecution comes. We too must learn to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done." By the way Jesus spoke of it, I believe that to evade or refuse the way of the cross is to forfeit one's salvation.

Is the cross hard to bear? Yes, but it also enjoyable. We sing, "The cross

that He gave may be heavy, but it ne'er outweighs His grace." Yes, ministry is not always easy. There are times that are very busy and pressing.

Just remember that Jesus took up His cross and the sins of the whole world without any mumbling. Was it easy? No, He broke down at one point, because He could carry His cross no farther. Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear the cross for Him. Should we bear the cross because we are compelled to? There's no joy in that. Jesus doesn't want compelled cross bearers. If someone is compelled to carry the cross, he carries the cross of Simon, not the cross of Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, Paul describes some of his cross. Read it the next time you find your cross heavy. It helps us set our eyes beyond our trials. Notice also the words of Peter in 1 Peter 5:2, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." So let us bear the cross with joy and carry the treasure in our earthen vessel. I believe others will know it. For His sake and for the glory of the cross, press on! 

*Cleanliness may be next to godliness
but it's no substitute.*



Call Her Blest

Stephen Miller, Belle Center, OH

When I was just a little lad,
Like maybe one or two,
I had a very special friend
That helped me things to do.

I did not understand it then
The way I see it now.
For every time I had a need,
My friend was there somehow.

And as the years did come and go,
And time so swiftly passed,
My special friend was always there
For questions that I asked.

And when the teenage years I reached
Temptations round me lay.
My friend was always close beside
To gently show the way.

As time went on, I felt this need,
To claim my chosen one.
My special friend just smiled and said,
“God bless you *both*, my son.”

Thus while my friendship circle grows,
This love I dare not smother.
Because my special friend remains,
“God bless you! My dear mother!”



Job Description

Naomi Petersheim, Oakland, MD

I have a very important job, perhaps the world's most important job. Yet, most people are not impressed when I tell them what I do. I have not earned a college degree to prepare me for this job. In fact, I have never taken a college course. Yet, the demands of this job have taxed all the job skills I have acquired during my lifetime.

This is a constant, unending job. There are no days off or vacation with pay. I'm on call 24 hours a day. In spite of working long hours seven days a week, I am accumulating nothing in a bank account for my efforts.

Although I have signed no worker's

contract and don't have a supervisor inspecting my work, I take my job very seriously and feel the weight of my responsibility very keenly. Although I'm not a member of a labor union and have no one fighting for my rights, I have no fear of getting fired, even for poor job performance. In fact, there have been days when I have had fleeting thoughts of resigning, but in my job, there are no provisions for that!

But in spite of the long hours, poor financial compensation, negative public image, and at times stressful demands of the job, I wouldn't trade it for any other occupation. The rewards cannot be measured by our monetary system.

Although the final pay day is in the future with rewards of eternal magnitude, the many tokens I receive every day

are enough to cause me to rate my job satisfaction at the top of the scale.

You see, I'm a mother.



The Plea of the Perishing

Jessica Flokstra, Perkins, OK

The writer wrote the following adaptation as the sheep's version of William Schell's hymn, "The Ninety-nine Within the Fold" during a time in her mid-teens when, in her words, "I was a wandering lamb upon the mountains, dark and cold, longing for someone to come and search me out." Jessica was raised in a Christian home, but when she was 13, she says she began seeking fulfillment in "the pleasures of sin for a season." But deep down, she realizes she was longing for Christ. She wrote this when she was 15, about a year before she was converted.

1.

There's many a sheep within the fold
Secure from fears and dangers dark.
Yet, out upon the mountains cold,
Our cry, our plea, O Shepherd, hark!

Refrain

**Come search us out and bring us home
No more in darkness let us roam.
You'll find us here in dreadful plight—
Oh, come and bring us back tonight.**

2.

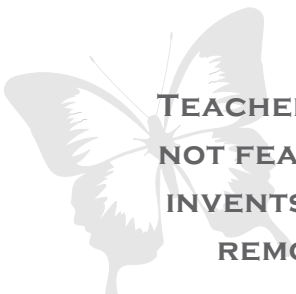
Thy shelt'ring fold we scoffed with scorn,
And left for pleasures found afar.
But now we're weeping, sad, forlorn,
The storms and gales have left their scar.

3.

Awandering lone, both night and day,
Upon the mountains dark and cold,
'Mongst thorns and brambles sharp we lay.
Oh, bring us back into the fold.

4.

Oh, do not wait 'til time has fled,
Or, for a morning clear and bright,
Rest not, until, safe home we're led.
Oh, come and bring us back tonight!



**TEACHERS IN THE LOWER GRADES NEED
NOT FEAR AUTOMATION UNTIL SOMEONE
INVENTS A DEVICE TO WIPE NOSES AND
REMOVE SNOWSUITS AND BOOTS.**

Creation Science Portrayed in the Psalms—Part Two

Kraig Beachy, Winfield, PA

“Genesis explains the beginning of many important realities: the universe, the earth, people, sin, and God’s plan of salvation.” (Tyndale House Publishers. Used by permission.)

We believe the formulated, expressive, creative commands of Genesis 1 and 2 ought to be the foundation in the teaching program in all our church planting endeavors. Believing Moses and the prophets is more important than seeing great miracles. Abraham told the rich man in hell, They have Moses and the prophets; let him hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead (Luke 16:29-31).

The following article (and the one that preceded it in the May issue) were written as a term paper at Calvary Bible School, 2007. It expresses the claim for biblical creationism and establishes the progression of biblical revelation. -FS

Job 38:16 speaks of springs of the sea. It is probable that when these words were written man knew nothing of oceanic springs. He, in all likelihood, had no way of exploring the ocean depths to any great extent. Even though oceanic springs are a relatively recent discovery, God spoke of them in the archaic past.

Job 26:7 tells us that “[God] hangeth the earth upon nothing.” Longer ago, the earth was thought to be held up on the shoulders of one of the gods. Some people offered a different explanation: A chain is fastened to the earth and attached to a stable object somewhere above us in interstellar space. We now know that God was right once again. Indeed the earth hangs on nothing, but is held in its orbit by a combination of centrifugal force and gravity.

Psalms 8:8 speaks of “the paths of the seas.” Until a few years ago, this was a passage with a rather obscure meaning. Then a young military officer, who was off duty due to injuries sustained in combat, decided he would find out what God was referring to in this verse. So he

began studying the sea. After much study, he discovered that, contrary to popular opinion, the ocean was not a tranquil pool of motionless water. Instead, it had currents as strong—and stronger—than a river’s current. The Gulf Stream and other ocean currents have since been utilized to save fuel in ships traveling to and from Europe. Those that are going to Europe from the USA get into the Gulf Stream to use water power to help them get to their destination. Those traveling the opposite way make sure to stay out of it as much as possible. In the days of colonial America, it was unknown why it took ships coming from England to America longer to traverse the ocean than the ships traveling the other way. We now know that the ships traveling west were bucking the Gulf Stream, while the ships traveling east were being pushed by it. It was another case of man making a discovery that God knew all along and had sacred writers write about.

In Psalm 19:6, we read of the circuit of the sun. Until rather recently, the sun was thought to be motionless in the very center of the solar system, with all the planets orbiting around it. However, it has been discovered that the sun also does indeed have a circuit. It, along with the billions of other stars, orbits the black hole in the center of the Milky Way galaxy,

some 28,000 light years distant. This Scripture says that the sun’s “going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it.” Indeed, the orbit of the sun is to the ends of the heaven.

Psalm 19:6 further states that “there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.” In archaic times, when this psalm was written, it could easily have been said that the sun’s heat does not strike the earth at night. But we now know that nothing could exist without the heat of the sun. Even at night, the sun’s heat is sustaining life on the earth. And we see that God knew and designed this in ages past.

Psalm 102:25 states that the earth and the heavens shall “wax old like a garment.” And indeed, this is what we observe. There is a scientific law stating what Psalm 102 says—The Second Law of Thermodynamics (also known as the Law of Entropy) which states that the amount of usable energy in the universe is diminishing. In other words, the universe is running down, getting old, wearing out, or “waxing old” as Psalm 102:25 indicates.

Psalm 147:4 tells us that “God telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.” Modern astronomers estimate the number of stars in the universe to exceed 10,000,000,000,000,000,000 (ten quintillions or 10 to the 22nd power). Even

with this mind-boggling number of stars, we know from this Scripture that God not only created them, He is familiar with them all! He has names for every one of them. And here I thought it was hard to remember the names of 70 CBS students!

The best thing that the Psalms teach us is that the creator of the universe is a personal God who cares about every aspect of our lives. Psalm 121:2 says, “My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.” This is only one verse of many in the Psalms that talk of God’s loving care for His children. David is very eloquent in his applause of God’s creation, God’s power, and most of all, God’s loving support for His creatures. David never seems to exhaust His praise of the God who carried him through all his difficult times. And often when speaking of God, he refers to His power demonstrated in creation. Indeed, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the

firmament sheweth his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). And in Psalm 97:6, “the heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.”

If there is one lesson that stands out to be learned from this study, it is that the universe was made and is completely understood by an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, yet personal God. He is the One who has designed all the complex processes by which life and the universe in general are sustained. If this entire essay were to be packed into one concept, it would be as follows: Science can only try to catch up with the Bible. This fact has been observed from archaic times. The Bible has always been—and will always be—correct. Science, if given time to research any subject will, if it is honest, bow to the inevitable: it will agree with the infallible Word of God! Any scientific assertion that does not agree with the Bible, such as the theory of evolution, is surely false.



helpers at home

A Crown to Her Husband

Mary June Glick

Proverbs 12:4 says, “A wife of noble character is her husband’s crown.” (NIV) A few words from the Thesaurus for *crown* are “completion, finishing touch, jewel, trophy, and honor.” A crown

is defined as a reward of victory or a mark of honor. Can I really be all of that for my husband?

A new bride is excited to be a wife, to know that she is loved and appreciated by her husband. As time goes on,

and we get caught up in the stresses of making a living, we tend to lose the early excitement and romance that we anticipated. Sometimes we wives feel that we talk a different language from our husbands. We can share our heart with another woman and she understands us, but somehow our husbands just don't catch what we want to say. That is alright, because that is exactly how God made us. He made us male and female, and different, because we function with different roles. I believe if we would better understand some of these basic communication differences, we could be free to enjoy our marriages better and not expect the unlikely from our partner.

Let's look at a few ways that we communicate differently:

1. A man expresses love by *doing*; a woman expresses love by *being*. Your husband shows his love by bringing home a weekly paycheck, by mowing the lawn, by fixing things around the house. A woman expresses love in words. She looks for romance in candle-light settings and wonders *why* her husband would rather see his food when he eats.

2. A man wants to *fix things*; a woman just wants him to *listen* to her. I need to talk about things that bother me, even if I know there's nothing my husband can do about them. I just

need him to listen. A man tends to feel frustrated if he doesn't have the solution for a problem.

3. A man needs the facts, not all the little details and interesting embellishments a woman might add to a story. Our husbands may tune us out if the story gets too long. When we have important things to discuss, let's let them know that this is very important to us and that we need their attention.

4. Your husband may not be aware of your needs unless you tell him. Women have a built-in tuition that helps us to see and respond to a need. Because of that we expect our husbands to notice and to meet our need and are hurt when they don't. It is much better if we simply acknowledge our need and ask for help.

5. A woman needs *love*; a husband needs *respect*. This is why the Bible clearly tells the husband to love his wife and the wife to honor her husband. We honor him by being supportive of his job, his ministry, and his methods of discipline with the children. We honor him by showing appreciation, by admiring his manly characteristics. We honor him by accepting and loving him as he is without trying to change him.

May God give each of us wives the grace to be a true CROWN to our husband.



A Full Bucket

Anita Yoder

In West Africa lives a little girl named Amina. She comes from a very poor family, so she cannot attend school. Her days are filled with carrying water for her family. Their supply of water comes from a dirty pond within walking distance. Amina lugs the water home in a bucket. If she fills it it's very heavy. If she allows some to slosh out, she will need to make another trip. During the dry season, the pond may dry up, making her walk further.

What an existence, you say. We always have a supply of water. It's piped into our homes effortlessly. We turn on the faucet and let it run.

Water is such an important part of our lives that we cannot imagine living without it. It sustains all of nature. Countries with a shortage of water also have extreme poverty. Diseases and sicknesses multiply with dirty drinking water. Clean, fresh water is definitely a blessing.

Jesus said "I am the living water." He welcomed the woman at Jacob's Well (John 4) to partake of His living water and told her if she drank she would never thirst again.

What did Jesus mean? Did the

woman of Samaria understand what He meant?

When Jesus lives and rules in our hearts we live and are sustained by his power. Jesus wanted her to see that believing in Him was like having a constant flow of water, or even like a full bucket of pure, refreshing water.

If Amina drinks of Jesus' salvation water she is better prepared for eternity than are wealthy, privileged folks who have running water in their houses, but don't open their hearts and receive Jesus' refreshing, life-giving water.

• • • • •

Dear Girls,

Hi—from Kansas! My name is Malinda Sue Graber. I'm 12 years old and my birthdate is May 17, 1994. I would like a twin or penpal to write to.

My parents' names are Willard and Julie Graber. My siblings are Lydia (17) Marla (15) Joshua (14), Sarah (10) Deborah (8), Travis (5) and Sean (6 mo.).

We go to Lyndon Amish Mennonite School and our church is Lyndon Amish Mennonite Church.

We raise cattle and have horses. My hobbies are singing, swimming,

riding horses and ice skating.

Again, I would like a twin or penpal. Please write soon!

Yours truly,

Malinda Graber

161 W. 269th St.

Lyndon, KS 66451



youth messages

Dear Youth, Parents, and Other Interested Adults,

Sometimes those of us who have opportunities to teach and preach, “run out of” subjects to talk about. Sometimes we “get stuck” on subjects that we enjoy talking about. This month we will look at subjects that some youth would like to hear discussed. I will comment

on each subject and try to give some background for what I understand these youth to be saying. Perhaps you adults who are reading this column will take up the challenge to study these subjects and speak on them.

—EE

This Month's **QUESTION**

What subjects do you rarely hear taught that you would like to hear more teaching on in your church community?

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

One thing we youth struggle with is knowing God's plan for our lives. I would like to hear more teaching on how to discern God's will for my life and also to make the right choices in all the different areas that I face.

I would also like more teaching on how to witness to those around us.

—*Jeanie Bontrger, Goshen, IN*

Youth Editor's comments:

Finding God's will is something all of us want to know more about, but is one that is often mentioned by youth. Most youth enjoy hearing adults talk about experiences in life where they struggled to know God's will for their lives and then to hear their testimony of how God led them. Telling stories

about “all the way that God has led us” is good for us as well as them. Youth sometimes benefit from knowing that the most important step to being in the will of God is to commit ourselves to being His disciple all through life. God then “keeps that which we have committed to Him” and “guides us through our journey.” When we are daily committed to this way of life, God often gives us the “gift of choice.” Knowing that God often gives us the privilege of choice can sometimes relieve youth who are struggling to know what particular path God has for them. We learn to walk with God as we recognize both His sovereignty and our freedom to choose.

The second subject is also very pertinent. We tend to excuse ourselves by thinking that we should live lives that will be a witness and that is sufficient. Yet we tend to compartmentalize our lives into “work,” “leisure,” and “church” and then donate money to others to be “missionaries.” When we think about the apostles and early Anabaptists and consider how much trouble they could have saved themselves if they would have kept their mouths shut, our excuses melt rather fast. Our youth need more adults to show us and teach us how to witness all week long.



We need to hear more of a vision for the church. We need to know

the concepts which our Anabaptist forefathers considered important enough to live and die for. But simply knowing about them is not enough. We must hear and understand the vision in such a way that we embrace it and espouse it as our own. We need sermons that challenge us to carry on the world-changing vision of what the church is and should be. We need to learn, or be reminded, how we, individually, must live in order for the church to be what it can and should be. We need to learn what it means to be “Kingdom Christians” in today’s world. We need to hear about true discipleship, not as an option, but as an imperative. We need to realize who we are and who we are supposed to be as followers of Jesus. What we need to hear will not always be comfortable and cozy; in fact, at times it could be decidedly uncomfortable. Then again, Jesus never promised comfort and ease on earth; actually, He predicted quite opposite. Are we willing?

—Doug Kauffman, Huntsville, AR

Youth Editor comments:

I agree with Doug that we need to hear more about what it means to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and then to align ourselves with it. We as teachers and preachers tend to teach

and preach in such a way that brings “mental assent” but fails to grip youth with the fact that they have the opportunity to join a “different country.” Our talking and our lives should be so seamlessly interwoven that youth want to follow us as we follow Christ and want to participate with us in His Kingdom.

• • • • •

I would like to hear more about:

The Value of a Good Education

—Have plain communities who have steered away from education, benefited from their position?

—Is the present conservative-Anabaptist generation advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of not being trained to think biblically-logically?

—What kind of education do we as Anabaptists need in order to be effective in witnessing to a post-modern America?

—Victoria Miller, Partridge, KS/
Honey Grove, PA

Youth Editor’s comments:

There seem to be two extremes on the subject of education. In one ditch are those who recoil at the idea of someone learning more than they themselves have. In the other ditch are those who are uneducated and believe that a lot of the world’s problems will be solved if people were more

educated. It would seem that today’s youth are exposed to pressures from one extreme or the other.

I have rarely heard people teach the manner of life that makes it possible for a person to live humbly and simply while acquiring knowledge that makes them a useful and effective servant of God. I think this is a subject worthy of our study and time and a subject that our generation needs to hear.

• • • • •

I would like to hear more about nonresistance in everyday living.

—Darren Beiler, London, OH

Youth Editor’s comments:

Jesus tells us that all men will know that we are His disciples by our love for one another. In many communities Anabaptists are known for other things. This is sad. Evangelicals and unbelievers are finding it ironic that we as nonresistant people profess to love our enemies but find it very difficult to love our neighbors, relatives and posterity.

• • • • •

Here are several subjects that I seldom hear:

—Who holds the standard book of my life— The Word or those around me?

—How can youth find security in Christ as their “All in All?”

—How can youth find and know God’s will for their future?

—*Kenneth Eash, Romney, WV*

Youth Editor’s comments:

I don’t know if this is accurate or not, but it would seem as if our generation faces an unprecedented amount of pressure to make the opinions of others count more than the Word of God. If this is true, can we not also depend on an unprecedented amount of God’s grace to help us make The Word the standard of book of our lives? Youth need to know that God’s grace is available and attainable.

• • • • •

Strange as it may seem, I feel that we are very weak in our teaching of salvation—the process of justification and sanctification. Although I had been a Christian for some time, I did not understand the process of salvation until I was an 18-year-old at Bible school. A lot of the teaching I had heard before was confusing and gave me a desperate feeling of needing to earn enough “brownie points” to get into heaven. Understanding salvation was completely life-changing for me. It freed me to see my brothers and sisters in the church as totally righteous at the core. I deeply feel that many crying needs would be met by solid teaching

on this subject.

—*Rosina Schmucker, Partridge, KS*

Youth Editor’s comments:

This subject perhaps deserves more attention than all the rest. Many of us have a view of salvation that is neither Anabaptist nor evangelical but some mixture of the two that leaves youth confused and feeling guilty. When “conversion” and “justification” are taught as synonymous terms, youth are often confused.

In my understanding, an Anabaptist view of salvation is one that views salvation as a work of Christ that begins in a person’s heart, climaxes during new birth, continues throughout life, and concludes at the end of life. To describe this view another way, Jesus is not only needed for an initial work of salvation and new birth, but He is needed for daily salvation and keeping power, as well as for an ultimate salvation from Satan and this earth. According to Anabaptists, salvation is the process of Christ bringing a person into a loving, obedient relationship with Himself.

*Youth who do not understand this view of salvation or who “accept Jesus” for selfish reasons, instead of wholeheartedly **believing in Him**, struggle to find the peace, joy, and hope they desire.*

Salvation is truly at work in a person's heart when the believer accepts Christ's redemption as his only path to heaven, invites Jesus to become Lord of his life, and continues to nurture that loving, obedient relationship with Christ. It seems that it was this view of salvation that gave the Apostle Paul the persuasion that God would "keep that which [he had] committed to Him against that day." (2 Timothy 1:12)

• • • • •

An apology from Paul L. Miller:

I mistakenly left out the proper credit for the first part of last month's (May) youth responses. Thus the first part of what appears to have been given by Lynita Beachy was not hers. It was given by students attending Calvary Bible School. Here is that portion of their comments:

PRESSURES?

—Listening to unhealthy music that makes a person think wrong thoughts

—Becoming close friends with fellow employees and local people, and being more influenced by the

ungodly than influencing the ungodly for good

—The compulsion to pursue "the American Dream"

—Watching videos and DVD's that do not build the "inner new man"

—The unspoken constraint to "be on top" socially

WEAPONS?

—Personal stability, being rooted and grounded in the Truth

—Prayer

—Listen to the counsel of parents and leaders, even if they seem to be behind the times

—Do not be arrogant. Be open and willing to hear the opinions of others

—Live on the "offensive." Challenge other people to take a stand for God.

What follows these comments from CBS students in the May issue was submitted by Sis. Lynita.

To Lynita Beachy, Ernest Eby and all readers, I am very sorry for this error for incorrectly showing who was being quoted. —PLM

Next Month's QUESTION

Youth sometimes wish they had a closer relationship with their parents and ministers. If those in authority neglect building relationships, how can youth begin building a relationship, even though it seems "backward" for them to do the initiating?

Please respond by June 20.

THOUGHT GEMS

The best way to gain respect is to earn it.

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A Bible in the hand is worth two in the bookcase.

• • • • •

A bigot sees two positions on an issue—his and the wrong one.

• • • • •

A boaster and a liar are first cousins.

• • • • •

Too many people confuse free speech with loose talk.

• • • • •

The trouble with a chronic borrower is that he keeps everything but his word.

• • • • •

Most men can handle adversity better than they handle power.

• • • • •

To train children well it is important that both parents and children spend quality time at home.

• • • • •

Choice, not chance, determines destiny.

• • • • •

We do not live for Christ on our own terms.

• • • • •

The man who is immersed in business all week, should come up for air on Sunday.

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