



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

Galatians 6:14

SEPTEMBER 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.

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

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Material for *Calvary Messenger*, marriages, births, ordinations, obituaries, and general articles—send to the **Editor**. Other Material—mail to their respective **Editors**.

Subscriptions, renewals, changes of address, etc.—mail to **Circulation Manager**. **When you move**, please notify the Circulation Manager one month in advance, giving your old and new address in full, so that your mailing label can be properly corrected and your credit be kept in order.

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Calvary Messenger (USPS 767-160) is published monthly by Calvary Publications, 2673 TR 421, Sugarcreek, Ohio 44681. Subscription rates are: 1 year (U.S.) \$7.50, 3 years (U.S.) \$21.00. For congregations using the every-home-plan, \$6.00 per year to individual addresses. Renewal \$3.75 when you also give a 1-year gift subscription at \$3.75. Second class postage at Sugarcreek, Ohio. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvary Publications, Inc., 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW, Dundee, OH 44624.

Trusting My Guide


Bethany Sommers, Newcomerstown, OH

A tiny ant labored up the mountain of my hand,
Turning and stopping, wandering to left and right.
At last it left and slipped away ... somewhere.
But it will find what it's looking for, I know.
(A tiny ant? Who tells it where to go?)

A bird flew far above my head,
Over stately buildings ... far beyond my sight.
But it will find the tree it's seeking, I know.
(A bird? Who tells it where to go?)

I must take a path I have not walked before ...
Young, inexperienced, and prone to lose my way.
Like ant or bird, I know my destination,
But cannot find my way alone.
(Will God, who guides insect and bird,
forsake His child? Never!)

*"Fear not therefore; ye are of more
value than many sparrows."*

—Jesus 

Freely We Have Received

Today is July 4, 2007. It is truly a privilege to live in North America where we have many basic human rights and freedoms. The United States Constitution includes a Bill of Rights that names four basic human freedoms, and calls them “inalienable rights.” They are: Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of peaceable assembly. What a blessing these four freedoms are!

Even with these freedoms, we all know that making a living can be quite a challenge. As a young man, I struggled with having enough means to provide satisfactorily for our family of six children. I sometimes failed to give due honor to God as I struggled to trust our faithful God. He promised to supply all our needs if we bask in His love and put Kingdom priorities first.

By now, the pressure on me as breadwinner has lessened. I’m retired, the nest is empty, and it takes much less for the two of us to live on. I think I have also learned a deeper and simpler acceptance of Matthew 6:33, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all

these things (daily living needs) shall be added unto you.”

While many North Americans have enough food, clothing, and shelter, poverty is common in many other places, even where people work very hard. The poorer nations of the world are often called “third world” countries. “Have-nots” from less developed nations may look at the “haves” in North America and wonder why we don’t do more to relieve their poverty.

Martha and I struggle with this situation. We get numerous requests for gifts of charity from various organizations. We enjoy helping, but obviously cannot help everywhere. Sometimes we fear making the mistake of the rich man who had Lazarus lying at his gate. Neighborhood dogs, with their affectionate slobbering, had more pity for Lazarus than the rich man did. We do want to know that our gifts reach those in need and that they are accompanied with a clear Christian testimony.

How do you approach living and giving?

In June we published a baker’s dozen of responses on the need for

unity in our churches. Thank you! I believe these comments blessed us all. Again, I ask for reader response. This time I invite you to comment (perhaps 100-200 words) on aspects of the following questions:

1. How do you look at living in a land of good economic opportunity, especially as it pertains to being conscientiously opposed to performing military service for our country?

2. How do you calculate your giving?


3. How do you deal with the many requests that come for charitable funds?

4. In general, how do you ap-

proach the question of living by faith that honors God, provides for our families, yet also gives cheerfully and significantly to world needs for food, clothing and shelter?

5. How are we to balance our giving between evangelism and humanitarian needs?

Please pray about it, and don't put it off too long. I would like to hear from you by September 25. I plan to use your feedback in the November issue.

Here's a final thought. **Is it true?** *God loves a cheerful giver and a cheerful giver loves God.* —PLM 

Book Review

Melvin Yoder, Gambier, OH

God and Uncle Dale, by Lester Bauman, Published by Rod and Staff Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box 3, Hwy 172, Crocket, KY 41413

Lester Bauman attempts to give the reader a vision of the agony and trauma many went through as they were caught in the vortex of the spiritually changing Mennonite conferences in the 1960's. As the church lowered her standards and changed both doctrine and practice,

some were bound by conscience to find fellowship elsewhere.


Many, however, chose to stay and enjoy the new freedoms which the church was now permitting. This brought broken relationships for many. Freedom in dress brought with it a whole new set of problems. As the teaching of a holy and separated life was being dropped as being too restrictive, immorality crept into the ranks of the youth.

Church leaders seemed to be more

concerned about losing members than they were about having the church pure. To take issue with the church's newly-acquired apostate positions was considered to be a far greater error than anything the church was permitting.

Now 40 years later the author feels that we have many people who are

nice and want what is right, but are not committed enough to pass the crucial test of living a truly separated life.

I am writing this review to the people of our beloved Beachy constituency, especially those serving as ministers. This book is must reading for all who are concerned about the direction many of our churches are taking. 

Financial Support for Ministers—Part 3 of 3 Guidelines for Pastoral Support

Howard Bean, Tavistock, ON

(These articles first appeared in The Midwest Focus, which Bro. Bean edits. They are being reprinted by request of several lay brothers, who recently taught together at Calvary Bible School, yet wish to remain anonymous. "Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good." —PLM)

An old country preacher was earnestly exhorting his congregation to give more liberally. He was interrupted by a member who said, "Parson, you told us salvation is free—as free as the air we breathe and the water in the river. If that's true, why are you always asking us for money?"

The elderly preacher solemnly replied, "Brother Jones, you're right. *Salvation is free*—as free as the water you drink. But if you want that water

in the kitchen, *somebody has to pay the pump.*"

Although I don't advocate preachers asking for money, the old minister had a point. Jesus Himself assumed that people who do spiritual service will normally receive remuneration. In the context of His disciples' sharing the Gospel, He said, "The workman is worthy of his meat" (Matthew 10:10).

In a previous article, I tried to show that the Old Testament Scriptures teach financial support by principle and precedent and the New Testament gives specific teaching on the subject. In a second article, I presented reasons for significant support then gave reasons for avoiding the salaried ministry. Now in this concluding article, I wish to make ten suggestions

for pastoral support.

1. Have regularly scheduled offerings. In the congregations where I grew up, they were held once each month. (A preacher friend of mine thought that was really often—until he heard how much each offering amounted to.) In my home congregation, pastoral support offerings are held bi-monthly. Some congregations I know schedule them on the fifth Sundays.

The frequency may vary but the principle is the same. The frequency should vary in that the larger congregation may have an offering of \$3,000 while a smaller congregation may not have that much collected in twelve offerings. Yet the expenses of a pastor may not be much different. Some congregations give their pastoral support offering to the conference which then distributes the money. This can eliminate some of the disparities.

2. Avoid a conflict of interest. Lay people, instead of those who receive the support, should be the ones to decide how many offerings there should be for pastoral support. A committee, or the whole congregation, or a person (sometimes a deacon) who doesn't receive remuneration should establish the frequency or amount of support. This helps to avoid temptations for ministers and

spares their reputation.

3. Remember the effects of inflation.

4. Offer support to ordained brothers whether rich or poor. Even if the preacher has a high-paying job or wealth, remuneration should be offered. The brother can feel free to give it back through other church offerings. Or, like the Apostle Paul, he may decline to accept the money.

5. Pay administrative costs for a pastor. If a congregation feels reluctant to give significant financial remuneration to a pastor, the congregation can at least pay such costs as phone, postage, and travel costs incurred on behalf of the congregation. My congregation doesn't do this—the members give generously and I use some of the money to pay administrative costs.

6. Pastors need to guard against greed. Although the Bible teaches pastoral support, it also warns against the motive of doing spiritual service for financial reward. Peter tells the bishops to feed the flock and give oversight “not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:2).

Likewise, a brother who is materialistic is not eligible for ordination. 1 Timothy 3:3 says, “Not greedy for filthy lucre” (“not a lover of money” NIV). Titus 1:7 says, “Not given to filthy lucre” (“he must not

be grasping and greedy for financial gain.” Amplified).

Fifty years ago, my parents attended a lecture in Kitchener by a prominent evangelical speaker who wrote a number of helpful books which I have read on the subject of Christian Evidences. After an offering had been received on his behalf and he saw the amount, he announced, “I didn’t realize I was giving a *nickel* lecture.”

7. Sister churches may need to assist. A wealthier congregation could give financial help to pastors of small, less wealthy congregations. This is an idea I haven’t thought too much about. But we apply this idea sometimes to pastors of mission churches that are small. And the churches of Macedonia gave to Paul so he wouldn’t need to ask the church at Corinth for money. 2 Corinthians 11:7-9 says, “I have preached to you the gospel of God freely. I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will keep myself.”

The logistics of sister churches giving financial assistance is more feasible in a conference, I suppose.

8. Support doesn’t need to be colored

green. In addition to money, I have received an annual “grocery shower” at Christmas, my car has received a fill-up on various occasions by farmers who have a fuel tank on the farm, my library has acquired books, and my freezer has been stocked with a side of beef or a whole hog.

9. Avoid a “pay-me-for-everything” mentality. The Bible exhorts us to “serve the Lord with gladness.” A congregation needs workers—Sunday School teachers, ushers, superintendents, personal workers, song leaders, and so on. They serve voluntarily without pay. The reason an ordained person should receive money relates to the amount of time and expense over a year’s time and the fact that an ordained person serves permanently.

Preachers should be happy to serve without payment for mileage or time. When I preach for another congregation, especially in the United States, I usually receive money for mileage and an honorarium, but I don’t always.

In one case, a speaker who served at a large Bible conference wrote to the secretary-treasurer and reminded him that he should pay him. I read of the Apostle Paul thanking the churches for their support, but I don’t recall that he ever asked for financial support. This is a good example to follow.

10. *Follow the Golden Rule.* Place yourself in the minister's shoes. I asked a friend who grew up in a bishop's home how he felt about the

supported ministry. He immediately said, "Add sugar to the plums."

Let us preach, promote, and practice the supported ministry. 

What Did Early Anabaptists Believe? *Part 2 of 3*

Elam Stoltzfoos, Kalona, IA

Gelassenheit und Nachfolge Christo

The word *Gelassenheit* translates to a number of words like *yieldedness, trust, self-denial, and true surrender.* *Nachfolge Christo* simply means following Christ.

When we have studied a principle of God's Word and have arrived at a certain conclusion, an interesting thing generally happens. It is not unusual to find ourselves in fellowship with someone who has studied the same Scriptures and much to our consternation, has arrived at a different conclusion than we have. Our first impulse is to think that surely the other person has it all wrong, thus making it that I can be right. When this happens, we are brought to a choice. Will we yield or use power? Now yielding does not mean merely giving up everything I have discovered, nor does it mean that the belief I hold should be purged from my mind. But it does mean that I will

actively listen and hear the reasons my brothers and sisters used in arriving at their conclusions.

In order for this to happen effectively in the brotherhood, a few things must be present. If no one communicates their belief, discussion is impossible. And generally, if no one presents an alternate point, the discussion is short. I like to think of this happening in what can be called the "hermeneutical circle." [In this case, hermeneutics means the methods and principles used to study the Bible.] This circle shall firstly be comprised of people who have placed the Word of God supreme over themselves. Then, when discussion ensues, and various viewpoints are brought to the table, each one in the hermeneutical circle begins to be more fully instructed in the Word of God. This does not mean that we will all understand every issue exactly the same, but it does mean that in this forum, the group arrives at much bet-

ter and more fully informed conclusions on matters of life that present themselves to us. When the people in this circle simply “shut up” and refuse to share their views in yieldedness, then *Gelassenheit* cannot work. To be unwilling to share your view with the brothers in the circle does not indicate yieldedness.

Of course, when every member of this circle understands that each individual only sees a part of the whole picture, it should cause us to work together in a yielded manner, coupled with trust. Far too often we think of using power to accomplish the things I want to see happening in the group. The concept of *Gelassenheit* served the early Anabaptists well, and it was not understood at all by their persecutors. Their persecutors thought that if they would destroy their leaders, they could squash the movement. But the Anabaptists were not a group that was ruled in a clerical manner, but rather it was a brotherhood following Christ. The fact that their leader, Christ, had already been killed and resurrected served as an unshakable pillar of strength to them.

Perhaps we should discuss the difference between *clerical rule* and *brotherhood, ruled by Christ*. The Anabaptists appointed lay leaders—men from their own midst, who simply were their “lay leaders and

preachers.” Now when a great difference is made between ministers and lay men, we begin to lose the focus they had. I do think that Anabaptists ordained men to lead the church, and I am not suggesting that we disrespect our chosen leaders. We need to respect and honor them for their service and position.

Perhaps the concept of a brotherhood following Christ is more of an operational concept in which the leaders will be careful to lead the hermeneutical circle as a group following the will of Christ, rather than to enforce their will on the brotherhood, thus reducing the brotherhood to a group of subscribers that follow a prescribed system of belief. When church leaders use undue power to enforce their will on the brotherhood, it causes the brotherhood to sit back lazily, and allows the leaders to do the work of church, rather than to have the brotherhood engage in the work of the Kingdom of God together. When the brotherhood follows Christ within a structure that brings glory to God rather than to man, the world itself will be impacted in ways that lifts up the name of Christ.

Because the Swiss Brethren followed Christ as a brotherhood, their earthly leaders were not indispensable, but the brotherhood that followed Christ was indispensable. This permitted this group of believers

to grow under extreme conditions even with the loss of their “lay leaders.” They were all laymen, following Christ, their real leader.

Another factor that *Gelassenheit* presents is the idea of *submitting myself to my brethren* for their analysis of who I am as a person. We must recognize our inability to truly perceive our own character using only the lens of our personal perspective. While we like to have people accept us based on our own testimony, we will rise to a higher level of maturity when we receive testimony from others about ourselves. When this is given to us in the circle of brotherhood that follows Christ, our life of discipleship is enhanced and we are able to see our deficiencies and strengths from another’s perspective.

Of course, the main goal of the hermeneutical circle is to see true discipleship (*nachfolge Christo*) in the lives of others in the circle. One can postulate ideas, and spend a lot of time discussing them, but until these ideas through wisdom find life, they remain as they are—ideas without value, mere intellectual concepts, not applied to life.

Following Christ in this way is sure to change our lifestyle. However, a much more fundamental event is required first, the renovation of one’s heart and mind, which changes our focus from the kingdom of the world

to the Kingdom of God.

One area which we should consider is the area of wealth and the lifestyle of consumption. Throughout the history of the Christian church we note that when its people increased in goods and money, it tended to lead them to a lifestyle of consumption, and they tended to proceed from there to spiritual bankruptcy.

We seem to have deluded ourselves into thinking that we are a generation that is exempt from this phenomenon. We should take notice that if it did not work in the past, it will not work in the present, for the present is fast joining itself to the past. Perhaps the issue is not as much how much mammon we collect, as it is how willingly we distribute it to the needs in our time. Think about this and help build the Kingdom of God. Rather than attempting to feverishly work hard so we have more money to send to missions, maybe we should consider working less and giving more time to the Kingdom, thus presenting ourselves to God as disciples and missionaries. Is this not discipleship?

Here are a few quotes from Peter Hoover in his book, *The Secret of the Strength*:

“The Anabaptists did not ask what Christ meant; they simply followed Him, and people called them fanatics.”


“The Anabaptists used their free-

dom to think, but not to think for themselves. They thought like Christ. They used their freedom to believe, not to promote their own beliefs, but to believe like Christ. They used their freedom to stand, not to stand for personal convictions, but to stand for Christ.”

May we capture this vision, the vision of discipleship embraced by Anabaptists, which caused them to live

and die for the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 16:24: **“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”**

Matthew 6:33: **“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”** 

Historical Glimpses of Biblical Nonresistance —Part 1 of 2

Ronald Border, Minerva, OH

Nonresistance” is a doctrine in God’s Word which we as Anabaptist/Amish/Mennonite/Christian believers accept in its *absolute* sense. Most Protestants and churches of other “flavors” give some recognition to it in the *abstract* sense, but not as a life-changing, defining model for discipleship.

We as Amish-Mennonites believe the Bible is the Word of God. That is why we are called “people of the Book” or Biblicists. We accept the Word as our marching orders for life. Consider the following Scripture: **“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance**

is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:19-21).

It is the acceptance of these verses as our Christian ethic (principle way of living) that we oppose the use of force in private life or in carnal warfare. We would hold this position humbly, aware of the fact that there are other believers who do not understand our position. We base this ethic of nonresistance on both the letter and the spirit of the New Testament. For us, the question is not HOW FAR

to take these verses, but rather: If one means to obey these verses at all, can he possibly participate in warfare?

A youth in Czarist Russia who had become a conscientious objector to war through the reading of the New Testament was brought before a magistrate. With strength of conviction, he told the judge of the life which loves its enemies, which does good to those who despitefully use them, which overcomes evil with good, and which refuses war.

“Yes,” said the judge, “I understand. But you must be realistic. These laws you are talking about are the laws of the kingdom of God; and it has not come yet.”

The young man straightened and said, “Sir, I recognize that it has not come for you, nor yet for Russia or the world. But the kingdom of God HAS come for me! I cannot go on hating and killing as though it had not come!”

From their beginning in 1525, as in the days of the Apostles, the Swiss Brethren held to the principle of nonresistance. Conrad Grebel, an early leader of the movement, wrote in September, 1524: **“True, believing Christians are as sheep in the midst of wolves... They use neither the worldly sword, nor engage in war, since among them taking hu-**

man life has ceased entirely, for we are no longer under the Old Covenant.” Felix Manz, a friend and co-worker of Grebel, said: **“No Christian smites with the sword nor resists evil.”** Pilgram Marpeck said of the Christians: **“ALL bodily, worldly, carnal, earthly fighting, conflicts, and wars are annulled and abolished among them....”** The Dutch Mennonites, at first, took the same stand as the Swiss Brethren. One of them, Dirk Philips testified: **“The people of the Lord arm themselves not with carnal weapons...but with the armor of God, with the weapons of righteousness...and with Christian patience, with which to possess their souls and overcome all their enemies.”** Another one of them, Menno Simons, wrote: **“The regenerated do not go to war, nor engage in strife. They are the children of peace....Their sword is the sword of the Spirit which they wield with a good conscience through the Holy Ghost.”** [1]

Matthew 5:9 says, **“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”**

Some Incidents From History:

In the 1700's, while some persecution was still going on in Switzerland, a number of unprincipled young fellows went at nighttime to an old

Mennonite minister's home in the Emmenthal, Canton Bern. To test his sincerity as a defender of the principle of nonresistance, they began to tear off the thatch from the roof of his house.

The minister, awakened from his slumber by the commotion on the roof, arose and saw the work of destruction. What did this man of God do? No doubt, the scene stirred his heart to indignation, but he did not act upon such an impulse. Silently praying, he returned to the house and addressed his wife, "Mother, you had better arise and prepare a meal. Workmen have come to us." His wife was startled but soon understood.

Meanwhile, the marauders continued their malicious work. After a while, the aged minister went out to them. "You have worked long, and no doubt are hungry," he said, "now come in and eat." Very slowly and with considerable hesitation, they came down from the roof and went into the house. Finally, upon another invitation, they sat down at the table. Then the old patriarch bared his head and folded his hands. He prayed so fervently, so lovingly, and so earnestly, both for them and for himself, that their hearts were softened and their consciences were awakened. They became heartily ashamed of what

they had done. The food seemed not to taste good anymore. They arose and went again to the roof, not to finish their work of destruction, but to reconstruct the roof as best they could, that the fiery coals, which had gathered upon their heads, might cease to cause them pain. [2]

Many years ago in the Moslem country of Syria, Abu Dugaam was being severely persecuted because he had begun to believe in the teachings of the foreign missionaries. His father-in-law had taken his new wife away from him. The villagers had torn down his new house. Finally, when he refused again and again to give up his belief in his wonderful book, the Bible, he was led to a pile of wood and was given a chance to say his last words. Much to the surprise of the excited mob, he neither cursed nor wept. Ignorant of the ancient martyrs, but with their selfsame spirit, he knelt and prayed for each one of his persecutors. Either in fear or penitence, one by one the angry crowd stole quietly back to the village, leaving Abu Dugaam alone, but nearer to his God. [3]

In 295 A.D., a youth named Maximilian stood before the military commander in North Africa for induction into the Roman army. Maximilian was a Christian who accepted Christ's teachings.

“I cannot serve as a soldier,” declared Maximilian, “I cannot do evil. I am a Christian.”

The commander put all the pressure on him that he could. “Put on the uniform,” he said, “or it will cost you your life!”

Maximilian was not to be frightened. Even the thought of execution did not move him. He knew his Lord, and he seemed to have no fear of death. Beyond death he would be with Christ! “I shall not perish,” he told the commander, “But when I have forsaken this world, my soul shall live with Christ my Lord.”

Young Maximilian, only 21, was executed for civil disobedience because he dared to stand for the beliefs the Christian church has taught from apostolic times. [4]

A little frame church on the outskirts of a small city was attacked by vandals who wrecked everything they could. The church people gathered for worship on Sunday morning only to find things in a state of ruin. The minister gathered the people together outside and they sang hymns, served communion, and gave their offerings and tithes. Then he preached. At the close of the service, he asked that the members never tell outsiders what happened. Those who were willing would come back on Monday with

tools, and work would begin on the restoration of the building.

Most of the members reported for work the next day, and the women provided dinner for the workers. The work proceeded as in the days of Nehemiah, when the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. The people had a will to work, and many visitors came to see what was going on. The members often stopped working to sing hymns of praise right in the midst of the wreckage.

One day as the building was nearing completion, a group of young men stopped by. The minister suspected that some of them were the guilty ones. Still, the church people were kind to them and sang for them. Some of the young men actually helped with the work.

On the first Sunday of holding a service in the restored building, the house was full of worshippers. When the invitation was given, a dozen young men came forward and confessed to wrecking the building. They asked God and the congregation to forgive them. They accepted Christ and were baptized. One of the young men later became a preacher.

Only the Christian way could solve the problem to the glory of God. No wonder that the church grew from that day forward. [5] —to be continued.

marriages

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

Beachy-Stoltzfus

Bro. Keith, son of Dale and Esther Beachy, Dundee, OH, and Sis. Kris Andrea, daughter of Steve and MaryEtta Stoltzfus, Kennedyville, MD, at Chestertown Baptist for Harmony Christian Fellowship, on April 14, 2007, by Steve Stoltzfus, the bride's father.

Gingerich-Gingerich

Bro. Marcus, son of Mark and Rhoda Gingerich, Plain City, OH, and Sis. Andrea Kay, daughter of Dannie and Laura Gingerich, Sullivan, IL, at New Life Tabernacle for Trinity Christian Fellowship, on June 16, 2007, by Lonnie Beachy.

Helmuth-Miller

Bro. Joel, son of Glen and Mary Alice Helmuth, Bremen, IN, and Sis. Joyce, daughter of Mahlon and Irene Miller, Bremen, IN, at United Pentecostal Church for Clay Street A.M. Church, Bourbon, IN, on July 20, 2007, by John A. Miller.

Hostetler-Beachy

Darrel, son of Myron and Margaret Hostetler, Halsey, OR, and Sis. Carolyn, daughter of David and Betty Beachy, Franklin, KY, at First Baptist Church, Franklin, KY, for Russellville Mennonite Church on June 23, 2007, by Eli Beachy. (Bro. Darrel's first wife was Valerie, daughter of Ray and Gladys Yoder, Cedar Creek, TX. Valerie died of cancer on November 27, 2004, at 27 years of age.)

Lengacher-Coblentz

Bro. Marcus, son of Floyd and Marietta Lengacher, Summersville, KY, and Sis. Glenda, daughter of Ed and Kathy Coblentz, Summersville, KY, at First Baptist Church for Summersville Mennonite on June 15, 2007, by James Hershberger.

Mast-Hershberger

Bro. Loren, son of Stanley and Edna Mast, Concord, AR, and Sis. Kayla, daughter of Dale and Jeanie Hershberger, Mountain View, AR, at Church of Christ for Shadylawn, on May 26, 2007, by Dale Hershberger, the bride's father.

Mast-Miller

Bro. Michael, son of Elsie and the late Lowell Mast, Mountain View, AR, and Sis. Eunice, daughter of Marvin and Ruth Miller, Suceava, Romania, at Arbana Baptist Church for Shadylawn on June 2, 2007, by Elmer Gingerich.

THE OPEN HAND HOLDS MORE FRIENDS

than does the clenched fist.

Miller-Schlabach

Bro. Eric, son of Sam and Vera Miller, Drasco, AR, and Sis. Kristy, daughter of Brian and Dorothy Schlabach, Mountain View, AR, at Foothills Baptist Church for Shadylawn, on June 30, 2007, by Brian Schlabach, father of the bride.

Miller-Summy

Bro. Arlen, son of Maynard and Shirley Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA, and Sis. Naomi, daughter of Edwin and the late Nancy Summy, Stuarts Draft, VA, at Pilgrim Christian Fellowship on April 14, 2007, by Bennie Byler.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. Jonathan, son of David and Effie Miller, Shreve, OH, and Sis. Ruth Yvonne, daughter of Bennie and Rhoda Yoder, Holmesville, OH, at Messiah Christian Fellowship for Peniel Christian Fellowship, on June 23, 2007, by Nathan Yoder.

Peachey-Yoder

Bro. Jason, son of Earl and Edna Peachey, Mattawana, PA, and Sis. Nancy, daughter of Richard and Susan Yoder, Hutchinson, KS, at Yoder Mennonite for Cedar Crest A.M. Church on July 7, 2007, by Paul L. Miller.

Stoltzfus-Lapp

Bro. Merlin, son of Melvin and Mary Ellen Stoltzfus, Gap, PA, and Sis. Katrina, daughter of Thomas and Iva Lapp, Gap, PA, at Ridgeview Mennonite Church for Mine Road Church, on July 7, 2007, by John U. Lapp.

Yoder-Miller

Bro. Raymond, son of Raymond and Linda Yoder, Adams, NY, and Alina, daughter of Walter and Wilma Miller, Minerva, OH, at First Christian Church, Malvern, for Christian Fellowship, on June 23, 2007, by Perry Troyer.

Yoder-Woldron

Bro. Timothy Wade, son of Noah and Anna Mae Yoder, Pratts, VA, and Sis. Rachel Leah, daughter of Bill and Cari Woldron, Louisa, VA, at Prospect Hill Plantation for Gospel Light Mennonite Church, on June 1, 2007, by Melvin Yoder.

cradle roll

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

Akins, Jason and Monica (Peachey), Allensville, PA, first child and dau., Makayla Jewel, June 4, 2007.

Beiler, Matthew Lamar and Yvonne Joy (Swarey), Paradise, PA, second child and dau., Kendra Rose, June 15, 2007.

Burkholder, Scott and Suzanne (Troyer), Bourbon, IN, first child and dau., Kaelyn Eileen, July 16, 2007.

Byler, Joseph and Dianne (Overholt), Franklin, KY, first child and son, Derrick Joseph, July 7, 2007.

Eash, Kathleen, Purdin, MO, first child and son, Kyle David, born Nov. 30, 2003; received for adoption, April 3, 2007.

Gingerich, Joel and Dorcas (Sommers),
Minerva, OH, fifth child, third dau.,
Cecilia Joy, June 14, 2007.

Gingerich, Steven and Katie (Yoder),
Danville, AL, fifth child, second son,
Jeremiah Ezra, Feb. 21, 2007

Helmuth, Dan and Laura (Yoder),
Brookfield, MO, sixth child, fifth dau.,
Leona, June 29, 2007.

Hershberger, Conrad and Esther (Koop),
Stuarts Draft, VA, second child and son,
Jordan Micah Dan, July 5, 2007.

Hershberger, Kelvin and Beth (Her-
shberger), Stuarts Draft, VA, third and
fourth children, twins, second and third
dau's, Veronica Raquel and Olivia Kate,
July 5, 2007.

Kauffman, Lavon and Maria (Beachy),
Belleville, PA, first child and dau., Ma-
rissa Elizabeth, July 1, 2007.

Lengacher, Galen and Esther (Miller),
Summersville, KY, second child and dau.,
Darika Serene, July 16, 2007.

McGrath, Thomas and Erika (Border),
Minerva, OH, fourth child, second dau.,
Elizabeth Chloe, June 13, 2007.

Miller, Jonathan and Mary Kathryn (Yo-
der), Cottage Grove, TN, fourth child,
(one stillborn), first dau., BrendaLou
Faith, July 5, 2007.

Miller, Kim and Monica (Beachy),
Sugarcreek, OH, fourth child, second
son, Logan Reese, June 7, 2007.

Nisly, Wayne and Sharon (Brenneman),
Hartselle, AL, third child, second dau.,
Christina Grace, March 3, 2007.

Raber, David and Barbara (Detweiler),
Bourbon, IN, sixth child, third son, Mi-
chael Jay, June 27, 2007.

Schmucker, Abner and Angela (Nisly),
Partridge, KS, fifth child, fourth son,
Tristan Blake, July 7, 2007.

Stoll, Leonard and Lana (Knepp), Odon,
IN, fourth child, second dau., Lenora
Dawn, May 21, 2007.

Stoltzfus, Alphonse and Teresa (Troyer),
Gap, PA, fifth child, third dau., Larisa
Lynn, July 7, 2007.

Strubhar, Carl and Lillian (Miller),
Perkins, OK, first child and dau., Naomi
Promise, June 23, 2007.

Troyer, Wayne and Ilona (Lapp), Free-
port, OH, first child and son, Brady
Nicholas, June 21, 2007.

Weaver, Duane and Ruth (Miller),
Stuarts Draft, VA, fifth child, third son,
Timothy Loyal, June 4, 2007.

Yoder, LaVern and Anita (Kline),
Hartselle, AL, first child and dau., Jayln
Kiel, April 19, 2007.

Yoder, Ralph and Janice (Nissley), Paris, TN, second child, first dau., Leandra Fern, July 3, 2007.

Yoder, Reuben and Mary Lynn (Smucker), Malta, OH, first child and son, Nicholas Drew, July 5, 2007.

Zook, James and Becky (Overholt), Chesapeake, VA, fifth child and dau. (one deceased), Madeline Hope, June 15, 2007.

ordination

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

Bro. Jonathan Overholt, 41, Russellville, KY, was ordained to the office of minister at Franklin Mennonite Church, Franklin, KY, on April 1, 2007. Preordination messages were brought by Donnie Brenneman, Virginia Beach, VA.

The charge was given by Lavern Eash, Whiteville, TN, assisted by Donnie Brenneman and Jim Yoder. Also in the lot were Michael Overholt, Stephen Kramer, and James Overholt.

obituary

Hostetler, Savilla B., 71, died at Ohessa Manor, Lewistown, PA, on July 15, 2007. She was born May 12, 1936, at Belleville, PA, daughter of the late John and Lena (Bawel) Yoder.

She was a member of Valley View A.M. Church, Belleville.

On July 29, 1951, she was married to Elam K. Hostetler, who survives. Also surviving are children: Lena Mae (Gary) Stuter, Milroy; Steven R. (Rose) Hostetler, Sudlerville, MD; John E. (Twila) Hostetler, Belleville; Martha Hostetler, McVeytown, PA; and N. David (Karla) Hostetler, Beavertown, PA; as well as eight grandchildren.

Other survivors include sisters: Naomi (Louis) Yoder, Bellville; Mary E. Yoder, Belleville; Nancy (Andrew) Beachy, New Berlin; brothers: Kore (Susanna) Yoder, Belleville; Raymond (Ann) Yoder, Free Union, VA.

Preceding her in death were brothers: Benjamin and Aaron and two sisters: Lomie Yoder and Elsie Beachy.

The funeral was held on July 18 at Valley View, with Eli King, David King, Jesse L. Spicher, Earl Peachey, and Matthew Peachey serving. Burial was in Locust Grove Cemetery.

FAITH REACHES OUT TO WHAT THE WORD OF GOD SAYS,
ABOVE WHAT MEN OF LEARNING SAY.

observations

Body piercing has become common and culturally respectable. We see women whose church may be only a few decades removed from visual identity and plainness, displaying elaborate hardware dangling from their ears. Others are more modest. Their pierced ears accommodate something less noticeable and more tasteful.

Presently the masculine population is also attaching unnatural fixtures to the ears and sometimes the nose. I have noticed that sometimes a number of rings are attached to an ear. They have a slight resemblance to the rings we used to put in hogs' noses to limit their unruly and destructive behavior.

This is not surprising for people who do not profess Christianity. But recently I was shocked and also disappointed when I noticed several instances of the practice in persons whose upbringing would have considered such practices unthinkable.

One was an adolescent/teenager. The other was a 60-ish man who has some denominational prominence. I appreciated the privilege of meeting this man whose father I had known well more than 50 years ago. I have no simple explanation as to why such

persons are drawn to practices that seem so foreign to Christian values. I realize that a reactionary spirit does cause persons to do strange things. Giving the Lord Jesus, His Word, and His Church their rightful place of high priority is certainly a helpful safeguard.

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An ear-piercing event at a Wal-Mart in Wichita was recently reported in *The Hutchinson News*, (July 5, '07).

An employee in company with the mother of a daughter about five years old was attempting to pierce the ears of the young child. The child resisted by screaming, crying and trying to protect her ears with her hands. But the adults persisted with their project.

A shopper, Marilyn Johnson, took pity on the child and called 911 to report child abuse.

The officers who responded to the call determined that no laws had been violated. At the request of a Wal-Mart official, Johnson was issued a warning for trespassing and escorted from the store.

Ms. Johnson said, "If I'm crazy for calling the police, then maybe I'm crazy, but I don't think so."

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The mode of baptism is supremely important to many who favor im-

mersion. There was a time when I felt that the Scriptures favor this method over affusion. Probably the passage in Romans 6, "...buried with him by baptism..." was a major factor of influence for me. There are, of course, numerous references of baptisms taking place "in Jordan."

When considering the "burial" in Romans 6, it is important to discern whether this is to be taken as a literal, physical burial or whether it is a spiritual burial of the old man of sin. It is important to notice that death is not physical but symbolic and spiritual. This is consistent with verse 6. "Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Since to spiritualize the death, crucifixion, and resurrection of the believer is the only reasonable option, it would seem strange to insist on a literal burial.

George R. Brunk I (1872-1938) has noted the various washings and anointings of the Old Testament seem to have pre-figured baptism. Without exception the substance was applied to the person, not the reverse.

I notice that according to Strong's Concordance, baptism "with water" is used a number of times. The term "baptism *in* water" never occurs. Philip and the eunuch, Acts 8:38,

both went down into the water where the latter received baptism. It is not conclusive that he was immersed.

Some would argue that the word baptism means immersion. I Corinthians 10:2 reports that our fathers "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." This could not possibly mean immersion since they passed through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Egyptians who pursued them were immersed, but they were not baptized.

The late Amish bishop, John D. Yoder used to say that the Bible is silent on the mode of baptism.

The above lines are not written to create needless discussion on a subject that has at times received too much attention and "contention." The important thing is that recipients have repented of and renounced their sins, have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. No mode of baptism would compensate for lack in this area. But when we meet persons who are vocal and adamant that only immersion is Scriptural, we believe the above observations are in order.

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A person who attended a "peace meeting" remarked that some people became rather militant in their peace witness.


We should be careful that the manner of our defense of truth does not

compromise the spirit of Christ.

David Aikman in *Christianity Today*, (August, 2007) writes: “What disturbs me is the extent to which some Christians have turned themselves into self-appointed attack dogs. They attack not only opponents of Christianity, but also fellow believers whose doctrinal positions they

disapprove.”

He supports his concern by citing many quotes that are judgmental, harsh, and uncharitable.

To be steadfast and unmovable speaks of stability. To defend our position with wrong attitudes and methods weakens both our position and our witness. —DLM 

Minister's Meeting Messages—2007

This is a condensation of a message given at the annual Ministers' Meetings, April 3-5, 2007, in rural Hutchinson, KS. The set of eight cassette tapes or CD's with 10 messages (plus three sermon responses and a men's and women's session on Tape 9) is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$45, postpaid.

4. Wholesome Intercongregational Relationships

—Daniel Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Many scriptural principles of good personal relationships apply to congregational relationships. For example, Ephesians 4:25-32 says, “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth to his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun

go down upon your wrath; Neither give place to the devil. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. [Malice is active ill will.] And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

We have the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12. In essence, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” The two greatest commandments have been referred to already. We are to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Let us read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7, responsively.

Much of what we do in the church will end, but charity will not end.

In James 2:1-4 and 8-9, being a respecter of persons [partiality] is portrayed as the opposite of loving one's neighbor as oneself. It springs from pride and pride is sin. Ephesians 2:11-13 and 18-22 specifically addresses the Jew-Gentile issue in the early church, reminding them (and us) that we are one body in Christ Jesus. In our time I believe we also need to think about how we shall relate to congregations at home, but also to congregations in other countries like Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Kenya.

In Acts 8:14, we are told that when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. In Acts 10, Cornelius received new life in Christ. In chapter 11:1-3, these Jews were facing the fact that Peter had done things that Jews were not to do. In verse 4, Peter began to tell them about what had happened when the great sheet was let down in front of him with all manner of animals in it. Peter was careful to tell them why he did what he did. I believe he explained what he understood God to be saying in verse 9b: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

You may say to me, "But Brother Daniel, that had to do with animals. That had nothing to do with congregations and relationships." I think Peter understood those animals to mean *people*. It wasn't about eating lizards or pigs. Think about that, *Do not call that unclean which God has cleansed*. Would it be fair to say that if someone has experienced salvation through Jesus Christ, I am not to belittle that? Think about that when you relate to non-Beachy people. Think about that when you think about the Baptists and the Presbyterians and others.

In Acts 11:27-30, a new angle of relationships is opened. We see teachers sent back and forth across the church. But we also see sharing for financial needs. In Romans 15:27-29, Paul speaks about his plans to go to Jerusalem again to deliver an offering there which the Gentile churches had taken for the [Jewish] believers in Jerusalem.

I have heard some interesting reasons why the church in Jerusalem became poor. Maybe it was because they had sold their things and had things in common. Possibly so, but let us think about this: The Jerusalem church was the seed of taking the Gospel to the rest of the world. How many of our congregations have

become poor from taking the Gospel to the rest of the world?

Look at Romans 16 and think about how many people Paul knew in a church he had never visited. Some of that was through travel and communication, but the mention of those with the person to be greeted indicates a local house group. That seems to say to me that there were a number of congregations in Rome, even though we aren't told how they related to each other.

In Romans 16:17, 18 and Colossians 4:15, 16, Paul addresses a number of fellowships. He may have been writing almost like someone today writing in *Calvary Messenger*. This is going out to different congregations. In 1 Peter 1:1, Peter addresses the strangers (people he had never met) throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (five cities in Asia Minor which are scattered over half of modern Turkey). So Peter wrote to people in a very big area.

Did he fax or e-mail his letters? Obviously not, but I think he expected this letter to circulate among the churches. I say this because I think there were lots of small congregations scattered all over that part of the world. I believe these congregations interrelated with one another much like we relate to each other.

2 John 7-11 speaks of hospitality

for those who are true to God and of refusing tolerance to those who are not faithful. This is particularly relevant coming from a man who wrote much about love. His desire also in his writing is to communicate the love of Jesus Christ. In 3 John 9 and 10, we read of Diotrephes, who wouldn't allow certain teachers to teach in the church. If church members invited such teachers into their homes, Diotrephes would excommunicate them. John was not enthused about that abuse of power.

In summary, in the early church there was a sharing of leaders and teachers among congregations. There was a sharing of finances, similar to some of our medical plans. Sometimes, as a deacon, I get a letter asking if we could share for a special financial need. I think that's great! There was communication and travel. There were newsletters.

In Lancaster County, we have a number of Beachy congregations. Perhaps every five years, we assign topics to all the ministers that they are to preach in all of the congregations.

We also saw warnings in the Scriptures that we read. Warnings about dissenters, and that we should not associate with them. We saw the warning to Peter that what God has cleansed, he was not to call common

or unclean. The first verses of Ephesians 4 speak about unity—“one God, one faith, one Lord, one baptism.” In John 17:20-23, we have Jesus’ prayer for our unity.

Let us think of practical things. Here is a short list of Bible doctrines. Belief in:

- The inspiration of Scripture
- A Triune God
- Creation by God (six days, approximately 6,000 years ago)
- The Fall of Man (otherwise, why do we need a Savior?)
- Satan, enemy of all that is good
- The New Testament for our day
- The ordinances
- Nonconformity

Here are some questions:

1. How can we practice neighborliness in our communities without compromising principle?
2. Is denominational loyalty okay?
3. How can we have denominational loyalty without arrogance?
4. Within the constituency, what are the benefits of working with other congregations?
5. How do we balance working together with autonomy?
6. Do differences in practice and conviction frustrate our youth in our communities, in our service units, or in Bible School?

Let me offer this: The more of these

doctrines and practices we agree on and see eye to eye on, the closer we can work together.

In the matter of not compromising principles, I want us carefully and prayerfully to consider these questions: Is this a Bible principle? What [part of this question] is cultural? What is my personal preference? My plea is: Don’t teach culture and personal preference as Bible principle. Bible principle is expressed in Romans 12:2, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

I may comb my hair differently from the prevailing styles, but what about my mindset? What about my work? What about how much money I need to make?

What about mindset? Romans 12:3 teaches humility and modesty, clearly biblical values. 1 Peter 3:15 teaches that we are to be ready to give a reason of the hope that we have. In Lancaster County, we are asked many questions by tourists about our beliefs. I believe these are to be answered about the hope within us, rather than some good interpretation of biblical teaching that sets us apart from the rest of society.

How can we practice neighborliness without compromising princi-

ples? Who did Jesus say was “neighbor to him that fell among thieves”? The person that helped when there was a need. We can freely help other congregations whether they are like us or not. If there’s a need, we can help! That’s neighborliness and it’s one way of reaching out without compromising principle.

Is denominational loyalty okay? How can we have it without being arrogant? Arrogance is of much graver concern than denominational loyalty. Arrogance is pride and pride is sin. At the Last Supper, on the last evening they were to be with their teacher, they were squabbling about who would be the greatest. As a school teacher, I would feel like I had failed to get my teaching across if my students so misunderstood my teaching. Is that how Jesus felt? I think that’s why he washed their feet.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22, Paul speaks of the extent to which he went to win men to Christ. Let us ask God to give us denominational loyalty without arrogance, and with that, servants’ hearts.

What are the benefits of working with other congregations? One is these Ministers’ Meetings. Have you been blessed here? I have. This is one of the benefits of working together as a constituency. Other benefits include youth having greater choice

of a marriage companion. In foreign missions, if we each tried to have only our own mission programs, it would be quite a burden. I like the way we can work together with medical and financial needs.


So how do we balance working together with autonomy? Let us not run competition with other congregations in our communities. I’ll let you think about the practical outworking of that, but let’s not compete.

Do our differences frustrate our youth? I think sometimes they do. I think there is strength in similarity. It can have a unifying and stabilizing effect. That effect is seen in Acts 16:4, where Paul and others took the decisions of the Jerusalem conference and passed them along wherever they went and the churches were strengthened. The greater frustration comes in when specific applications are taught as Bible principles. We need to actively teach tolerance to our children. I have taught school for many years. Children have taught me this: “Anything different is dumb.” I could give you many illustrations of that. But, please teach children that that’s not true!

My wife went to public schools until about fourth grade and felt well-accepted by the other children. That school was staffed by women and there was respect throughout

the school. Then her parents moved and they were pleased because they could finally send their children to a Christian school. But the children experienced more ridicule in the Christian school than they had in the public school. We must work on that!

In Colossians 3:12-14 the redeemed are described as being clothed with love. In Revelation 7:9-12 we see them gathered around the throne of God, praising Jesus with saints from all over the world.

Let's remember, "What God has cleansed, call not thou common." 

Yes, I'll Pray for Susie

Simon Schrock, Catlett, VA

Telemarketers and uninvited sales people call at inconvenient times when we are busy with other things. There was a time when I identified with folks who smiled as they described how they got rid of such intruders and how they "told them off." Such stuff can become fodder for Sunday afternoon conversation that brings chuckles and laughter. I'm not in that camp anymore.

In fact, I cringe when I hear how some Christians treat those unwelcome callers. Recently, I have been focusing on how to turn those calls into a witness for Christ. It has been an interesting journey with a variety of responses. The responses range from a quick cutoff by the caller to a good discussion on matters of faith. Sometimes we close the conversation with my agreement to send them a

good book to read.

One evening, when I was making some progress on projects around the house, the phone rang and I answered. A friendly voice began to promote something related to entertainment. It wasn't immediately clear what she was promoting. "You do watch adult movies?" she remarked. I asked for clarification. Then she referred to "X-rated movies."


I did not scold her by telling that she was in a sinful occupation. Neither did I tell her she was a big sinner. I explained that I am a disciple of Jesus Christ and my relationship with Him is much better than X-rated movies. I wanted her to get the idea that living for Jesus is truly a fulfilling and peaceful experience. The conversation led me to question why I would even consider disturbing my relationship with Jesus with

X-rated movies. While these are not exact quotes of our conversation, she got the message. It soon became clear that this saleslady had an unquenched thirst for righteousness. Then she requested that I pray for her. I got her name and assured “Susie” that I’d pray for her.

The Bible instructs the servant of the Lord to be gentle to all people. “And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,...In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the knowledge of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (2 Timothy 2:23-26).

Turning unwelcome sales calls

into opportunities to witness for Christ has some personal benefits. It enhances my growth in Christ and strengthens that relationship. It can be an opportunity to confess Him “before men” (Matthew 10:32). Another benefit is that I feel better after hanging up the phone than if I would have “told him off.” My conscience doesn’t prick me about being rude and unkind. And now, I can let the Spirit of God water and till the sown seed.

Tell off the telemarketers? I’m cultivating using it as an opportunity to witness for Christ. After all, the Scripture calls for me to be thoughtful of others. Doesn’t that include intruding sales people and telemarketers, who, like me, are trying to make a living? 

My Birth Story #3

A Student in Flesh and Spirit class at CBS, 2007

I was quite young when, with my parents’ guidance, I accepted Christ at home. I really did not understand the whole idea very well, and before long I was not calling myself a Christian any more. Some time went by and I rededicated my life to Christ but soon I fell away again.

When I was 14 or 15, I responded during revival meetings at our church. This time I caught onto the process of being a Christian. I began having personal devotions, not always regularly, but much more than ever before. I was baptized about a year later.


Unfortunately, I did not grow well after my conversion. I would have my devotions and go to church but nothing seemed to come out of it. By this time I was probably 17. Gradually, my devotions were next to nothing. Our church was having problems and our youth group situation was not good.

Since my faith was not strong to begin with, the church problems tended to draw me farther and farther away from the Lord. I felt angry and bitter toward certain people, especially the church leaders. I wanted to slam them in any way I could. Finally, I had my devotions only out of duty and sometimes neglected them altogether.

God continued to draw me, and I was really looking forward to attending CBS to help me get back on track with the Lord. He answered that longing in my heart, and I left that term

with a new desire to serve the Lord.

I felt better about everything, especially my walk with Christ. My devotional life took on new meaning. God gave me the courage to ask forgiveness from my ministers about the bitterness in my life and they gladly forgave me. I looked forward to another term at CBS to increase my knowledge of God. One desire I have is to be more open about sharing the Gospel with others. I tend to feel nervous and almost clam up. I was challenged with the thought that if we were to shake hands with President Bush, we would gladly broadcast that news, but we are not as eager to tell people what Christ has done for us.

I have been learning that God cannot use us if we are not fully broken, so I want to learn more about God and continue to grow in my Christian life. 

LOYALTY THAT IS BOUGHT WILL NOT STAY BOUGHT;

sooner or later there will be a higher bidder.

Who Can Help Me?

—By a voice of experience

I have a friend who taught me a lot about how to handle rejection. This man was born and raised in a country halfway around the world. I got to know him early in life and developed a personal acquaintance with him during my adolescence.

Some years later, as he and I were driving down the road in my truck, I told him of some of the deep hurts I was going through. He looked over at me and said, “I hurt with you; I know how it hurts. Years ago, I traveled to a country where a lot of slaves were being held in very bad living conditions. They had a cruel dictator ruling over them.

“My father and I agreed that I would go and set them free. He gave me the necessary authorization and the resources to do it. But most of these slaves didn’t seem to like me. They really picked on me and tried to make me look bad.

“I kept right on with my assignment and gave my deep love to them.

I went out of my way to help them. My whole life’s goal was to set these slaves free. But they would not believe that I wanted to help them.

“One night, they mobbed me. Quickly they had me in the middle of a kangaroo trial, with trumped-up charges. They wanted me to say who I was and where I was from. When I told them, they became still angrier, tied me to a whipping post and beat me until my back was torn to shreds. O, how that hurt! But what hurt worse than that was their rejection after all I had done for them.

“They totally rejected me. Those closest to me wouldn’t even stand up for me. Some rough-and-tough soldiers nailed me to a rough-hewn cross and let me hang there. After about six hours, I died. Several men, who had been afraid to show their colors, hastily buried my lifeless body in a large, hollowed-out boulder.

“Then my Father took over and made sure that I did not stay in the




How few other laws we would need if we all
went by the Ten Commandments!

tomb. After three days of the enemy's 'solitary confinement,' I rose triumphant over death. Such mistreatment will never happen to Me again. But it still happens to those who follow Me.

"Now anyone who believes in Me has everlasting life like I do and anyone who gives his heart to Me can say no to the worst slave driver in the world, Lucifer himself."

That's what Jesus Christ said, with a heavenly smile of love and assur-

ance that He has accepted me and that He knows exactly what rejection feels like.

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son,...that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). *"...it became him...in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering... Wherefore, he is able to [comfort us]"* (from Hebrews 2:10, 18). 

mission awareness

Afghanistan

Like many other lands, Afghanistan is a needy mission field. (See "Facts of Afghanistan, August, 2007, in *Calvary Messenger*.)

Prior to sowing the seed of the Gospel, we must prepare the soil of the heart. Or do both these steps take place at the same time? In farming, preparing the soil is necessary for seed to take root and grow. Even with modern corn planting techniques, it still takes the smelly manure, the tested fertilizer, and the rugged chisel plow to prepare soil for seed to germinate. In some lands it has taken years to prepare the "soil" and have a visible church to emerge.

The following comments are taken from a newsletter, describing some experiences of preparing the soil for the gospel in a spiritually barren land. Bro. Darrell Yoder is presently spending some time in the United States. His testimony shows us a burdened heart and godly love! —FS

Being Salt and Light in Afghanistan

—Darrell Yoder, Free Union, VA

If God ever weeps, this must be one country for which His tears are shed. It is a tough place for foreign followers of The Way to live, not to mention the lot of local disciples. I think this situation has to break open

sometime. A lamp cannot be hidden indefinitely.

As in other Muslim nations, alienation and retribution come quickly for the Islamic “heretic.” In this country culture is very strong and seems to overpower Islam. The double barrel of culture and religion dictates the way one must **DO** things. Stepping outside of this means alienation. It seems like everyone is interdependent on everyone else and all are forced to maintain each other. When someone steps outside these bounds, he becomes a virtual societal nobody.

In Afghanistan, individualism is disastrously hard. In describing their situation above, I used the word “**DO**.” The cultural and religious duo of Afghanistan dictate an intricate degree of “how, when, where and what.” But Islam fails to give a satisfactory “why.” The dearth of **Light and Truth** is hoarse from crying for lack of knowledge and understanding. My experience in Afghanistan has made Christ much more meaningful to me. Praise to God is much more significant in this country where Christ is stripped of His rightful glory. I have been amazed on various occasions (again speaking of this strangled nation) of the simple, yet powerful manner in which Christ lived and taught the

truth. The potential of **Light, Salt and Seed** can be active in Afghanistan. I am convinced that a primary consequence in the witness for Christ is to **BE**. Jumping around like chickens with their heads cut off and doing many wonderful things for so many people is not the point. Unless we **ARE** alive in Christ, all we **DO** is fluff. Christ demonstrated the power of **BEING**, and out of that, He lived.

The spring water development project is moving forward toward the finish line. From the beginning of this project until now this has been an interesting journey for me. I’ve had a cultural dunk living at a guesthouse surrounded by Afghans. Working with an engineer who does not speak good English and with villagers who need a translator to communicate with me has been a real challenge. The reasoning of the Western mind sometimes struggles with the gymnastics of the Eastern mind.

In this project, the villagers have been generally happy to do their part in the work—bringing rocks for the water storage tanks, digging trenches for the water line, and hauling sand, cement, and rebar up the mountain from the base village. Much of this work demands the use for their donkeys (Land Cruisers, we called them). One of the interesting scenes of the project was to watch the young boys

bringing the donkey cruisers loaded with rocks into the village, then climbing on the donkey and bouncing enthusiastically back to the rock quarry for another load. The water lines needed to be laid down and hooked up. Then we tested the lines. Needless to say, there have been some difficulties along the way.

My translator friend, Abdullah, is just a bit older than I am and enjoys discussing things. He and I have engaged in many conversations. We have nearly an hour and thirty minutes to ride on an extremely bumpy road in a Russian “jeep” to the village and then back to the guesthouse at the end of the day. This gives us opportunity to discuss many subjects.

We have talked about getting rich (or not), how men relate to women (a significant factor in Afghanistan), and the issue of sin and judgment. We have discussed the question, “What is truth?” I find my translator friend is unique in that he does not become quickly offended or excessively argumentative when I ask him many questions. Since I have refused to convert to Islam, he has washed his hands clean about his responsibility for me. He is really concerned about me.

One day when we talked about sin, I tried to give an understandable, limited-language explanation of sin and suggested he should continue his


search in the dictionary. After seeing the vague definition in the dictionary: “doing something your religion says you should not do,” I agreed to write down a definition of sin for him. It was hard to explain what it is, not just what it does or where it comes from.

Another day as we were traveling to Kabul on the bus, he plugged the one earpiece from the headphone of the MP3 player into his ear (I had one, too) and listened to someone speak on the problem of evil. Abdullah was ready to hear more truth. So we listened to “Convictions that changed the world” by Ravi Zacharias. This speaker centered his message on the commitment, persecution, and spreading of the Early Church. Abdullah said to me, “But there are two things yet remaining: the prophet and the Koran. Without these, everything is nothing.” May this man find Truth!

The Afghan folks in the mountains were very nice, even in their struggle to exist. What will happen with these villagers? They will probably continue sounding the prayer call five times a day. Likely they will continue to eke out a living hauling salt blocks with their donkeys. They will continue to exist until they die. Then they will exist in an everlasting reality. What will happen to these sun-baked elders?

What will become of those smiling, grimy children?

Who cares? Are they not just some unfortunate, backward folk who don't want to know better? I hardly know how to talk about the needs and opportunities in these eastern

countries. But I have experienced by living among them that there is the potential to toss some salt into people's mouths when you see an opening (an expression used by some missionaries in sharing Gospel salt with needy people.) 

helpers at home

Unexpected Change

Mary June Glick

I'm learning that writing for *Calvary Messenger* can be a dangerous commitment. Either God has a sense of humor or He takes us at our word and tries our hearts to see if we really practice what we write.

As I was contemplating about what to write this month, I suddenly remembered my article from last month, entitled, "Older Years, a Season of Joy." I almost had to chuckle. These past three weeks have definitely tested my joy and I guess I need to admit that they are also a part of the aging process. So now you're probably waiting to hear my story.

It all began with my weekly house cleaning. As I was sweeping the living room, I somehow tripped over a cord and fell—breaking my wrist. Ten days later, when the pain had become almost unbearable, the

doctor discovered I needed surgery because the bones weren't mending properly. Yesterday, they cut my cast to relieve the pressure and hopefully alleviate the pain. I thought I could bear pain, but after three weeks of almost unbearable pain, I find that I've become physically and emotionally exhausted. I confess I have not been responding with joy all the time. So that brings me to rethink last month's article. I will try to process my thoughts and give hope to you who are experiencing the difficulties of older years.

Pain is a lonely road to travel. No one else knows exactly what we are feeling. Even those who are closest to us and care deeply cannot reach inside that tunnel of pain. Pain has a way of distorting reality. The nights seem twice their normal length, regular activities assume momentous

proportions, and nothing tastes, looks, or feels as good as usual. We like to think this is a good time to read and pray, but even that is difficult. God tends to seem far away. This is a time to rest in God's love. Ask someone else to pray with and for you. Fill your mind with positive, wholesome thoughts.

Develop a grateful spirit. Joy comes through the love and care of others. It is up to us to appreciate and be grateful for each act of kindness. It is easy to become so absorbed in our own pain that we fail to recognize or acknowledge the kindness of others. Our husbands or other caregivers may not do everything around the house the way we would like to have them done. We may even be dependent on them for personal care. My husband is doing a good job of combing my hair, even though it's

not his favorite job. I try to keep a sense of humor to help break up the stressful moments.

Find the good in the bad situations. One good time that came out of my experience was having my 13-year-old granddaughters spend a week with us. I couldn't take them anywhere or do special things with them, but I could listen to them. I will always treasure those serious conversations we had together even late at night when they sat up with me. We made special memories together.

Can we experience joy in these dark seasons of our lives? We must remember that joy is an inner expression of peace. It is the assurance of God's presence, and it is the quiet reflection in the heart of hope in the future.

Yes, we can find joy in the darkness amid the pain. 

junior messages

Sending Forth God's Light

Anita Yoder

I sure wish old Jack Harmon would be concerned about the lighthouse grounds," Everett muttered. He passed the property on his way to the small town of Sedgwick, Maine, for his weekly supplies.

There had been a storm the night

before and now twigs and leaves littered Jack Harmon's yard, while gaps on the brown-roofed cottage showed where shingles had been torn loose by the boisterous wind. But Jack was not to be seen working in the yard.

"He's probably up working on the

lights,” Everett decided.

Coming into town, Everett noticed Dave Jenkins tying his team of horses at the hitching post outside Warner’s Grocery.

“Hello there, Dave!” Everett greeted the middle-aged man as he guided his team in beside Dave’s.

“Oh, good morning, Everett! You surprised me.” Dave turned from tying the horses to the hitching post.

The two men ambled slowly into the store, discussing the weather.

“Say, what a nasty one we had last night!” Dave exclaimed. “I spent a whole hour cleaning up the mess in our yard.”

“Sure was a nasty one, alright,” Everett agreed. “But it looks like Jack isn’t planning on spending the day cleaning the lighthouse grounds. He’s kept busy with the lights. His age keeps him from moving as fast any more. Jack hasn’t lost a ship yet. I’d sure hate to see him leave.”

“Well,” Dave said thoughtfully, “You know, maybe he needs someone to help him a little.”

“Help him?” asked Everett. “But you and me both have farm work to do and ...”

Dave interrupted, “We both have our families to help us. Why, I trust my Charlie to go on with things any day.”

“You’re right,” Everett agreed.

“Maybe some other men could help, too. That would make a lot of difference. How’re ya thinking of letting others know?”

“I didn’t think about that,” Dave admitted, stroking his chin thoughtfully.

“We could do it ourselves the first time,” Everett suggested. “Then every time we go to town we could tell someone else.”

“I guess you’re right,” Dave agreed. “Since there is always someone at the hardware, or the grocery or the feed store, we ought to be able to get the news out fast.”

After deciding to work at the light house every Saturday for at least two hours, Dave and Everett paid their purchases and left.

Every week the number of men increased until almost every man in the Sedgwick area had helped. Soon the grounds began to look much better. Jack humbly expressed his thanks over and over for the men’s helpfulness.


One Saturday as Dave and Everett hammered away at the board fence, Dave commented, “Everett, this is much more worthwhile than fussing at Jack’s neglect.”

“Yes,” Everett agreed. “Every time I wake up at night and see the light from the lighthouse on the hill, I feel good. I’m helping Jack, making

it possible for him to do his best at keeping that light shining?”

“You know what that reminds me of?” Dave asked.

“No,” Everett replied.

“I think of us as God’s children.” Dave explained. “It is much better to work together to send forth God’s light, than to let one person struggle alone to keep it burning.” 

youth messages

Dear Youth,

I expect everyone is really busy, as I received only a few responses this month. This makes me curious as to what you are busy doing.

Nowadays it seems that everyone is busy. If we are not, it is assumed that we are either lazy or unmotivated. But ... is busyness synonymous with productivity? Not really. Sometimes I am amazed at how extremely busy we can be and yet produce little that is of any real worth. Can a person be busy and productive at the same time? Is it possible to be busy, yet not frantic?

When reading through the Gospels, it appears that Jesus was always busy, yet never in a hurry. He always seemed to take the time to stop whatever He was doing to have a long discussion with someone or to bless someone in need. So what was His secret?

First, “He did not entangle Himself with the affairs of this life.” Each of us is also faced with that choice. If

we become “entangled,” our mental and emotional energy is **consumed** rather than **invested**. Refusing to become “entangled” allows us the freedom to really live Christ’s Gospel among our relatives, church family and neighbors.

Second, “Jesus maximized each moment throughout the day.” What was the secret here? Might it be His preparation at the beginning of each day when He went alone with God before daybreak? Was it His connection with God that prepared Him to be ready “in season and out of season” to bless, nurture, teach, comfort, rebuke, pray ... or whatever else was needed at the moment? No wonder people recognized Him as God!

Someone has observed that we cannot expect to act like Jesus in the moment, unless we have first decided to take up His life. So being a follower of Christ depends not so much on our life’s work, but on how connected and alert we are to the opportunities right

“under our noses” while we work. Two men work with their children. The one works with his children day after day and little by little loses their hearts. The other works with his children day after day and brings them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Two young men go to work each day. The one man works all day without saying a word about his faith to his fellow employees, but then “witnesses” at nursing homes every other month. The other young man reads Bible stories to his fellow employees during lunch break. What is the difference? The latter in each of these situations has a relationship with his heavenly Father that enables him to “seize the moment.”

Third, “Jesus did only those things that pleased the Father.” His life did

not revolve around the pursuit of personal pleasure, financial accomplishment, or religion. His life revolved around the calling He had received from God. This one is perhaps the hardest one for us. Each of us has a calling from God, that at times conflicts with our own agenda. So a question for us to consider as we analyze our lives ... in the decisions of each day ... when push comes to shove...what gets pushed aside: our agenda or God’s calling? When we push the call of God aside, we are always the losers.

Do you have some extra time and money? Invest it in something that will not rust, depreciate, get stolen, or “put you to sleep” spiritually.

—EE 

This Month's QUESTION

Our current financial situation in America gives youth more reward for their labor than perhaps any other time in history. In light of this, What advice do you have as to how youth should invest their time and their money?

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

I think the primary and most important advice is to ask God for wisdom in how to invest our time and money. Recently our youth group had what we called a “Good Deed Night.” Instead of having our normal weekly youth activ-

ity (volleyball, Bible study, etc.), we got together at someone’s house and helped them with yard and garden work. It was an enjoyable evening, working together, along with the fulfillment of helping someone in need.

Another thing I think of is leaving our homes for a short period of time and going on a mission trip. This would involve investing our own money in expenses that are a part of such a trip, as well as giving up other things we could be doing if we stayed at home. Above all, we should seek to bring glory to God in all that we do.

—*Maria Nisly, Geneva, IN*

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As youth, I think we tend to lose sight of the bigger picture, which is God's kingdom being advanced in the world. I'm thinking that one of this world's biggest needs is genuine love. In order to meet this need, we need to be able to sacrifice our time in order to communicate this love to others. It's much more convenient to experience the world's problems from a distance, rather than entering into people's lives and really caring. This can play out in a million different ways, even in things like taking time for the elderly, or volunteering for a local AIDS support group, etc., etc.

As youth, we probably have more time on our hands than we ever will. [until retirement-PLM] And with the liberal income of many

youth, we should easily be able to afford investing our time in others. As youth, we have the exceptional ability to contribute generously to charities and local needs. We also have the unique opportunity to prepare for future housing needs and so on. Even in this, our driving motivation needs to be in sync with the bigger picture. Wise financial planning can enable one to serve more freely later in life. In the final analysis, it's all about God and His kingdom being advanced. And as we fix our sights on this primary goal, I believe that the intricate details of how we're to manage our time and money often becomes much clearer.

—*A reader from Texas*

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As a youth in "the world of plenty," I think my struggles can be the same as those in "the world of little." In which ever "world" I find myself, it all comes down to one basic question: "Why was life given to me?"

Was life meant to revolve around me? Or was it given to me so that I can love, serve, and praise my Maker—in whatever situation I find myself?

—*Andrew Miller, Suceava, Romania*

Next Month's
QUESTION

Please send in a question that you would like discussed!

THOUGHT GEMS

People are guided to heaven more by footprints
than by guideposts.

• • • • •

Why are some men too tired to help around the house,
but then go golfing for exercise?

• • • • •

The world's greatest institution—the family
—has God's design.

• • • • •

People who are pleasure-bent tonight will be
pleasure-broken tomorrow morning.

• • • • •

We can't put our faults behind us until we face them.

• • • • •

Almost catching a fish seems to make it bigger.

• • • • •

Flattery might be called an artificial sweetener.

• • • • •

We tend to be too fond of people who agree with us
and food that doesn't.

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