



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

Galatians 6:14

## JANUARY 2008

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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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## The Cry

*Rebecca Kuhns, Belleville, PA*

A wrenching cry, from deep within, resounds across the nations.

“Oh, who will come and tell us of the Gospel of salvation?

Our idols, Allah, and our books cannot bring our hearts peace.

Oh, come and tell us the Good News and make our crying cease.”

The wailing of the millions rings out across the land.

Will we respond to them and give a helping hand?

From somewhere in the U.S.A., an answer echoes back:

“I cannot leave my home, I would get such flak,

I must not leave my business here, my family, or my fame.

I would lose an awful lot, my money and good name.

The wailing of the millions still rings across the land.

Who will respond to them, and give a helping hand?


That wrenching cry still vibrates across the peopled globe.

Will we respond to that dire need, or must the people probe,

For reapers to deliver them from Satan’s wicked hold?

We must respond to God’s great call, with steadfast heart and bold.

The wailing of the millions still rings across the land.

Let us respond to them and give a helping hand. 

## Jesus Only or Jesus Preeminent?

**A**s Christian believers we are blessed to know about the infinite God who has made Himself known, yet we are so limited in understanding that we cannot fully comprehend Him. Scripture states that **“God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds”** (Hebrews 1:1,2 NKJV).

God is the head of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:3b) He and his fellow Creators are in such complete harmony that we can not liken them to any earthly trio. For some people, this truth becomes a stumbling block, for they read: “The LORD our God is one LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Let us allow God to address that difficulty and let us acknowledge that his ways are higher than our ways and his thoughts are also higher than our thoughts. (See Isaiah 55:8,9). Truly, “The LORD--He is God!” (1 Kings 18:39 NIV).

### Different Roles

In the beginning, at the creation of the world, God the Father took the

leading role, even though the Son was present and active. (John 1:3) At the same time also, the Holy Spirit hovered “over the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2).

When Jesus sojourned on earth, He represented the Holy Trinity to man and was given the greatest prominence. At Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration, God spoke from heaven removing any doubt that He had appointed Jesus to preeminence. Paul observed in Philippians 2:6 that Jesus, before He took on human form, was in his “very nature God” yet He “did not consider equality with God something to be grasped...”(NIV)

Jesus promised that when He returns to the Father, the Holy Spirit would be given greater availability and prominence in the lives of His subjects. Pentecost fulfilled his promise.

I think it was J. B. Philips who observed that if we fully understood God, He would be on our level. It is good for us to learn what we can, while we also live with unanswered questions. However, we are to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength, so it is good for us to worship with our minds engaged, even while we know we don’t “know

as we are known” or shall one day know.

### Only or Preeminent?

Let us return to this question: **How could we mortals possibly revere Jesus too much?**

Let us address that question with another one: What happens when we do not properly recognize all three members of the Holy Trinity? Note the following situations:

-Someone thanks God that He died for sinners.

-A prayer is ended with, “In *your* name. Amen.”

-An “informed” mind settles for theistic evolution.

-The Holy Spirit is welcomed simply to make us feel good.

I think the above situations indicate confusion. Furthermore, I believe we are closer to God’s revelation of Himself when:

1. We accept the Bible to be God’s accurate, life-giving, inspired Word. (2 Timothy 3:16)

2. We regard the New Testament as superseding the Old Testament. (Hebrews 8:6-10)

3. We give God credit for being Architect of the universe. (Acts 14:15)

4. We see The Creation occurring in six, 24-hour days. (Exodus 20:11)

5. We interpret historical geology in light of The Flood. (2 Peter 3:3-6)

6. We repent heartily from our sins

and confess them to Jesus. (Romans 10:9-11)

7. We respond positively to Jesus Christ, who saves us from sin. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

8. We pray fervently to God in the name of Jesus. (John 14:13,14)

9. We welcome the Holy Spirit’s baptism as God’s gift in salvation. (1 Corinthians 12:3)

10. We seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit for our ongoing needs. (Acts 4:31)

11. We obey carefully the Holy Spirit’s instruction and direction in life. (John 14:26)

12. We await expectantly the return of Jesus at any time. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17)

The foregoing is not exhaustive, for we know only in part. But the fact remains that varied roles of Deity are presented in the Scriptures, comprising our wonderful inheritance in Jesus Christ. For example, Peter explained it this way, “**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: *Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied*”** (1 Peter 1:2). (boldface and italics added)

Notice how Peter mentioned each of the Trinity separately, explaining an aspect of their intended interaction with our lives. Having done that, Peter invoked a benediction upon

his readers —and on us. Glory be to God! —PLM


• • • • •

**Reminder to those reporting marriages:**

Please be reminded that newlyweds whose marriage is reported in *Calvary Messenger* are given a free, one-year subscription.

When reporting a marriage, please

include the mailing address of the newlywed couple, if they are *not* part of a congregation receiving a bulk mailing. It makes it easier for us if you tell us whether or not their names are to be added to the subscription list.

Prompt reporting enables the new couple to start sooner getting this periodical, whether it's at church or from the post office. 

**reader response**

**Re: Uncertain Sounds**, (Nov., p. 25).  
Bro. Paul,

I really appreciate “Uncertain Sounds.” Thank you for putting that in. We need to hear it!

—*Rudy and Elsie Overholt  
Melvern, KS*

• • • • •

Uncertain Sounds was very timely. You handled the subjects well.

—*Vernon & Leona Troyer,  
Plain City, OH*

• • • • •

I read this with interest. It must take some courage and commitment to write plainly about unpopular subjects...Let us not become weary (I, as a parent tend to) in teaching objectively even though the carnal mind objects to it....What else matters on that final day except that we have been true to God?... While encouragement in well doing has its place, that is not all that is

required as we prepare to appear before Him.

In prayer for you,

—*James Weaver, Brookfield, MO*

• • • • •

**Re: Reader Response**, on “Living and Giving,” Nov., 2007, p. 5.

Brent Inion asks some probing questions. One is, “Does the amount we have saved reflect obedience to our Lord’s command not to lay up treasures on earth?” I would like to read some discussion on what is an appropriate amount to save in our American economy. One financial counselor suggests that young people should save 15% toward retirement. Personally, I feel we should not save more than we give. I’d like to hear what others are thinking and doing.

A second question Bro. Inion asks is, “Are we as fervent about non-accumulation as we are about

non-resistance?” I would have to confess that while I firmly believe in non-resistance both on a personal level and a national level and would refuse to participate in the military, I do have some financial investments and savings. Does our brother mean to imply that we should save nothing, depending only on the Lord, our children, and the church to care for us when we are no longer able to do

so ourselves? I frequently struggle with finding the balance between giving and saving, when I read about all the needs and opportunities in our world. I should like to read insights from those who have wisdom and experience in this area.

Sincerely in Christ,

—Marvin E. Yoder, Meyersdale, PA



## the bottom line

### *I'm Saved!*

*Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA*

I was eating alone in a local restaurant. An Amish man came over and sat across from me and said, “I’m saved.” That had never happened to me before. He gave me his name, but wished not to say where he lives, lest it cause problems in his community. What an uplifting word! It was additionally encouraging to hear him say that his being saved was largely due to a financial seminar I had taught just last winter. My friend appeared to be saved: clear in his testimony, peaceful in his demeanor, and joyful in his expression. Would to God all his children could/would testify like that!

At home, I turned to my Bible to see what God says about the subject

of being saved. It is clearly a biblical term, declared without apology or embarrassment or secretiveness.

Let us look briefly at three questions about being saved: **from** what we are saved, **for** what we are saved, and **to** what we are saved?

**1. From what are we saved?** “...for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Sin is the problem, the blood of Christ is the remedy. One missing element in many churches, plain or not, is the fact of sin. Can one be saved if he does not recognize being lost? Can one be saved if he does not recognize his sinfulness? Of course not! But much of our testifying and even preaching is a call for people to believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ without referring to the sin problem.

It is possible to grow up in a Christian home, plain or not, and never be confronted with one's personal sinfulness or sin nature. Becoming aware of it and confessing it precedes being saved. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). We could rightly add: "whether or not he is baptized." One can be baptized without being saved.

The reconciliation needed with God is accomplished by "having made peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:20). That is God's side of the offer to bring peace into our relationship with God. When we believe, Jesus' blood purges away our sin.

"Being justified freely (without earning it—Luther) by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood..." (Romans 3: 24,25). That is man's part—faith in Jesus' Blood. It is the blood that makes atonement for sin.

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). It is clear that all have been born with a sinful nature. In addition, all have sinned against God by thought, word, and deed. It is *from* that Adamic

nature and those personal trespasses against God that makes an air-tight case of personal sin *and* sins. *From* that we need to be saved.

## **2. For what are we saved?**

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. *For* we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works...*" (Ephesians 2:8-10). We are saved for God's purpose of being re-created in Christ to having good works, bringing forth good fruit.

The tension between faith and works never goes away. We are saved by faith in the blood of Christ *from* our sins. We also are saved *for* the purpose of cooperating with God to have good works.

## **3. To what are we saved?**

*To* the praise of God's glory occurs three times in Ephesians. (All in chapter 1: verses 6, 12, and 14.) Paul says the Thessalonians were a showcase of God's grace, "So that ye were ensamples *to* all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia" (I Thessalonians 1:7).

In addition, not only as examples, but also as promoters and message exporters, they gave witness *to* the saving Gospel and the Lord Jesus. "for from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place



your faith to God is spread abroad” (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

There is yet another dimension here. We are also saved *to* his heavenly kingdom. There is the whole realm of the future life in which we shall benefit from that salvation.

- Being saved *from* sin encompasses faith.

- Being saved *for* good works highlights love.


- Being saved *to* being heirs of his kingdom focuses on hope.

“Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus (past tense), and of the love which ye have to all the saints (present tense), for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven (future tense)...(Colossians 1:4,5)

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy *he saved us*, by the washing of regeneration (being born

again—Luther) and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior (past tense); that being justified by his grace (present tense), we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (future tense). (Titus 3:5-7).

**The bottom line** is that our salvation is given by God as a personal experience of being saved from sin. The shame of our sins is covered over by Jesus’ blood. In its place we now are not ashamed of Him, and gladly own Him as our Savior and Lord, even to say, “I am saved.” The future prospect and fulfillment of our hope is an anchor. It is sure and steadfast, and carries us through and over the storms of life.

Salvation is from our sins, for God’s glory and to his everlasting kingdom. Have you been saved? 

## Under His Wings

H. Stephen Ebersole, Myerstown, PA

**T**he Scriptures often use word pictures to help us understand the fullness of spiritual realities. But since we do not live in the land of the Bible or the times of its writing, we may at times miss the impact of some of these illustrations and word pictures.

The phrase, “Under His wings” is a word picture we might miss. We

remember the words of our Lord as he lamented over Jerusalem, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*” (Matthew 23:37).

Most of us have enough farm back-

ground to see the mother hen and her chicks in time of danger. Mother hen senses the danger long before the chicks. She clucks her warning, gives her invitation and then commands them to come almost before we sense what is happening. The chicks come running and find protection from danger.

Spiritually, we have an infinite resource watching, inviting, and even commanding us to come to Him in all our need. The Jews who rejected Christ opened themselves as chicks to the destruction of the Roman eagle which swooped down on them within 40 years.

The word picture of “under His wings” greatly expands when we do a simple word search in *Strong’s Concordance*. Here we find that the Old Testament Hebrew word: “wings” also means “extremity or border.” It is sometimes translated, “border” or “skirt.” Strange as it may seem, the command to the children of Israel to place a fringe on the border of their garment uses the same word. In Numbers 15:38 it is translated “borders” twice and in Deuteronomy 22:12 it is translated “quarters” from the corners of the hem.

We are told that from Bible times the hem or border of one’s garment was where one’s rank or authority was worn. We don’t know if this came to be because God chose the

border as a place where the mark of distinctiveness would be displayed, or if the hem already revealed one’s rank or authority and God chose it, in essence saying, “Even your rank or authority is mine.” But either way, God gave them authority as His people as they chose to identify with him in their dress.

There are three different stories from the Bible that enhance our understanding of the symbolism and effectively communicate a spiritual message for us today.

When Boaz first encountered Ruth in the field, he commended her for her choice to come under the wings of the God of Israel. (Ruth 2:12) She had changed her loyalties and her trust, and Boaz blessed her by praying a reward for her sacrifice. Ruth later used the same Hebrew word when she reversed the discussion and made her appeal to Boaz. Here the word “skirt” is used “...*spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid...*” (Ruth 3:9) Her request was rich in meaning. She was asking to come under the protection and provision of Boaz, placing herself under his authority as his handmaid, his wife.

Saul’s authority as king was jeopardized because he lacked integrity and a heart to follow after God. Twice before his authority had all been taken away, God touched the hem of his garments as a message of warn-

ing. The first is recorded in 1 Samuel 15:27 in a meeting with Samuel. The text doesn't make it clear whose skirt was torn, but it would seem logical that Samuel reached out and tore Saul's garment at the skirt. Whether it was his skirt or Saul's doesn't really matter, because apparently with the torn hem in his hand, he immediately made a prophecy. He announced that because of Saul's disobedience regarding the destruction of the Amalekites, God would rend the kingdom from his hand and give it to a neighbor who would serve Him with all his heart.

A second incident warning Saul of losing his authority and to whom it would be given, involved David in the cave in Engedi. (1 Samuel 24) David did not kill Saul even though he had opportunity. What he did to Saul seems innocent enough to us, but it smote David's conscience. This is understandable when we realize that in cutting off Saul's skirt, he attacked Saul's authority, saying, in essence, "I am taking the kingdom from you." In his acknowledgment of this, Saul conceded that he knew David would be king after him.

The third of these illustrations we mention here relates to Jesus when people touched the hem of his garment for healing. In the last book of the Old Testament we have a strange prophecy: "*But unto you that fear*

*my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall*" (Malachi 4:2). The prophecy was that the Sun of righteousness would have healing in his "wings," the same word as "skirt" (healing in his skirt). There are two references to a literal fulfillment of this prophecy. We likely all know of the woman with the "issue of blood" who only touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was healed. (Mathew 9:18-26) A lesser known account is in Matthew 14: "*And he besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole*" (Matthew 14:36). Apparently, many came to Jesus for this healing.

What shall we learn from this?

Today we too can flee to a protection and provision that far surpasses what any earthly power can provide. We are invited to come under the wings, the hem, the skirt of the Almighty. Look at the following statements:

*"Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings"* (Psalm 17:8).

*"How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings"* (Psalm 36:7).

*"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth*

*in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast*" (Psalm 57:1).

*"I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah"* (Psalm 61:4).

*"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice"* (Psalm 63:7)

*"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler"* (Psalm 91:4).

We must accept his authority; we must submit ourselves to his mandates. We must make these choices. When we do this, no power on earth can overtake us. There under his wings, under his skirt, identified forever with Him, healing is ours!

Enablement is ours! The future is eternally ours in Him!

So, should we turn to earthly insurance to protect us from loss? Should we depend on medications to numb our soul pain during unfulfilled expectations? Should we go to the world for answers for emotional distress? Should we pursue mammon as though it could give us satisfaction, importance and worth?

Let us rather draw near to Jesus through his Word. Let's ask Him to spread his skirt over us as we find healing in his wings.

From *The Pilgrim Witness*, Jan., 2007. Used by permission. Submitted for publication by Harry Shenk.



## ***Son of God or Good Teacher?***

*Daniel Beachy, Winfield, PA*

*Sometimes we find ourselves trying to make sense to people who do not accept the biblical record as accurate. In those times we may approach the unbelieving mind on the basis of reason. The apostles were not new to such situations. Bro. Daniel wrote the following for a class he is taking.*

—PLM

**A** good man named Jesus lived about 2,000 years ago. Many people flocked

to hear Him speak, just as they do today for men like Billy Graham and other well-loved evangelists. Jesus spoke of heavenly things by using earthly stories called parables. He even claimed to be the Son of God. Some people believed him; others did not. Even today, many do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but when one considers the evidence, there is ample proof that He is who He claimed to be.


Putting his claims into action, Jesus freed people from demonic oppression. His opposers accused him of being possessed with a stronger demon than the ones he cast out. Jesus countered them with this, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?" (Matthew 12:26). If Jesus were on Satan's side, He would tell the demons to *come* rather than to *leave*. This authority to cast out demons definitely speaks of a connection to higher powers. Anyone can claim divinity, but actions speak louder than words.

Jesus did many things that are physically or naturally impossible. One such thing was to heal a man who was born blind. Jesus' opposers arrested this man and questioned him in hopes of finding an accusation against Jesus. The blind man, who had come to see, defended himself well with, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (John 9:31-33). Such simple, yet refreshing logic could not be disputed by the educated elite of Jesus' day. Jesus' ability to do the impossible shows that He was more

than an ordinary man.

Some say Jesus is not the Son of God, even though he was a good teacher. Yet, in Jesus' teachings He claims to be the Son of God. (John 1:3) If this is not true, then Jesus is a liar, and he ceases to be a good teacher. Since the Father of all lies is Satan, Jesus would be a son of Satan in that case. He would have commanded demons to enter people rather than leave them. It is impossible for Jesus to be a good teacher and **not** be the Son of God.

One of the most spectacular affirmations of Jesus' divinity was given to three of Jesus' closest friends: Peter, James and John. They had gone with Jesus to the top of a mountain for a time of prayer. When they were about to leave "...behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid" (Matthew 17:5-6). Even God from heaven affirmed Jesus' claim.

A person's unbelief does not change the facts. Jesus' actions are evidence of his Deity and God in heaven affirmed it. I have given only a little evidence for the reader to consider, yet there is much more that could be examined to support Jesus' claim to Deity. 

# The Wickedness of Doing Nothing

Eli A. Yoder, Stuarts Draft, VA

Even though the word “wicked” is used 16 times in the New Testament, we tend to use it sparingly. We prefer words like: *mistaken*, *dishonest* or even *sinful*, rather than *wicked*.

In the parable of the talents in Matthew 25: 14-30, the man who failed was not a thief. He wasn't wasteful like the prodigal son in Luke 15. He didn't lie when he came to give account, yet he was called a “wicked and slothful servant.”

**Idleness is wickedness.** In the case of the traveler from Jerusalem to Jericho, it wasn't the wickedness of the thieves that Jesus spoke about. What they did was evil, for that matter. It was the wickedness of both the priest and the Levite who did nothing that Jesus spoke about.

It is wicked not to care, not to work, not to pray, not to give and not to witness. As James 4:17 says, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” It may be hard to understand why the man who had only one talent and didn't use it was to give it to the one who had ten talents. The point is that either we *use* what we have or we *lose* what we have.


Were we to strap our right arm to our body for a long period of time, it would become useless, because dormant muscles lose their strength. The same applies to friendship: Just ignore it, never call or

write or visit and you'll lose it.

Are we concerned about our children? Do we ask them about their friends or what they have been doing? In farming, we don't have to sow weeds in the field to have a problem. If we do nothing, the weeds will spring up and take over.

It is the same way in the church. If we do nothing for the church, we will reap poor results. Are we too busy with our work to help with the work of the church? Do we attend all worship services? When asked to do something like giving a topic, do we do what we can? If we can't give a topic like some can, we should still do it as well as we can. By doing less than our best for the church, we can hurt the church more than we think.

Let us give our support, our talents, and our encouragement. When we come to the judgment seat of Christ, we will be glad not to be left with nothing better to offer than excuses of why we didn't do God's work. Let us serve to the best of our ability to God's honor, so that some day we may hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21).


Christ didn't have to shed his blood for us. If he had done nothing about our need, we'd all be lost. We still are lost if we do nothing about it. **“How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?”** (Hebrews 2:3a). 

# Ordination

*Stephen Miller, Belle Center, OH*

The lot is cast, the verdict's done,  
You are now the chosen one.  
To fill a very special place,  
I wonder how this thing you face.  
Do you feel big, so wise and grand,  
Much better than your fellow man?  
I tell you, friend, if this you seek,  
Your witness will be very weak;  
Your message will its power lose,  
If your position you misuse.

God has indeed a better plan,  
On how to help your fellow man.  
Within your heart, there first must be,  
The peace of God and victory.  
A love for all, though friend or foe,  
With courage and great strength to go.  
For there's one thing my heart does touch,  
And to all men does mean so much;  
And does more good to spread the light,  
And helps us all to choose the right.

This virtue stands above the rest,  
And by this too, all men are blest;  
Great mountains move, and powers fail,  
And no man can that work assail.  
Indeed, what can this virtue be,  
What makes that men take note of thee?  
The Bible says there first must be,  
Compassion and humility! 

**“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8).**

## marriages

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

### **Burkholder-Sexton**

Bro. Wade, son of Gary and Lillian Burkholder, Mentone, IN, and Sis. Charlotte, daughter of John and Laura Sexton, Knoxville, MD, at Faith Baptist Church for Yarrowsburg Mennonite Church on Sept. 1, 2007, by Duane Eby.

### **Coblentz-Helmuth**

Bro. Jonathan, son of Andy and Clara Mae Coblentz, Millwood, KY, and Sis. Loretta, daughter of Glen and Rosanna Helmuth, Belvidere, TN (presently serving in Kenya, Africa), at Winchester Church of Christ for Belvidere Mennonite Church on November 4, 2007, by Stephen Beachy.

### **Eddy-Hostetler**

Bro. Dale, son of William and Arlene Eddy, Andover, NY, and Sis. Marlene, daughter of Raymond and Tura Hostetler, Belleville, PA, at Pleasant View Church on June 30, 2007, by David Peachey.

### **Hostetler-Esh**

Bro. Carlon, son of Andy and Nancy Hostetler, Etna Green, IN, and Sis. Lillian, daughter of Reuben and Anna Mary Esh, New Holland, PA, at Spring Garden Church for Bethel Christian Fellowship, on August 25, 2007, by Lonnie Beachy.

### **Overholt-Beachy**

Bro. Alan, son of Robert and Martha Overholt, Franklin, KY, and Sis. Shirley, daughter of Stephen and Susan Beachy, Belvidere, TN, at Winchester Church of Christ for Belvidere Mennonite Church on October 13, 2007, by the bride's father, Stephen Beachy.

### **Hershberger-Yoder**

Bro. Loren, son of Jesse and Mary Ellen Hershberger, Stuarts Draft, VA, and Sis. Ruth, daughter of Marvin and Linda Yoder, Dade City, FL, at Old Dominion Baptist for Faith Christian Fellowship, Catlett, VA, by the bride's father, Marvin Yoder.

## cradle roll

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

**Anderson**, Marvin and Carmelita (Chub), Cayo, Belize, second child and dau., Clarita Joy, Oct. 14, 2007.

**Beachy**, Kenneth Leon and Mirta Elisa (Montania), Lancaster, PA, second child, first son, William Hugh, Oct. 25, 2007.

**Beiler**, Carlin and Hadassa (King), Harrison, AR, first child and son, Kenton Isaac, Nov. 15, 2007.

**Bontrager**, Matthew and Lacry (Havr-istiuc), Suceava, Romania, fourth child, third dau., Simona Rose, Oct. 26, 2007.



**Gerber**, John and Tanya (Jantzi), Millbank, ON, first child and son, Neil John, Nov. 3, 2007.

**Gerber**, Joseph and Anita (Wagler), Brunner, ON, second child and dau., Jalissalynn Emma, Oct. 29, 2007.

**Hochstetler**, Brad and Grace (Lengacher), New Haven, IN, third child and dau., Erika Jaci, Sept. 9, 2007.

**Kuepfer**, Darryl and Rosetta (Ropp), Sebringville, ON, first child and dau., Brooklynn Rose, Nov. 1, 2007.

**Martin**, Robert and Rachel (Nissley), Cottage Grove, TN, eighth child, second son, Hans Menno, Nov. 5, 2007.

**Matute**, Orlando and Glenda (Wagner), Cayo, Belize, fourth child, second son, Josiah David, July 11, 2007.

**Miller**, Dean and Barbara Jean (Yoder), Harrison, AR, fourth child, first dau., Janeva Elizabeth, Oct. 29, 2007.

**Miller**, Merle and Lillian (Esh), Free Union, VA, sixth child, fourth dau., Bethany Grace, Oct. 15, 2007.

**Overholt**, Len and Naomi (Stoltzfus), Warsaw, IN, first child and son, Addison Lance, Nov. 10, 2007.

**Ropp**, Matthew and Sheila (Erb), Milverton, ON, second child and son, Jeremy Delmer, Nov. 6, 2007.

**Stoltzfus**, Ben and Marian (Beiler), Cayo, Belize, twelfth child, (one in heaven), fourth son, Miguel Elisha, Oct. 28, 2007.

**Troyer**, Joe and Darlene (Yoder), Bealeton, VA, second child and dau., Haley Dawn, Oct. 19, 2007.

**Yoder**, Marlin and Anna Renee (Raber), Cedar Creek, TX, second child and dau., Valerie Jo, Nov. 11, 2007.

## ordinations

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

**Bro. Jeffery Kuepfer**, 28, Millbank, ON, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of deacon at Whitechurch Amish Mennonite Church, Whitechurch, ON, on Sept. 30, 2007. Preordination messages were given by Titus Hostetler. The charge was given by Arthur Gerber, assisted by Melvin Roes and Laverne Ropp.

**Bro. Lavern Miller**, 35, Middlebury, IN, was ordained as minister at Rosewood Fellowship on Dec. 2, 2007. Preordination messages were brought by Perry Troyer. The charge was given by Glenn Yoder, assisted by Perry Troyer and Wilbur Yoder. Tim Miller was also in the lot.

**Bro. David Stoltzfoos**, 35, Leola, PA, was ordained to the office of bishop at Weavertown Amish Mennonite Church, Bird-in-hand, PA, on Nov. 18, 2007. Preordination messages were given by Ernest Stoltzfus, Perry, NY. The charge was given by John U. Lapp, assisted by Ernest Stoltzfus and Raymond King. Mervin Lapp and Norman Kauffman were also in the lot.

## observations

In the mid-1990's, Steve Steiner flew from Cleveland, Ohio, to Wichita, Kansas. He had received word that his 20-year-old son, Paul, who was a student at Heston College, had been admitted to a hospital in Wichita and was in grave condition because of lupus.

When Steve entered the hospital room, there was a pleasant exchange of greetings and small talk. But rather quickly, Paul indicated that he had something of special importance on his mind. It was this: "Dad, when it's time for me to die, promise me that you won't keep me hooked up to machines. Let me go to be with Jesus. Dad, promise me."

Steve agreed to do his best to honor the son's request. Paul continued, "I want to tell my birth father in Guatemala that I forgive him for killing my birth mother and that I love him. I want you to tell him about the joy and peace I have in Jesus Christ."

Steve was amazed. He said, "Paul, you've changed. What happened?"

Paul explained, "Last Thursday night Jesus came to me in a dream. He was right in this room, with outstretched hands He was asking me to come home. Dad, you would not believe how beautiful heaven is!"

Steve answered, "What did you tell Jesus?"

"That I would not go yet."

"Why was that?"

"Dad, I need you to tell my birth father I forgive him for all the things he did."

Steve assured Paul that he would do all he could to find his birth father and give him his son's message.

Later that same day, Paul fell asleep. In his sleep, he talked inaudibly, weeping as he spoke. When he woke up, Steve asked him what he had dreamed. "Jesus came to me again and asked if I was ready to come home. I told Him 'I'm ready.'"

Paul suffered a lot of pain. The doctor wanted to do exploratory surgery. He said his chances for surviving the surgery would be 50-50, at best. It would require the use of a ventilator and that Paul would need a dialysis machine for the rest of his life.

Steve could not give his consent. The doctor seemed to understand and was respectful. Later, however, the chaplain came to Steve with a request from the doctors to ask him some questions. Paul was only 20

years old. Even Christian families with an aged parent predictably choose to have everything possible done to keep the patient alive for a few more days or weeks. The doctors wanted an explanation as to why no heroic medical measures were being chosen.

So Steve Steiner told the chaplain about his son's experience and request, and how eagerly he looked forward to going to heaven to be with Jesus and having a perfect new body.

Some students from Hesston College and their dean came to visit. They had an anointing service as they quietly sang several hymns. Other students came two by two to grieve with Paul. But they went away blessed and privileged as he encouraged them to faithfulness in their own faith journey.

That evening, Paul said, "Dad, I am so happy. I'm going home." And he slipped away to be with Jesus forever.

This story appeared in *Our Faith Digest*. Fall/Winter, 2007. Several things strike me as being particularly noteworthy:

-The Lord's grace is well able to reach through extremely unfavorable family conditions.

-Life in Christ comes not from a good earthly family, but from our Heavenly Father.

-Paul's forgiving attitude toward his

birth father is a fresh reminder that forgiveness is an essential earmark of having had our sins forgiven.

-A Christian sometimes has good reasons to make decisions that may seem strange to the mainstream medical community.

• • • • •

The following letter is a slightly condensed version of a response to Mark Gingerich's message, October, 2007, page 26. It is submitted because we believe it can help us to be more sensitive to mature singles and other people who come to us from various (churched or unchurched) backgrounds:

*A big "thank you" to Calvary Messenger and to Mark Gingerich for his thoughtful and sensitive message, "Developing Strong Relationships with Minorities in the Church."*

*Being a single man past the typical marrying age AND an NMB (non-Mennonite background), I was encouraged that a minister (a SINGLE minister, too!) actually recognized and affirmed the worth and struggles of a single person among Anabaptist people. Although it surely must be unintentional, just the opposite message is conveyed in many subtle ways by ministers and laity alike in the church.*

*Singles—especially women, in my opinion—are often made to feel they are somewhat less of a person because they are not married. Their struggles*

are rarely perceived or addressed by the married majority; yet we hear many sermons on marriage and raising a family. Even the youth have their groups and functions and are groomed for the day they, too, will marry. What happens when they find life going by and they are unmarried?

Some people comment about the 'freedom' we singles have. Ha! That may be true of those living with family; however, those of us who have jobs, live alone and have our own abodes must come home to do the cleaning, cooking, laundry, mowing, errands, and so forth. Many of us teach Sunday School classes and spend hours in study to prepare.

What singles need and desire is basically the same things married people want. After all, we are the same as you—just not married. We need to love and be loved, we need to be wanted, to be significant in others' lives, and to have meaningful and fulfilling relationships that go beyond an occasional dinner invitation on Sunday or a church function. (Did you ever try holding a deep, personal conversation in a crowd or with a spouse and half a dozen children sitting around, too?)

I am fortunate that I have Menno-nite friends who have let me be a part of their families, even spending the night or taking trips with them. They frequently call, send cards and letters at times, and I do the same. Their

children love for me to play and read with them. I like to cook or do things for my friends and have them over to my home as a family or alone. Their wives graciously let their husbands have a few hours of "one-on-one" with me occasionally. It may be as simple as accompanying him on errands or as special as doing something we like to do. The important thing is being together and sharing life in a more personal way. Often we share our hearts and pray together for each other—at least with some who are closest to me. Such times have forged bonds of deep friendship and mean so much to me...

Bro. Mark was right on when he said in regards to NMB's: "in order to join themselves to us, they have separated themselves from the social community most familiar to them. It has been a big, hard separation for them..." I don't think those raised in the "plain" churches have any concept of just how big and hard that separation is... Many NMB's—especially those coming from other church backgrounds who are attracted by Anabaptist DOCTRINE (as opposed to standards and practice) have been through some incredibly deep, often painful, soul-searching and questioning of the things they were taught and believed before taking that step into the Anabaptist world.

That questioning and evaluating of teachings in light of the Word of God does not stop (or should not)... To see

the “plain people,” God’s people, make issues and divide churches over what we NMB’s see as trivial is discouraging and senseless.

Let me say this about nurturing a relationship with singles and NMB’s: Give them some quality, one-on-one time as well as group functions, go beyond shallow conversation, don’t be judgmental and respect that we have cultural traditions just as valid

as yours. Do not expect us to think or be like you in everything, and we will endeavor to do the same.

God wants all to be saved, and that includes every one in every culture in city or rural areas. There should be room in the church for singles, elderly, NMB’s, physically challenged, all nationalities, whoever. All can be a useful part of the Body of Christ.


—DLM 

## ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CASP

The November issue of *Calvary Messenger* gives a brief history of the Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP). That issue includes an announcement of plans to participate in a pilot program March 24-April 18, 2008.

Please notice that issue for more details. We have the advantage of learning from others who have “been there and done that.”

It seems necessary to inform interested congregations and individuals that such a project does require significant funding. Donations should be sent to: Elmer J. Miller, 63511 C R 33, Goshen, IN 46528.

Those interested in participating in the work project should also contact Brother Elmer. 

## John Wesley Speaks

[Excerpted from *Instructions to Methodists*, 1784]

Let all our chapels be built plain and decent; but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable; otherwise the necessity of raising money

will make the rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent upon them, yea, and governed by them. And then, farewell to the Methodist-discipline--if not doctrine, too.



# The Tests of Life


*Mrs. Martha King, Belleville, PA*

We don't understand all God's ways,  
Nor why sore trials come.  
We only know God knows what's best  
As He sends each trying test!

Our lives need showers that He sends,  
Not always sunshine bright.  
To make our lives bear fruit for Him,  
And keep us free from sin!

He has a secret place for us,  
When troubles come our way,  
Where we can find a rest so sure,  
Within his arms secure!

We need to trust His guiding hand,  
As through each day we go.  
Then he will lead us safely on,  
To our eternal home!

So let us all take heart,  
This life will soon be o'er.  
Then we shall know and understand  
The mystery of it all! 

# Minister's Meeting Messages—2007

*This is a condensation of a message preached at the annual ministers' meetings, April 3-5, 2007, at Yoder Mennonite Church, 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) is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$45, postpaid.*

## 8. The Minister's Relationship to the World

—Ernest Strubhar, Perkins, OK

**D**o we care that 2.5 billion people share this planet with us who have never heard about the Lord Jesus Christ and that 66,000 die every day who have not heard of the Savior? That's 46 every minute. Such statistics, however, may not help us reach the lost. We can give all kinds of reasons why we can't reach those 2.5 billion people. Even though we're quite a crowd here, we're not much. We don't have the resources, human or monetary. We don't speak their languages; we can't go to their far off countries. There are many reasons we can give for our inability and there is truth in them all. But my concern is that we excuse ourselves too easily.

What about reaching our neighbors? Why can't we be more effective where we are?

Bro. Mark Yoder told us in a recent ministers' meeting in Central America that there was an early Amish church in history which in 20 years added 200 new surnames to their number, many of whom were your forbears, I believe. I was astounded and convicted. We haven't done nearly that well.

What reasons do we give in our generation? The world is Gospel-hardened. People are rich and complacent, and so on and on. I believe those things are true. But when we focus on those things, do we end up excusing ourselves? Are we doing what we could do, what God has called us to do? Are our hearts burning with compassion? What does God want to change in us to make us more effective?

We will not be effective in reaching the world, unless God gives us a Spirit-borne vision that produces a revival in our hearts that first changes us and our churches. We can hardly stanch the bleeding apostasy in our churches. Dale Heisey quoted a Mennonite bishop as saying, "A church that reaches the world is a

living church. A church that saves [only] its own, is a dying church. A church that cannot even save its own, is a dead church.” That is thought-provoking and, I believe, a valid challenge.

We cannot reach the world by putting a new board member on AMA, or by electing a new man on the bishop committee, or whatever else we might do, all of which are good. We need much more than that. We need to do such things, but we won’t reach many unless God changes us. That’s the burden of my heart and I’ve been asking God to change me. I confess that the process is very slow. I have not gone far. Many of you are ahead of me, but I will share my vision and burden.

In John 20:21, Jesus said to his disciples in the upper room, “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” [pointing to the congregation: ‘and you, you, and you’] Jesus gave his life to save the world. What we are we doing to save the world? Jesus followed this with breathing on them and saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost:....” If we are Servants of Jesus Christ, we must follow Him. We must serve as He served. We must be in the world as He was in the world; we must do as He did. That’s not just in feet washing, either. He prayed for us that

we would be kept from the evil in the world. He further prayed, “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so send I them into the world.”

The apostles’ writing confirms that we are to follow Christ. John (in I John 2:6) said, “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” In chapter 4, he noted: “Because as he is, so are we in this world.” In John 15:4, Jesus said, “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

Jesus said in Luke 9:56, “the son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” In Luke 19:10, “the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost.” Luke 6:40, “The disciple is not above his master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.” In Matthew 8, right after the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus healed a leper who confessed that if Jesus wanted to, he could heal him. Jesus said, “I will, and put forth his hand and touched him.” This raises an important question, “Are we willing to touch the unclean?” If we touch the lepers of the world, driven by a spirit of reaction to our past, we will become leprous. But if we touch the lepers of the world, driven by a vision for Christ’s kingdom, we can heal the leprosy.



When a Roman centurion in need came to Jesus, he only said that he had a need. He didn't tell Jesus to come. Jesus offered that He would come and minister. Jesus commended this man's faith. He did not call him to receive circumcision and join the synagogue. I don't mean that we should not encourage people who make a commitment of faith to make a commitment to a church. Is our vision in evangelism to build Christ's kingdom or to build "our" church? Can we speak to the deepest needs of people?

Jesus ate with outcasts. Are we called to do that? As we move outside our familiar contacts, we will be asked many questions. Are we able to give patient and wise answers? Jesus could minister both to those respected and to outcasts, equally well. We are called to do as He did. We are here to bear the image of Christ.

As long as we are focused on the commandments, the principles, the ordinances, and the applications of God's Word, we will never be able to hold them in a harmonious balance that reflects the image of Christ. Unless we look beyond the written Word, to the living Christ and fill our eyes with His vision and His heart, and let His Spirit fill our lives, we will not reach the world and we will not

minister to our neighbors.

Some years ago, I attended a ministers' meeting in which Lloyd Troyer, who is now serving in the Ukraine, spoke. He was assigned a sermon topic similar to this one. In preparation, he sent out a survey to more than a hundred NMB (non-Mennonite background) families. I took some notes from his findings that I am using today.

Here are the seven most listed hindrances and obstacles that those families gave him:

**1. Family cliques.** You all know the Mennonite game. We have played it too long and hurt many people with it. If you are to minister to those from other backgrounds, take them into your family, include them in family activities, then you'll bless them.

**2. Disrespectful children.** It is not uncommon that the children of parents who have always been in the church are less respectful than those of parents who have stepped outside the systems they grew up in.

**3. Speaking Pennsylvania Dutch in their presence.** Tongues need an interpreter.

**4. Finery in homes and vehicles.** I don't remember what Bro. Lloyd said, but

I suspect it's because of the inconsistency of what we teach and what we practice.

**5. Fence riders in the church.** I suppose we'll always have some, but what are we doing about it?

**6. Arrogant attitudes.** How can we be holy in a wicked world, without having holier-than-thou attitudes? I asked my wife that recently and she observed, "We must focus on Christ and compare ourselves with Him."

**7. Generation gap.** Many NMB's come from a background of putting forth great effort to build family unity. They come and find many of our families fragmented. Our children go off here and there and the youth have many separate activities.

One brother, whose family has been worshipping with us for about a year in Perkins, told me that they are thinking of moving closer to us, but one thing they fear is that their family might lose some of its closeness and unity when they move closer. I don't think we have many activities at Cimmarron Christian Brotherhood. I tried to reassure this dear brother who has a precious family of seven beautiful children, who put us to shame in so many ways, by saying that we would want them to attend our services, but that most of the other activities are optional. Can we give our families that grace?

I encourage you to go home and purposefully, prayerfully, and patiently share this vision with

the churches that you serve. As a brotherhood, make adjustments in your church life that will remove these obstacles. Or do we love our ease, our comfort, our prosperity, our pleasure-seeking life styles more than we love the souls of those around us? I know what Jesus would do. He would seek to save, to serve and to sacrifice, to live and to die to reach the world. That's what we must do!

Here are several questions for us:

1. Is it *our* church that we're building or is it the church of Christ?

2. Are *we* building the church or is *Christ* building the church?

3. Do we take any glory or are we more than willing to deflect it all to Him?

Until we answer those questions wisely, we will not reach the lost. Christ came to glorify his Father. The Heavenly Father looked down on his Son and said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." I have come to understand is that the only way that the Father can be pleased with me and receives glory from my life is when He sees the beautiful image of Jesus in my life. When I fail to do that, I am robbing the Father of his glory and I'm hindering my testimony to the world.

Are the believers who come from other backgrounds into our churches truly our brethren or are they our

trophies to put up on a shelf? We need to make them our brethren. We need to bring them right into our family. Many of them have had to cut family ties. Some do not feel free to go back to their families because of the wickedness they are confronted with. Some are even hesitant to go back to the grandparents' home, for similar reasons.

Are we trying to force these families to change their ways to become like we are —Swiss-German stock? Do we let them be themselves under the lordship of Christ?

*Are we preaching Christ or are we preaching the church?* I realize that they're never completely separated. Christ, the head, can never be separated from the church, the body. But either Christ will lead the way in our preaching or the church will lead the way. There's a huge difference. We will not reach the lost, unless we're preaching Christ.

*Do we have teachable spirits?* Are we willing to answer questions? Or do we think we're going to teach them? We do have something to share with them, praise God! But I have found that they have also much to share with us. I have often been humbled by what I see in families that come from other backgrounds.

Nothing hinders the work of Christ like a defensive spirit does

in our interaction with NMB's. One bishop in my experience told a young seeker, "You may ask any question you want. We're here to answer all your questions. The challenge is good for us." That was fine.

In a later situation, that same bishop felt his authority was being challenged by the questions he was being asked by a first-generation member in the church. His fellow minister asked him if he was dealing with this brother because of the questions he's asking or because of the answers he's giving? The bishop said, "It's because of his questions!"

Seekers don't care how much we know. They want to know how much we care.

But even Jesus, in his perfection, did not win everyone. Neither will we, but we must by all means save some! He would send us forth into the world as He was sent into the world.

We do not reach the world because we love the world nor do we reach the world because we do *not* love the world. We reach the world because we are filled with the Spirit of Christ. Too often, we are filled with ourselves. We must be transformed by the Spirit of God so that God stamps eternity in our eyes and in our hearts. **"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."**



# *Thanks For The Pain*

*Jessica L. Flokstra, Perkins, OK*

I would not know the beauty of the morning,  
Had I not known the darkness of the night;  
I would not feel the closeness of your presence,  
Had I not felt alone, rejected, and affright;

I would not feel the meaning of your love,  
Had I not felt forsaken and alone;  
But life takes on a deeper, fuller meaning,  
Since death has turned to flesh my heart of stone.

I would not smell the fragrance of the roses,  
If they had not been crushed by stinging pain;  
I would not see the splendor of the rainbow,  
If there were not clouds to bring the rain.

I would not know the liberty of freedom,  
Had I not been in prison and been bound;  
I would not know this precious comfort,  
If I had no tears with which I'd mourned.


I would not know the blessing of cool water,  
Had I not known the desert's burning thirst;  
I would not know the 'mounting up as eagles.'  
Had I not felt both faint and weary first;

I would not have experienced feet like 'hind's feet,'  
Had I not first been crippled and undone;  
I would not know the joy that comes with singing,  
Had not my tongue first been mute and dumb.

I would not know the wondrous light of Jesus,  
Had I not known the darkness of the lost;  
I would not have the pearl of greatest price,  
If I would not have had to pay the cost;

I would not know the greatest joy of finding  
My God, had I not searched so long,  
But God has come to me within the darkness,  
And given me the beauty of a song.

I would not know the freedom of forgiveness,  
Had I not known the crippling pain of hate;  
I would not know the joy of sins forgiven,  
Had I not been in such a sinful state;

I thank the Lord for letting me face sorrow,  
So I could feel the freedom that He gives;  
I thank Him for the darkness of the nighttime,  
So I could hear His invitation, "Rise and live!" 

# Our Young Sisters

*Anita Yoder, Waterford, Ireland*

Dear Mothers of Young Women,

**I**n January-March, 2007, I had the enormous privilege of being dormitory dean to your daughters at Calvary Bible School. It was a wonderful experience for me. I loved their exuberance and sensitivity, their thoughtfulness and concern for others. I heard their dreams and cheered for them. I'll probably always feel a certain possessiveness about "my" CBS girls, and will always be in awe at having seen their beautiful, pliable, honest hearts.

I loved seeing how alumni from 2006 had matured in one year. It made me wish all problems would solve themselves that easily—by just waiting a year!

A few of you called me to talk about your daughters. I heard your deep love and the tears in your voice when you shared your concern for them. I welcomed that kind of networking with you, talking about each others' goals and ideas for the girls in our care. I think this coming year's deans will want you to communicate with them also.

On the other hand, I gave tissues to other girls who spoke of the pain of their parents' failures and neglects. Some spoke of how they've considered suicide, and others, unsure of

how God sees them, said they feel overwhelmingly guilty in case they sinned unknowingly. Some girls were distracted with debilitating crushes, and others woke up every morning with scars of verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse.

Panic attacks. Eating disorders. Moral failure. Guilt. Loneliness. Fear. Depression. CBS '07 was special, but the stories were not new. I heard and saw what their personnel deans have heard, and I weep for the girls—for their betrayals, their sadness and their grief.

How can this be? How can this happen to daughters of people who are committed to godliness and Christ-likeness? The girls are from families and live in communities that strongly teach and try to live the truth, yet some of them come to CBS with lies deeply ingrained in their hearts.

If our girls were physically starving and wearing rags, we would do something about it. If they were speaking profanely and visiting nightclubs, we would try by all means to stop them. But these girls basically keep the rules they need to, and things look fine. Who will care—or even be aware—that they're hurting emotionally?

And I wonder—who will help

them? Who will hear their questions without becoming defensive? Who will tell them they're beautiful and that God has a special interest in them? Who will model biblical principles, behavior, and actions of modesty instead of simply focusing on specific rules that they can keep-or bend? Who will warn them to avoid crude, "off-color" talk that sticks to the mind like flypaper? Who will treasure them and give protection from men who play with their hearts? Who will teach them about Christian service in adverse, lowly places?

Our generation has teaching on physical purity, but today's young women need guidance in emotional purity. They need to know the concepts of a healthy relationship's commitment, intensity, and intimacy. Maybe you think, *That couldn't be my daughter*. However, it appears that too often parents are not aware of how much our lifestyle and culture is breaking down. Too many of our girls are slipping through the cracks. True, the number of lost ones is lower than it is among girls growing up "unchurched." But if *just one* of our girls is left behind, it is too great a loss—an unconscionable loss.

This is an open letter specifically to you mothers. Maybe you feel you need help with your daughters. At the very least, you can try to identify with them and be honest about your

own life's questions and difficulties. Regardless of how incapable you feel, you really can make a difference!

Developing Godly character in young ladies is not about helping the CBS deans to get to sleep earlier. It's about serving God's kingdom, and getting a vision that is big enough to supersede personal comfort or just being "cool."

Maybe you can think now of the ways God has developed your character. Has pursuing a comfortable life brought you contentment and deep relationships with other women? Has focusing on rules and keeping your life in a neat little package answered life's questions and helped you to pour out your heart to the lonely and disadvantaged? What has it taken for you to come to where you are, and how do you dream for your lovely, gifted girls to reach their potential?

Young girls will rarely break out of the mold that their mothers have shaped for them. If *being "cool" and comfortable* has been your life priority, your daughter will likely do the same. If your priority has been to *just keep rules and keep life in a tidy package without rocking the boat*, your daughter will probably follow suit. These approaches can be tragic.


What should concern us in this pursuit is whether young women are being prepared and equipped to fill to capacity God's purposes for

them. I cannot believe that His purpose for them includes pursuing the American dream of beauty, financial success, achievement, and so on, or working around authorities' requests, or squandering their hearts on cheap relationships.

The issues of the direction and future of our churches may be too big for us and our girls to grapple with. But there has to be something that women can do to help build the church instead of just placing life in

neutral. At the very least, we can aim to follow the biblical principle of the older women teaching and caring for the younger women.

Thank you for hearing me and for trusting your daughters to CBS. None of us has all the answers, and life is often neither comfortable nor tidy. But surely as we learn from Christ and from each other, we can find what pleases Him most, and we can pursue His ways together.

Your sister, Anita 


## *The High Price of Free Love*

*Craig Eicher, Butler, IN*

Outmanned? They stick to their defenses,  
Outgunned? They press the battle sore.  
This war against God demands their resources  
What's at stake? The right to be gay or whore.

The 60's man brimmed with optimism,  
The Bible was old-fashioned beyond compare.  
"Free love" became the motto of the masses,  
And now our culture's broke beyond repair.

Assailed by violence, we decry our situation:  
School shootings, serial killings, massive horrors.  
This free love has now come full circle,  
We cower in fear and put locks on our doors.

Outmanned? They stick to their defenses,  
Outgunned? They resist the God they should adore.  
Now instead of "free love" our nation builds prison fences,  
And curses the holy name we rightly implore. 



## *Mission Work in Grenada*

*Floyd Stoltzfus*

**O**n Thanksgiving Day, 2007, we took in the enthusiastic preaching of John Brubaker at an Amish Mennonite church in Pennsylvania. John and his wife, Rachel, have been serving on the island of Grenada for a number of years under the auspices of Olive Branch Mennonite Missions. OBMM, founded in 1987, is mainly supported by churches in Keystone Mennonite Fellowship, a conservative fellowship of churches listed in the annual directory published by Christian Light Publications.

According to information in *Operation World*, Grenada is a large island (345 sq. km.), plus smaller islets north of Trinidad, off the northern coast of South America. Afro-Caribbean peoples make up about 96% of its 95,000 people. The country received its independence from Great Britain in 1974. Some of us will remember the swift U. S. invasion into Grenada under the Reagan administration in 1983, which resulted in the defeat of a Marxist coup. Since that restoration, there has been a more stable constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary, democratic form of

government.

This background of U. S. assistance has formed a bond with America and has provided the foundation for smoother entrance, protection, and safety to missionaries. However, John said he is grieved that Grenada's national day of thanksgiving is celebrated more by praising America for military help and deliverance than praising God for all his bountiful blessings.

OBMM has three churches in Grenada and a Christian school in each congregation. There are seven American families and a number of single people serving in this needy land. Their goal is to plant and establish biblical, Anabaptist churches. They are cautious about making the native people too dependent on them materially, but seek a balance in providing physical aid where needed, with nourishment for spiritual growth paramount. A delegation of board members visits the missions three times a year.

John mentioned that the greatest need of new missionaries is to be better equipped for the strenuous tasks of the work. We also firmly believe that more thought and time

ought to be invested in orientation. Let me quote an older writer from the book, *Facing the Field*, “Many people are being made conscious that the Lord has called them to be His ambassadors in needy lands. So often, however, they start out with vague and imperfect ideas as to the variety of problems that they shall face and to the way in which they should meet them. The sudden impact of life in a foreign country, amid conditions which they had previously never imagined, and the necessary adjustments to be made sometimes demand from them almost more than they are prepared to give, [resulting in] frustration, disillusionment, and discouragement.” We are thankful for the several days of orientation Amish Mennonite Aid provides for its workers prior to being sent to the field.

John spoke of the challenges of resisting American affluence, standard of living, handy gadgets, and so on, lest they be distractions in ministering to Grenadians. Some do not have electricity or land-line telephone service. Most people do not own a vehicle, but depend on public transportation.

Some of the missionaries use motorcycles for short runs. A generous American brother offered John a new cycle some time ago,

because of the condition of his older one. John refused. He strongly felt a new cycle would be a hindrance to his ministry and that of his fellow missionaries. The mission owns and uses vehicles, but certainly does not need an image of prestige, worldliness and selfishness.


Do the people there receive the Gospel gladly? Tract distribution on street corners has been encouraging. People are quick to talk about the ways of God. It is easy to strike up a conversation with some Grenadians and discuss Bible subjects. However, John talked about Bob (not his real name), who cursed him whenever they met. He offered Bob rides in his vehicle, but it was always the same story. Hostility, anger, and bitterness flowed vigorously from his mouth.

John did not give up. He was there for Bob in time of need, especially during the hurricane of 2004. John put to practice the words of Jesus: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:4). Bob’s attitude has changed. Today they are good friends. Even though Bob is not a believer, he is much more open to the Gospel.

Evangelical faith is on the increase in Grenada. With it comes a mix of “easy-believism,” loose morals, lack

of holiness and integrity. There is such a need for biblical faith to take root and grow. One of the greatest needs is for the people to know the truth about God's Word and live it. There are some families who enjoy their Christian walk in the sanctity of marriage and are blessed with children. This nucleus of believers is praying for a stronger influence of godly family living in the community where Christians witness to their neighbors by word and life, saying, "This is the way a man should behave

around women. This is the way a godly family conducts itself."

Paul, the missionary, briefly summarizes the need of serving on the front lines of battle: "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thessalonians 5:25). To begin this work of prayer when we are young establishes a beautiful habit for the rest of our days. Make a list of names of workers serving nearby and far away. Add the workers of Grenada to that list. It is as O. Hallesby wrote: "Prayer is the most important work in the kingdom of God." 

## helpers at home

### *Decisions for the New Year*

*Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC*

**W**e all come to crossroads in life at times when we ask, "Which way shall I go?" We face decisions concerning our future and we pray: "God, show us the way." Many of you who are reading this even now are facing decisions concerning the new year. Some of these decisions include: Where should we live? Is God calling us to a different area of ministry? What about our child's future? And so on.

The decisions may be health-related, financial or spiritual. Each of us needs to be prepared for the fact that we will face challenges that will call us to difficult decisions or

even threaten our security in 2008. If you are like me, (and I believe most women are) I suspect that you probably do not look forward to "the unknowns" in the new year. But let me assure you there are aspects of our experience that will remain firm and unchangeable in 2008.

Let us look at a few principles from God's Word that give us the comfort and assurance needed to face the future:

#### **1. I am loved of God.** (John 3:16)

Knowing that I am loved by God releases me from the bondage of insecurity and the strong desire of wanting acceptance by my peers. It

also frees me to show love to others—even to those who are unlovely.

**2. My needs are met in Christ.** (Philippians 4:19)


I can trust God to provide all my financial, physical, and spiritual needs in this coming year, even though I don't know exactly how He will choose to do it. My resources may be limited, but God's resources are limitless.

**3. I will be restored.** (Psalm 23:3)

I will trust God for restoration to

my spirit by spending time reading his Word, talking to Him in prayer, and meditating on his goodness. I will be restored as I fellowship with other Christians sharing together those deep inner needs.

**4. God has a special purpose for my life.** (Esther 4:14)

God planned for us to be alive in 2008 and He has a plan for each of us to fulfill. May you find joy in meeting the challenges and opportunities of this new year. 

## junior messages

### *A Treasure*

*Anita Yoder, Ligonier, IN*


**M**any years ago two Dutch children enjoying the river bed near their home discovered a beautiful stone. It was finally determined they had found a diamond. A shepherd boy in South Africa found a rather large gem, causing his people to begin searching for this treasure.

Diamonds are a very hard substance. At first, no one knew how to cut or handle this gem. An Italian man discovered the cut called "brilliant cut." This treasure could then be polished and even boiled in an acid bath. The more they polished it, the more the diamond gleamed and shone.

Have you ever thought about

owning a diamond or some other gem? Did you know that you actually do own a jewel of great worth? It's called your character. Every day little things polish your character. Little actions that seem very insignificant—a smile, a kind word, an unselfish action, or saying "no" to something that is wrong.

Taking responsibility for your actions and becoming trustworthy may seem like a difficult task. This is God's polishing. On the other hand, yielding to wrong action—a little lie or cheating in a game or on a test can tarnish your character.

Take a look at the jewel you own. Does it gleam and shine? 

*Dear Youth,*

Anabaptists have historically been known for their community interdependence. Rapid changes in technology and lifestyle are threatening to destroy values that are only obtained

by hard work and neighborliness.

Several young men have tackled this difficult subject in the following paragraphs. Thank you, gentlemen, for your contribution! —EE

*This Month's*  
QUESTION

**Just fifty years ago, rural men worked hard, and often helped each other with farming and building projects. Times have changed for many Anabaptist communities. What can youth do today to help keep these values alive?**

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

I think this problem is closely related to the growing problems of individualism and materialism. We, as a whole, are richer than people were 50 years ago. As a result, we buy more and more equipment, instead of borrowing or sharing. If we can afford it, and use it, why not buy it? This tendency to buy more, of course, fuels our individualism. Who wants to ask the Jones' for this implement, if we could just buy our own? Besides, what would *they* think if we'd keep asking to borrow their things when they *know* we have enough money to buy our own? That's hard on our pride! The same can go for work projects. Maybe we're quicker to just hire somebody to do our work than ask our neighbors to help. (They're too busy trying to get their own work

done to help anyway.)

But maybe God has a different plan for the extra money He has given us. Maybe He wants us to start giving that extra money away, rather than spending it on extra equipment. Maybe He wants us to keep relying on each other rather than allowing our money to help us grow apart.

Since it is less and less necessary for us to rely on our neighbors for survival, the neighborly interactions of yesteryear don't happen as naturally as they once did. If we value these interactions and want them to continue, it will take a much more deliberate effort to make them happen. This might involve looking for different and more creative ways to interact. Invite your neighbors over for supper, a picnic, or

barbecue. Drop in on them for no other reason than to chat. Offer to help them with their work, rather than waiting till they ask for it. This will help break down the fear of asking for help and make you both more free to ask things of each other. Take the first step--make sure your neighbors know that they are welcome to use your tools as well as to ask for your help if they need it. Gauge your schedule--make sure it's not so busy that you don't have time to lean over the backyard fence and chat, or to go to the neighborhood work bees.

Brian Shenk, Partridge, KS



*I think that the youth should be more willing to take the first step toward bridging the gap that separates us from the older generation. If we learn to know (and like) each other better, I think that will naturally result in a greater desire to help each other not only in times of need, but in everyday tasks and weekend projects. It is simple things like this that will help the brotherhood stay together in an increasingly individualistic society.*

—Daniel Yoder, Partridge, KS



Prioritizing work nights as a youth group for the elderly or others that are in need can be a big help in taking the focus off ourselves, as well as making us aware of the rewards that

come out of a little sacrifice.

—Michael Ropp, Kalona, IA



*In today's world too often our youth's focus is on the youth group and it becomes our own little world. We tend to focus on what we can get for ourselves, and we forget about the needs among others in our church. We need to get out of our protective shells and start looking for ways to help others. We tend to be to schedule oriented. If helping someone for a day doesn't fit our schedule we usually don't change our schedule and help. We instead think that someone else can do it, then just forget about it. We need to be willing to take a day off of work to help those in need.*

One thing we as youth can do is have work nights. Our youth occasionally have a work night where we go and help someone in our church who has a lot of work that needs to be done. If someone loses their house in a fire we young men should be willing to take several days off work to help rebuild the house. The girls could sew dresses and help however they can. I think we also need more work bees. We need to be willing to accept help from the other church brethren if we have a need. Too often we just hire someone to do the work instead of allowing others the joy of helping us. We need to have our eyes open to those around us so we can see their needs and help them. It is when we are willing to help others

*that God blesses us richly. I want to challenge each one of us to keep our eyes open and be willing to help when the need arises.*

—Jason Yoder, Mifflinburg, PA

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Longer ago people had to work hard just to live. If two people helped each other, it was easier for both of them. *Now* maybe we think that our neighbor does not really *need* help or that he could afford to hire help. I believe that if we could only get a picture of how heaven and hell really are, and what Jesus did for us, and how our time here on earth is in relation to all eternity, we would have a whole different view on life. Maybe now, we dream of getting some land and building up a nice business or something. It could be many things we think about a lot, and would like to do. That is not what life is about. I believe if we would see our life here, in relation to eternity, our life would be centered on serving Jesus, and we would *redeem the time, because the days are evil* (Ephesians 5:16). I believe we would want to warn unbelievers and build up Christians. Yes, we would still need to work to be

able to live, but we would not think so much about ourselves. Helping our brother (or anyone) would show that we are interested in their lives and care for them. The Bible says: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). I believe we should be more interested in other people and show that we care about them by helping them, even if we may think that they do not really *need* our help.

—Randall Schrock,  
Isabella Bank, Belize

• • • • •

*The way to keep these values alive has a lot to do with our heart. If we have the right heart's attitude it will affect our actions and our thinking. If our heart is full of God's love then we will help others who are in need of help like they used to do fifty years ago. I think a lot of youth today have the mind set of "what is in it for me?" not, "what can I do for others?" We need to get the focus off ourselves and back on Christ.*

—Jonathan Race, Cherry Creek, SD

*Next Month's*  
**QUESTION**

Lack of planning hinders creativity, especially during busy seasons! How can young people prepare themselves spiritually for a rewarding, God-honoring spring and summer?

Please respond by January 15. 

# THOUGHT GEMS

(Gems from the pen of Bill Miller, compiler of the book, *Fifty Spoken*.  
Available at 60 Hurt Hollow Road, Summer Shade, KY 42166)

• • • • •  
What we call adversity, God may call opportunity.

• • • • •  
Dragging your cross is much harder than carrying it.

• • • • •  
To grow old gracefully, you must start when you are young.

• • • • •  
If you only sample the Bible, you will never acquire a taste for it.

• • • • •  
Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.

• • • • •  
We tend to praise dead saints and persecute living ones.

• • • • •  
As sleep renews our bodies, so worship and praise renew our spirits.

• • • • •  
A man frequently finding fault, seldom finds anything else.

• • • • •  
The secret of contentment is the realization that life is a gift, not a right.

• • • • •  
Rise and shine, everyone is on heaven's "most wanted" list.

• • • • •  
Criticism will not hurt you unless it should.

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