



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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2008

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 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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God Still Answers Prayer

Joyce Martin, Lebec, CA

*We're human and it's easy
To think it was 'way back there.
But miracles still happen;
The Lord still answers prayer.*

*Prayer really makes a difference;
God takes my every care.
My life is filled with freedom,
'Cause He still answers prayer.*

*When burdened down with trouble,
It's hard a smile to wear.
Have faith and keep on asking,
Our God still answers prayers.*

*Praise Him for His faithfulness;
Thank Him for all His care.
We are still alive today.
'Cause God still answers prayer.*



The Trials and Tests of Life

Recently a person in his early 60's had a heart attack which fortunately was not fatal. As one person pondered that situation, he offered this interesting comment: "We never know who God will pick next, so let us be prepared to meet our Maker..." Is it that simple? Is God always responsible for what happens? What is our responsibility?

The Battle

When a baby is born he or she participates in a beneficial struggle for life. As the child grows up he (or she) naturally strives for significance—sometimes even fights for it. In adolescence, conflicting desires in the flesh pull toward forbidden fruit. Victory is possible, but even when we make good decisions, prosperity does not always follow.

When gardeners and farmers plant seeds, they may get a crop to harvest and they may not. The destroyer (Job 15:21) is ever lurking nearby—or overhead. Yesterday we were reminded of that when Martha and I were driving in Hutchinson. Suddenly an unidentified flying object from an oncoming vehicle hit our windshield. **THUNK!** It broke the glass, but fortunately, because

of the sandwiched flexible material bonded to the glass, the UFO didn't break through. If it had, it would likely have struck Martha.

Throughout life, sickness may find us at any time. Disease seems to pop up at random. Death is never very far away. "That's life..." we say with resignation. I believe God would have us say it with triumph, "That's life!" After the Fall, God redesigned things to work that way in this world. We are insecure unless and until we find our security in Him. We are meant for struggle. Without struggle, we lose motivation. In order to glorify God and reach our potential, we must embrace this struggle.

We May Be To Blame

Some of life's hazards are self-imposed. If we fail to exercise and yet ingest many calories, we should expect obesity and clogged arteries. If we readily pick up other people's grievances, our neighbors will probably seem unfriendly. If we are usually dissatisfied, we make ourselves subject to more misfortune. If we delight in passing along negative reports, stomach ulcers (or worse) should come as no surprise. If we insist on taking life by the wrong

handle, folks naturally hesitate to confide in us. Paul explained it this way, “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7).

Certainly God allows trials for our good. Let us, however, be humble enough to ask God and other trusted friends how we may be bringing trouble on ourselves. Let us be alert to self-imposed trials.

Others May Be To Blame

In 2007, Christian Light Publishers published *Never Alone, Galina’s Story*, by Violet Miller. If you’ve been having trouble with “poor me” thoughts (or if you haven’t) you owe it to yourself to read this book. It depicts life in the last century in Communist Russia. The path of faithfulness for those Christians was not an easy path, yet they experienced Christian joy. Reading it reminds me of Paul’s depiction of life in his time: “We are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,” (Romans 8:36). We rejoice that Galina’s family kept on serving God under very stressful conditions.

Those who have come to know Galina’s family in their new home near Sacramento, California, report that Galina’s husband bears permanent reminders of their many life-threatening harassments and trials. We rejoice that they have finally experienced relief.

God Draws Us to Himself

We often don’t know the reasons why suffering comes—to us or to others. Let us not be like Job’s friends who assumed they knew why Job suffered. They did not. It would have been much better for everyone if they had not tried to guess. Some things are best left to the wisdom of our sovereign God, Who has not promised to explain everything to us, whether we have confidence in God or doubt His goodness. Fortunately, He has promised strength and courage for those who place their lives in His hands.

We reap the benefits of God’s wonderful presence and provision by simply trusting Him. We gain nothing by second guessing Him and what He allows to come to us. Together now, let’s all say it: “God is good—all the time!” or if you prefer, “All the time—God is good!”

We gain peace of mind by simple appreciation and positive response to the divine hand that comforts, feeds, corrects, and leads us.

As obedient children of God, we are given this dependable confidence: Our sovereign God examines and clears every new test He allows to come our way!


It is an exercise in humility to try to understand how we may be contributing to life’s trials. Let us be

good students of life. It is better to be humble and teachable than to assume we already know everything we need to know.

We had better not say we know why suffering comes. But always, we can do this: "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

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Apology: I apologize for the fact

that in recent months we have not always listed accurate subscription rates on the inside front cover of *Calvary Messenger*. Please note that the new individual subscription rates are: **\$8.50 per year or \$24 for three years. Every-home-plan is \$7 per year. Gift subscriptions are half-price, \$4.25 Your renewal is also \$4.25, if accompanied by a gift subscription.** Thank you for your patience! —PLM 

reader response

Re: Zionism comments, Observations, March, p. 20

I can understand Dr. Bishara Awad's concern regarding Zionism and its effect on those in Israel, in light of all the bloodshed and in light of the oppression that Christians, both Jewish and Palestinian, receive from Israel. But such circumstances, however severe, certainly do not negate nor nullify God's unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Other covenants were conditional, for example the Mosaic Covenant, which became obsolete and was surpassed by the New Covenant, which by the way is conditional for all those who meet its terms for God's blessing.

God's covenant with Abram (and its promises) was seven-fold (Genesis 12:1-3). The seventh promise is

that of the coming Redeemer. That promise is unconditional. Otherwise it could never have been fulfilled, for no one is good enough to merit His appearance. The fulfillment of that promise hinges on the fulfillment of the other promises, which Paul mentions in Romans 9:1-5. Can you separate the seventh promise for the other six as to fulfillment? Wouldn't that kind of interpretation be somewhat akin to that which says 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 has no relevance for the church today while the rest of the chapter does?

Israel's presence in its Promised Land, although in unbelief (Ezekiel 36:24) is in partial fulfillment of God's covenant with Abram, and God's ultimate purposes for Israel will be realized as prophesied in Ezekiel 36:25-38 and other Scriptures.

As to Dr. Awad's questions, perhaps the most concise and conclusive answer is found in Romans 11:25-29, which concludes with these words: "As concerning the gospel, they [Israel] are enemies for your sakes: but as touching

the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [are irrevocable—NIV, NASB, NKJV]."

James Goering, Dayton, VA 

the bottom line

The Credit Card Crunch – Part Two

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Money is a medium of exchange. It represents the value of goods or services provided, which can then be used to obtain such goods or services. Using credit cards places a distance between the spender and his debt. He puts off facing the realities of debt.

Debt is like an invisible monster that won't go away until the very last farthing is paid. In the good old days everything was paid with cash or you did without. That was much better than having high, unmanageable, consumer debt. In those days, if you couldn't borrow at the bank or from relatives, you had your answer.

Credit cards have muffled the voices of moderation, so that we may not hear God speak any more through such means. Some of us should go back (or forward) to those safeguards even now.

If a credit card is used, the following guidelines will help keep you out of

unmanageable debt:

1. Use a credit card **ONLY** if there is enough money in the checking account to cover it. Otherwise, don't even think of using your credit card. (This is cardinal rule #1!)

2. Don't buy things you don't need now.

3. Avoid impulse buying. Sleep over the idea first, then decide.

4. Beware of "unbelievably" low prices.

5. Back off from "super-big" discounts, especially on luxury items.

6. Pay monthly statements before the deadline.

7. **Never** use credit cards as a painless way of getting a loan, for afterward, it will sting like a scorpion!

Some people fall into deep debt, using credit cards for loans.

If you can't pay your monthly statement, put your cards in a stainless steel bowl, half-filled with

water, and put them in your freezer. By the time they thaw out, you should have found a better way to make a sound purchase or do without!

Secular sources say second-generation users are less able to handle credit. Consumer debt has sky rocketed in the last 20 years:

- In 1990, consumer debt averaged \$2,985 per household.

- In 1995, it was \$5832 per household.

- In 2000, it was \$7,942 per household.

Here are other astounding statistics:

- 40% of Americans are

overspending every month.

- Three out of five families average a \$12,000 running balance.

- 40% pay \$2,000 or more in finance charges every year.

- Six out of ten people are not aware of the interest rate on their credit cards. More yet are unaware of how much money it actually takes to pay off credit card debt.

Hopefully, some who read this will be informed and encouraged, directed and changed from the bad habits of debt accumulation. Let us turn our hearts to the Lord in repentance as we cultivate sanctified spending habits!



The Headship Veiling

Donald Miller, Hutchinson, KS

Condensed from a sermon given at Cedar Crest Church, February 24, 2008.

Someone noted that unless we keep on teaching every several years the principles supporting the doctrines and practices of the Word of God, we shall lose them. If that is true, I fear that we are in danger of losing the headship veiling. I last preached on this subject here in May of 1999. Others have done so since, but that was also some time ago, so I believe it is time to do so again. Some of these doctrines are peculiar to us as plain people, and are not more important than other

doctrines, yet they are biblical and important, nonetheless.

The Scripture that forms the basis for this doctrine is 1 Corinthians 11:1-16. Notice that in verses 3-5, we have these words: “The head (authority) of every man is Christ; and the head (authority) of the woman is the man and the head (authority) of Christ is God.” Furthermore, “Every man praying or prophesying, having his head (his physical head) covered, dishonoreth his head (Christ). But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her

head (her physical head) uncovered dishonoureth her head (the man).”

We might ask whether this passage was written for first-century Christians only. Was it merely a cultural thing that modern-day Christians are free to ignore? Some say that if Paul and other writers of Scripture were here today, they would probably say it differently than they did back then. I believe we place ourselves in dangerous territory when we begin to discount or explain away certain passages of Scripture. It seems to me that it leaves us with less than the reliable, inspired Word of God. It leaves it to the discretion of men to determine which Scriptures are valid and which ones are not. It is my understanding that unless the Scripture in question (or other Scriptures) makes it clear that something is not to be taken literally, we are to take it literally.

Other passages in 1 Corinthians are taken to be pertinent for our time. For instance, the doctrine and practice of communion in chapter 11, the teaching on love in chapter 13, the teaching about the resurrection in chapter 15, and even the spiritual gifts taught in chapters 12 and 14 are considered valid for our time. But somehow the first part of chapter 11 is often seen as something as merely cultural and not for our time. Paul said in chapter 1, verse 2, he’s writing

to “the church of God at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” I see that as a universal greeting addressed to all who call on God in Jesus’ name, including us today.

In 1 Corinthians 4:17, Paul says that Timothy would come to them and “bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.” Once again, it seems clear that Paul was not giving them something just for a certain time and place. In chapter 14:37, 38, Paul writes, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” Verse 38, in NIV says, “If any man ignores this, he himself will be ignored.” [Editor’s note: Chapter 7 gives us an inverse example, where Paul discourages marriage, but says that he speaks not by commandment, but with an eye to special stresses of that time. Thus he encourages singleness as advice, but not as a commandment from God. Note 7:6, 25, 26.] We see then that what Paul was teaching here has stood the test of time and has not been changed by culture or redemption. It is a principle that is to be observed

throughout the church age until Jesus returns for His bride.

R. C. Sproule writes about a humility principle we ought to use in interpreting Scripture: “That means that if, after careful study of a Biblical mandate, we are still uncertain as to whether it is a principle or a custom, we need to use the humility principle...It is better to err by treating a possible custom or cultural thing as a principle than it is to err by treating a principle as merely a custom and therefore ignoring it.” I think if we are to err, we ought to err on the side of safety. It is my conviction that **the Lord would have us unapologetically practice scriptural directives.**

It is important that we do not allow ourselves to get caught up in the practices of modern-day Western culture. We can be assured that women’s lib and the feminist movement are not of God. They are from another source.

In verse two, Paul praises them for keeping the ordinances he taught them, which is sometimes translated from the Greek as “traditions.” “Traditions” was sometimes used in a negative sense, when it referred to man-made practices that had no biblical basis. Here he uses ordinance or tradition in a positive way. Paul is saying that this is one of those traditions that they were to continue

to practice as he had taught them when he was present with them. The Greek word for tradition means the passing on of truth from one person to another or from one generation to the next.

I think we must be careful that the wearing of the headship veiling does not become merely a tradition or a mere habit, like putting on shoes and socks in getting dressed, so that it’s just part of our attire and that is as far as it goes. It is important that we remember what it stands for and keep in view the principle that supports wearing the veiling. It is not a good luck charm for protection. It has a deep spiritual significance. It is a symbol of God’s headship order.

In verse three this order is spelled out for us. “The head (authority) of man is Christ, and the head (authority) of the woman is the man, and the head (authority) of Christ is God.” God is a God of order. God the Son is subject to God the Father. I do not understand all the details of how the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit relate to each other, but I believe there is order. It is an order that has a practical purpose. It is not an issue of who is greater, but is created by the need for someone to lead. God the Father is the one who leads in the Godhead. Christ, the Son submits to God, the Father. It was that way when Christ came

to earth. In John 6:38 says, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” It gives us a beautiful picture of submission by Jesus. He modeled so well what God expects of us as we submit to the authority figures in our lives. Our society does not value submission. Submission is equated with “wimpiness.” Was Jesus a wimp? No! There was a power that emanated from Jesus’ life because He was in His rightful place. It would have compromised that power if He had stepped out of His place.

Watchman Nee says, “Speaking about the headship order as being God’s arrangement does not necessarily mean that one is greater than another. For God to be Christ’s head does not touch upon the matter of who is greater. Rather it is simply an arrangement in the government of God. Likewise, under God’s government Christ is the head of every man, and man is the head of woman.” Jesus was given a place of special honor and glory because of His willingness to submit to his Father’s will. That glory came because He was in His rightful place in God’s order.

Likewise, there is a certain glory and beauty present in a woman’s life when she is willing to be submissive to man and fills her role as God intends. The veiling you wear is a beautiful symbol of that submission.

It tells us that you are willing to be in your rightful place. What we see happening in society is not beautiful. It is ugly. It is a picture of what happens when God’s order is violated. We recognize that by what we see in the home.

Men and women were not created to do the same things. Male and female were made to complement each other physically, socially, and spiritually. This principle was present at Creation. Woman was originally taken from man. She was created to complete him. 1 Corinthians 11:8-12 reiterates the creation story in Genesis 2. God saw that man was not complete and needed woman. As we ponder that, we realize that man and woman are not competitors. Instead, they are mutually dependent on one another. Watchman Nee says, “Man cannot do without woman and woman cannot do without man. Neither can say that he or she is special for all things are of God. Since all things are of God, there is no place for boasting or for depreciation.”

We men may overemphasize the need for submission on the woman’s part and fail to submit to the authorities in our lives. It might feel good to say, “God put me here to be a leader, so you need to submit to my leadership.” If that is so and I refuse to submit to those over me, I am violating the same principle.

God expects us men to exercise loving leadership in our homes while willingly submitting to Christ and other authorities in our lives.

1 Peter 3 speaks about the need for the wives to be in subjection to their husbands and husbands dwelling with their wives “according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life.” The fact that God has given us different roles in the headship order does not make one of us more important to God than the other. Husbands and wives are to be heirs together of the grace of life.

Galatians 3:28 indicates that, in Christ, our value is not determined by our place in the headship order. “There is neither...male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Our value before God is not determined by our place in the headship order. We have the **same value** before God. But we are to fill **different roles** in God’s order.

Visible Symbols in the Headship Order

In verse 4, it tells us that man is to be uncovered. Verses 5 and 6, tell us that the woman is to be covered. This passage refers to two different kinds of coverings: One is the natural covering or the hair. We see that in verse 15, where it says, “If a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her for

her hair is given her for a covering.” We see also the reference to the hair, in verses 5 and 6, where it speaks of cutting the hair. It also speaks about a covering *for the hair* or a veil.

The Greek word here is *katakalupto* and means (to be) covered. Unveiled or uncovered is its opposite. In verse 15 another word is used, *peribolion*, which means, something thrown around one, that is mantle, veil or covering. The hair, being a natural covering, is wrapped around the head instead of hanging loosely. So we have two coverings: the hair and a covering that is placed on the hair.

Sanford Shetler says, “If the hair is the only covering referred to here, she is faced with an impossibility, namely two successive removals of the hair.” He is commenting on verse 6, *For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.* “If the hair is the covering and she is uncovered, then the hair has already been removed. Why then add, ‘Let her also be shorn.’? What would be left to cut off? Also, if the covering implied is the hair, then man would have to shave his head in order to comply.”

I notice that in verse 6, the woman brings on herself a measure of shame by cutting her hair. “*If it be a shame...*” The Greek grammatical construction of this verse is, “*Since it be a shame*

for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.” I notice also in verse 6 that being shorn or shaven and the non-wearing of the covering are both shameful.

God’s instruction through the Apostle Paul is that the woman is to have a visible symbol, a covering on her head as a symbol of her acceptance of God’s order of authority. Watchman Nee says that “Sisters wearing the veiling bear testimony that ‘I have covered my head...for I do not seek to be head [in charge]. My head is veiled and I have accepted man as head. To accept man as head means that I have accepted Christ as head.’”

Four Directions of Witness in Wearing the Veiling

Borrowing from Richard Detweiler, I note the following:

1. It is a witness of obedience and dedication to God and Christ for it reveals a desire to fill the sphere of life designated by God’s order.

2. It is a witness to man, challenging him to fill his place.

3. It is a witness in the Christian brotherhood; the spirit and attitude of voluntary submission it represents enables woman to fulfill her place in the church.

4. It is a witness to the world, to society that disregards scriptural truths and practices and does not recognize God’s order. Wearing the

veiling is a powerful witness, sisters.

Another Direction of Witness

What does verse 10 mean? Let me read that verse from the New Living Translation: “So a woman should wear a covering on her head as a sign of authority because the angels are watching.” One thought that deserves serious consideration is that the angels referred to here are both fallen and faithful angels who note that the woman is taking her rightful place in the headship order. To the fallen angels it is a reminder of their own refusal to stay in God’s order, where under the leadership of Lucifer, they attempted to usurp the authority of God Himself. As a result, they were thrown out of heaven.

To the faithful angels, the veiled woman gives them occasion to take to God the message that she is filling her role as man’s helper and co-worker in the service of the Lord. We know that angels are ministers of God carrying out His will and His purposes to and for the saints. So the covered head is a sign to the angels that a woman is qualified to pray and prophesy and is eligible for their protection. [Editor’s note: Her prophesying, however, shall not be used to usurp authority over the man. See 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-14.]

This angelic ministry is more fully recognized by those who are

obedient to God by wearing the veiling as a sign of submission.

Nature's Object Lesson

In verse 14 and 15, we have reference made to nature's object lesson: If a man has long hair, it is a shame to him, but if a woman has long hair it is a glory to her. Ken Miller proposes that women naturally, generally speaking, can grow thicker, longer hair than men can. It seems to come from the hormonal makeup of women. Men have more baldness, presumably also for the same reasons. Ken suggests that God may be revealing something of His plan in these matters by having men get bald.

The Final Verse

What is Paul saying in verse 16? Is he undoing what he just took 15 verses to carefully lay out? Some would argue that that is exactly what he is doing. If so, he would be saying in effect: "If you choose to practice this that's fine. If not, that's fine, too." The New Living translation gives us the following thought: "If anyone wants to argue about this, all I can say is that we have no other custom than this and all the churches of God feel the same way about it." So what he's saying is that we have no other practice than that woman is to wear a veiling, that man shall go unveiled, and that men and women are to observe distinctive hair lengths.

Some Practical Considerations

When should the veiling be worn? I understand that *praying and prophesying* mean *worship*. It seems to me that we cannot separate life from worship. Wearing it constantly reminds us of our privilege to worship God any time, anywhere. There should be no time in life when we are not able to worship God.

Wearing it constantly also gives witness that we accept God's headship order. He has established the headship order and we are constantly reminded of that when we see the veiling being worn. God has chosen the sisters to display the symbol of headship order. Consider yourselves privileged that God has chosen you to bear the symbol.

I would also ask us to consider the fact that the significance of the covering is either enhanced or diminished by the Christian woman's dress and manner. The general appearance of a woman wearing the veiling should be consistent with a woman professing godliness. 1 Peter 3 speaks of "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." If a woman's manner is otherwise, it cancels out the significance of the veiling.

Men's head gear should only be for weather protection. Otherwise, the wearing of hats should be avoided. Any head covering with religious significance for a man violates the

teaching in this passage. I also believe that any women's head gear that is worn for the purpose of making a fashion statement violates the principle of the headship veiling.

What about covering size and style? I acknowledge that large coverings don't automatically indicate a submissive attitude, but I would also ask, "What does a small covering indicate?" It is my conviction that **the covering should take prominence over the hair**. I believe most of the head should be covered with a covering.

In the book, *Manners and Customs in Bible Times*, by Ralph Gower, I find a picture of what early coverings looked like. Woman has a flowing veiling that covers her head and her hair. Even though you can't see how it looks down the back, it looks very adequate in size.

Another book I have here is *Mennonites in Europe*, by John Horsch. One sketch is taken in the eighteenth century and the other in the seventeenth century (1641). Both of these women are wearing a cap-style veiling. We don't know when the cap style came to be, but it must have been some time before 1600. These coverings cover very well. They were also opaque enough to cover the hair, which means that you couldn't see through them. I'm asking whether a covering you can see through is

actually a covering? We don't consider ourselves to be covered if we wear clothing we can see through.

My observation is that regardless what style of covering is worn, the tendency seems always to be to have them diminish in size as time goes on. I believe the enemy has a keen interest in seeing this practice done away with. I would like for us to talk with people who have come to us from outside the traditional Mennonite faith and on the basis of their own study and conviction have come to wear the veiling. I think it would do us good.

If we see a decline in the size and wearing of the veiling, is it possible that it comes in proportion to a decline in the practice of the headship order? How well are we as men submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ? Is Jesus Christ and His kingdom our foremost goal? Is that what motivates us? Is it a high priority to us? Are we encouraging the feminine beauty and glory of submission by exercising loving leadership in our homes?

I would say that if we expect future generations to embrace the headship principle, we need men who will stand by their wives and daughters and encourage them in the wearing of the symbol of this biblical principle—the Christian woman's headship veiling.



marriages

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

Beachy-Wittmer

Bro. Sheldon Davon, son of Stephen and Susan Beachy, Huntland, TN, and Sis. Jamie Fern, daughter of Larry and Barbara Wittmer, Montgomery, IN, at Bethel Mennonite Church for Mt. Olive on March 29, 2008, by Stephen Beachy.

Funk-Yoder

Bro. Shane Alan, son of Wilmer and Vivian Funk, Chambersburg, PA, and Sis. Grace Elaine, daughter of David Alan and Rosanna Yoder, Dundee, OH, at Messiah Fellowship Church for Grace Haven Fellowship Church on Sept. 15, 2007, by the groom's father, Wilmer Funk.

Jantzi-Willey

Bro. Gabriel, son of Bruce and Ruthann Jantzi, of Wellesley, ON (currently serving in Ukraine) and Sis. Jennifer, daughter of Arnold and Irene Willey, Abbeville, SC, at Cold Spring Mennonite Church, on Dec. 21, 2007, by Ernest Hochstetler.

cradle roll

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

Bange, Nathan and Martha (Esh), Gordonville, PA, fifth child, fourth dau., Anita Joy, Mar. 6, 2008.

Barkman, Clement and Michelle (Troyer), McConnelsville, OH, seventh child, third dau., Sonya Yvonne, Feb. 24, 2008.

Beachy, J. Ellis and Kimberly (Zelaya), Scotland Halfmoon, Belize, first child and dau., JahZemira Rosanna, Dec. 19, 2007.

Eash, Steven Paul and Anna Louise (Byler), Whiteville, TN, first child and son, Jamin Lavern, Feb. 26, 2008.

Farmwald, John and Katherine (Miller), Crossville, TN, second child and dau., Carleena Dawn, Mar. 17, 2008.

Fisher, Daniel and Lydia (Stoltzfus), Mifflin, PA, fourth child and dau., Hannah Grace, Nov. 4, 2007.

Fisher, Elvin and Saralynn (Esh), Honey Grove, PA, second child, first dau., Amber Elizabeth, Dec. 21, 2007.

Fisher, Nathan and Ruth (Fisher), E. Waterford, PA, second child, first son, Isaac Joseph, Sept. 27, 2007.

Graber, Myron and Joanna (Wagler), Montgomery, IN, third child, second son, Adrian Dean, Mar. 19, 2008.

Jantzi, Kenneth and Andrea (Ropp), Poole, ON, first child and son, Zachary Kenneth, Mar. 14, 2008.

Jess, Kenneth and Sue Ann (Gingerich), Arthur, IL, fifth child, first dau., Grace Angela, Feb. 28, 2008.

Kauffman, Vincent and Rachel (Peter-sheim), Mill Hall, PA, second child, first dau., Clarita Raquelle, Jan. 25, 2008.

Lapp, Calvin Jay and Barbie (King), Leola, PA, eighth child, fourth dau., Kayla Marie, March 6, 2008.

Lapp, Titus and Julia (Glick), Freeport, OH, third child and son, Carlin Pierre, Sept. 28, 2007.

Lebold, Rodney and Sarah (Gerber), Millbank, ON, first child and son, Ryan Jacob, Jan. 28, 2008.

Lehman, Spencer and Trudy (Dick), Col-colamus, PA, first child and dau., Victoria Cheyenne, Feb. 26, 2008.

Lengacher, Galen and Esther (Miller), Summersville, KY, third child and dau., Angelika Rose, Feb. 15, 2008.

Miller, Jeremy and Marla (Bender), Rural Retreat, VA, third child, first dau., Karida Lanae, Mar. 17, 2008.

Peachey, Paul and Geneva (Yoder), Sum-mersville, KY, sixth child, fourth dau., Charity Jewel, Mar. 3, 2008.

Steckly, Shane and Sharon (Kuepfer), Millbank, ON, fourth child, first dau., Marita Cheyenne, Mar. 18, 2008.

Stoltzfus, Matthew and Jewel (Stoltzfus), Gordonville, PA, third child, first son, Mason Cordell, Jan. 25, 2008.

Wagler, Travis and Renee (Marner), Odon, IN, fifth child, fourth son, Devin Tyler, Mar. 28, 2008.

Weaver, Hans and Rochelle (Burkhold-er), Jesup, GA, third child, second son, Jefferson Hans, Mar. 27, 2008.

Weaver, James and Amanda (Troyer), Lore City, OH, fifth child, first son, Taylor James, Mar. 13, 2008.

Weaver, Nathan and Shelby (Miller), Quaker City, OH, seventh child, and dau., Mariah Lyn, Jan. 30, 2008.

Yoder, Nate and Janae (Hershberger), Plain City, OH, fifth child, (one de-ceased), second dau., Ashlynn Jade, March 6, 2008.

Zook, Marcus and Anna Mary (Stoltzfus), Mifflin, PA, fifth child, fourth son, Joshua David, Oct. 25, 2007.

ordinations

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

Bro. Ray L. Kauffman, 38, Whiteville, TN, was ordained as minister at Whiteville Mennonite Church on March 16, 2008. Preordination messages were brought by Ray Stutzman of Plain City, OH. The charge was given by Lavern Eash, assisted by Elmer Mast and John Mast. Kevin Yoder was also in the lot.

Bro. Raymond E. Miller, 29, Paris, TN, was ordained as deacon for Bethel Fellowship Mennonite Church, Cottage Grove, TN, on March 9, 2008. Preordination messages were brought by L. J. Helmuth. The charge was given by John Mast, assisted by Melvin Troyer and Lavern Eash. Also in the lot was Milan Wagler.

obituaries

Gerber, Mahlon G., 70, died suddenly of a heart attack at his home in Millbank, Ontario, on March 7, 2008. He was born Jan. 17, 1938, in Wellesley Twp., son of the late Ezra and Adeline (Gingerich) Gerber.

He was a member of Cedar Grove A.M. church. He was ordained a minister there on April 22, 1979.

On May 18, 1963, he was married to Mary Kathryn Jantzi, who survives. Also surviving are 10 children: Clare (Gwen) Gerber, Wingham; Peter (Mary Ellen) Gerber, Woodstock, New Brunswick; Wayne (Susan) Gerber, Millbank; Ralph (Bernice) Gerber, Millbank; Susan (Darryl) Kuepfer, Millbank; Sarah (Rodney) Lebold, Millbank; Linda (Allen) Jantzi, Wellesley; John (Tanya) Gerber, Millbank; Martha (Luke) Wagler, Lavigne; and Daniel, at home. Other survivors include 38 grandchildren; two brothers: Melvin, Thunder Bay, ON; and Nelson, Millbank; three sisters: Ella Mae Schmidt, Wellesley; Mary Jantzi, Millbank; and Norma (Elmer) Mast, Whiteville, TN; and brother-in-law, Murray (Karen) Jantzi, Warren, ON.

Preceding him in death were brothers-in-law: John Wagler, Elmer Schmidt, Melvin Jantzi and Jacob Jantzi and sister-in-law: Alice Jantzi.

The funeral was held on March 11, with Arthur Gerber serving. Interment was in the Cedar Grove cemetery.

Kuepfer, Benjamin, 97, died at Nithview Homes, New Hamburg, ON, on Feb. 22, 2008. He was born Sept. 10, 1910, in Newton, ON, son of the late John and Mary (Schwartzentruber) Kuepfer.

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

On Dec. 17, 1936, he was married to Marion Nafziger Gerber, who survives. Children are Willis (Kathryn) Kuepfer, Milverton; Ivan (Anna Mae) Kuepfer, Millbank; Irene Kuepfer, Wellesley; Nelson (Elaine) Kuepfer, Kingwood; Merrill (Laverne) Zehr, Crosshill; Verna (Nelson) Jantzi, Brunner; 25 grandchildren; and 25 great grandchildren.

Preceding him in death were grandson Brian, a stillborn granddaughter, and great granddaughter, Angela; three sisters and seven brothers: Lena, Jonas, Nick, Christ, Clara, Eli, Dan, Nancy, John and Allen.

The funeral was held on Feb. 25, with Arthur Gerber serving. Interment was in the Cedar Grove cemetery.

Lebold, Fannie, 85, died at Knollcrest Lodge, Milverton, ON, on Mar. 7, 2008. She was born in Millbank, ON, on July 26, 1922, daughter of the late Peter and Elizabeth (Jantzi) Schmidt.

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

On Dec. 16, 1943, she was married to Jacob Lebold, who died on Dec. 30, 2006. Survivors include: four children: Kenneth (Mary) Lebold, Earlton, ON; Wanda (Mervin) Wagler, Wellesley; Wayne (Shirley Anne) Lebold, Millbank; and Floyd (Kathy) Lebold, Lucknow; 18 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren. Three sisters-in-law also survive: Mary Schmidt, Katie Erb, and Ella Mae Schmidt.

Preceding her in death were brothers and sisters: Laura and Lorne Lichty, Nicholas and Emma Schmidt, Elmer and Annie Schmidt, Lorne Schmidt, Emma and Cornelius Erb.

The funeral was held on Mar. 13, with Arthur Gerber serving. Interment was in the Cedar Grove cemetery.

observations

The devotional booklet, *Beside the Still Waters*, mailed from Clarkson, KY, continues to grow in circulation. A correspondent to *The (Sugarcreek) Budget* reports that 150,000 were sent out in a recent mailing. In 2007, 1.4 million pieces, including tapes, were sent. This is about 300,000 more than the previous year.

It is noteworthy that volunteers

who provide the daily meditations are asked to subscribe to a statement of belief and practice that is unapologetically conservative. This includes man's leadership, head covering, permanence and sanctity of marriage, non-use of radio and television, and other expectations that many would consider too restrictive to commend widespread appeal.

It is doubtful that any other Anabaptist publication has wider circulation.

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David A. King is athletic director at Eastern Mennonite University. He has a long history of coaching before coming to EMU in 2005. King has begun to speak out against what he perceives as an obsession on the part of parents that has shifted the purpose of the game from *fun and learning* to *winning*. He sees value in sports and competition, but believes that students and their parents are not viewing sports as a way to develop life skills, but as a means to achieve recognition and acclaim. A book, entitled, *Sports: The All American Addiction*, by John R. Gerdy, has influenced King. Virginia Mennonite Conference is in the process of licensing Mr. King for "specialized ministry" to share his message. He has the backing of the EMU administration in assuming this role. He says, "I've heard too

many stories from parents who tell me how stressed they are, how sports has negatively affected their family and church life, how their children are chasing an unrealistic goal and forsaking core values in the process, but no one has been giving any warnings.” (*Mennonite Weekly Review*, 3-3-08)

Christians would do well remember that bodily exercise profits only a little, but godliness is profitable— not only now but in the eternal future. (1 Timothy 4:8)

• • • • •

We would all agree that Bible principles can be expressed in various ways. Modesty in dress is a case in point. We are interested in seeing this principle practiced and preserved. One could reason that since this is true, why not simply teach the principles and encourage individuals to make their own application? Such reasoning may sound logical. Logic should prompt additional questions: Has it been tried? If so, how well has it worked?

Harry A. Diener (1888-1987) was bishop at Yoder Mennonite Church (Reno County, KS). He was active during the lifetime of Daniel Kauffman, George R. Brunk I, and others of that era. He lived quite a while after he was no longer a participating minister at Yoder. Some of the church trends that gained momentum during his retirement were a serious disappointment to

him. This included widespread non-wearing of the woman’s headship covering.


Bro. Diener told me personally that this trend started when individuals were allowed to choose what pattern of covering to wear. This was a departure from the earlier standard of wearing only church-approved patterns. It is apparent that this approach has preserved neither the practice nor the principle for which the covering stands. Honesty causes us to ask why. Allow me to suggest two possible reasons:

- Whatever idealism may have prompted this trend, there was an obvious lack of realism and practicality involved.


- Biblical obedience and non-conformity do not do well in the absence of group loyalty and identity.

History can teach us many helpful things. Let us be willing and humble learners.

• • • • •

I was blessed with the article selected and reprinted in the April issue, “Unsung Heroes.” I do not know the author. But this person has an outlook that is often lacking when there are serious church problems. I take it that she is a “Philippians 4:8” kind of Christian. I am aware that this column (Observations) does not always reflect that priority. But I do sincerely want to be a person who majors on what is noble and thankworthy. —DLM 

ANNOUNCEMENT

Wanted: Executive Director. Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Indiana, is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an executive director to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: Strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumes or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald c/o Menno-Hof, 510 Van Buren St., Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com. 

CHRISTIAN NONRESISTANCE and NONCONFORMITY

David L. Miller, Partridge, KS

Historically, Christian non-resistance and non-conformity to the world were features that distinguished Anabaptists from the larger bodies of professed Christendom.

In some Anabaptist circles non-resistance has been replaced by a “peace witness” or “pacifism.” Pacifism is not a bad word. It could include all that Christian non-resistance takes in. But the term can also be used to describe a philosophy that is purely secular. One can be pacifistic without being Christian. But Christian non-resistance is obviously just that, Christian. Let’s not settle for anything less.

Historians seem to agree that the early church did not participate in the military or other involvements

that would have compromised the way of Christ. But the illicit union of church and state in 313 A.D. changed that. The church/state union was not friendly to those who could not in good conscience blend in with the new “christianized” state. Recently someone pointed out that for the first three centuries the church forbade its members to participate in the military, then following the union of church and state its members were forbidden by the state to refrain from that participation.

Dissenting groups do not get much historical recognition for more than a thousand years following the church/state union, but it is apparent that such groups did exist.

The participants in the Reformation, for the most part, did not abandon the

church/state union. This is powerfully symbolized in Zurich, Switzerland, where the statue of Ulrich Zwingli can be seen holding the Bible in one hand and a sword in the other.

Let us note in passing that while we now have separation of church and state in this country, the issue of national loyalty usurping Christian priorities is very prevalent throughout the larger church community. We do well to remember that we are not necessarily immune to such influences. But we also want to remember that during the Reformation in Switzerland a significant but small number of people were committed to following the way of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament.

In spite of extreme opposition and persecution this ideal has survived for almost 500 years. However, during World War II it became evident the “Bible and sword” mindset had made serious inroads into some Anabaptist circles. That worldview is still very much alive.

It would be wrong to assume that any rising generation will remain steadfast without diligent nurturing. The present emphasis on renewed teaching is being promoted with that awareness as well as service associated with Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP). We are sometimes not sure how well we are connecting with the grass

roots of the constituency. Some young people who are full of energy and vigor do not always seem to find time to pay serious attention to some weightier and enduring values. They are certainly entitled to the benefits of seeing these ideals modeled in their church settings. The way of Christ includes all of life; not just non-participation in the military. Solid teaching and Christian service opportunities are important parts of the equation.

Moving now to the second part of this discussion has become the occasion of unexpected hesitation and prolonged seeking for God’s direction. It is an issue that has been mentioned occasionally in the Observations column. But a “bits and pieces” column is hardly suitable for an in-depth review of important subjects.

Part of my hesitation comes from the awareness that older people are sometimes perceived as being out of touch with current realities. I am remembering also that older people are sometimes unknowingly afflicted with the “cracked-record syndrome.” But, in spite of all this hesitation, the need for helpful discussion and direction is very evident.

Let us agree together to ignore a problem is not an honorable option. It is only realistic to be aware that large numbers of Anabaptists have re-defined, if not abandoned, the important doctrine of nonconformity

within my short lifetime. It is noteworthy that the process did not start in the last eighty years, and it is still ongoing.

We can respond in several ways. We can assume that certain trends and outcomes are simply inevitable. This is essentially a defeatist mentality. We can also take measures that are explicit and detailed in application, without a corresponding emphasis on underlying principle. This can result in a lifeless rigidity and cause people to turn their backs on a vital Bible principle and practice.

Let me propose a third response that I believe is a worthy and realistic ideal. It is important that we recognize past failures of the practice of this doctrine. Failures, inconsistencies, and limitations do not invalidate Bible principles. Let us rather recognize the sufficiency of God's grace for us to respond with honesty and faithfulness.

A non-conformed life style or any other lifestyle cannot give us eternal life. Only Christ can do that. But our manner of life should reflect His lordship. And the prince of this world is always at odds with Christ and His lordship. To give prominence to this awareness does affect all of life, not just favorite "conservative Anabaptist" ideas.

We have rightly rejected immodest clothing and other unpredictable, faddish whims, in favor of church-

guided directives in this area. When it comes to material things, such as the houses we build, the cars we drive and the management of finances, we generally have been fairly non-specific. Perhaps the success or failure of this method gives us an indication of how well Christian stewardship is being taught and received. How do we feel about those who notice serious deficiencies in this area? An honest response is always right. A willingness to take corrective measures is an earmark of true honesty.

North American Anabaptist Mennonites/Amish can be divided into three categories: Those who are Old Order, those who are culturally "mainstream," and those who find themselves somewhere between. The larger numbers are on either side of the middle, and are both in excess of 100,000.

For a number of years Christian Light Publications has been publishing a yearbook with a goal to include churches who, in their minds, desire to uphold the doctrines of the Scriptures as historically taught by the Mennonite Church. They mention specifically: "separation from the world, nonresistance, separation of church and state, permanence of marriage, the Christian woman's veiling, moral purity, and the leadership of man." Their 2006 book lists a total of over 37,000 from 23 different groups. This includes a

section of “Unaffiliated Mennonites” of 98 congregations, with 4,824 members. The Beachy (BAM) census shows 159 congregations with 9,577 members, or about 25% of the total number. A Sword and Trumpet yearbook lists additional in-between groups.

Though these groups have some variety in backgrounds, they want to be guided by the same principles, i.e., the Spirit and Word of Christ and the apostles’ doctrine. It seems evident, furthermore, that these groups are facing similar challenges.

- We do well to encourage one another, remembering that we have not been sentenced to failure.

- We need humility and courage to boldly stand for truth. Bible truth has appropriate parts of grace and love. (John 1:14; Ephesians 4:15)

- The local bodies of Christ need to be closely knit together through love of the truth and of each other.

- Ideally, the different age groups can blend together in beautiful harmony. Imbalance in this area can cripple the healthy function of a congregation.

- The essence of the congregation is not its leaders. But we all know that responsible, godly leadership is extremely important. When we try to discover the fine line between being responsible overseers over God’s flock (Acts 20:28) and not lords over God’s heritage (1 Peter 5:3), we discover a

very delicate balance is required. Let us assume that this balance is available to those who seek it with honest, humble hearts. Let us remember first, last and always, it is God’s flock. To willingly feed and take oversight of the flock is part of the leadership assignment. (1 Peter 5:2)

- It is only realistic to acknowledge that the potential for us to drift is very real and obvious.

- To assume that drift is inevitable is to fail to appropriate the victory and grace of Christ.

- In our zeal to do what is right, it is never necessary or right to have unchristian and unloving attitudes.

A kind reader, who requests anonymity, sent me a brief sketch of a man’s life. We will call the man “Amos.” This reader’s motive was simply to observe various decisions that Amos, this rather colorful character, made some 30-35 years ago and how these decisions worked out. Amos is remembered in a good way for his interest in spiritual things. However, he somehow felt free to disregard the positions of the church if he disagreed with them. Having come from a more conservative setting, his reactionary spirit was evident in his willingness to confront leaders about his perception of their misuse of authority.

A Pentecostal-type movement appeared in the community, with no external Anabaptist marks. Its self-proclaimed spirituality was a cut above other churches in the

community. Amos quickly became an active participant.

Today the lives of his grandchildren and great grandchildren offer an important commentary on an ancestor's easy decision to abandon practices he saw as needless. There is serious reason to question whether the third generation knows the Lord. Several great grandchildren have been born out of wedlock and are living in unstable, single-parent homes.

The brother who wrote expressed his concerns that we often take church loyalty too lightly. Amos' unwillingness to submit to group expectations has affected many others in a very negative way. Rebellion is still as the sin of witchcraft. (1 Samuel 15:23)

I quote the brother who sent me the report: "The brotherhood speaking into our lives in practical ways carries a strong measure of safety for us now and in future generations. Let's appreciate it."

The Islamic world population is a very needy mission field. But generally Muslims are very antagonistic toward Christians. There are historical reasons for Muslims to believe that professed Christians are militarily aggressive. Inasmuch as they have access to the teachings of Christ, the inconsistency becomes obvious.

Good Muslims dress modestly. Changeable western styles often reflect wanton immodesty. This is repulsive to serious Muslims. Let

us note that not only is it right to be non-resistant and non-conformed to contemporary culture. It may also be a significant plus in reaching Muslims with the Gospel.

As I review and reflect on what is written, I wonder if being more specific in some ways could be helpful. The pressures of cultural conformity are relentless. There are different ways in which principles of conformity to Christ and His Word can be lived out. But to assume that to emphasize principle without a church-directed expression has, to my knowledge, never survived the test of time.

The long look ahead reminds us that identity with the people of God is a wise choice, a privilege. (Hebrews 11:24-29). To stand together in unity of spirit is contrary to the individualistic spirit of our times. This is one of the reasons why it is so important to do so. God cannot fail. To fail Him would be unspeakably tragic. It need not happen. It must not happen.

The above article has been incubating for some time. Several non-local brethren have expressed support and interest in it. This is being reviewed before publication by an interested circle of peers. Let us not fail "to exhort one another and so much the more as we see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). Jesus is still building his church, with or without us.



The Cry and The Answer

Name Withheld

The author of this poem was inspired to write it by observing the unselfish lives of several different people.

Oh, if only she had children!
Her heart, if unchecked, fain would cry
With Rachel of old, "Give me children
To mother or else I shall die!"
Oh, for small bodies to cuddle!
Oh, for round faces to kiss!
Few gifts of this earth God could give her
Would please her more greatly than this!
Her woman heart cries for expression,
For children on whom she can pour
The wealth of exhaustless expression
God gave her in plenteous store.
But others reap well of that bounty,
And others are blessed by her care,
For living for others protects her
From self-pity's crippling despair.
Her brothers' and sisters' small children
Hail Auntie's arrival with joy.
Her love and her time and attention
Are claimed by each girl and each boy.
The lonely are warmed by her friendship.
The aged compete for her care.
The sick are secure in the knowledge
The nurse they call "angel" is there.
She faithfully writes to her grandma,

Her uncles and aunts and her friends.
The ill, the bereaved, and discouraged
Are cheered by the cards which she sends.

Oh, if only she had children


For whom she could sew tiny clothes,
Feeling the thrill of excitement
A mother-in-waiting well knows,
Choosing the baby-soft fabric,
Cutting the pieces with care,
Happily stitching each garment
With love and a dream and a prayer!
Returning again to the present
She folds up her fanciful dreams.
She hums as she patiently stitches
The lengths of monotonous seams.
The clothes she is skillfully making
Are sewn for some people in need,
And many a work-driven mother
Has reason to bless her indeed.

Oh, if only she had children,

Children to teach and to train!
How thrilling to help them develop
New skills of the body and brain!
What pleasure to watch Baby forming
New words with a faltering tongue!
How great the importance of teaching
Obedience while they are still young!
What fun it would be to teach daughters

To cook and to bake and to sew
And how to make order of chaos—
Those things which a daughter should know
Right now, though, there's no time for dreaming,
She smiles at the questioning hands
And tries to explain proper fractions
In terms that her class understands.
She finds her position fulfilling.
Unconsciously, too, she has taught
Many an older disciple
Whose life has been constantly fraught
With trials and sore disappointments
To carry a song and a smile,
For living for God and for others
Is sure to make living worthwhile.

Oh, if only she had children!
Less often she feels this sharp cry.
Submission steals over her being
As year after year passes by.
Contentment has given its blessing,
And God is the Source of her joy.
She feels deep within her a stillness
No trouble can shake or destroy.
And how unexpected the gladness
To see how God chose to impart,
Through all of her service, the answer
To comfort the cry of her heart.

[From *Family Life*, Jan., 2008, by permission.] 

Godly Manhood

Lydia Nissley, Catlett, VA

Our men buy parts and machinery at a Ford dealership in a nearby town. Some time ago, this place of business had a very immoral calendar hanging on the wall of the parts department. LeRoy, my husband, decided it is not fit to take his sons along to that store. Later, when he sent a check to pay a bill, he enclosed a note to the effect that the calendar may adversely affect their business.

Some time later, the owner called and was very apologetic. The calendar had been removed. Today, the owner seems to have a high respect for LeRoy.

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An elderly neighbor lady died. Her husband was already deceased and LeRoy had been pall bearer at his funeral. He had worked with

this elderly couple and had done things for them, so he was asked to be pall bearer again. Of course, he consented. We were with the family at the funeral home and LeRoy sat with the other pall bearers.

We were part of the funeral procession that went to the grave site. At the grave site, after the committal service and when the flowers had been placed on the casket, the pall bearers proceeded to give the three daughters and their spouses a hug and a word of condolence. What was LeRoy to do? He does not believe it is proper to hug other women. So, he didn't. He kindly shook hands while we talked and sought to comfort the relatives in that way.

Two examples of godly manhood!

Happiness or Holiness?

John E. Glick, Gap, PA

The Declaration of Independence, adopted by America's founding colonies on July 4, 1776, states that the Creator has given all men certain unalienable rights. It lists these rights as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." I am not sure just what the founding fathers meant

by this statement, but I will interpret it to say that the Creator has given all men the privilege to be free from the bondage of sin and to have life everlasting. He has commanded all men to repent and to pursue holiness.

In studying happiness, we find it spoken of in a positive way in Scrip-

ture. God certainly does not object to our being happy. A much deeper experience, though, is that of joy. Happiness seems to be dependent on circumstances. It's easy to be happy when we are healthy and things are going well, but when sadness comes, happiness flees.

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. It is not dependent on outward circumstances. Joy springs from a positive relationship with God. We can sorrow because of unfavorable circumstances, yet at the same time, have the joy of the Lord in our hearts. Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord always" (4:7). He also said that because of the unbelief of his fellow Jews, he had "continual sorrow in his heart" (Romans 9:2). To the Corinthians he described himself as "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Cor. 6:10).

Unregenerate society seems to be engrossed in the pursuit of happiness. What is alarming is how it has "rubbed off" on the church. The Epicureans of Paul's time believed that pleasure was the chief end of man. Do those who observe our lifestyle have reason to think that we also believe that? While Christians in some countries are willing to suffer for the cause of Christ, many of us here in the West are busy pursuing "The American Dream." Sports and entertainment hold a prominent

place in the lives of many professing Christians. We spend much money and take great measures to make life pleasant for ourselves. When this becomes the driving force in our lives, we lose sight of the call to holiness.

The Scriptures nowhere promise an easy life to the believer. Jesus said that if one would be a disciple, he must bear the cross. He said people may mock us, reject us or even persecute us physically. He spoke of being separated from family and friends. Paul said that we must go through much tribulation to enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).


God calls His people to something much nobler than the pursuit of happiness. He calls us to holiness.

Holiness is, first of all, to be cleansed and liberated by the blood of Jesus. The pursuit of holiness involves going against the tide. The seeker of holiness recognizes that "this vile world" is not "a friend to grace." Those who pursue holiness are seeking to glorify God rather than pursuing personal ambitions. They are more concerned about the salvation of souls than about happiness and pleasant surroundings. Pursuing holiness may mean fasting, weeping, and agonizing in prayer. It may mean foregoing some temporal pleasures that others engage in. The way of holiness, however, is the way of real joy. Such

joy has enabled martyrs to sing and praise God while facing execution.

Those who pursue only happiness will suddenly experience an awful emptiness when the things of this world pass away, whereas those who pursue holiness are laying up treasures in another world. The way of holiness leads right on up into glory. There the cross will be exchanged for

a crown. There, at God's right hand, there are pleasures forevermore.


If we choose to travel the broad road of ease and pleasure, then we must accept the destiny to which it leads. Let us, much rather, choose to find our joy and fulfillment in God. The strait gate and the narrow way lead into His very presence, where we will enjoy Him forever. 

The Holy Spirit's Touch

“Earnestness is good and impressive;
genius is gifted and great;
thought kindles and inspires, BUT...

It takes a diviner endowment, and more powerful energy than earnestness or genius or thought--
-to break the chains of sin,
-to win estranged and depraved hearts to God,
-to repair the breaches and restore the Church to her old ways of purity and power.

Nothing but the anointing of the Holy Spirit can do this.”

[From E. M Bounds, (1835-1913), from *Preacher and Prayer*, p. 93-94, published in 1907. Emphasis added.] 

We cannot lead beyond where we have
gone ourselves.

Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us

Floyd Stoltzfus

We are thankful that Calvary Bible School is nestled in such an ideal location away from the distractions of modern life. Here in the Ozark Mountains, we can enjoy God's creation as we listen to the rippling stream, observe the deep blue sky, or take a quiet walk and see deer graze peacefully in the valley. This year we were even able to take a walk in nine inches of snow.

This institution of learning is open to any person, regardless of nationality, if they have confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and possess a desire to grow in the understanding of the Word of God. Students must commit themselves to a study of the Bible and cooperate in upholding biblical standards of conduct. The purpose of this study discipline is to promote holy living and to prepare for a lifetime of Christian service in and through the church. Our prayer is that all students may fulfill the Great Commission, that is, in some way, make disciples at home and in the regions beyond.

Within the high plastered walls of the main building, you might hear beautiful, four-part singing that moves one in awesome worship of our Heavenly Father. Calvary Bible School provides crowded hallways, full schedules, and pressing assignments. When the classes are in session, there is often careful listening,

writing down organized material, or participating in discussion.

The total enrollment this winter was 207 students from states as far-flung as New York to Georgia, Texas and California. Kansas was well represented and there was as sprinkling from Minnesota and a number of the corn-belt states. Ohio and Pennsylvania had the highest number. We had dedicated students from Canada, Belize, El Salvador, Romania, Liberia, and Kenya. In the first term, there were 78 new students and only 11 who had attended here before. Second term had the highest number of students, with 54 men and 54 women. At meal time the cooks fed 137 people, which included staff and faculty, and their wives and children. In the third term, we had 60 students. These people bonded through struggles, prayers, tears, joyful sharing times, and meaningful relationships.

This was our fourth year for offering a six-week term. The two three-week terms have good purpose and we plan to continue to offer them, especially for students and teachers who cannot commit themselves for six weeks. The third term has specific advantages. For example, normally a student in two, three-week terms can receive credits in eight subjects. However, in the six-week term one can only take

three subjects with more extensive and in-depth study.

Come with us to Harrison, Arkansas, for a Saturday of witnessing: some 65 people spread out in the town in groups of two or three. We offer free Gospel CD's and tracts. A word of witness is given as the Holy Spirit opens doors of opportunity. A prayer may be offered for someone who indicates a special need. We write this need on a card and bring it back to CBS and share it with the rest of the school for prayer.

On one day, we gathered about 120 requests. Here are several samples of people with need: Arthur and Clara are confused about the Bible. They don't

believe in hell and are bitter about not being able to have children. Boyd and Cheryl are struggling in their marriage and experience depression. Preston (age 14) was broken and penitent and decided to become a Christian. He seemed sincere and was glad in the Lord.

Our prayer is that we may keep this vision of witnessing as we return to our home communities. Psalm 126:5 and 6 depict the scope of evangelism. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."



helpers at home

Mother's Day

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

May is the month for Mother's Day. Those of us who are mothers look forward to phone calls, cards, and perhaps flowers or visits from our married sons and daughters. Younger mothers anticipate homemade gifts and cards or maybe a bouquet of wild flowers lovingly clutched in grubby little hands and bestowed with childish delight. I remember well of slipping outside on Mother's Day morning to "surprise" my own mother with a bunch of lily of the valleys out of her own garden.

Another memory of Mother's Day

is the flowers that my father always gave to Mom on her special day and my own husband has continued that tradition. No, I am not his mother, but I am the mother of his children.

Every woman is born with a "mothering" heart and deserves to be remembered on Mother's Day, even if she never gave birth physically. Older single women have nurtured nieces and nephews, school students and befriended younger people in the youth group. Use this Mother's Day to show your appreciation and love to them. For you single ladies, you may be surprised to find that you

could be a source of encouragement to young mothers with several small children who feel overwhelmed with the daily responsibilities of motherhood. There are married women who long to be mothers and actually dread Mother's Day. Let them know that you care about them.

There are older widows in our neighborhoods who feel very alone. Drop in with a bouquet of flowers and brighten their day. Mother's Day is a day of spreading love to those in our families and stretching the border to those outside our natural blood limitations.

Recently I had the privilege of sitting among a group of women. As we went around the circle sharing our thoughts from the past week, I was saddened to hear the frustration, discouragement, and physical exhaustion expressed especially by mothers with small children. I know I forget the negative aspects and tend to remember only the joys of motherhood, so I confess I could not quite relate to the negative comments. In spite of that, I would like to share some insights I have gleaned through the years that may help you to think of motherhood as a joyful experience and to bring you a renewed sense of awe and fulfillment on this Mother's Day:

1. *Take care of your body.*

Eat healthful, nourishing meals. Take your vitamins. Get lots of rest; don't hesitate to take an afternoon

nap. If you are struggling with postpartum depression, make an appointment with your doctor.

2. *Lower your expectations.*

I want to say this carefully because I realize we can expect nothing and receive nothing. I also realize mothers can have unrealistic expectations of the perfect family and become discouraged when they discover their family is not perfect. Relax and enjoy.

3. *Take every thought captive by the grace of God.*

Our thoughts are not sin but if we dwell on negative thoughts, they can become sin in the form of discontentment, anger, bitterness, covetousness and so on. Fill your mind with wholesome, happy thoughts. It is OK to listen to music, books on tape, messages, but also allow for quiet times to hear God's voice. Be thankful. A thankful heart is a happy heart.

4. *Guard your time.*

A mother's time is valuable. Your children will respond to a schedule and a disciplined mother. Don't use the computer and telephone as a form of escape. Teach your children to work and teach them how to play.

5. *Enjoy your children.*

Let them know you enjoy them in each stage of their development: toddlers, preschool, school age, teenagers. Express your pleasure in them. Take an interest in their friends, activities, their likes and dislikes. Remember that God delights in you

Happy Mother's Day to each of you!



The Man in White-Part 1 of 6

Based on an actual account

Roseanne Peachy

The Mohammed in this story is a real person. The major events are true, only a few details have been added.

Many Muslims around the world have little or no knowledge of Jesus Christ and are first introduced to Him as “The Man in White,” either through dreams or visions that God gives them. Keep them in your prayers, so many are enduring rejection and persecution from their loved ones, once they turn to Christianity and accept Jesus as their Savior.

It was early morning and already the sun rose hot and bright over the Nigerian countryside. Seven-year-old Mohammed stepped out of his family’s small wooden hut and began doing his chores. His father owned a herd of cattle, and according to tradition, the youngest son needed to rise first. Mohammed milked the cows, and sent them out to graze. Then he built a fire to keep the flies away. He loved the cows so much that he liked to call them his very own.

Mohammed loved one person more than his cows. It was his father, whom he affectionately called, “Baba.” In his eyes, Baba seemed to be the greatest man in the world—always so strong, smart, brave, and wise.

“Baba, I want to be just like you when I grow up,” Mohammed would say every day. His father would only chuckle. When Father knelt down to pray to Allah, the Muslim god, little

Mohammed would do the same.

“Allah is the one and only true god,” his father often said.

“Mohammed, you must always remain a Muslim, because it is right! Allah will reward you for your endurance. You must NEVER listen to any foolish Christian talk about their god, the Prophet Isa. (“Isa” is the Muslims’ name for Jesus Christ.) The son would nod in obedient assent to his father’s frequent words of wisdom. As he grew older, he had a deepening hunger to worship Allah and to honor his name.

Ten years went by. Mohammed grew into a tall, lean young man. He still tended cattle, lived in the same hut, and helped his father in the same fields. Yet, something was different. He often felt lonely and hollow inside.

“Baba,” he approached his father one night, “I must request one thing. I have a growing hunger to get a proper education and attend an Arabic school,

so I can better understand the Koran, our holy book.” Mohammed believed that he could find rest for his soul if he acquired knowledge about its writings.

“Yes, perhaps I will send you to Bauchi, to attend Sheik Ibrahim’s school,” his father responded thoughtfully. Mohammed felt like leaping for joy.

Several years went by and Mohammed also received education from other schools about how to interpret the Koran and the fundamentals of the Islamic religion.

“Allah, greatest god of all,” he often prayed, “I want to serve you with my life. Show me the way to go, so I can be called great in your sight.” It seemed the hungrier Mohammed grew for his god, the farther away Allah seemed to be.

When Mohammed was 22 years old, he began wishing to travel to Saudi Arabia for further advanced studies. But his father asked him to come home. “Son,” he said gravely, “you mother and I feel it is best that you get married before leaving for Saudi Arabia. After all, isn’t Allah’s will for every man to be married?”

Mohammed stayed silent for a long time. Oh, how desperately he wished to fill that haunting, empty void in his soul. He replied soberly, “Baba, I want to know Allah more intimately. This is the deepest desire of my heart. It is even a desire stronger than marriage.” His father shook his head in perplexity. *When would his son ever be satisfied with receiving an education? Was it driving him mad?*

Mohammed reluctantly stayed home on the farm and went back to being a herdsman. Because he had received several years of religious training his family and relatives revered him as their spiritual leader.

One dark night, everything in his world changed. It came in the form of a series of terrifying, mysterious dreams. In his first dream, he walked along through a field when suddenly evil men in black robes began attacking him. The following night, he had the same dream, but his terror vanished, when still in his dream, a tall, peaceful looking man dressed in a long, shimmering, white robe appeared.

The Man in White asked, “My son, what are you doing here?”

“I don’t know!” Mohammed cried in distress.

The Man in White reached down and lifted him up and replied, “Let me take you home. I love you, my son!” Continuing in his dream, Mohammed watched in awe as the evil men fled at the sight of the Man in White. He wanted to be in His presence forever. It seemed as if he had been trapped in a dark dungeon, then suddenly had freedom to walk in brilliant, heavenly sunlight—a world of glorious gardens and rainbows.

When Mohammed awoke, he couldn’t stop thinking about the dream. *Who was the Man in White? Why did he feel this way? Was this more than an ordinary dream?*

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To be continued...



Dear Youth,


People never really succeed when they make people BIG and God small. Yet this is perhaps the number one temptation that all humans have in common.

A long time ago, Jesus asked, “How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?”

Why is it so hard for us to learn this truth?

We discussed this human dilemma at length in the Interpersonal

Relationships Class this winter at CBS. In the following paragraphs, you will read what some of the students had to say, after going home to “real life.”

If you are interested in learning more about this subject, I would recommend reading the book, *When People are Big and God is Small* by Edward T. Welch. Many youth and older people have found this book to be helpful in their goal to make God the only one they serve. —EE 

This Month's QUESTION

What happens in communities and churches when people are **BIG** and God is **SMALL**?

response from our readers ...

When people are big and God is small is when people care more about what other people think than what God thinks. They allow other people to control them. When they allow that they are not able to wholeheartedly follow God's leading because it might mean doing something of which others do not approve. If people in the church do not follow God's leading it becomes dead spirituality. They cannot serve God; whereby they cut off any relationship with Him.

“Fear of people” also makes people think they must have everything as good—or better—than the next person.

Jealousy and covetousness keeps them from having close friendships with people and God. They might even start hating people and causing rifts among people.

*Arlene Reimer, Spanish Lookout,
Belize*

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Those who make people big and God small tend to move away from God's principles because they care more about what others think than what God thinks. They often serve self because they don't have a proper fear of God.

Gideon Eichorn, London, OH

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We as humans naturally crave acceptance. When people are BIG and God is small, peer pressure becomes an incredibly strong force! We see it daily; people are driven to all kinds of crazy lifestyles just to fit in, or to be on top of their small group of friends. In a church, people become so focused on each other (others' opinions and ideas) that people become more important than God. Decisions are made via popularity instead of a well-balanced, scriptural basis. Furthermore, the fear of people becomes a manipulative force in our lives. We begin to form ideas about those people whom we take to be on our own level and those who we take to be on a higher level than ourselves. Based on these erroneous ideas, we guard ourselves against some people, taking them to be above our status, and actually hinder relationships from forming. On the other hand, we reject people whom we term as below our group, hindering our relationships with them. Many times a twisted focus is fed by our own pride. If two people are walking in humility it is impossible for them not to get along. Some people react by becoming approval addicts. They thrive on approval from peers (instead of from God) and feel hurt and left out if they are not popular. When the fear of God is stronger than the fear of man, relationships thrive.

Daniel Yoder, Free Union, VA

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In any situation where people are bigger to us than God, we are headed for trouble. We begin fearing man instead of fearing God. Naturally, we all have a fear of man, but our American culture has only intensified this by teaching us to think about “me” rather than “us” and because of all our “needs” and “rights.”

We eventually come to fear the things or people we think we need. When we pursue the things we think we “need,” we can become selfish, demanding, controlling and yet never satisfied. We can also tend to become self-sufficient and not need anyone else OR become so dependent that other people take the place of God in our lives and we avoid any responsibilities. Because of our fear of man, we compare ourselves to others instead of God and we forget who we really are.

We start thinking that some people don't deserve our love and respect so we treat them differently than those we like. This ultimately sets up “caste systems,” pecking orders, cliques, or whatever you want to call it where people are placed on different levels by how well they know their Bibles, how well-behaved their children are, and so on. It can also depend on your age, what you wear, how much money you have, your popularity, how intelligent you are, what you drive, how nice your house is kept, and many more.

What we are really saying when we put ourselves on these levels is that we are more valuable to God and He loves us more than those on the levels below

us. The people on the lowest levels usually feel rejected because we may avoid them or in some way make them feel unwanted. Some of these people may experience emotional or spiritual problems such as difficulty in relating to others, bitterness, and wondering if God loves them. We ourselves are actually afraid of what others think or will say and are not free to serve God, as we should. Our reputation matters more to us than our character or what God thinks of us. As the fear of God becomes less and less, the fear of man becomes stronger.

Mary King, Port Royal, PA



People who are “big” and have God as “small,” are most likely proud and self-centered, thinking only of their own wants, needs and self-image. They are afraid to do anything out of the ordinary or “uncool” for fear of what others may think. As a result, people in the church and community with special needs (such as widows, singles, or the elderly) will most likely be neglected.

These “big” people won’t notice the needs around them since they’re so busy looking out for themselves and their self-image. When they are called on to have devotions or a topic, they may either be pleased to have the opportunity to show off how well they can do it, or refuse on account of what others may think. The offerings will be meager because these people are mostly concerned about fulfilling their

own wants and wishes. Their spiritual life will be very shallow, since they are focusing on self, which is pride. God hates pride, so as a result, He will cut them off from among His people. (Proverbs 16:5).

In essence, the poor will stay poor, the lonely will stay lonely, and the churches will be suffering from having proud and spiritually dead members.

Clara Kuhns, Arthur, IL



Well, I believe a lot of things happen and I think it is safe to say that those things are not good.

I believe that one of those things is that we become fearful of change. I think we can all agree that we have our own comfort zone. We try to stay in that zone as much as possible. We clam up and don’t want to do anything outside our comfort zone because we might look dumb or naïve. This makes us want to stay where we are and how we are. We don’t want God to stretch us and make us different from others. It hurts, right? It’s not comfortable. We think about what our friends will say, our parents, our siblings, our schoolteachers, our pastors, other denominations, and maybe even people that we don’t know!

Why? Because God is small and what people think about us and the way we do things becomes the number one “inspiration” in our lives. Let’s not let that happen.

Kendall Nissley, Parksburg, PA

THOUGHT GEMS

Emotion may make the world go round, but common sense keeps it
from going too fast.

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Don't pay a compliment as if you expected a receipt.

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It is better to create happiness than to pursue it.

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A mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original
dimensions.

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Before making a negative judgment on a sermon, try it out.

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Knowing one's own limitations is the first step in overcoming them.

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Liberty is worthless, except liberty which is under law.

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Some people figure that now that we have antibiotics, we don't need
prayer anymore.

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Our creeds may be interesting, but our deeds are much more
convincing.

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