



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 2009

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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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## *Keep Purpose Firm and True*

*Wilmer D. Swope, Leetonia, OH*


Keep purpose firm and true  
Faith solid in your life,  
“O God, support my faith today  
Give strength in times of strife.”

Close eyes and ears today  
To evil’s worldly call,  
And live a godly, holy life  
Make sure you do not fall.

To weakened faith say, “No!”  
Be resolute today,  
Let faith forever stronger grow  
And keep God’s holy way.

Where faith is not, no crown,  
Our faith on earth must be.  
Both part and parcel of God’s will  
Devotion, Lord to Thee.

Stand fast. This is God’s will.  
Foundation in His book,  
Foundation true is Jesus Christ  
Eternal water brook.

Be active in God’s work,  
Obedient all the way,  
Hear now the wisdom of His book,  
Come worship, saint, today. 

## Miss Josephine's Legacy

**M**artha's sister, Josephine (Yoder) Bontrager, (1935-2009) was the first to depart from her nine-sibling family circle. In the time we spent with Josephine and Edward (her husband) in the final days of her valiant struggle with cancer which ended in their home near Cumberland Furnace, Tennessee, on March 11, 2009, several truths stand out:

**Life is a gift of God.**

Josephine, identical twin to Anna, began life (in October, 1935) as a baby so weak that the attending doctor did not expect her to survive. But survive she did and usually with good health! To Edward and Josephine were born four daughters: Sovilla, Rebecca, Kay Ann, and Meda; then two sons: Philip and Paul.

**Life is to be shared with neighbors.**

In recent years, a number of families from Whiteville, Tennessee, moved near the Bontragers. Martha and I spent the nights that week in the home of Paul and Darlene Overholt, one of the families that moved from Whiteville. The Overholts said that when they came to the new

community, they were too busy with building their house to plant a garden. That summer Josephine kept bringing things from her garden to help them along. She also took a keen interest in their family.

**Life is to be lived with observant compassion.**

At her funeral, a lady who worked with Josephine in the school cafeteria said that "Miss" Josephine (a common title of respect, in Tennessee, for women older than the speaker) seemed keenly aware of how others felt as they came to work. When she was "down," more than once Josephine inquired what was on her mind and prayed for her—right on the spot.

**Life is meant for love.**

When we arrived at their home on the evening of March 7, Josephine was sitting up in bed with arms outstretched for a hug. Such affection seemed to alleviate her pain. Her unabashed love for others was returned to her in the well-lit sign out by the street of the grade school where she had worked. On Josephine's last trip home from the hospital, the ambulance driver carefully moved

the vehicle into position so that Josephine herself could read the sign. It said: “We love you, Miss Josephine!”

**Life is not good with strained relationships.**

Steve, Josephine’s son-in-law, noted that she sometimes tried to make things right which she had not made wrong. When asked to explain, she said something to the effect that she cannot bear to go on with unresolved ill feelings. She worked to keep channels of good relationships free and open.

**Life must not be taken for granted.**

Our bodies do get sick. It is not faithlessness to seek the help of doctors early. Vigilance, prayer, and treatment belong together. Early detection and treatment might have changed the course of Josephine’s illness. Granted, some cases of cancer seem to march inexorably on—in

spite of medical treatment.

**Life goes better with a song.**

Josephine planned her own funeral. She wanted an atmosphere of joy and victory, rather than doleful, dreary sadness. She chose the song “Victory in Jesus” for a congregational number. She also asked that her siblings sing several songs. Anna (Mrs. Loyal Mast) noted that as her twin had never asked much of her family, surely the siblings and in-laws could sing for Josephine after she was gone.

**Life’s burdens may be given to Jesus.**

Quite often we prayed together during those few days before her demise. Some weeks earlier, when the doctor informed Josephine that her time was running out, she was soon heard singing the song, “He Abides,” which was also sung at her funeral. I shall close this tribute to Josephine with that triumphant song. (see page 4)

**THE**

is a gift of God  
is to be shared  
is to be lived with compassion  
is meant for love  
is not good with strained relationships  
must not be taken for granted  
goes better with a song  
its burdens may be given to Jesus

# He Abides

-1-

*I'm rejoicing night and day,  
As I walk the pilgrim way,  
For the hand of God in all my life I see.  
And the reason of my bliss,  
Yes, the secret all is this:  
That the Comforter abides with me.*

-Chorus-

*He abides, He abides, Hallelujah, He abides with me!  
I'm rejoicing night and day, as I walk the narrow way,  
For the Comforter abides with me.*

-2-

*Once my heart was full of sin,  
Once I had no peace within,  
Till I heard how Jesus died upon the tree;  
Then I fell down at His feet,  
And there came a peace so sweet,  
Now the Comforter abides with me.*

-3-

*He is with me everywhere,  
And He knows my every care,  
I'm as happy as a bird and just as free;  
For the Spirit has control,  
Jesus satisfies my soul,  
Since the Comforter abides with me.*

-4-

*There's no thirsting for the things,  
Of the world, they've taken wings;  
Long ago I gave them up, and instantly  
All my night was turned to day,  
All my burdens rolled away,  
Now the Comforter abides with me.*

—PLM 



# Yost H. Miller, 1918-2009

David L. Miller, Partridge, Kansas

To have known Brother Yost is to be reminded that our Creator does not need to re-use the pattern when He makes people. Yost made a significant and unique contribution in the body of believers as he offered himself a living sacrifice, acceptable to God, a reasonable service.

Yost was living proof that a teachable spirit, a healthy curiosity and a keen intellect are assets to learning that cannot be rivaled inside the walls of a classroom.

Before his mind began to diminish because of aging, he often contributed to this periodical. His writing reflected an awareness of our Anabaptist heritage. He was also deeply concerned that we do not lose sight of the centrality of Christ and the authority of the Word. He was keenly aware of the human tendency for world-ward drift.

Brother Yost had an unassuming personality. When he spoke publicly, it was not a demonstration of eloquence or oratory. It was

rather the evidence of the person that God had made of him. He had a good command of words to express himself.

His was an unusual combination that included the heart of an undershepherd, theologian, philosopher, and scholar. His preaching reflected an active interest in prophecy. He often referred to the second coming of Christ. Even after his mentality became limited, he would frequently mention the Lord's soon coming.

Brother Yost was not only pastoral and intellectual, he also had manual skills as a builder. He especially enjoyed engineering and draftsman aspects of the building trade. Local landmarks of his engineering skills include the Walnut Creek Mennonite Church sanctuary.

While Yost was not a man without struggles, we believe to follow him as he followed Christ is a worthy ideal for all who knew him.

*[This tribute was assigned and is approved by Calvary Publication Board.]*



**The Christian's cross is meant to be carried**

**— not dragged.**

# Words of Admonition

Yost H. Miller, 1918-2009

*[We here publish one of the last things Bro. Yost Miller submitted for publication. This required more editing than his earlier writing had, but rings true to his convictions. Let us take heed. –PLM]*

**B**ack in 1999, Yost was responding to two issues in the May issue, in the Observations column, in which David L. Miller raised two questions:

Under what conditions does worldward drift occur?

### **Yost's Response:**

The attitude that the new birth, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, word-of-mouth testimony and missions are the only basics for salvation! This is a factor for worldward drift coupled with a generation or two of Protestant influence via radio, tapes, magazines and books while the Kingdom principles of the Sermon on the Mount linked with holiness of life, nonconformity to the world and separation of lifestyle, becomes very secondary to initial response to the plan of salvation.

There is a creeping difficulty in seeing the woman's veil, sex distinction, non-resistance, etc., as of great importance along with the keeping of the commandments of the New Testament. Too often this

is now seen as a carryover from our Old Order background and 80% traditionalism that must be scuttled lest it hinder the spreading of the Gospel! Grandpas can't do much more than join in the shouting and watch the parade toward the Protestant camp of "saving of souls by faith in the blood alone."

2. *Under what conditions can such trends be prevented or corrected?*

### **Yost's Response:**

We must continually and persistently emphasize, not only the Saviorhood of Jesus, but also His lordship via the preached word. The commands of the New Testament must be *declared*—not only *shared*!

The commands must be preached with life applications. This includes the doctrines and practices of the historic faith, rather than the sights and sounds of the Protestant gospel.

Many years ago Harold Bender sounded a warning at a local Mennonite church saying, "History shows that when a church loses (in



practice and application to life) its non-conformity to the fashion world, it is only one generation until they lose their non-conformity to the military world, since non-resistance is ultimately an extension of the military section of the same cosmos (John 18:36) or world system!”

We cannot afford to identify with any division of Satan’s world system. Our people MUST hear this convincingly over pulpits and classrooms if we think to change the trend toward the Luciferian world order now gaping at us with open mouth!



## *Keeping the Faith*

*Gerald Wagler, Washington, IN*

**I** have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith...” (2 Timothy 4:7).

These triumphant words of the Apostle Paul echoing down through the centuries still hold out a stellar, beckoning challenge to Christians everywhere. We all want to finish our lives this way. Sadly, not all finish well who start out in the Christian way.

The story of Joash in the Old Testament recently affected me in a new way. I don’t remember of ever having felt such sadness for how his life turned out so tragically after having begun so well.

Joash narrowly escaped death when his grandmother, Athaliah, attempted to get rid of all the royal descendants. Joash’s righteous aunt and uncle rescued him and kept him in hiding for six years. At the age of seven under his priest uncle’s direction, he was anointed king and

the wicked Athaliah was slain. Then, again with Jehoiada’s help, Jerusalem experienced a real turning back to God. Joash initiated a major repair campaign for the temple.

Sadly after Jehoiada’s death, Joash allowed the people to turn back into idolatry. When Zechariah, Jehoiada’s son, warned of God’s judgment, Joash stooped so low as to bless his stoning. Finally, after an ill-fated war with Syria that left him badly wounded, his own servants plotted against him and killed him in his own bed. By this time he had dropped so low in public opinion that he wasn’t even buried in the kings’ sepulchers.

I suggest three possible reasons why Joash (and most other kings of Judah) turned out badly:

1. They developed an arrogant spirit after God blessed them. This worked itself out in a cocky, “I can do anything I want” attitude. They


would, at times, foolishly take on wars that God wasn't blessing. Not heeding God's prophets, they often brought about their own defeat.

2. They gave in to the lust of the flesh. Time after time, kings who started out well eventually caved in to the temptations of an immoral, idolatrous lifestyle.

3. They formed alliances with the ungodly. This, no doubt, seemed reasonable. It provided for them in the situation they were facing. It

really amounted to not trusting God to provide in every situation.

The temptations of life haven't changed much over the years. Satan delights in bringing God's servants down. Each of us must daily fall at our Savior's feet, begging Him for grace to live faithfully—today.

[From *Fresh Start* newsletter, Jan-Mar, 2009. Bro. Gerald Wagler presently serves as board chairman of Fresh Start Training Center, Washington, IN. Used by permission.] 

## *Standing on a Mountain or Kneeling at the Rock*

*Elmer Schrock, Stuarts Draft, VA*

**W**hen I felt secure, I said, 'I will never be shaken.' O LORD, when you favored me, you made my mountain stand firm, but when you hid your face, I was dismayed. To you, O LORD, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy" (Psalm 30: 6-8 NIV).

Our vulnerability to stray tends to weaken our spiritual reserves when we are in either of two states of mind:

1. **In the midst of success.** In 2 Samuel 24:1 David commanded Joab, "Go, number the people." David seems to have been impressed with the vastness of his domain and the

many people under his rule. He became bold and arrogant. He pushed aside and refused the counsel of his co-regents and best advisors. His inflated opinion of himself alienated him from them. He violated the principles of the God he professed to love and serve. As a result, thousands of people died because of his sin of counting the people.

In his adultery (2 Samuel 11) David was in an unguarded state of mind. The "mountain" he stood on seemed solid and dependable. He dared to explore its borders, its cliffs, its pitfalls.

His generals were successfully

commanding Israel's armies. Victory was so common it was taken for granted. David had time to relax and take it easy. That misplaced security became like a drug that numbed and undermined his spiritual discernment. In that mental state, he trampled his conscience and heeded his inflamed passions.

It happened to a man after "God's own heart." It behooves us also to beware of the subtleties of pride in our accomplishments. Success in business or spiritual matters, popularity, outstanding abilities and a high level of achievement, and acceptance by our peers are all welcome. But they also pose a serious threat to an appropriate estimate of oneself.

Feelings of superiority over the opinions of co-laborers, and strained relationships with peers and others are a few of the symptoms of "living on the mountain" that David was talking about when he said, "I felt secure. I will never be shaken." Feeling secure in Christ is a must, but to assume that security in high social standing is spiritual achievement, can puff us up and bring us into folly. Then it hinders the work of God and may frustrate others in teamwork situations.

2. The opposite mental state that can bring vulnerability to stray is

### **depression and discouragement.**

This may come when things go wrong, causing "the mountain of security" on which we rested to crumble.

Perhaps we've never quite arrived there. Circumstances have stifled our achievement to the point that we feel like "flops and nobodies." Attitudes about us leaked out and betrayed someone's feelings in a hurtful way. These can awaken baser features of our fallen nature that beg for expression: Frustration, self-pity, anger, blaming others, bitterness, feeling justified in indulging in sinful thoughts and fantasies, feelings of retaliation, empty and ineffectual prayer life. Too often when the going gets tough, we wait too long to cry unto the Lord as David did in verse 8. Whether the "nobody" perception is self-generated or an effect of relational tensions, the results are much the same.

Remember, there are no "nobodies" in God's sight. In Christ, we are "somebodies," whom He clothes in appropriate humility, and whom He loves dearly.

One solution is found in Psalm 63:1, which David may have penned as he struggled with discouraging elements in the wilderness while hiding from King Saul: "O God, thou art my God, early (in the struggle)

will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.”

Sometimes it is difficult to maintain a thirst and longing for God, in the midst of our struggles, but that is when we need Him most desperately. So, hang in there, Brother, Sister! He’s eager to help.

David had no problem with pride in personal achievements in this situation. His successes had made him the target of a jealous superior who felt threatened by David’s popularity. Nor was he enthused by feelings of superiority. His circumstances had brought a brokenness that drove him

to seek the face of God. He had not yet found the “mountain of security” to rest on. But he had found the “rock that is higher than I.” That was the security he needed.

That Rock is a very effective refuge we can resort to with the assurance that we will be heard. Mountains can elevate us dangerously. Kneeling at the Rock comes first. After that, we can safely stand on the mountain, if the Lord grants that.

“God, help us in poverty or prosperity, in being a celebrity or a nobody, to make our supplications to You daily, to obtain humility and faithfulness that You can use for Your glory.”



## *Maybe It Was the Right Words*

*Simon Schrock, Catlett, VA*

**T**he metropolitan area of Washington, D.C. has become a place of many cultures and religions! This was very evident recently while my wife was a patient at Fairfax Hospital. Both workers and patients reflect the diversity of cultures that is evident in attire and lack of attire. Polly and my presence added to this mix. We live among people from many parts of the world. It is indeed a challenging time and place to be ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

One day as I stepped into the elevator, I stepped into the presence of a woman whose attire indicated she was of the Muslim faith, or something similar. She was indeed modestly dressed in dark garb and head covered, but there was enough of her face visible to see her facial expression.

Here I was on the elevator, doors closed, with a religious woman whose little bit of face showing was an expression of sorrow and dejection. Maybe words like melancholy, gloom,

depression, doleful and drab would describe what I quickly observed. Maybe she had a serious family illness on her mind. Maybe she was on her way to see a terminally ill parent or husband.

I am a follower of Jesus Christ. For a few seconds I was in the presence of a person who appeared to be of a religion other than Christianity who had an expression that was gloomy and depressing. What should I do? I spoke to the lady. I don't remember the words I said, but I attempted to be a friendly representative of Jesus without preaching. I may have said, "Good morning!" and not much more.

It was like an instant miracle happened. In just seconds her expression went from melancholy to sanguine. Her face lit up with a big smile. Within seconds, the door opened and we parted ways. The transformation was so fast and vivid that the scene just stays on my mind. Perhaps this experience did more for me than the gloomy-faced woman.


Some questions remain: What impressions do I leave with others? Solomon wrote: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Proverbs 18:24). How often do I miss opportunities to be a friendly presence or to give a word "fitly spoken"? "A word fitly spoken is like

apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Maybe this was "a word in due season." Maybe it was the right word for a sad moment in the woman's life. As Proverbs says, "Everyone enjoys a fitting reply; it is a wonderful thing to say the right thing at the right time!" (Proverbs 15:23 NLT)

Jesus said His followers are the light of the world and that we should let that light shine. As I live and work among persons of many cultures and religions, I want to be a light for Jesus. Colossians 4:6 is helpful in reaching that goal: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

"Lord, I want to be a light in a gloomy world, to give a word fitly spoken and a presence that brings gladness on elevators or any other place of gloom."

A prayer of Randy Alcorn is fitting here: "Help us to treat those who are different from us with deepest respect, including racial minorities and immigrants in our communities, schools, and workplaces. May we be your ambassadors to those who don't know You and may they find in You what they are looking for deep in their heart." (from *50 Days in Heaven*, Tyndale House Publishers) 

# Jesus is the Answer

Lori Hershberger, Hutchinson, KS

*[The following was written for the editorial page of The Hutchinson News that appeared on April 15, 2009. Lori is the 18-year-old daughter of Dan and Verna Hershberger. Words of courage for the Savior usually ring clearer than actions without words. Submitted for publication by Julian Nisly, Hutchinson, Kansas — PLM]*

Every day we hear of more shootings, killings, and mass murders. All around us are angry, hurting people who, in a selfish attempt to ease their pain, inflict their wrath on those around them, killing them or perhaps only wounding them, leaving them to a living death of emotional scars. What causes a human being to become so angry that he ceases to be humane and instead becomes like an animal or worse yet, a machine designed to hate and kill? What kind of darkness in his soul compels him to this extreme?

Anger, if nursed and fed, can become a demon of bitterness intent on destroying the one who houses it and the lives of those around him. An angry man becomes self-absorbed in his rage, wrapped up in himself, living only to feed his anger until living itself becomes too painful with results like those recently in

Binghamton, N.Y. He does this because he knows no alternative or refuses to know it.

But there is an alternative. It comes in the form of hope, not hope that [President] Obama so positively promotes, but hope in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Last Sunday we celebrated His resurrection from the dead, a resurrection that sounds like an unbelievable, impossible idea, but nevertheless true.

He is the one who can take a life on the brink of suicide and turn it around 180 degrees. He can take the life of a murderer and save him, restore him and give him hope, if only he lets him. There's nothing He can't do.

If you let him, He's behind you cheering you, giving you strength for every step of the way. He'll never let you down. What's more, He wants to help.

He's always there; just ask.





# *A Message for Youth*


*Selected and adapted from The Communicator, April, 2009*

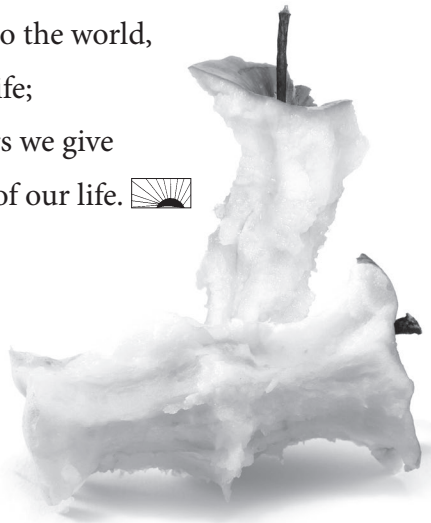
*Union Rescue Mission, Wichita*

## **LEFTOVERS**

Leftovers are such humble things,  
We wouldn't serve them to a guest,  
And yet we serve them to our Lord,  
Who deserves the very best!

We give Him leftover time,  
Stray minutes here and there.  
Leftover cash we give to Him  
Some coins that we can spare.

We give our youth unto the world,  
To hatred, lust and strife;  
Then in declining years we give  
To Him, the remnant of our life. 



## marriages

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

### **Chupp-Graber**

Bro. Levi, son of Raymond and Irma Chupp, Kokomo, IN, and Sis. Malinda, daughter of Ronnie and Waneda Graber, Amboy, IN, at Bethany Church on Jan. 17, 2009, by Marvin Beachy.

### **Kuhns-Miller**

Bro. Jonathan, son of Dave and Dawn Kuhns, Sullivan, IL, and Sis. Verna Kay, daughter of Larry and Esther Miller, Arthur, IL, at Sunnyside Mennonite Church for Trinity Christian Fellowship, on March 21, 2009, by Noah Knepp, Jr.

### **Miller-Hershberger**

Bro. Javan, son of Mose and Amy Miller, Dundee, OH, and Sis. Suetta, daughter of Aden and Edna Hershberger, Millersburg, OH, at Maranatha Fellowship, on March 14, 2009, by Paul Leroy Miller.

### **Miller-Peight**

Bro. Joshua, son of David and Effie Miller, Shreve, OH, and Sis. Marlene Kay, daughter of Jacob and Nannie Peight, Lewisburg, PA, at Pine Glen Christian Missionary Alliance, on April 10, 2009, by Daniel Beiler.

### **Stoltzfus-Beiler**

Bro. Merlin Wayne, son of Wilmer and Emma Stoltzfus, Leola, PA, and

Sis. Marie Rose, daughter of Vernon and Elizabeth Beiler, Paradise, PA, at Weavertown, A.M. Church for Mine Road A.M. Church on March 28, 2009, by John U. Glick.

### **Troyer-Miller**

Bro. Lee, son of Elsie and the late Andy Troyer, Belvidere, TN, and Sis. Sharon, daughter of Raymond and Ada Miller, Uniontown, OH, at Hartville Conservative Church for Pleasant View Church, on April 10, 2009, by Stephen Beachy.

## cradle roll

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

**Beachy**, Jason and Cynthia (Lapp), Burgettstown, PA, second child and dau., Elya Joanne, Feb. 7, 2009.

**Beiler**, Matthew and Yvonne (Swarey), Paradise, PA, third child, first son, Durrell Marlin, March 13, 2009.

**Beiler**, Reuben and Naomi Sue (Stoltzfus), Gap, PA, ninth child, fifth son, Joshua Paul, March 20, 2009.

**Bontrager**, Greg and Trish (Schlachbach), Arlington, KS, first child and son, Joel LaVon, April 15, 2009.

**Byers**, Jason and Doretta (Graber), Worthington, IN, fifth child, fourth son, Kevin Lee, Sept. 22, 2008.

**Coblentz**, Jonathan and Loretta

(Helmuth), Caneyville, KY, first child and son, Ryan Andrew, April 15, 2009.

**Freeman**, Homer and Martha (Graber), Bloomfield, IN, sixth child, fourth dau., Bethany Rose, Oct. 29, 2008.

**Graber**, Allen and Rosa (Yoder), Bloomfield, IN, second child, first dau., Sherry Lanelle, Oct. 13, 2008.

**Graber**, Kenny and Geneva (Wagler), Amboy, IN, second child, first dau., Kaidelyn Rae, April 19, 2009.

**Helmuth**, Aaron and Denise (Herschberger), Lott, TX, third child, second son, Evan Grant, Jan. 9, 2009.

**Herschberger**, Darrell and Maria (Yoder), Lovington, IL, second child and dau., Anya Brooka, April 9, 2009.

**Horst**, Calvin and Sara (Stoltzfus), New Hamburg, ON, third child and dau., Trisha Brooke, March 2, 2009.

**Lapp**, Gerald and Rosie (Atkinson), Avella, PA, fifth child, third dau., Hannah Grace, Nov. 24, 2008.

**Lapp**, Marcus and Carmen (Zook), Burgettstown, PA, fifth child, fourth dau., Karisa Anne, Jan. 16, 2009.

**Martin**, Elam and Barbara (Jantzi), Belgrave, ON, sixth child, fourth son, Stanley Robert, April 20, 2009.

**Miller**, Marcus and Lisa (Gingerich),

Kokomo, IN, sixth child, third son, Merlin Dean, Feb. 21, 2009.

**Miller**, Nathan and Marietta (Schrock), Bloomfield, IN, second child and son, Curtis Nathan, Sept. 19, 2008.

**Miller**, Wayne and Rhoda (Kemp), Auburn, KY, fourth child, third dau., (one deceased), Melody Joy, Feb. 26, 2009.

**Miller**, William and Jolene (Farmwald), Clarkson, KY, first child and son, Glendon William, April 18, 2009.

**Nisly**, Brad and Rosa (King), Partridge, KS, first child and son, Zachary Stephen, April 14, 2009.

**Nissley**, Steven and Edith (Yoder), Paris, TN, sixth child, fifth dau., Melanie Anne, April 9, 2009.

**Rich**, Greg and Denise (Velasco), Caneyville, KY, fifth child and dau., Alyvia Elise, March 30, 2009.

**Schrock**, Darrell and Naomi (Gochnauer), Catlett, VA, second child and dau., Carina Joy, April 19, 2009.

**Stoltzfus**, Luke and Ruth Ann (Stoltzfus), Waterville, NY, twelfth child, sixth son, Luke "Eugene," March 15, 2009.

**Troyer**, David Dean and Rhoda Marie (Beiler), Leesburg, OH, fourth child and son, Isaiah John, April 15, 2009.

**Troyer**, Matthew and Sara (Yoder), Baltic, OH, first child and son, Todd Matthew, March 28, 2009.

**Yoder**, Ken and Kristy (King), Bulger, PA, sixth child, fourth son, Keyshawn Jesse, Sept. 19, 2008.

**Yoder**, Millard and Carolyn (Yoder), Rural Retreat, VA, second child, first dau., Samantha Lynn, Feb. 16, 2009.

**Yoder**, Phil and Sheryl (Peachey), Harrison, AR, fifth child, second dau., Abbygail Joy, Feb. 25, 2009.

**Yutzy**, Leon and Nora (Schrock), Winchester, OH, first child and son, Kendall Jon, Feb. 18, 2009.

## ordinations

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

**Bro. Arlen Mast**, 30, Hutchinson, KS, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of minister at Arlington A.M. Church April 19, 2009. Bro. Ivan Beachy brought preordination messages. The charge was given by David Yoder, assisted by Ivan Beachy and the Arlington ministerial team.

**Bro. Alvin Stoltzfus**, 56, was ordained as bishop at Mine Road A.M. Church April 26, 2009. Preordination messages were given by Donnie Brenneman, Virginia Beach, VA. Ben A. Stoltzfus, Mor-

gantown, PA, also preached on Sunday evening. The charge was given by John U. Glick, assisted by Elmer Glick. Jason Smoker was also in the lot.

## obituaries

**Gingerich**, Katie (Stutzman), 93, died at her home in Goshen, Indiana, April 9, 2009. She was born Nov. 11, 1915, in Haven, KS, daughter of the late Joseph and Amelia (Miller) Stutzman.

She was a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, rural Goshen.

On Dec. 19, 1939, she was married to Moses Gingerich, who served as minister at fair Haven, in LaGrange County, IN. He survives. Other survivors include, two daughters: Mary Ellen (Wayne) Mishler, Goshen, IN; Esther (Mike) Miller, Cochran, PA; and four sons: Alton (Fannie) Gingerich, Goshen; Elmer (Lavina) Gingerich, Mountain View, AR; Melvin (Elsie) Gingerich, Goshen; and Ura (Helen) Gingerich, Goshen. There are 23 grandchildren and 47 great grandchildren.

Preceding her in death were three brothers: Jerry, Wally and Willard Stutzman and five sisters: Lizzie Stutzman, Rachel Stutzman, Mary Stutzman, Fannie Bontrager, and Amanda Miller and two grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Fair Haven on April 13, with Wilbur Yoder, Neal Beachy, and Harvey Miller serving. Interment was in the Thomas Cemetery.

**Miller, Yost H.**, 90, died at Walnut Hills Nursing Home Feb. 23, 2009. He was born near Charm, Ohio, Oct. 5, 1918, son of the late Henry and Mattie (Miller) Miller.

He was a long-time member and minister at Bethel Fellowship Church, Millersburg. Ordained in 1960, he was widely used in the Beachy Amish constituency. He retired in 2000. Yost was involved in local construction projects as laborer, contractor, and draftsman. He served in the CPS program during World War II.

He is survived by his wife, Lizzie (Yoder); sons: Nelson (Sara); Clarence (Lois), Ellis (Rita), and Phil (Paula), all local, a daughter, Priscilla (Harold) Yoder, Plain City, OH, a son-in-law, Floyd Helmuth, Kalona, Iowa; 21 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Fannie (Gingerich); daughter Esther, (Mrs. Floyd Helmuth); a stillborn daughter, Barbara; brothers: Adam and Levi; sisters: Lizzie Troyer, Lovina Miller; and Amanda Raber.

The funeral was held Feb. 26 at Bethel church with Bill Mullet and Mark Miller serving. Interment was at the Bethel Cemetery with Paul Weaver and Wilbur Hershberger serving in the committal.

**Peachey, Hannah R.**, 97, died of old age at her home in Belleville, PA, April 5, 2009. She was born Sept. 17, 1911, at Belleville, daughter of the late Joseph and Leah (Yoder) Kurtz.

She was a member of Valley View

A.M. Church.

On Dec. 11, 1934, she was married to Aaron J. Peachey. He died in 1970. Their eight surviving children are Joseph Y. Peachey, Belleville; Leroy (Sally) Peachey, Lewistown; Mary (Sherle)Wert, Milroy, PA; Lewis (Rebecca) Peachey, Belleville; David J. Peachey, Cassopolis, MI; Sara Ann (Levi) Peachey, McVeytown, PA; Arlene Peachey, Lewisburg, PA; Lester (Shirley) Peachey, Belleville. Also surviving are 27 grandchildren, 43 great grandchildren, one great great grandson, two sisters-in-law: Linda and Elsie Peachey, Belleville.

She was the last of her immediate family and said, "Do not pray that I can be well again, but pray that I can go on." She was preceded in death by a son, Jesse L. Peachy, a sister, Cora Kurtz, a daughter-in-law, Mary Ann Peachey, three grandchildren, and a number of half brother and sisters.

The funeral was held at Valley View on April 8, with David King and Earl Peachey serving. Burial was Green Lane Cemetery, with Eli B. King, Jr. in charge of the committal.

**Peachey, Malinda S.**, 81, died Feb. 23, 2009, at Valley View Rest Haven, Belleville, PA. She was born Sept. 3, 1927, at Belleville, daughter of the late Simon J. and Susan Bawel Peachey.

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

Surviving are three brothers: Eli B. (and wife Linda) Peachey, Ezra T. (and wife Nannie) Peachey, Sylvanus S. (and

wife Ada) Peachey, all of Belleville and one sister, Amelia S. Graber (and husband Jerome), Graybill, IN.

Preceding her in death were brothers: Stephen, Alvin, Aaron, and Simon Peachey and one sister, Emma Zook.

The funeral was held at Valley View on Feb. 26, with Enos Kurtz and Earl Peachey serving. Burial was in the Locust Grove Cemetery with Eli B. King, Jr, in charge of the committal.

**Riehl**, Dora R., 82, died of a stroke March 26, 2009. She was born March

22, 1927, daughter of the late David K. and Dora Glick.

She was member of Pequea A.M. Church.

On Nov. 21, 1946, she was married to Elam A. Riehl, who is deceased. They had two children: Martha (David) Diem, Ronks; and Sadie Mae (Elmer) Riehl, Gap. Other survivors include two grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Pequea Church with Roman Garber, Jonathan Stoltzfus, Ben Stoltzfus and Joshua Beiler serving. Burial was in the Gap View A.M. Cemetery.



## observations

This is being written with the Florida ministers' meetings fresh in my memory. The memories of fellowship, instruction and inspiration are good memories. Paul A. Miller reminded us that only about 10% of what is heard will be remembered. Question: Will the 10% that is remembered make a difference?

Several brethren came to me with that concern. What now? It brought to my mind something I heard many years ago. Milton Brackbill held meetings at Yoder Mennonite Church. I remember only one thing he said. And I do not remember all the details, but I do remember that he was driving a vehicle and had an

accident. He was thrown out and suffered skin abrasions. The local veterinarian came onto the scene. He applied iodine to the injury. Brother Brackbill's punch line: "It's the application that hurts."

The Supremacy of the Scriptures was such a timely topic. The brethren did well in teaching and emphasizing its extreme importance. The question is: How well will we do with application? Theorizing is easy. Application is more difficult and can be quite painful. But the value will ultimately be realized only to the extent that we have the courage and humility to make fitting application, even when it hurts.

One speaker mentioned the



importance of learning to use reverse gear. As a result of this comment, leaders in attendance from a constituent congregation reported that they have recently concluded that cell phones may be used for conversation, not for texting, photography or internet access.

The Bishop Committee is offering leadership that can help rescue us from the “dead fish” syndrome.

Let us remember that the Author and Finisher of our faith has overcome our adversary. As we look to Him, we can be assured of His grace for the journey with the ultimate prospect of being with him forever.

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Many of you know that Simon Schrock enthusiastically promotes good books. After the Florida meetings, Simon regretted that he had insufficient time to mention a book that we believe deserves repeated mention and wide circulation. *Overcoming Evil God's Way* by Stephen Russell is very able treatment of Christian non-resistance as historically understood by Anabaptists. The author is a teacher. The chapters are designed for systematic study. As a person with non-Mennonite background, Bro. Russell has important things to say to us who have a tendency simply to take things of granted.

Co-teacher and writer John Coblentz says: “I can readily attest that writing this book was not merely an academic exercise, but Stephen passionately pursues the love and peace of Jesus as his way of life.”

Your congregations, especially the youth group, could benefit greatly from the contents of this book. It is being offered postpaid for \$12.99. You may order from SON Recordings at 703-530-9993, ext. 309.

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About two-thirds of the 20<sup>th</sup> century occurred within the time period that I have some memory of. So when a kind brother called my attention to an article entitled: “Developments During the Twentieth Century/Watershed Issues of the Twentieth Century Mennonite Church,” I was immediately interested.

It also lists a bibliography mentioning the following authors: Harry A. Brunk, Noah Mack, John L. Ruth, and Albert Keim. The outline mentions five points pertinent to the title:

1. Higher Education
2. Industrialization and Urbanization
3. The Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy
4. Blurred Fellowship Lines
5. Pietistic and Pacifistic Thought Patterns

Space does not permit a thorough

review. But it is noteworthy that General Conference was brought into being to bring unity and stability to a constituency that was scattered both geographically and doctrinally. In 1944, General Conference became a major player in a crucial event.

Both Daniel Kauffman and George Brunk I had passed from the scene. A special session was called to consider a resolution that would have denied membership to any conference not in harmony with General Conference ideals. This would have immediately disassociated at least one district conference which had been lax on nonconformity and other issues.

Mennonite leader Sanford Yoder made an eloquent appeal addressing issues of distrust and broken fellowship. There was a deathly silence until someone suggested a time for prayer. The next morning the committee presented a softened resolution, which passed easily. One historian said, "The old had died; the new was born in 1944." (Lynn Martin, *Eastern Mennonite Testimony*, 4-09. Used by author's permission.)

History is a great teacher, but it works only as there are willing learners.

From my perspective, it seems that there were several competing factors in the 1944 incident. The matter of relationships won out.

It has had long-term implications. Relationships are an important part of the present journey. Unless it is balanced by consideration of truth and righteousness, it can lead us to conclusions that are essentially humanistic rather than Christlike.



Greg Epstein is a humanist chaplain at Harvard University. Humanists reject belief in the supernatural and are guided by reason, experience, and compassion for others. Epstein has written a book that is to come out later this year, entitled: *Good Without God*.

A recent survey shows that 15% of respondents said they had no religion compared to 8.2% in 1990. Epstein wants to plant local humanist centers nationwide.

In 2005, he was ordained as a rabbi by the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism. The movement combines reason, human experience, Jewish culture and other insights from Jewish tradition. (*The Hutchinson News*, 3-28-09)

This is yet another instance of someone who is speaking perverse things to attract a following.



The story of Russian Mennonites is fascinating. Catherine the Great welcomed them, granting them religious freedom, except that they

were not to engage in evangelism. After nearly a hundred years, there was new leadership in Russia. Some Mennonites felt that their freedoms were in question. In 1874, there was a major exodus to some American prairie states and Canadian provinces. But many Mennonites stayed in Russia and continued to experience financial prosperity.

The Marxist revolution, 1917, initiated a chain of events that eventually changed any semblance of Christian freedom to horrible experiences.

I had not been aware that the harsh measures taken against wealthier Mennonites (1928-1930) was done with the cooperation of ethnic Mennonites. These were people who were employed by the government. It was during this time that many Mennonites were loaded into cattle cars and shipped to work camps in Siberia.

*Mennonite Quarterly Review* (April, 2009) has an extensive article by Colin Neufeldt that describes these events in great detail.

Below is the concluding paragraph of this study:

“What makes this story especially poignant is that Mennonites participated in the destruction of their own communities. In the end, these Mennonite officials helped

to accomplish what the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian Civil War had not: Namely, the disintegration of their communities and the traditional social, religious and economic institutions and practices that had distinguished the Mennonites of Ukraine for more than a century as ‘a people apart.’ These same Mennonite officials also played a crucial role in bringing about a forcible integration of Mennonites into the broader non-Mennonite community with its surrounding Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish, and German populations. Many Mennonites resisted this process as long as possible, and some even fled to Moscow in a desperate attempt to leave the country. But for those who remained in Khortitsa, integration into well-organized collective farms or exile settlements across the U.S.S.R. was inevitable. This process had long-term, irreversible consequences for the Mennonite community in Khortitsa. It severed Mennonites from their historical communities, and marked the beginning of their demise as a people apart.”

It is apparent that the enemy is eager to attract allies from within the sheepfold when he is given the opportunity.



Most of the unsolicited mail we

get ends up in the waste basket. Recently such a letter caused me to pay serious attention. It was a form letter from a ministry that is targeting the Muslim population via the air waves in their own language. This method eliminates the hassle of crossing geographical borders, yet allows viewers to listen to evangelistic messages in the privacy of their own homes. The letter requests that their information should not be shared on the internet or e-mail.

They report that there is evidence of serious hunger for truth and there have been some dramatic conversions. A man who had seen the *Jesus* film, called the counseling center. He was extremely angry. For ten minutes, he raved and swore at the counselor, saying, "You are going to burn in hell for the lies you are spreading!"

The counselor remained silent the entire time, praying. In a gentle voice, she said, "I appreciate the fact that you placed a long-distance call to express your opinion. I encourage you to call at any time."

Ten minutes later he called again, and said, "I apologize for the way I spoke to you. But you need to realize

that what you put on TV shakes all of our belief system. And how can we know what the truth is? How can we know if what we have been taught all these years is right or if what you are telling us on the screen is right?"

The counselor replied, "I know Someone who can help you. Why don't you pray to God tonight and ask Him to reveal Himself to you. I am confident He will."

Two days passed. The man called again. He said, "I did what you suggested. Jesus appeared to me! I know now who is the true God. I know what truth is. Can you please send me a Bible? I want to know more about Jesus."

I continue to feel that our stand against TV in our homes is well-justified. The objectionable content and negative effect on families and homes is well-documented. But for Christians to use this method to reach the unreached for Christ is something entirely different.

Interested persons can get more information by calling: 410-770-9804. The above information is shared with their permission.

—DLM 

***To err is human;***

***to cover it up is even more human.***

# A Changed Attitude


From *The Communicator*, April, 2009

*Union Rescue Mission, Wichita*

When David first enrolled in our New Beginnings Life-Change Program, he was addicted to drugs and alcohol, and hadn't spoken to his father in several years. When someone in class made a comment about his long hair pulled back and held together in a pony tail, he showed a very "tell-tale attitude" as he stated, "I quit cutting my hair because I knew my long hair always made my father mad."

Eight months later, David is still a student in that program. After eight

months, he is drug-free and alcohol-free, and now relies on the grace of God and a new-found relationship with Jesus Christ to get him through his day. When someone in class asked David about his freshly-cut hair and clean-shaven look, he again showed a very "tell-tale attitude." This time his comment was: "I'm going to see my dad this weekend, so I cut my ponytail off, because I know my long hair always made my father mad!"

Changed lives really do bring changed attitudes! 

## *Minister's Meeting Messages — 2009*

*This is a condensation of a message preached at the annual ministers' meetings, held on March 24-26, 2009, at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Florida. The complete set of cassette tapes or discs is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$45, postpaid.*

### **Welcome and Devotional Comments**

Lester Gingerich  
Sarasota, FL

Good King Josiah lived in the dark ages of Judah not very long before Judah was taken captive. He broke the pattern. His father did evil, but

Josiah, as a young man, turned that thing around. God was pleased and blessed him richly. Josiah had a son, Jehoiakim, who did not do well, even though he saw how God had blessed his father, Josiah. Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of the Lord and went back to their old habits and rituals.

Are you following this story by relating it to the present? How are we doing better than the generations before us? When the law is read as it was for Josiah, what do we do? When the law was read, Josiah tore his garments, fell to the ground face down and cried, "O Lord!" and asked day in and day out that the book be read to him. He cried out to God repeatedly and told the scribes to search the Scriptures and bring him word. He was diligent. Jehoiakim didn't do that which prompted God to utter these words: "**O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord**" (Jeremiah 22:29).

In 2 Timothy are Paul's last written words. Paul was in prison in Rome. He longed to see Timothy. In chapter 4:9, he said, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:" Then he explained why he was lonely and uncomfortable. He asked Timothy in verse 21, "Do thy diligence to come before winter." It was the fall of the year. Timothy was in Ephesus. In verse 13, He said, "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments."

Timothy collected those items. How much effort it took we do not know, but he boarded a ship. Tradition says Timothy did not arrive in Rome until spring. It was a harsh winter and ships were detained in port after port on their way to Rome. When Timothy finally got to Rome, he took the cloak,

the parchments, and the books and made his way off the ship.

Up the street he went to the prison. He walked up to a large door and knocked. A husky man opened the door. "What is it you want, young man?"

Timid Timothy said, "Is this where Paul is? I've come to see Paul."

"Young man, I don't keep lists of men's names; I just keep men." Then he closed the door in Timothy's face. Timothy had his arms loaded with Paul's belongings. He moved away from the prison door and went up the street. In a garden he saw a woman working, whom he suspected might be a believer. He went to her and asked, "Ma'am, do you know anything about Paul?"

She asked, "Do you mean Paul the Preacher?"

"Yes, Paul the Preacher!"

Then she said, "Oh, but young man, you're too late; he was beheaded in January."

Dejected, Timothy wondered what he should do next. He went back to the prison and rapped on the door again and the same turnkey came to the door. "What do you want, young man?"

"Sir, can you tell me about the preacher?"

Then the countenance of the turnkey changed and he said, "Are you Timothy? Your Paul asked about you every day before his death." Now Timothy was not only dejected, he



was stricken with guilt, “Oh, if only I had tried harder! If only I had gotten there sooner! Now it’s too late!” He had Paul’s cloak, his books, and the parchments—but there was no Paul to deliver them to.

My burden is that most of us are comparatively young men. We could identify with Timothy. We have an urgent matter to deliver. Let’s do it diligently! Living with regret is not a good feeling. Let us live uprightly, studiously, searching the Scriptures diligently, giving them the high place in our lives they deserve, working together harmoniously, bending over backwards and burning midnight oil for the welfare of the church—God’s people.

### **How We Got our Bible**

David Graber,  
Sarasota, FL

“It must be evident to all who pay close attention to the spiritual conditions of our day that there is being made at this time a very determined and widespread effort to set aside entirely the authority of the Bible.” While this quote seems to speak of our day, the statement is almost 100 years old. Much has happened in the last 100 years. We want to look at some of those things this evening.

The Word of God deserves the supreme place in our lives. It grieves me when I hear what some people say about the Bible. George W. Bush recently said the Bible is not literally

true but God gave us a son. I would ask George: “How do you know? If the Bible is not literally true, how do you know that God gave us a son?” How do we know anything about God?

The neo-orthodoxy of Barth says the Bible *contains* the Word of God. Further, it says we need to pick and choose which part comes from God and which does not.

#### *I. The Formation of Scripture*

In 2 Timothy 3:15, is our text verse: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” In 1 Peter 1:25, we have this statement, “But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.” Matthew 24:35 says, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Do we believe that?

Let us look at the formation of Scripture. We have 66 books in the Bible (39 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament), written over a period of about 1500 years by about 40 different authors. These writers lived on different continents, in many different countries, speaking different languages, from different backgrounds, from kings to shepherds, from fishermen to physicians, from herdsmen to publicans and Pharisees, with writings of differing literary genres. There is law, history, poetry, prophecy, biography, apocalypse, and epistles, but all come together with one main theme. That main theme

is the divine redemption of man by a holy, triune God. Even with that diversity of styles and writers, there are no contradictions.

Canon simply means *measuring rod*. We want to speak of the canonicity of the Scriptures. What were the guidelines used to decide which books were Scripture and which were not? The canon of the Old Testament was probably determined at The Great Synagogue. This group was comprised of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. When Jesus met the disciples on the road to Emmaus, he opened up the Scriptures to them and taught them (Luke 24:27 and 44). This tells us that Jesus used those Scriptures as though they were already a final canon. The Old Testament was complete.

When we come to the New Testament canon, we find that some of the writings were added to the canon almost as soon as they were written. As far as historians know, there is no evidence of the 27 books of the New Testament being acknowledged before 367 A.D., at the time of Athanasius. However, it is obvious that probably 200 years before that much of the New Testament was already in place.

## *II. The Miraculous Preservation of Scripture*

If God had not preserved them, we wouldn't have them. Sometimes it came very close. King Manasseh in the Old Testament hated the Scriptures because they convicted him of his

lifestyle. That is also what is taking place today in the United States of America. Maybe people wouldn't actually say they hate religion, but I believe they do because the Word of God convicts their lifestyle. Manasseh of Judah was just such a man. He tried to destroy all the copies of the Scripture. Twenty years after his death, Josiah comes on the scene. History tells us that a great revival followed Josiah's reforms.

A Syrian tyrant offered a pig on the altar in Jerusalem during those 400 silent years between the testaments. He also tried to destroy the Scriptures. He said that anyone who had a copy of the Scriptures should be put to death. Yet, after his death, there was another great revival of interest in the Scriptures.

In 303 A.D., the Emperor Diocletian ordered the burning of every Scripture. In ten years, he was dead and Constantine came on the scene. I don't think he was a Christian, yet when we look at the life of Constantine, I think we can say that God used him to preserve the Scriptures. Later on, some of his descendants tried to disprove the Scriptures. Julian, the Apostate is one.

In the Middle Ages, there was a synod at Toulouse that forbade anyone to possess a copy of the Scriptures. Probably most of you know the story of William Tyndale and how he tried to translate the Bible into English. He got the New Testament done and

much of the Pentateuch, I believe. But he was captured and put to death. Before he died, he said, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”

John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English. They didn’t kill him, but after his death his enemies were so furious at what he had done, that they later dug up his bones and burned them.

Mary, Queen of England, (“Bloody Mary”), ordered that anyone that had a copy of the Scriptures should be burned. Five years after she gave that edict, she was dead. Queen Elizabeth I replaced her and she ordered at least 130 editions of the Bible to be published.

These preservations had to come from God. No way could man have done all of this on his own.

### III. *The Trustworthiness of Scripture*

Is our Bible trustworthy?

Let us look first and foremost to the words of Jesus. When Jesus was being tempted by Satan, He responded every time with, *It is written*. That verifies Jesus’ view of the Scripture. When He cleansed the temple, He said, “It is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves” (Matthew 21:13). Twenty-six times in the Gospels it says, *It is written*. Thirty-seven times in Acts through 1 Peter it says, *It is written*. Since the Bible testifies of itself, is that circular reasoning? Not if it proves itself. Jesus said, “I am

not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matthew 5:17). When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he said, “We know that you’re a teacher come from God for no one can do the miracles thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2). Thus we can say that the miracles of Jesus attest to the validity of the Word of God.

The words, “Thus saith the Lord,” are found 414 times in the Bible. “The word of the Lord” is found 258 times. The Bible claims to be the Word of God thousands of times. This is not circular reasoning if it can prove itself. It has proved itself not only by divine preservation, but by miracles, by the coming of the Son of Man and so on.

I would say this: This truly is the Word of God or it is the greatest fraud ever. It cannot be something between those two. Which is it? We must decide. If we believe it is the Word of God, are we going to believe it? Sometimes we hear this: “Whatever is in the heart is what counts,” as if to say that what we *do* does not matter. I’m convinced that if we really have something in the heart, it will show on the outside, as well.

Let us consider archeology. For many years critics tried to destroy the trustworthiness Scriptures by *higher criticism*. Many of these critics were German scholars who tried to disprove the Old Testament by taking Scriptures that couldn’t be proven from other sources. One of them was

in the New Testament in Luke 2, the Christmas story where it says that Quirinius was governor when Jesus was born. The secular writings didn't fit that. They said that Quirinius ruled at a later time. Then archeologists found a coin or inscription of some kind that proved Quirinius ruled from 11 B.C. until after Herod died. So what happened? Either such a man ruled twice or two men by that name ruled at different times.

Assyria, the critics said, never existed. There was no King Sargon. These were simply mythological characters because they are found only in the Bible. Since the Bible cannot be trusted, they discredited those facts that could not be otherwise confirmed. Then Henry Liard found the city of Nineveh and a huge library, many cylinders and references. It included records of battles against Israel or Judah, but did not indicate who won. On a brick that Liard found was the name of King Sargon. He sent it to Paris to have it authenticated. He was told that it was not reliable because there was no such place. He was told it was a fake. Liard kept going and dug up the larger city and higher criticism was wrong again.

William Michael Ramsey from England was born into a family of skepticism and atheism. His parents, very wealthy, were unbelievers. William was well educated at Oxford as an archeologist. He was determined to see the Word of God demolished.

He said, "Here's what I'm going to do: I'm going to go to the Book of Acts and follow Paul's missionary journeys and I will prove that Luke is wrong." That's what he did. Where Paul went by ship, William Ramsey went by ship. Where Paul walked, he walked. The unbelieving world was all excited.

Ramsey labored for 15 years from 1881 to 1896. Then he produced his first writing: "St. Paul, the Traveler and Roman Citizen." Much to the dismay of the critical world, he said that he found Luke to be "astonishingly accurate." He continued his studies for a total of 40 years and, in keen disappointment to the critics, sometime during those years he made a profession for Jesus Christ, simply because he couldn't ignore the evidence.

Many such stories exist by people who honestly studied the Scriptures and found they could not continue to discredit the Scriptures. (The Resurrection of Christ is one such fact.)

Nelson Glick, a Jewish rabbi and archeologist, said, "It can be categorically stated that not one single archeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical text." Someone has said that over 2,000 Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled. Over 300 prophecies on the coming of Jesus have been fulfilled.

A mathematician, Peter Stoner, said that the odds of fulfilling even eight prophecies are one in 10 with 17 zeroes behind it. To fulfill 48

prophecies would have the odds of one in 10 followed by 157 zeroes.

Lee Strobel came up with this illustration: If you would cover the whole world with white tiles that were 1.5 inches square and paint the bottom of one of them red, then take one man and let him wander over all seven continents. At one time during his lifetime he could reach down and pick up one tile—only one. For him to pick up the red one, what are the odds of that? Strobel said that this would be the same as fulfilling eight prophecies of the Old Testament.

No other writing comes close to this in accuracy. We know that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Paul and Peter acknowledged the authority and inspiration of Scripture.

Inspiration means “God-breathed.” God breathed out the thoughts that He wanted man to write down. B. B. Warfield’s definition of inspiration is: “A supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writings by the Spirit of God by virtue of which their writings are given divine trustworthiness.”

“Verbal inspiration” means that every word was inspired. “Plenary inspiration” means it is full and complete. We have no originals. Can we trust what we have? The critics come along and ask, “How do you know that you have the Word of God, because it’s been copied and copied?” When the Jewish scribes, who copied the Scriptures, came across a word

or a letter they didn’t think was right, they dared not change it. They would put a dot above it and go on. They thought the Scriptures were inalterable and they had no right to make any corrections.

The Septuagint was a Greek translation of the Old Testament that was made about 150 years before the birth of Jesus. There were more Jews in Alexandria than in Jerusalem. Many of these could no longer speak Hebrew. So they translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek. Many times in the New Testament when Jesus and the Apostles quoted Scripture they quoted from the Septuagint. What does that mean—double inspiration? It verifies that the Bible can be translated from one language to another.

The Dead Sea scrolls were found in 1947 by a shepherd boy who was idly throwing rocks into a cave. He heard pottery breaking, so he went in and found some old scrolls. These were taken to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1948, during Israel’s war for nationhood. The professor recognized the importance of these scrolls. The book of Isaiah from the Dead Sea scrolls was about 1,000 years older than any scroll of Isaiah we had. When they started comparing, it was nearly completely verbatim. The book of Daniel scrolls provided a similar confirmation.

*IV. The King James Version as our continued standard*

Have you ever heard this statement?

“The oldest and most reliable manuscripts do not include this.” It is given in such a way that it seems it must be right. Any time you see that statement, this is what it means. There are two manuscripts extant—the Siniaticus and the Vaticanus. The former was discovered on Mt. Sinai and are today in a museum in Britain. The latter is in possession of the Catholics in Rome since 1481. King James translators had these copies at their disposal, but did not use them because they considered them unreliable.

Scholars who have looked at these two manuscripts say that they disagree with each other thousands of times. The manuscript that is used for the New Testament is Westcott and Hort. I give you this as homework. If you want to look into this, look at what they believe. They believed in Mary worship, for one thing.


The Mark 16 controversy: The NIV Bible says about this passage: The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not include Mark 16:9-20. We have 618 manuscripts that have it. We have two that do not have it. A first-grade student could pass the test if I asked, “Which two?” Siniaticus and Vaticanus. That’s not the end of that story. I have a book that has a copy of the Siniaticus manuscript. There is an empty space [at the end of Mark] where there’s room for those verses.

Let’s look at translation methodology.

How is the Bible to be translated? “Formal equivalency” means it is translated “word for word.” New Testament Greek to English word for word. “Dynamic equivalency” means “thought for thought.” What are the chances of your doctrinal biases coming through if you use the latter method? How safe is it? The King James Version is “word for word.” The New International Version is “thought for thought.”

Study Bibles also present the biases of those who put them together. I encourage using Bibles without study helps. My fellow teacher at Bible School had a study Bible that he was using one year. The second year he told me he had quit using it. He said it was so full of Calvinist bias that he decided to stop using it.

Should “The Purpose Driven Life” be our Sunday School curriculum? Or our Wednesday night study? I have not read it, but I am uncomfortable with such materials. If the choice were up to me, we wouldn’t even use [Sunday School quarterlies]. Simply get into the Word of God.

Many of you have had much opportunity to learn the Bible. What have you learned about the Bible? I had memorized only one Bible verse before I was 28. Today I’m in the ministry. I preach the Word and I don’t know the Scriptures like some of you do. My plea is, don’t take the privileges you have had for granted. 

## *Honor and Respect*

*Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC*

### **F**or the Children;

The third Sunday of this month is set aside to honor our earthly fathers. If your father is still living, you will want to remember him on this special day. Assure him of your love and appreciation for all he has done for you, whether you do it by card, telephone call or, if possible, with a visit. I can no longer give material gifts to my parents but we can all honor them by respecting those godly values they taught us and by passing them on to the next generation.

Father's Day will evoke different emotions in each of us. Many will have fond memories of godly fathers who took time to read the Bible and pray. For some of you, your father told you daily that he loved you. Others may not have heard their fathers express love in words, especially in your growing-up years, but you knew that you were loved.

Our fathers showed love by providing for the family, by taking time to play or work with us, by giving us gifts or taking us with them to the store or other places of business. I

especially remember the pride I felt when someone would say, "You look just like your dad." Don't judge your father's love just by his words, but remember his acts of love and kindness, too.

There may be those of you who experienced physical or even sexual abuse as a child from your earthly father. That is very sad! I just want to assure you that your heavenly Father loves you and desires to heal that pain in your heart. I would encourage you to share your pain with someone who can help you.

Earthly fathers fulfill their roles best when they live a life that portrays our heavenly Father.

### **For Wives;**

Not only does the Bible require that we honor our parents, but as Christian wives we are told to reverence (respect and honor) our husbands. To honor is to esteem, exalt, pay tribute, dignify, and keep a promise. Respect also carries the meaning of esteem and includes admiration, not going against, being considerate and thoughtful.

In Ephesians 5, where Paul refers



to the relationship of Christ and the Church, he instructs the wife to respect her husband in the same way the church is to respect Christ. This gives us wives a tremendous responsibility but at the same time it gives us a beautiful symbol to fulfill. Honor and respect also give the idea of supporting our husbands in their jobs, church responsibilities and their role in the home as fathers. It is standing by them in support of their work.


We (especially ministers' wives) will refrain from telling others the confidences they share with us. We will be thoughtful and considerate of their time and of the paychecks that they work so hard to provide for the family. We will always speak kindly of them to others and not make jokes about them. We will never belittle them to our children, but admire the effort they put into being a good father. Let us not be guilty of shaming our husbands by complaining about things we would like to have but cannot afford. Husbands take those remarks personally. It makes them feel that they are not providing well enough for the family.

We will make mistakes but we will not hesitate to say, "I'm sorry; I was

wrong; please forgive me." A wife may give suggestions and ideas but will allow the husband to make the final decision. After all, we are a team working together for the good of the family and for God's glory.

We have a great responsibility as wives. We have heard the comment that a woman can make or break her husband and I believe there is much truth in that saying. Our support will make his work much easier and will bring us joy in return as our husband will find it easier to love us. We will also find freedom from fear and worry as we allow him to take responsibility in the home.

Father's Day can be a tool in helping our children honor Daddy. You can help them make small gifts or cards, maybe a special photo you put in frame, or letting them help you prepare his favorite meal. It is a good time of the year for picnics and barbecues. Older children could surprise Dad by washing the car or doing the chores for him. Little acts of helpfulness show that we love and care.

Let us honor our fathers and husbands not only on Father's Day, but also on each day of the year. 

Sometimes criticism is a subtle form of envy.

## In God's Hands—(*Part One of Two*)

*Brenda Friesen, Shippshewana, IN*

*Would the God that rocked the Costa Rican mountains  
be able to take care of a family that trusts Him?*

**H**urry! There's no time to lose, Ariel! Karen dashed to where her four-year-old sat paralyzed, his toys sliding crazily into each other, and then she scooped Ivania out of her crib. The house started shaking harder and the fish aquarium's water splashed out in waves as the fish swam frantically. Nevertheless, as Karen struggled to keep her footing she took a second glance around at her cozy home—the furniture, the wall hangings, the toys, and the half-made lunch on the counter.

Then with a child tucked safely under each arm she raced for the road. Panic-stricken neighbors poured out of their houses and businesses. Many kept on running down the road as the ground beneath them rumbled, heaved, and pitched. Fear drove them on. Buildings along the road shook and swayed,

and then as their knees suddenly buckled, they sank to the ground with a crash.

Karen and her two children took all this in as they stood on the road in front of what had been their home. Karen prayed silently as she surveyed the mess.

“Oh, God, what will Miguel and I—**Miguel!** Where was he? Had he gotten out in time? What if? No! Oh, God, please no!”

Picture after picture flashed through her mind's eye, their wedding day...little Olivia's funeral...the hard times trying to make ends meet...God's marvelous answer to their prayers for a better job for Miguel. Now their house lay in shambles!

“Mama.” Ariel's whimper jerked Karen out of her reverie.

“Mama, why did it shake?”

Karen sat down and pulled him

onto her lap. She squeezed her two children, thanking God that at least she had them.

Then another shock wave shook the mountain. Karen held her children even tighter as she looked down into their horrified faces and felt their little bodies tremble in fear as they pressed closer to her.

“Mama, will Papa come soon?”

“Oh, Honey, I don’t know. Shall we pray for Papa?”

The three bowed their heads and earnestly prayed for the safety of their husband and father. They also thanked God for keeping them safe. Karen felt a peace come over her. She knew they were all in God’s hands.

People gathered in little huddles along the road and some even ventured to poke around in the remains of their homes. However, the tremors that came unpredictably would send everyone scurrying back to the road.

“Mama, *tengo hambre.*” (I am hungry) This came from two-year-old Ivania.

“OK, you two stay right here and I’ll see what I can find.”

Karen stood up and stretched her cramped muscles. As she walked

toward the house, she noticed that only half of the roof had caved in. It looked like she might be able to get into the kitchen.

The kitchen door hung at a weird angle and she carefully pushed it open. Karen stepped into the kitchen and stopped short, shocked at the sight that met her eyes. Cupboard doors had swung open and emptied their contents on the floor. Shattered dishes were mixed in with flour, sugar, and broken bottles of vanilla, honey, and anything else that happened to be in the cupboards.

Everything on the walls had fallen except a plaque Miguel had put up just the night before. Its bold letter proclaimed: **WE DON’T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS, BUT WE DO KNOW WHO HOLDS THE FUTURE.**

*How fitting,* thought Karen, as she bent to pick up a box of cereal and some crushed crackers. She glanced once more at the kitchen and the motto, and then a tremor sent her flying for the door. She had barely stepped out the door, when, with a loud groan of protest, the rest of the roof caved in. Karen ran to her crying children and once

again praised God for His hand of protection.  
(to be concluded)

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**Pen Pals Wanted**

2529 Valley View Rd.  
Morgantown, PA 19543

Hi. My name is Annalisa Jo Stoltzfus. I am 10 years old. My birthday is Feb. 3, 1999.

I have 2 brothers and 3 sisters.

Trina (11), Vanessa (8), Trevor (6), Jonathan (3), and Jaquelyn (2 months and 4 days).

I would like to have a couple of pen-pals!

My Mom and Dad's name are Johnny and Angela Stoltzfus.

I enjoy swimming, sledding, and working in the flower bed.

Thanks!

Annalisa Jo Stoltzfus



**youth messages**

*Dear Youth,*

Have you ever wondered whether you should be spending more time being a better friend to the ungodly? Have you ever wondered if ungodly people are having more effect on you, than you are having on them? This

month's writers give perspective on how youth can be friends of sinners without becoming like them. I think each contribution adds something to the total picture. Thank you writers for the thought you put into this.

-EE

*This Month's*  
**QUESTION**

**How can you be a friend of sinners, as Jesus was, without taking on the sinners' wrong values?**

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

*I've often thought about this and wondered if we really are friends of sinners like Jesus was. I think too often we come across like the Pharisees. Do*

*we think we are actually better than the sinner? Are we willing to be on their level? By being on their level, I mean loving them for who God made*

*them, doing things with them they enjoy and being willing to go out of the way for them, but not accepting their sin? I know this can be very difficult. I believe only with a close relationship with God can we be the friend we should be. We should pray constantly for our friends and be open to any opportunity God gives us to speak to them. My prayer is that we can reach out more to sinners by being a friend and bringing them to God.*

*Rachel Yoder, Newcomerstown, OH*



To be a friend of sinners and not take on their values, we must first pattern our lives after Jesus. Since He came to earth and was unchanged (or unaffected) by sin, what better example could we ask for? I also believe it is important to be surrounded by friends that will spiritually build us, challenge us, and hold us accountable. This will include how we use our time. Whatever we spend the most time with will most likely occupy a large portion of our thoughts. So my challenge is this: Spend more time with God, reading His Word, praying, etc., than you spend with those who are unbelievers.

*Cliff Stoltzfoos, Kinzers, PA*



*My short and simple answer is: Accountability.*

*My longer answer is: It is important that sinners are not only our friends. If the sinners are our age, they especially have the potential for a lot of influence on us. If we ask our Christian friends to keep us accountable to the Bible, we will be a lot less likely to take on wrong values. I also think that spending too much time by ourselves on their turf and doing things that we wouldn't do with our Christian friends will break down our consciences. If we invite our sinner friends to youth activities or our homes, we will have our Christian friends and families to help us stick to our convictions. The interaction with our friends and families can also help us entertain our needy friends. And last but certainly not least, pray for these people. Remember, the goal in being their friend is to bring them to Jesus because He is the only one that can bring them lasting joy.*

*Crystal Yoder, Partridge, KS*



Jesus had a beautiful relationship with God. He spent a lot of time in prayer communicating with God and seeking God's will and strength. Because of this, His heart was filled with love for sinners. Jesus' way of being a friend was by loving them fully, regardless of how wretched the sinner was!

It's important that we have the same

humble attitude that Jesus did. One that encourages them to do what's right, rather than acting like we are superior to them! It took the same blood for us as it does for them. And Jesus loves, and came for them.

I think we as youth need to take more time out of our busy schedules to spend quality time with God. The more we get to know God, the fuller our hearts will become with "God love!" And when our hearts become filled with this kind of love, we will be friends that will spiritually benefit sinners, without becoming attracted to, and dragged down by their wrong values!

*Loretta Wagler, Newton, ON*

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*One characteristic of Jesus was, in spite of being the holiest person to walk the earth, He didn't come across with a "holier-than-thou" attitude. He had the ability to make a person feel convicted, yet not condemned. This came from having a heart of compassion and love for the sinner, not for the sin.*

*I think our lives should radiate Christ's love to others and that means being friendly and approachable without criticism. My experience from working in an environment with non-Christians, was that having and standing for spiritual convictions gave opportunity in some situations to answer questions of "why?" or "why not?" Being a friend to sinners like Jesus was requires us to have His Spirit within us which we receive through the new birth and that protects from becoming "infected" with their sin.*

*Lynette Troyer, Leesburg, OH*

• • • • •

There is a difference between friendship and fellowship. I think we should be friends with sinners in a way that draws them to the Light. We can be friendly without being with them and their group too much and fellowship with them. Youth should stand firm in what they believe and not just go along with the flow.

*Jennifer Thiessen, Spanish Lookout, Belize*

*Next Month's  
QUESTION*

**Is it consistent for a Christian who promotes "two-kingdom" theology to become mentally and emotionally attached to a favorite political party?**



# THOUGHT GEMS

Too many people don't start economizing until they run out of money.



The emptiest man is he who is full of himself.



It is possible to learn things from an enemy that we don't learn from a friend.



Forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the high cost of hatred, and a much wasted energy.



Some things are worse than defeat—compromise with evil is one of them.



Facts are troublesome things to the evildoer.



When you stretch the truth, watch out for the snap back.



For every sin men get into, Satan has a plausible excuse.



Fact is fact and feeling is feeling; the latter never changes the former.



There are many more trap doors to failure than there shortcuts to success.

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