



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

Galatians 6:14

DECEMBER 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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Behold the Olive Leaf

Wilmer Swope, Leetonia, OH

Behold the olive leaf
Plucked from the olive tree,
Brought by the dove to Noah's Ark
A sign of peace shall be.
The saintly do not fight
In armies of the world;
They do not draw the sword or kill
This witness be unfurled.

As lambs the saintly live
They teach the way of peace,
Like olive oil a healing balm
May hate and carnage cease.
We must obey the Lord
Nor train our hands to war,
It is the sin of hate brings death
And all its blood-red gore.

Peter, put up your sword
My servants do not fight,
Behold, they serve a heavenly King
To live at peace is right.
To all the born again
Peace is a living grace,
Let all the saints redeemed so live
Their witness be apace.

Be harmless like the dove
Completely live at peace,
And have no blood upon your hands
May brotherhood increase.
In meditation pray
For peaceful fruits of love,
Stand firm, refusing war and hate
Have peace from God above.

(These verses may be sung to the tune of "This is my Father's World.")



“I Want to Be a Builder”

Today I watched with fascination as half a dozen men made portable storage buildings. Some workers were very skilled; others less so, but they all kept busy and did good work. They make durable buildings that please their customers. As these workers pursued their tasks, I thought of what it takes to succeed in building--and in life.

God, through a Prophet, declared important aspects of His building plan for our redemption: **“Behold, I lay in Zion, a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. Whoever believes will not act hastily”** (Isaiah 28:16 NJKV). Thus the Architect of the Church explains that *both He and His people build carefully.*

Jesus’ work on earth was done carefully. Granted, on occasion He dealt destructively with things. His cursing of the fig tree (Matthew 21:19) shows His intolerance for protracted unfruitfulness and reminds us of His and the Father’s right to judge. His drowning of 2,000 pigs (Mark 5:1-17) makes it clear that being freed from demons is of greater value than great wealth. The Gadarenes asked

Jesus to leave. They did not see the value of the night-to-day change that had come over the demoniac. While material destruction was not part of Jesus’ cleansing of the temple (John 2:13-17), He certainly did not mince words or withhold strong action. Furthermore, when He denounced the Pharisees’ hypocrisy (Matthew 23), He was very forthright.

However, I think the more prominent and predictable features of Jesus’ ministry were what He blessed and gave life to--not what He destroyed or denounced. For instance, Jesus changed water into wine, made huge catches of fish possible, raised several people from the dead, stopped a storm that was about to swamp the boat, fed two large crowds of thousands of people all they could eat with only a small quantity of bread and fish, and **GAVE HEALING TO UNTOLD HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE afflicted with many different ailments.** This list is not exhaustive; there are many more (John 21:25).

I fear that some of God’s proclaimed servants think they do God’s work best when they denounce and

destroy. They seem to assume that *denouncing* and *destroying* have as much value as does *building* in the Kingdom.

In our preparatory service before communion, we ask people to indicate their commitment to Christ and the local body of believers. We encourage spontaneity and believe a person is welcome at the Lord's Table if they desire to commune, if they have peace with God and their fellow men, and if they are open to brotherly counsel. It is a blessing when someone includes this: **"I want to be a builder here."** We have never heard: "I want to be a destroyer in the church." That would be tragic!

Perhaps the destroyer aspires to be a smashing success. A "smashing success" is really an oxymoron: a case of two terms that are linked and yet contradict each other. The church needs men and women who are **eager to speak and work and build for the Savior**. The faithful flock has little need of people who find their fulfillment in smashing things. Even in the sandbox, children prefer playing with the mannerly child who uses his/her imagination creatively, not one who knocks down what others have created. Such conduct brings to mind the anonymous, ten-line poem entitled, "Wreckers or Builders?"

Wreckers or Builders?

I watched them tearing a building down,

A gang of men in a busy town.

With a "ho-heave-ho" and lusty yell

They swung a beam and the sidewall fell.

I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled,

And the men you'd hire if you had to build?"

He gave a laugh, saying, "No, indeed!

Just common labor is all I need.

They can easily wreck in a day or two,

What builders have taken years to do."

While I can saw a board and usually hit a nail with a hammer, I never became a carpenter. I'm quite sure, however, that making good buildings is not something that is done by defaming other craftsmen. Neither is it done with reckless haste and slovenly work habits. Beauty and utility require carefulness and commitment to excellence.

We never hear of contractors looking for destructive workers. While carpenters don't all make equal contribution, only one destroyer among 20 builders would turn work into chaos and profit into loss. The carpenter who sees the work of

building chiefly as an opportunity to destroy would find no work. While a builder with a passion for building will occasionally destroy, the worker whose greatest satisfaction is destroying cannot be trusted with building.

Jesus looks for men and women with a commitment to build. He gave us His solemn promise that He would build His church. He is now doing that, with (or without) your and my help. He is looking for willing, careful, enthusiastic builders in His house. Let us all make ourselves

available and see how we can help. Let us give our best efforts to the Carpenter of Nazareth, who said: “...**I will build my church**” (Matthew 16:18b).

• • • • •

The annual index requires considerable space, so we included no Ministers’ Meeting Message this month. Look for that feature again next month.

God bless all our readers with a worshipful observance of the birth of Christ! —PLM



Landmarks

Melvin L. Yoder, Gambier, OH

Steel pins mark the corners of our property. We would not consider moving them to gain more property. The property on the other side of those markers belongs to someone else. There have long been landmarks which marked what belongs to God’s people and what belongs to the world.

One man and one woman given in marriage for life has long been a landmark between the church and the world. On the other side is easy divorce and remarriage, also gay relationships, to name a few “freedoms” outside property lines. The woman’s veiling has always been a landmark between the Christian

woman and women of the world. Slowly, but surely, these landmarks are being moved to permit more of what belongs to the world to be in the church. By moving the markers slowly the change is not as readily noticeable. Sheer and form-fitting materials belong to the world, but we have moved the markers enough to allow some of these materials in some of our churches.

We attended a funeral service in a large Mennonite church. As we stood in the lobby, we observed the ladies coming in and getting their veils out of little cubby holes where they had been stored since the last service. It was apparent that they have not

totally removed this landmark, but have simply moved it over a bit, to excuse not wearing the veil except in congregational worship services. The minister in charge announced that the tickets for the Cleveland Indians' ball game would be available in the lobby after the service. It seemed to me that another landmark had been moved, or taken away, to allow more of the world into the church.


At our annual ministers' meeting in March of this year, the Bishop Committee advised that we continue the non-use of the radio as a defining characteristic of the Beachy constituency. A few have chosen to remove this long-standing landmark. Such markers are always moved in hopes of gaining something good thereby.

Years ago a neighborhood man hoped to gain real estate by disputing a boundary line. He claimed the line fence was on his property by a few feet and insisted the fence be moved. Surveyors proved that the fence was several feet on the other man's property. The man lost the dispute and became a laughing stock.

We can keep moving the markers

to gain more property which in truth belongs to the world. But, in the end, we will be laughed to scorn—God has set the boundaries. Moving boundaries will bring calamity. God has said, “I will laugh at your calamity. Ye have set at nought my counsel [landmarks] and would have none of my reproof. I will mock when your fear cometh” (From Proverbs 1: 15, 26).

Keeping the Lord's Day holy is very dear to most of us. But it can be seen that this landmark is also being moved. Sunday morning worship no longer has sole priority and is being skipped in favor of travel or certain functions and entertainments.

As I observe the changes coming into our churches, I wonder, *Are we trying to persuade God to go along with our wishes and thinking?* In Galatians 1, Paul faces this same dilemma. People were falling away from the truth and following another gospel. In verse 10, he asks the question, “Do we now persuade God or men?” Even in the final judgment men will try to persuade God that they are right, but He will say, “Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.” 

Don't try to force men to serve
... inspire them to do so.

Following the Changeless God in an Ever-changing World

Glen Bontrager, Free Union, VA

The world in which we find ourselves
Is changing every day.
It seems the only changeless fact
Is: Change has come to stay!

That naturally requires of us
To choose between the two:
Continue on the same old way
Or try out something new.

I have a question for you, friend:
Which of the two do you
Believe to be the wiser choice
In tune with your IQ?

Should we abandon all the old,
Replace it all with new?
Or seek a cautious compromise
Lest we should go askew?

Do you appreciate your past,
Regard the good that's there?
Or do you scorn your heritage
And think life's not been fair?

What do you see as you look back
At things of yesteryear?
Do you see more than bonnets black
And such peculiar gear?

Suspenders holding broadfall pants,
The men with bushy beard,
Black hats atop the haircuts round,
By some described as weird.

The women dressed in colors dark,
With cov'ring on the head,
And rather than the usual coat
The shawl was worn instead.

The horse and buggy, oh, so slow,
The singing slower still!
No 'lectric, and no telephone,
The creaking old windmill.

Those folks had one more quality,
And wore it like a badge—
That noise that from their mouths came out—
Dat Pennsylvania Deitsch!

By now you're wond'ring: What on earth
Of value's there in that?
There's nothing precious I can see,
Not now—just off the bat.

But wait, my friend, don't hasty be.
Go visit neighbor Jim.
His history is not the same.
What can we learn from him?

Jim's father, a disabled vet,
Since back from World War II,
Returned from Europe, married Nell,
And then his pension drew.

Jim's father stayed at home to drink,
To smoke and spit and chew.
Poor Nell, became the mother of five,
Worked odd jobs to make do.

Jim's brother Zack did not come back,
When sent to Vietnam.
He's MIA since '68,
When he the North did bomb.

Jim's brother Bill, just up the hill,
Returned, but not the same.
They say he lives there by himself.
The war drove him insane.

Jim's sister, Beth, drew her last breath,
Her boyfriend drove too fast,
Intoxicated, missed the curve—
Last time they had a “blast.”

Jim's sister, Gail, has been in jail
Too many times to tell.
Divorced four times and hooked on drugs,
Her life's a living hell!

Jim has no church, no brotherhood
To tell him what to do.
He's free to do just what he wants—
To choose his own hairdo.

No one tells him which car to buy,
How fast to drive, and where.
He's got it made...or so it seems—
But his life's been a nightmare!

Jim sometimes thinks that suicide
Is the way out for him.
What do you think by now, my friend,
Would you trade homes with Jim?

As we reflect upon our past,
Let's thank the Lord above
For the things He's blessed us with,
Out of His heart of love.

There's so much more in our rich past,
Than often meets the eye—
The teachings of the Prince of Peace,
To never steal or lie,

To swear no oath, industrious be,
And for the future plan,
To plant a garden, eat thereof,
And share with whom we can.

These are a few of many things
That we have all been taught,
And, God forbid, that by our choice,
These virtues come to naught.

No doubt the lamp of kerosene
Was not so very bright.
And central heating is so nice
On any winter night.

With thermostat in many rooms
And switch beside each door,
To keep together family now
Is harder than before.

The automobile brought great change,
Of that, there is no doubt.
But do we spend more time at home?
Or do we gad about?

They ate together after church,
A simple meal, that's all.
Have we not something precious lost,
That seems hard to recall?

The challenge lies before us all—
It's not the *old* or *new*.
The real-life test is to discern
Between the *false* and *true*!

And may the good Lord help us all
With prayer, avoid mistake,
And never throw out good with bad
When we our choices make.

May choices of our brief life here
Conform us to the Son,
The One who's perfect without change,
He is the Changeless One!



Tribute to the Bible

Billy Sunday (1862-1935)

Twenty-nine years ago, with the Holy Spirit as my Guide, I entered at the portico of Genesis, walked down the corridor of the Old Testament art galleries, where pictures of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Isaac, Jacob, and Daniel hang on the wall. I passed into the music room of the Psalms where the Spirit sweeps the keyboard of nature until it seems like every reed and pipe in God's great organ responds to the harp of David the sweet singer of Israel.

I entered the chamber of Ecclesiastes, where the voice of the preacher is heard, and into the conservatory of the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley where sweet spices filled and perfumed my life.

I entered the business office of Proverbs and on into the observatory of the prophets where I saw telescopes of various sizes pointing to far-off events, concentrating on the Bright and Morning Star which was to rise above the moonlit hills of Judea for our salvation and redemption.

I entered the audience room of the King of Kings, catching a vision written by Matthew, Mark, Luke,

and John. From thence into the correspondence room with Paul, Peter, James and John writing their epistles.

I stepped into the throne room of Revelation where tower the glittering peaks, where sits the King of Kings upon His throne of glory with the healing of the nations in His hand, and I cried out:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all."

[This colorful overview of the Bible was given by Billy Sunday (a baseball player turned evangelist) during one of his sermons. According to World Book encyclopedia, Sunday preached to an estimated 100 million people, of whom one million were converted. All of this was accomplished without benefit of loud speakers, requiring him to be a dramatic and very loud speaker. Men's hearts may have been softer than they often are today.]

This essay was submitted by a listener at Arlington A.M. Church, (KS) after it was given in a message on October 5, 2009, by Ronald Border, (OH) as a tribute to the wonderful Word of God.]



ANNOUNCEMENT

Fourth Annual Conservative Anabaptist School Board Institute

Mark your calendars for March 5 and 6, 2010. This year's institute is scheduled to be held at Aroda, VA, sponsored by the Oak Grove Mennonite Church and School. This meeting is planned for ministers, school board members, and principals—anyone involved with the overall planning and operation of our Christian day schools.

Some of the scheduled main addresses include:

Indicators of a Healthy School Spirit

Developing a Teacher Apprentice Program

Meeting Special Education Needs of Individual Students

Recognizing and Curing Teacher Burnout

Reviving Parent-Teacher Meetings

Some choices of sectional topics planned are:

Healthy Ministerial Support for the Board

I'm on the Board—Now What?

Dealing with Difficult Parents

Adequate Financial Support for Teachers

*Meeting the Needs of the...hearing-impaired, learning-disabled,
or autistic child*

Programs will be mailed in early January. If you have any questions or comment on the program, you may contact someone on the planning committee. Allen Beiler 540-337-4106; Edwin Eby 717-597-8654; Lee Lehman 717-263-9710; Jonas Sauder 717-285-3495



*Three secrets of success in public speaking:
be sincere,
be clear,
and be seated.*

marriages

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

Bender-Petersheim

Bro. Javan, son of Simon and Virginia Bender, Mifflinburg, PA, and Sis. Melody, daughter of Henry and Marie Petersheim, Abbeville, SC, at Cold Spring Mennonite Church on Oct. 10, 2009, by Ernest Hochstetler.

Eash-Wengerd

Bro. Donnie, son of Lavern and Carolyn Eash, Dixon, TN, and Sis. Marlene, daughter of Daniel and Dorothy Wengerd, Summersville, KY, at First Baptist Church for Summersville Mennonite Church on July 31, 2009, by Lavern Eash.

Hochstetler-Miller

Bro. Landis, son of LaVern and LorAnna Hochstetler, Millersburg, IN, and Sis. Andrea, daughter of Wilbur and Marilyn Miller, Middlebury, IN, at Fair Haven A.M. Church on Oct. 23, 2009, by Dean Miller.

Mast-Hochstetler

Bro. James, son of Albert and Lydia Mast, Millersburg, OH, and Glenda, daughter of Perry and Mary Hochstetler, Huntsville, AR, at First Assembly of God Church for Lighthouse of Faith Fellowship on Oct. 3, 2009, by Phil Miller.

Miller-Yoder

Bro. Marvin, son of Roman and Ruth Miller, Hutchinson, KS, and Sis. Jackie Lynn, daughter of John and Janice Yoder, Hutchinson, KS, at Arlington A.M. Church, on Oct. 24, 2009, by Lee Nisly.

Overholt-Yoder

Bro. Benny, son of Steven and Kaylene

Overholt, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Bethany, daughter of Daniel and Rachel Yoder, Montezuma, GA, at Montezuma Mennonite Church on June 27, 2009, by Donny Swartzentruber.

Steinman-Mast

Bro. Uve, son of Sumner and Sue Steinman, Albany, KY, and Sis. Miriam Joy, daughter of John and Mahala Mast, Crossville, TN, at Mt. Moriah Church on Oct. 24, 2009, by John Mast.

Weaver-Miller

Bro. Jeremy, son of Paul and Orpha Weaver, Brown Co., OH, and Sis. Jennifer, daughter of Norman and Sara Miller, Martinsburg, OH, were married at Faith Baptist for Melita Fellowship on Sept. 19, 2009, by Alan Byler.

Yoder-Nissley

Bro. Joshua, son of Marion and Lizzie Ann Yoder, Big Prairie, OH, and Sis. Lillian, daughter of Leroy and Lydia Nissley, Catlett, VA, were married at Dayspring Mennonite Church for Pine Grove Mennonite Church on Oct. 3, 2009, by Timothy Miller.

cradle roll

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

Bontrager, Brian and Lois (Miller), Chilton, TX, third child, second dau., Heidi Renee, Sept. 2, 2009.

Bontrager, Lavon and Vesta (Miller), Kalona, IA, fourth child, second dau., Kierra Joy, July 10, 2009.

Coblentz, Luke and Ruthann (Miller), Flemingsburg, KY, fifth child, third dau., Jayanna Ella, Sept. 28, 2009.

Helmuth, Eldon and Shana (Ropp), Kalona, IA, sixth child, fourth dau., Hannah Elizabeth, Sept. 2, 2009.

Kauffman, J. Timothy and Ruth (Peachey), Reedsville, PA, ninth child, fourth dau., Emily Ada, Sept. 24, 2009.

Kramer, Stephen and Ellie (Baer), Franklin, KY, third child, first dau., Larisa Danae, Aug. 12, 2009.

Lengacher, Caleb and LaRonda (Wingard), Montezuma, GA, first child and dau., Seonna Ranae, July 16, 2009.

Lengacher, Marcus and Glenda (Coblentz), Summersville, KY, second child, first dau., Alayna Dawn, Oct. 8, 2009.

Mast, Mark and Lynette (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, first child and son, Derrick Brayden, Sept. 11, 2009.

Miller, Dave and Regina (Miller), Martinsburg, OH, fifth child, second son, Matthew Levi, Sept. 12, 2009.

Miller, Myron and Fern (Beiler), Goshen, IN, third child, first dau., Cassidy Paige, Oct. 5, 2009.

Miller, Myron and Rosina (Mast), Middlefield, OH, second child and dau., Danae Elise, Oct. 15, 2009.

Miller, Tom and Carole (Byler), Leesburg, OH, fourth child, third dau., Brooke Danielle, July 22, 2009.

Mullet, Jeffrey and Denise (Swartzen-truber), Newcomerstown, OH, second child, first daughter, Brooklyn Joy, June 28, 2009.

Schrock, Dwight and Lori (Bontrager), Riverside, IA, second child, first dau., Nicole Rianne, August 3, 2009.

Schrock, Eli, Jr., and Carol (Miller), Huntsville, AR, sixth child and dau., Jacinda Lynn, Oct. 16, 2009.

Schrock, Jonathan A. and Myra Doreen (Gingerich), Colon, MI, first child and son, Mickale Jon, Sept. 21, 2009.

Stoltzfus, Chester and Cindy (Kauffman), Leola, PA, fourth child, third son, Carson David, Oct. 2, 2009.

Sweigart, Eric and Sheila (Stump), Goshen, IN, second child, first dau., Khloe Brooke, Sept. 4, 2009.

Wagler, Dale and Heidi (Wingard), Washington, IN, second and third children, twins, first son, Austin Dale and second dau., Alanna Danae, Sept. 9, 2009.

Weaver, Travis and Rhoda (Schmucker), Franklin, KY, fourth child and son, Myron James, Aug. 25, 2009.

Yoder, Mark Anthony and Angela Lynn (Frantz), Oakland, MD, first child and son, Eli Jamison, Sept. 24, 2009.

Zook, James and Becky (Overholt), Chesapeake, VA, sixth child and dau., (one deceased), Mariah Amelia, Sept. 27, 2009.



ordination

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

Bro. Duane Troyer, 43, was ordained to the office of bishop on Aug. 30, 2009, at Faith and Light Christian Fellowship, Leesburg, OH. Preordination messages were given by Ivan Beachy, Free Union, VA. The charge was given by Perry Troyer, assisted by Ivan Beachy and Homer Zook.

obituaries

Beachy, Roman S., 86, of Huntland, TN, died Oct. 15, 2009, at Southern Tennessee Medical Center. He was born March 22, 1923, son of the late Simon J. and Lizzie (Miller) Beachy.

He was a member of Belvidere Mennonite Church. He served faithfully as a deacon since his ordination in 1960 at Bethel Fellowship, Millersburg, OH, moving to Tennessee in 1972.

On Nov. 13, 1947, he was married to Ada Emma Mullet. She survives. Also surviving are six sons and one daughter: David (Miriam) Beachy, Strasburg, OH; James (Mary Ann) Beachy, Dover, OH; Ivan (Elsie) Beachy, Free Union, VA; Roman Merle (Sue) Beachy, Kenya, East Africa; Stephen (Susan) Beachy, Huntland, TN; Gabriel (Sheila) Beachy, Wellman, IA; Tryphena Ruth (Kenneth) Beachy, Winchester, TN; 32 grandchildren, and 27 great grandchildren; and one sister, Anna Mae Beachy, Sugarcreek, OH.

He was preceded in death by one sister and two brothers.

The funeral was held at Belvidere Mennonite Church on Oct. 19, with Alfred Beachy, Raymond Barkman, Adin Troyer, and Benjie Byler serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Gerber, Esther (Ropp), 89, died at Nithview Home, New Hamburg, Ontario. She was born Feb. 7, 1920, daughter of the late John and Emma (Roes) Ropp.

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

On Sept. 29, 1940, she was married to Joseph W. Gerber. He died April 29, 1995. Three children survive: Ron and Marie Gerber, Wellesley; Vernon and Elaine Gerber, New Hamburg; and Eileen and Earl Steinman, Wellesley. Other survivors are sisters: Adeline (Elmer Erb); Barbara (Joe Kennel); brother: Elmer Ropp; sister-in-law: Annie Ropp and brother-in-law: Milton Roth.

Preceding her in death was sister: Clara Roth; brothers: Emanuel, Daniel, Samuel (who died in infancy); and sisters-in-law: Edna Ropp and Mary Ropp.

The funeral was held on Sept. 21 at Cedar Grove Church, with Arthur Gerber officiating. Interment was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Mast, Susanna (Hochstetler), 94, died at the home of her son, Loyal (and Ann) Mast, Linn Grove, IN, on Oct 3, 2009. She was born in Nappanee, IN, on March 3, 1915, daughter of the late Amos and Drusilla (Yoder) Hochstetler.

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

On Dec. 6, 1934, she was married to Moses L. Mast, who predeceased her in 1993. Survivors include a daughter: Mary (Daniel) Yoder, Madison, IN; sons: Loyal (Ann) Mast, Linn Grove, IN; Floyd (Theda) Mast, Goshen; Laban (Barbara) Mast, Goshen; and Lester (Marsha) Mast, Goshen; 23 grandchildren; 59 great grandchildren, and one sister: Lavina Miller, Nappanee.

She was also preceded in death by a daughter, Drusilla, who was married to Melvin Bontrager and died in 1979; sisters: Barbara

Miller, Verna Yoder, Elizabeth Miller, and Magdalena Hochstetler; brothers: Alvin Hochstetler and David Hochstetler.

The funeral was held on Oct. 7 at Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen, with Wilbur Yoder, Harvey Miller, and grandson, Chester Mast serving. Burial was in the Townline Cemetery, Shipshewana.

Peachey, Mary A., 86, of Allensville, PA, died August 30, 2009. She was born August 27, 1923, daughter of the late Abraham S. and Salome P. (Zook) Yoder.

She was an active member of Pleasant View A.M. Church, Belleville, piecing and quilting for charity. She was a homemaker.

On Feb. 20, 1958, she was married to Alvin J. Peachey, who served the church as a minister and died on Oct. 2, 2002. Surviving are children: Linda (Raymond) Yoder, Adams, NY; Katie (David) Peight, Belleville; Leon A. (Elsie) Peachey, Reedsville; Vera (Martin) Yoder, Huntingdon; Anna Mary (Alvin) Zook, Virginia Beach, VA; Lovina (Samuel) Swarey, Allensville; David J. (Ruth) Peachey, Reedsville; Steve A. (Minnie) Peachey, Reedsville; Saloma (John) Byler, Allensville; 48 grandchildren; 51 great grandchildren; brothers and a sister: Stephen Yoder. Kore E. Yoder, Fronie Yoder, Noah Yoder, and Benjamin Yoder. She was preceded in death by five brothers, two sisters, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

The funeral was held at Pleasant View on Sept. 2, with David J. Peachey, Jesse Lee Spicher, and David Byler serving. Burial was in Locust Grove Cemetery, Belleville.

Plank, Amanda (Yoder), 79, of Montezuma, GA, died June 24, 2009. She was born Sept. 28, 1929, in Kempsville, VA, daughter of the late Noah and Sadie (Schrock) Yoder.

She was a member of Montezuma Amish Mennonite Church.

On Sept. 28, 1949, she was married to Isaac

Plank in Kempsville, VA. He survives. Also surviving are 10 children: Verda (Henry) Overholt, Montezuma, GA; Eliza (John) Wagler, Abbeville, SC; Ruth (Raymond) Weaver, Montezuma; Eddie (Becky) Plank, Montezuma; Lewis (Mary) Plank, Montezuma; Maynard Plank, Myakka City, FL; Irene (Levi) Yoder, Montezuma; Bertha (Marvin) Yoder, Montezuma; Kathy (Louis) Yoder, Montezuma; Marie (Eugene) King, Montezuma; Willis (Lorene) Plank, Montezuma; 48 grandchildren; 66 great grandchildren, three sisters: Frieda (Galen) Yoder, Costa Rica; Sarah (Alva) Yoder, Montezuma; Lena (Enos) Swartzentruber, Montezuma; three brothers: Clarence Yoder, AR; Allen Yoder, MO; and Noah Yoder, Jr., VA.

Preceding her in death: one son, George; one daughter and son-in-law, Pauline and John Wagler; four granddaughters, three sisters: Esther (John) Kanagy; Vernie (Mark) Brenneman; and Elsie (Mark) Brenneman; and two brothers: William (Emma) Yoder, and Dan (Susan) Yoder.

The funeral was held on June 26, with Donny Swartzentruber, Eli Kauffman, and Irvin R. Yoder serving. Burial was in the Montezuma Mennonite Cemetery.

Sharp, Katie A., 82, of Belleville, PA, died at her residence on Sept. 14, 2009. She was born on Jan. 28, 1927, daughter of the late Samuel R. and Katie A. (Zook) Kauffman.

She was a homemaker and member of Pleasant View A.M. Church, Belleville, PA.

On Nov. 23, 1950, she was married to Noah B. Sharp, Sr., who preceded her in death on Feb. 17, 1999. Surviving are children: David S. (Sara Ann) Sharp, Milroy; Esther K. (David) Spicher, Belleville; Sally A. (Eddie) Peight, Mount Union; Grace E. Sharp, Belleville; Noah B. (Viola) Sharp, Jr., Reedsville; Joseph T. (Martha) Sharp, Belleville, NY; Daniel L. (Karen) Sharp, Belleville; 27 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by four brothers, four sisters, a son: John A. Sharp in 1983, two infant grandchildren, and a great grandchild.

The funeral was held at Pleasant View on Sept 17, with John C. Miller, Melvin Beachy, and Jesse Lee Spicher serving. Burial was in Green Lane Cemetery, Reedsville.

Yoder, John E., 77, of Salisbury, PA, died of pancreatic cancer on Oct. 1, 2009. He was born on Dec. 23, 1931, in Grantsville, MD, son of the late Eli L. and Amanda (Hershberger) Yoder.

He was a faithful member of Mt. View Mennonite Church.

On April 18, 1957, he was married to Grace J. Yoder, who survives. Children surviving are: Duane Yoder, Salisbury, PA; Wendell Yoder, Baltimore, MD; Sharon (Ernest) Stoltzfus, Perry, NY; Twila Yoder, Hazelton, WV; and nine grandchildren. Other survivors are one brother, Paul H. Yoder, Grantsville, MD, and one sister Edna Beachy, Paoli, IN.

He was preceded in death by three brothers: Elmer, Henry, and Ernest; and three sisters: Elizabeth, Mabel, and Lena.

The funeral was held at Mt. View Mennonite Church with Jerry Yoder, Henry Tice, and Nathan Yoder serving.

Zook, Henry Ray, 70, died peacefully while resting at his home in rural Kalona, Iowa, on Oct. 1, 2009. He was born in Dover, Delaware, on March 10, 1939, son of the late Amos and Mollie (Byler) Zook. He had rheumatic fever in his youth.

He was a member of Salem Mennonite Fellowship Church, Kinross, IA.

On Nov. 22, 1961, he was married to Esther Beachy, who survives. Their six children are: Ella June Gingerich, Kalona; Larry (Jewel) Zook, Kalona; Joyce (Jerold) Martin, Wagener, SC; Alan (Jean) Zook, Kalona; Jason (Louise) Zook, Kalona; Leon (Emma) Zook, Villisca, IA, 35 grandchildren; three sisters: Florence (Alva) Miller, Paris, TN; Mary Jane (Leroy) Beachy, Berlin, OH; Katie (Edward) Troyer, Bloomfield, MO; a brother, Crist (Irene) Zook, Greenwood, DE; two brothers-in-law, Amos (Susie) Schrock, Gladys, VA; Raymond A. Miller, Paris, TN; and a sister-in-law, Vera Zook, Lebanon, PA.

He was preceded in death by two grandchildren, two sisters: Lydia Schrock and Barbara Miller; a brother: Allen and a brother-in-law: Eli Miller.

The funeral was held at Fairview Church on Oct. 5, with Wilford Beachy, Walter Beachy, and David L. Miller serving. David Beachy was in charge of the committal at the East Union Cemetery.



observations

Recently in a casual telephone conversation, I remarked that maybe someone should do a research paper on why conservative Anabaptist churches sometimes experience division. The non-local brother readily agreed but added that it probably should not be done by an Anabaptist. He apparently assumed that for one of us to be unbiased would be very difficult. In

spite of our best intentions to be fair and open-minded, who can know that he is completely objective?

From our perspective, the Roman Catholic Church had regrettably departed from the earlier apostolic church after about two and half centuries. Thus it would seem to us that the Reformation was more than a thousand years past due. The mainline Reformation abandoned

certain Catholic errors, but continued the error of infant baptism and state/church union. Christian non-resistance, too, was not on their agenda.

Our Anabaptist forebears were unwilling to accept this serious compromise. They held out for a believers' church and the Free Church movement at the peril of their own lives. Of the well-known early Anabaptist reformers, only two are remembered as having died a natural death. Conrad Grebel died very early of the plague. Menno Simons, like the Apostle John, seems to have miraculously escaped martyrdom and died a natural death.

Thus division is not always wrong. Sometimes it is necessary. But Paul strongly rebukes the church at Corinth for their disunity. The issues in their case were unworthy of division. Their carnality had misdirected their attention from the centrality of Christ to their favorite human leaders: Apollos, Paul, and Cephas. Even those who claimed to follow Christ were reproved for their party spirit. This should remind us that church people are not immune to disagreements that are unworthy of our high calling as followers of Christ. When people who want to be guided by the Word have disagreements that disrupt peaceable body life, carnality might well be the problem.

Self-centeredness or *individualism* are several modern terms for the Bible term, *carnality*. Romans 12:3 refers to an exalted view of one's own importance or superiority. This not only hinders the individual from making a helpful contribution to the body, but is often disruptive to peaceable body life. In fact, it can cause a split.

None of us has ever experienced weighty issues such as our 16th century patriarchs faced. But the decisions that we face in the body of Christ can be a serious test of our Christian maturity. Individualism can manifest itself on opposite sides of the same question.

Pride is another word that describes individualism. True humility acknowledges our need of wisdom from above. (James 3:17,18) It is doubtful that division occurs when humility and divine wisdom prevail.

The above thoughts were triggered by the conversation mentioned at the opening of this discussion. I am well aware that for me to suppose my opinions are unbiased is wishful thinking. Readers are invited to evaluate these thoughts by God's Word and to "hold fast to that which is good." An unbiased view based on a balanced view of the Scriptures is a worthy ideal. In case divisions do occur, harboring ill will or unforgiveness is not a Christian response.

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Richard Hughes, a professor at Messiah College has written a book entitled: *Christian America and the Kingdom of God*. He reports that between 1949 and 1953, 80% of Americans believed the Bible to be the "revealed Word of God." More than half of that number could not name even one of the four Gospels.

In a 2005 survey, 85% identified themselves as Christians. Only 40% could name more than four of the Ten Commandments. The survey also showed that three-fourths of Americans believe the Bible teaches that "God helps those who help themselves."

In 2007, a survey showed that most Americans cannot name the first book of

the Bible. Only one-third knew that Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. Ten percent believed that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife.

Hesston College pre-tests some of their incoming students to find the level of the familiarity with the Bible. Most of these students have Mennonite upbringing. While they may know quite a few Bible stories, they generally lack a good grasp of Bible chronology. The majority cannot put Abraham, Moses, and David into chronological order. The Hesston faculty work to correct this by teaching salvation history, coordinating events with the use of a time line.

Hughes claims that a lack of biblical literacy allows many Americans to connect the Kingdom of God with the United States and its government and then justify immoral actions they would not normally accept.

The above thoughts are gleaned from an editorial by Dana Neff. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*, 10-12-09) The burden of this editorial is summed up with the following quote: "Faithful Christians need to know and understand what the Bible teaches. Bible stories need to be put into the context of the whole story of God's work with humanity."

This brought to mind my great aunt Mattie Nisly (1860-1944). She was a single sister who gave away many Egermeier's Bible story books and other Christian books to her many grand nieces and nephews. At her funeral she was called a book missionary.

All of this should be a helpful reminder that knowledge of the Scriptures is essential for us to live faithful Christian lives. We have little excuse to be ill-informed.

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Mark A. Gingerich, Plain City, OH, sent me an interesting letter that he got from Ken Ham, president of Creation Museum, Hebron, KY. On August 7, 2009, there were 2,240 visitors at the museum. Of that number, 285 were atheists/agnostics who disapprove of creationism. That group came mostly from Columbus, Ohio, where the Secular Student Alliance was holding a conference. A professor/blogger well-known for his vehement hatred of the Creation Museum encouraged the atheist attendees to make the two-hour drive to the museum. Ken Ham says, "I find it wonderfully ironic how God used an atheist professor to bring nearly 300 atheists—people who would not even think about attending church—to hear the Gospel message at Creation Museum! Where else could this happen? Praise God!"

Some of the group made horrible comments about the Lord, Ken Ham, and the museum. Many of these comments were too vile and blasphemous to print. Why such furor against a God who doesn't exist and a creation that did not happen? The spiritual conflict between light and darkness, truth and error, and Christ and Satan is real and intense.

I have not had the opportunity to visit the Creation Museum. People who have tell me it is definitely a faith-affirming experience.

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Funerals are special times. Recently Mary and I attended three funerals in three states, in eight days. These are solemn reminders that we all have an appointment with death. Parting is final, so far as this life is concerned.

For persons whose life has become

meaningless and burdensome, death may be kind. Survivors find comfort if a loved one has been relieved of a worn-out and sometimes pain-wracked body. Persons suddenly taken who were physically and mentally functional, leave a different kind of void. But the “Father of mercies and the God of all comfort” is eager to comfort mourners who draw near to Him. Comfort and hope are inseparably joined together.

Mary and I were blessed that in all three cases mentioned above the larger church communities eagerly reached out to the family to show their care and support. I assume that we can agree that kindness and good will should not be limited to such times.

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Mennonite Weekly Review (10-19) gives prominent coverage to national and world-wide Anabaptist census. The centerfold includes a color-coded U. S. map. There are six states that have more than 10,000 Anabaptists, in the following order: Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas, Indiana, California, and Virginia. The study by Donald B. Kraybill and C. Nelson Hostetter is very inclusive and detailed. Total Mennonites in USA: 236,855. Total Anabaptists in USA: 506,906. Amish including New Order: 101,600. World membership of Mennonite and related churches: 1,616,126.

Early Anabaptists were essentially three groups: Mennonites, Hutterites, and Amish. Now there are more than 50 groups. This number has greatly in-

creased in the last half century. There has been significant movement in opposite directions. Sometimes new groups have formed in response to the perception that theology and practice had become liberal to the point of compromise. Other groups have developed from the persuasion that to be needlessly restrictive can be a hindrance to Christian witness and the Great Commission.

God only knows how many new groups have been started simply because of personality conflicts or other unworthy reasons. Let us acknowledge that division is often more the evidence of our humanity than our Christian maturity. Neither party is immune to error in the case of division. I pray that in our efforts to be kind and non-judgmental, we would not want to be neutral about obedience to the clear teaching of Christ and the Apostles.

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Having recently passed a landmark that makes me another year older has caused me to reflect on the common experience called birthdays. I find it interesting that none of us get to choose when we are born. But God does allow us to choose to be reborn and invites us to spend eternity with him.

A kind sister at Center church likes to make attractive birthday cards. The one she prepared for me included this sentiment: “Making the years count is more important than counting the years.”

—DLM



*The emptier the pot, the quicker the boil.
Watch your temper!*

Stretched Too Thin

Many people back home have no idea what life is like on the foreign mission field. Homefolks adjust to the missionary family's absence and go about life as usual.

The missionary family's everyday life, on the other hand, may be very unusual. Five years later they may still be adjusting.

Language is often an obstacle. The missionary may only be learning or, at best, not be fluent. Homefolks don't realize how comfortable it is to express themselves without giving attention to the words. They have not experienced the fatigue and frustration involved in studying how to say every sentence.

Though a missionary may have thought he was prepared for cultural differences, he may often find himself frustrated as he copes with new customs and new ways of thinking. The missionary is used to starting meetings on time. The nationals may arrive on their own schedule.

The missionary does not want to offend the nationals, but their ways are not second nature to him. He must keep reminding himself...in this country, I must not use my left hand when I eat or when I give or receive a gift—they consider it unclean. Dining with neighbors, I must

leave some food on my plate so the hostess will know I am satisfied. It is inappropriate for a woman to shake hands with a man. I must not touch a child (or anyone else) on the head—that is considered sacred. Moving the head from side to side means “yes”; up and down means “no.” Pointing at something with my index finger is considered rude...and more.

Adjusting to a new culture, a new climate (which may include new diseases), and new foods, and lacking home comforts such as running water, electricity, comfortable beds, a one-family car, and easy access to the supermarket may not be the hardest tests a missionary faces.

In many locations more workers are needed. When a family serves alone, Dad may be the spiritual leader at home, the Sunday school teacher, and the minister in charge of all the Sunday services.

When two or more families serve together, there is more fellowship, but also more potential friction. Mission families must plan together for their individual work as well as group activities. A family is not free to decide their own course of action based on their perception of needs. The mission group must be united in their ways of carrying out mission policies. Satan loves to see a work

hindered through jealousy, personality conflicts, and disagreements.

Many missionaries can identify with Paul's concerns: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." So many needs crowd into their schedules that the missionaries may find it difficult to maintain their own close relationships with the Lord.

Foreign missionaries often struggle for answers to questions their home church never faced.

How can a needy mission congregation provide for a widowed church member with six small children? How can they encourage Christian teens or mothers standing alone in the midst of immorality, dishonesty, distrust, broken homes, and threats from anti-Christian family members? How can missionaries strengthen each other in the face of physical dangers, robberies, kidnapping, and threats against them? How can missionary parents meet the educational, social, and fellowship needs of their older children in a foreign country?

Missionaries may struggle with discouragement when a sizable number forfeit church membership in order to vote in national elections. "Where did we fail?" they ask themselves. The devil knows discouragement can hinder progress.

What is the answer to all these pressures and perplexities? The missionary should trust God. Homefolks may glibly say that, and the missionaries firmly believe it. With

sincere hearts they are trying to cast their cares upon the One who has many times been their fortress and their deliverer. But demonic spirits are often a very real spiritual opposition. And missionaries are human. Pressures, sleepless nights, and the constant battle against evil take their toll physically, emotionally, and spiritually—they may lead to burnout.

In addition to these things, the missionaries may feel out of touch and forgotten by the congregation who blessed them and sent them on their way!

What can homefolks do thousands of miles away?

Jesus, who said, "All power is given unto me," also said, "Lo, I am with you always." The same all-powerful Lord is with the missionaries and with us—a direct link. Holding their needs up to the source of power is supporting them, much as Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms until the victory came. Does our failure to pray enough sometimes limit the missionaries' abilities and successes?

One mission board chairman says, "Praying regularly with compassion about needs of specific persons and places is better than simply praying for 'missions and missionaries all over the world.'"

Praying is a most important service, but contacting the missionaries themselves is also needed. In *Paraguay Ponderings*, Miriam Schrock reminds us that letters from home

supporters bring encouragement.

A people, starved for news, soul-hungry for fellowship, lonely in the hidden corners of their hearts. No visitors to bring news, no fresh 'Budgets' to read, no telephones to contact far-away friends and family. No mail-boxes. No fax machines. No visiting ministers for months on end.

And then, letters come!

"Letters! Letters!" The cry resounds through the house, flows through the thin walls, and is joyfully echoed by each one who hears. "Letters!"


Quietness falls, interrupted only by rustling papers, a chuckle, or by a tidbit of news to share, interrupted also by little voices asking wistfully, "Did I get anything?"

And the happy squeals of delight as we joyfully hand them a bit of paper with their very own name on it. The

little ones were not forgotten. We were not forgotten. Far from it! The dear folks at home wrote that they are praying for us daily. Our hungry hearts are stilled. Almost reverently we return to our forsaken tasks and find that they, too, are lighter, for we have gotten letters.

Jesus was moved with compassion for the fainting and scattered multitudes. Will we be moved with compassion for our workers before they faint and are scattered?

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2b).

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helpers at home

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

The Christ of Christmas, God's great gift to humanity, came to us wrapped up in the warmth and security of a womb. He chose the womb of a woman—actually a young girl, probably a mere teenager—who lived in an obscure village in Galilee, the daughter of a humble Jewish family, to carry and care for His Son.

The fact that God entrusted His Son to a woman assures me of God's love and confidence in women. He has giv-

ing us a great responsibility, but has also enabled us with the qualities we need to love and care for the children He entrusts into our care. I believe women have a deeper and more personal love for the Christmas story than men do because we so closely identify with Mary. We also enjoy sharing Christmas with children, finding ways of making it alive and real to them.

Let us look at Mary, the young virgin from Nazareth.

The Bible does not give us any information about Mary's parents. I believe Mary had parents who taught her to love and serve God and about the coming of the promised Messiah. We do know that Mary was a young girl with a deep love for God because the angel immediately assured her that she had *found favor with God*.

Mary had a meek and quiet spirit. How do I know? 1 Peter 3:4 tells us, "a meek and quiet spirit" is of "great price to God." God must have chosen a girl to fit His qualifications for godly womanhood. Mothers, let me assure you, God values those qualities highly in a young girl's life. Your daughter needs to see them exhibited in your life, which will encourage her to develop them in her own life. I like the Living Bible's rendering of this verse: "Be beautiful inside, in your hearts with the lasting charm of a gentle and quiet spirit with is so precious to God."

The angel assured Mary, "thou art highly favoured with God, the Lord is with you." Even so, teenage daughters need assurance of our love and acceptance so they will be able to accept God's love and His acceptance of them in a personal way. I love Mary's response to the angel, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word."

We do not know how Mary's parents responded to Mary's situation, but they possibly sent her to Cousin Elizabeth, where her pregnant cousin confirmed the angel's message to Mary. When she did so, Mary praised God with these precious words, "My soul doth magnify

the lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." It appears that Mary's emotions had finally caught up with her willing spirit.

There was much at stake for Mary. Not only the public reproach of being pregnant outside of marriage, but also being engaged to a man who did not seem to understand her situation. However, God also spoke to Joseph. He believed the angel's message, took Mary as his wife and began to care for her.

Let us look at Mary the Mother.

Mary's initiation into motherhood could not have been easy. They traveled to Bethlehem, a distance of approximately 70 miles, possibly riding on a donkey or walking. It must have been extremely tiring and uncomfortable for this young mother-to-be. Finally, they arrived, only to find the inns full. The only place to sleep they could find was a stable.

I am sure that Mary must have felt the same physical pain and exhaustion that any of us would feel. However, there is no indication of complaining, or wondering why God would allow this to happen to her, the one chosen to bring the Messiah into the world.

I wonder how I would have responded. I remember one weary night traveling from Belize to El Salvador on dusty roads, finally arriving at a dark, dingy motel and lying down on a hard mattress in a stifling, warm, and dirty room and thinking how Mary must have felt in a stable so many years ago.

I believe she chose to be *content* in whatever situation she found herself.

I believe Mary also chose to be a *joyful* mother. Mothers need these two qualities: joyfulness and acceptance of the circumstances of life. Life will not always be easy, but God gives grace if we truly desire it.

I also like the fact that “Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” She did not phone or e-mail all her friends or complain and fret about her hard lot in life. However, she pondered things in her heart.

We know Mary had the normal concerns and fears for her children. When Jesus was 12 years old, they thought He was lost. When they found

Him in the temple, Mary rebuked Him saying, “Son, why did you do this to us? Don’t you know we were worried about you?”

Her darkest hour came when her Son, who knew He was the Son of God, hung on a cross between two thieves, dying the death of a criminal. I cannot imagine the pain she felt at that dark hour.

Morning did come, nevertheless, and He rose from the grave, not as her Son, but as her Savior!

The Christ of Christmas desires to fill my heart and yours with His joy and contentment.



junior messages

Who's Da Tief?

Amy Beth Gingerich, Belle Center, OH

Nancy Coblentz has spent many years in Belize as a missionary. This is a true story of how God helped her deal with a problem she faced as a teacher. “Tief” is a Belizean term. When used as a noun, it means “thief” and as a verb, it means “to steal.”

Miss Nancy! Guess what!” a Belizean boy exclaimed bursting into the door of the schoolhouse. “Edward Yorke found some shillings (25-cent pieces) and ten cent pieces in the chicken house!”

“Oh, no,” Miss Nancy thought, “I wonder if that Eddie “tiefed” some money out of my desk drawer.” But she showed no signs of suspicion as she answered calmly, “Oh, where is...” but she had no chance to finish her question; the door had already slammed shut.

“Lord, show me what to do about this,” she pleaded. “And help me to deal

with him in a kind way,” she added.

Just then the door opened and Eddie stepped in. “Eddie, someone saw you come in and take money out of my desk drawer.” Miss Nancy said. Noticing the surprised look on his face, she asked, “You didn’t know it, right?”

“N-no,” he stammered.

“When did you do it?” she asked.

“Yesterday, at recess.”

“Do you know who saw you?”

“No.”

“It was God,” Miss Nancy told him.

“Oh,” Eddie replied thoughtfully.

“I’m sorry, Miss Nancy.”

"I forgive you. Let's pray and ask God to forgive you, too," she suggested.

After they had prayed, Miss Nancy warned him, "Remember Eddie, if this ever happens again I will have to punish you; so don't ever do it again."

"I won't, Miss Nancy."

"Okay. You may go now," she dismissed him.

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Two weeks later, Miss Nancy opened her desk drawer to find that her money was gone. Again!

"Help me, Lord, to know what I should do," Miss Nancy prayed to her ever-faithful Friend. With a prayer on her lips, she rang the school bell to start another school day.

At recess time, Miss Nancy announced, "The class is dismissed. Those who are not done with their arithmetic, please stay seated." Only two boys remained seated—Charles and Edward. "Lord, I know that the thief is here. He'll be the first one of the boys to come to my desk with his work finished."

Sure enough, Eddie finished first.

"Eddie," Miss Nancy said, "my money is missing again. Was it you?"

"Me no thief no money, Miss Nancy," Eddie answered quickly.

"Charles, did you take my money out of my drawer?" Miss Nancy asked him as he walked up with his finished lesson assignment.

"Me take your money? No, Miss Nancy," Charles replied with a puzzled look on his face.

The experienced school teacher

sensed that Charles knew nothing about it. Nevertheless, she decided to find out who the culprit was by having them draw lots. She walked over to the bookshelf and chose three reading books.

"Okay, boys," she addressed them. "I have a Bible verse in my desk drawer and I'm going to write it on a slip of paper and put it in one of these books. One is for Charles, one is for Eddie, and one is for anyone else who might have tied it."

After copying the verse and putting it just inside one of the books, she said, "I'm going to close my eyes while you shuffle the books, then you'll close your eyes while I shuffle them."

Miss Nancy closed her eyes. While the boys shuffled the books, she pleaded with the Lord to soften Eddie's heart. When the boys had shuffled the books, they closed their eyes while Miss Nancy shuffled them again.

"Now let's pray and ask the Lord to show us the guilty one," Miss Nancy said.

"Okay, boys," Miss Nancy instructed after the prayer. "You may each take a book."

Each boy took a book then Miss Nancy reached for Eddie's book. She opened the cover. Tears filled her eyes. She tried to blink them back as she said brokenly to the red-faced, frightened boy standing in front of her. "Eddie, here...here is the slip," she finished in a whisper. "Charles, you are dismissed."


Suddenly Eddie broke down and wept. "I'm sorry, Miss Nancy. Can you

forgive me?” he pleaded.

“Yes, Eddie, I’ll gladly forgive you,” Miss Nancy answered. “And I’m sure God will forgive you too, if you ask Him.”

“Do you think He would?” Eddie wondered, tears glistening in his eyes.

“Yes, He would. Why don’t we kneel down and ask Him right now?” she suggested.

The two of them knelt on the floor. Miss Nancy prayed first. Then Eddie prayed. After they had prayed, Eddie received a punishment to help him remember never to tie again. After wiping the tears from her eyes, Miss Nancy rang the bell to end their recess time. Although it was a little bit late, her heart felt light, and she thanked the Lord for His wonderful gift of forgiveness. 

youth messages

Dear Youth,

Have you ever stopped to think about the sacrifice that many ministers make in accepting the call to serve the church? Recently friends of ours who are contemplating the “plain lifestyle” were asking questions about reimbursement for our ministers. They understood through reading that the “plain people” do not typically reimburse their ministers for their service to the congregation. To many of us, this concept is not shocking at all. But to folks whose ministers get paid very well for their service to the church, the sacrifice that “plain ministers” make in behalf of their congregations is quite astounding. The average “plain minister” invests anywhere from five to fifteen hours per week in behalf of his congregation.

When he was ordained, he needed to cut five to fifteen hours per week out of a schedule that was already busy. The Apostle Paul recognized this and gave instruction regarding the types of support that ministers of the Gospel deserve. This month’s writers describe some of those types of support based on Galatians 6:6. You may find some other interpretations of this verse interesting as well.

In conclusion, I would challenge you with these questions: Would your ministers or Bible teachers describe you as a grateful recipient of their sacrifice? More importantly, as God views your attitude toward those He ordained, would He call you a “thankful communicator” or and “ungrateful complainer”? —EE

This Month’s **QUESTION**

What are some practical ways youth can apply Galatians 6:6? “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”

Galatians 6:6 in the Amplified Bible says: “Let him who receives instruction in the Word [of God] share all good things with his teacher [contributing to his support].” This supporting of those who teach the Word (our pastors) can be done in a variety of ways. Some practical ways to support our pastors may be small, such as giving a plate of cookies and a card. Other ways may be bigger, such as giving a monetary gift or a gift of our time when you know your pastor is feeling overwhelmed with busyness. But, whether our support is small or large, I believe our pastors can feel that support.

A reader from Mifflinburg, PA

• • • • •

There are many ways we can support and encourage our ministers. One simple way we can do this is giving them gift baskets and thank-you cards. Recently our youth group divided into small groups and took a meal to each one of the ministers and spent the evening with them. I don't know if this verse is talking about paying our ministers for the work they do, but I think it would be good if ministers would get paid. This often brings the response that there is great danger in paying ministers! I believe that is a real danger, but I think it would be good if ministers were paid at least 1 or 2 days a week salary. This would give them extra time for more intense Bible study, or Bible courses, without having to worry about providing for their families.

Jason King, Kinzers, PA

• • • • •

This verse seems to be a reminder for us to reward our teachers in the Word. These teachers may be our parents, ministers, Bible school teachers, etc. One way we can repay them is through money, but I think this verse is talking about more than that. When we are personally inspired, we can share it with our teachers and be a benefit to them in return. Also, if they are using their wisdom and experience to teach us, we as youth can use our bountiful energy and strength to help them when the opportunity arises. Just some good old hard, physical labor for them goes a long way for our teachers to see us applying the knowledge we have gained from them to become better people—more useful to God.

Joshua Gingerich, Greenfield, OH

• • • • •

“Let him who receives instruction in the Word [of God] share all good things with his teacher—contributing to his support” (Galatians 6:6 Amplified).

My main teachers in the Word of God are probably my ministers. It seems like those in authority (especially ministers) are frequently ‘shot down.’ So, how can we as youth, practically contribute to their support? I believe one way is by not engaging in derogatory conversations concerning them, although they may not always do things the way we think it should be done. I think also telling our ministers what we appreciate about them or one of their messages can contribute to their support. Our ‘teachers’ were placed into their positions by God for a reason. Let’s stand behind,

encourage, and build them up. We as youth can make a difference!

Rebecca Kuhns, Belleville, PA


• • • • •

I think what Paul was saying in this verse is that the teaching of the Bible is not a one-sided proposition. When someone explains the truth of God from the Word, he isn't pulling it out of his own thumb. I believe the Spirit is what gives them the ability to understand what God is trying to say. Granted, those who have been following the Lord for a long time do have an edge to understanding the Scriptures over most of us younger Christians, but there are times when

we have insights or perspectives that we're just afraid to share because we think it might be wrong to challenge a teacher's opinion.

Obviously, with a wrong attitude there's going to be a problem. But when we have an open mind, there's no reason to not express ourselves. Here's how the Good News Bible puts it: "If you are being taught the Christian message, you should share all the good things you have with your teacher."

I guess the Lord is free to use young people to share with others when He's inspiring them.

Preston Hostetler, Malta, OH 

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Abbreviations identify sectional features: (M) Meditation; (P) Poem; (BR) Book Review; (Ed) Editorial; (MA) Mission Awareness; (MM) Ministers' Meetings Message; (Obs) Observations; (HH) Helpers at Home; (Y) Youth; (JM) Junior Message; (RR) Reader Response; (G) Guest Writer.

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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

We must not change the message; the message must change us.

• • • • •

Problems would lessen if people would listen.

• • • • •

Language, like linen, is best when it's clean.

• • • • •

One thing you can give and still keep is your word.

• • • • •

Drivers who weave in and out of traffic may wind up with stitches.

• • • • •

"Kneeology" often does more good than what poses as theology.

• • • • •

Rheumatism often served as our forefathers' weather bureau.

• • • • •

Treat a rumor like a check; never endorse it until you're sure it's genuine.

• • • • •

When a dictator is in power, it may not take long for a person to talk his head off.

• • • • •

A scandal is a breeze whipped by two or more windbags.

• • • • •

The emptier the pot, the quicker the boil. Watch your temper!