



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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2010

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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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Editor: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paulmiller@bttskynet.net

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 RR 1 Box 49-C, Augusta, WV 26704
 elmerg@frontiernet.net

Associate Editor: David L. Miller
 P O Box 73, Partridge, KS 67566

Contributing Editors:
 Simon Schrock
 Enos D. Stutzman
 Aaron Lapp

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus
 186 Skyline Dr., New Holland, PA 17557

Youth Messages Editor: Ernest Eby
 4812 Hwy. 5, Mountain View, AR 72560
 ec.eby.ar@gmail.com

Junior Messages Editor:
 Mrs. Anita Yoder
 10393 N 1100 W, Ligonier, IN 46767

Helpers at Home Editor:
 Mrs. Mary June Glick
 1080 Return Church Rd., Seneca, SC 29678

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:
 Mark I. Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624
 markbeachy@afo.net
 330-852-2982

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Thy Will Be Done

Andy Martin, McVeytown, PA

*“...nevertheless, not my will, but thine,
be done” (Luke 22:42b).*

“Thy will be done, Lord,” this is my prayer;
As for myself, I have not a care.
Trials, temptations, sickness, despair;
All of these things I’m willing to bear.

Lord, it is hard to follow You through;
I’m scared of the things You’ll ask me to do.
Trusting in You, at times, is real tough;
But You’ve promised me Your grace is enough.

Though it may hurt to give up my will;
In spite of the pain, I’ll follow You still.
Surrender to You is painful today;
But this is Your plan; I know it’s the way.

Through valleys of gloom, down paths that are dark,
Onward with You I press toward the mark.
Following You each step of the way;
Trusting in You, I’ll not go astray.

“Thy will be done, Lord,” this is my song;
‘Mid darkness of night, and all the day long.
Wherever You lead me, there will I go.
Lord, to Your will, I’ll never say “No!”



Messages from Calvary

A tribute to the late Ervin N. Hershberger (1914-2003)

Calvary Messenger has a well-chosen name. In the late 60's, its founding editor, Ervin Hershberger sensed God calling him to start a new publication. Ervin had been editing the English portion of the German/English *Herold der Wahrheit* (Herald of Truth) for many years. *The church would benefit, he thought, from a better-understood, more-focused periodical.* So it was that in January, 1970, Bro. Ervin, surrounded by other visionaries, launched *Calvary Messenger*.

With positive language, 55-year-old Ervin thus formulated the purposes of Calvary Messenger in that first issue with these stirring words: ***To propagate sound biblical doctrine; to stimulate a deeper study of God's Word; to build and strengthen the faith of Christians; to point lost and dying souls to the blessed Saviour; to welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God; and to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.*** That statement of purpose (with three small changes he later made), is the same as the one on the inside front cover of the current issue.

Bro. Ervin served as editor from 1970 to 1997. I was appointed editor

in 1999 and he assisted me until his death. I embrace the purposes our departed brother outlined in 1970. It is my prayer that *Calvary Messenger* would lift a standard of faithfulness in our time. Furthermore, I do not think *Calvary Messenger* needs only to "sniff out" false emphasis in professing Christendom. It is to proclaim *positive* messages from Calvary.

While it is not safe to close our eyes to negative issues, we believe that God is glorified when we know what we are *for*—not only what we are *against*. Let us briefly note each part of this statement of purpose as a message from Calvary:

To propagate sound biblical doctrine: One message of Calvary is that God's new covenant supersedes His old covenant. (Hebrews 8:6-13) We must rightly divide the Word of truth. If someone points to a deficiency we might have, we must be willing to examine it non-defensively. God's Good News is effective in conquest.

To stimulate a deeper study of God's Word: A second message of Calvary is that *we are no more spiritual than we are scriptural.* No

one, even in a lifetime of diligent study, can plumb the depths of God's Word. We grow as we regularly feed on the bread of life—God's Word. (John 5:39)

To build and strengthen the faith of Christians: Calvary's message includes this truth: He who is overconfident invites disaster. (1 Corinthians 1:12) We must daily cast ourselves on the mercies of God. God would have us venture out in faith on paths unknown. We need not fear the future when we fear God and keep His commandments.

To point lost and dying souls to the blessed Savior: While it is tempting to place Christian witness secondary to making life comfortable for ourselves, the message of Calvary places Christian priorities first. (Matthew 6:33) God needs us. He would have us cast our cares on Him and allow Him to provide for us. We must certainly work, but not as though we had no Good Shepherd to lead us and provide for us. We are co-laborers with Him.

To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God: All of us are subject to wrong and foolish choices, but Calvary has a better answer than despair. When someone strays then repents, we must not hold shut the door against them. (John 10:27-29)

To help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus: Golgotha's cross proclaims that *the church is*

not so much a showcase for saints as a hospital for sinners. We must not figuratively toss people who fail on the trash heap but patiently walk beside them to help them live by the power of God. If we invite them to lean on us, they may learn to walk leaning on Him. (Galatians 6:1)

Some think that unless we publicly expose and denounce those we disagree with, we fail. Notice that when John and James (the Sons of Thunder) asked Jesus to approve calling down fire from heaven on those who did not receive Him, Jesus rebuked them with: "Ye know what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9: 55, 56).

God's message from Calvary says that everyone who thirsts is welcome to come to the Savior. God's grace is available—"without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1). The Good News of the Gospel beckons everyone. Jesus' arms on Calvary were stretched out in welcome to all who look to Him (John 3:14) and come to Him in repentance and faith.

Let us face with optimistic courage the challenges of faithfulness in our time. Let us be *true Calvary Messengers!* That is what God looks for and that would have pleased Ervin Hershberger, too!

—PLM 

Re: Sport Hunting,

(*March*, p. 24)

I read with great interest the article...on sport hunting. Being an avid hunter myself, my viewpoint may be biased, but I believe the article sprang from a misconception of hunting...

Almost all hunting done in America today falls under the heading of “sport hunting.” Even a person who goes out only a few times a year to “kill meat for the freezer” is sport hunting... The idea is not just for the meat, but for a little diversion as well...


Also, the purpose of sport hunting is not to boast about the latest kill to friends. Telling hunting stories to a special group of friends known as “hunting buddies” is a tradition enjoyed equally by all involved. A true hunter enjoys hearing a good hunting tale quite as much as telling one...

I have learned more in the woods than I have in the church house....

Hunting offers a chance to a person to “retreat into the wilderness” and reconnect with God...

In summary, I am a hunter who would be called a meat hunter, but won't complain over a big rack. Those who do not hunt are missing, in my opinion, one of the finest aspects of God's creation...I connect with God on a whole new level while sitting in the woods early on a spring morning, waiting for the thunderous announcement of spring by a tom turkey...And as that first booming gobble resonates through the early morning air, I grip my gun a little tighter, breathe a little deeper, and whisper a prayer of thanks to the great Master of creation who has blessed me with the privilege of being a part of His handiwork.

Kraig Beachy

nimrodforgod@emypeople.net 



I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty,...

ANNOUNCEMENT

The annual Christian Youth Fellowship meetings for 2010 are scheduled to be held on the fourth weekend in July.

The reports of the five area meetings held in July, 2009, indicate God's blessings were abundant. We praise God for His continued faithfulness and commend our youth for their part in making these meetings a success. Certainly recognition is due to the hosting communities for their hard work in planning enriching programs and their unselfish hospitality.

May we continue to work together to make these meetings the success they have been in the past. Let us prayerfully look to God in the future for more good things at the meetings this summer.

The districts and their meeting places for July 23-25, 2010, the Lord willing, are as follows:

North East	Oak Grove Mennonite, Aroda, VA
North Central	Messiah Fellowship, Millersburg, OH
North West	Leon Salem, Leon, IA
South West	Lighthouse of Faith, Huntsville, AR
South East	Sunnyside Mennonite, Sarasota, FL

Donald Miller, Hutchinson, KS

Chairman, Annual Christian Youth Fellowship Meetings



and of thy wondrous works. Psalm 145:5

Turning to God!

Amazing Miracles in Haiti

Jerry Miel

For centuries, Haiti has been one of the darkest nations in the world, with much voodoo and witchcraft—even at the highest levels of government. But now—look at this!

I think I will remember this day as one of the most significant in my life, not because of what I did, but for its meaning. February 12, 2010, was the one-month anniversary of the great Haitian earthquake. About three days ago the Haitian President announced that there would be three days of holiday from work for the purpose of fasting and prayer. This is absolutely historic. If you have ever been in Haiti as a visitor or missionary, could you ever have imagined such a pronouncement? Could you imagine such an announcement from a U.S. President?

This morning I saw a young Haitian-American woman, the leader of a work team, crying because the Americans could not understand the incredible importance of this day and wanted to go about business as usual. Remember, it was only about six years ago that a former Haitian president called the nation to come together to rededicate the nation to Satan. This was not “a minute of silence for the deceased” or something equally

insignificant. Whatever the President might have originally intended, this became a real commitment for the Haitian people.

As I sit here this evening, I can hear the preaching coming from a nearby church. Services have been going on all day—let me tell you what I saw and felt today. Peniel and I had planned an inspection trip up to the Artibonite Valley today. Right or wrong, I don’t really know, but since it was the only opportunity, we went ahead with the trip.

As we left the guest house at about 7:30 a.m., we were met by throngs of well-dressed people headed to various churches. The sounds of Christian music and worship filled the air everywhere. The next observation was that there was so little traffic. Port-au-Prince streets are always clogged and overflowing with bumper-to-bumper traffic. This morning there were only a few vehicles on the roads, a few small buses (“tap taps”), some UN and military vehicles, and a few private cars. We had clear sailing through town.

The same was true of foot traffic. Usually the streets are clogged with people walking. Today there were only a few and many of them were dressed for church. The only place with

“*the Haitian President announced that there would be three days of holiday from work for the purpose of fasting and prayer*”

traffic blocks was in front of several churches where the congregations had overflowed the buildings and the yards and had moved out into the streets as well.

The next observation was that everything seemed to be closed. We could not find even one business or gas station open. There were no intercity buses running. Whereas the sidewalks are usually overflowing with many street vendors, we only saw a few here and there. The huge outdoor market near the wharf where thousands work each day and is spread out to cover most of the street, was EMPTY. Where were all the people? They were in churches and makeshift meeting sites. Every church (except JW church) had services going on, almost always overflowing into the streets.

Besides broken down churches, services were taking place outside. In

homeless camps, there were services. Everywhere the nation was gathered to worship and pray. No, I do not see any voodoo, Islamic, or Buddhist services. This scene was repeated in every town and hamlet that we passed during the day.

Tonight, Pastor Ignace, who is sharing the room with me, asked this question: “Can people still say that Haiti is a voodoo country?” What has been happening and is continuing to happen in Haiti did not happen because of the earthquake. It has been happening because the Haitian people know how to pray. This is a tremendous outpouring of God’s power as the result of prayer. Twenty years ago, I started praying for the Gospel to change the Haitian culture. I think that I am seeing God do that work. The only sadness that I feel today is for our nation (America).

While a nation that has long been under Satan’s domination is turning to God, America, founded on many godly values, has rejected God and is rapidly trying to forget that His name even exists. Let us pray for revival.

God bless you all!

[Edited from *Life Ministries* newsletter. Submitted for publication by contributing editor, Aaron Lapp.]



Troubles and weeds thrive on lack of attention.

Will The Theologians Please Sit Down!,

by David Bercot. Scroll Publishers, 2009.

Book Review by:

Ken Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA

I think David Bercot's latest book, *Will The Theologians Please Sit Down!* should be near the top of the reading list and should be thoughtfully evaluated by followers of Jesus everywhere.

Read completely through, it becomes an important defense of what has been called *The Kingdom Gospel* or *The Pilgrim Church*. It should not be easily dismissed.

I will first mention what could be the book's greatest weakness. At times, Brother David writes with a decisive, almost polemical style that could be taken as dogmatic, even strident. However, the style may well be the fearless shout of a prophet calling his people to truth.

In his assessment of those he calls "theological bullies," Bercot, in my opinion does not depreciate the value of rigorous study or the development of the Christian mind. "The door to the kingdom is not barred to those who have an advanced education. God is able to use such people in His kingdom, but only if they're willing to humble themselves and come into the kingdom as a little child." (p. 34)

It seems to me the impulse and burden behind Bercot's pen is similar to that of the Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and William Law, the English theological writer (1686-1761). They indicted the state church of their time and place for being marred by: "(1) Intellectualism—'the direct mental assent to a sum of doctrines'; (2) formalism—'battalions upon battalions of unbelieving believers'; and (3) Pharisaism—'a herd of hypocritical clergy that ignore the Christianity they were hired to preach.'" (*Provocations*, p. xi) Bercot writes passionately about these same issues.

Bercot makes it clear at the beginning of the book that by the term theologian he is not speaking of "Christians who desire to learn all that God has revealed to us about Himself, Jesus Christ, mankind, salvation, but "arrogant academics" and "ecclesiastical authorities."

Bercot asserts the following: "From the time they came into power, such theologians have warred against the true children of the Kingdom. For many centuries, these theologians

warred against them with fire and sword. Now the fight against the children of the Kingdom is with words.” “...in many ways, the war of words has been more effective than the war of fire and sword.” (p. 9)

Bercot names some of the theologians with whom Kingdom Christians parted ways centuries ago: Zwingli, Luther, Calvin, and their predecessor of a thousand years, Augustine. Bercot thinks it unfortunate that Kingdom Christians have turned back to the doctrine of these men who formerly persecuted them. “They’ve completely adopted the theology of their former persecutors. They’re afraid to preach or teach Sunday school without consulting the commentaries, theological textbooks and study Bibles of the theologians for fear they might say something wrong...As a result, the theologians are effectively destroying kingdom Christianity from the inside out. In fact, it wouldn’t surprise me if today’s Kingdom Christians would lose most of Jesus’ kingdom teachings within a generation or two.” (p. 9,10)

Bercot makes the point throughout the book that the essence of early Christianity was *a lifestyle* patterned after Christ’s own life and the teachings He left behind. In contrast, Bercot informs the reader that theologians through the centuries have led Christians to believe that *a correct theological understanding*

is the essence of Christianity. There is an eternity of difference between the two.

In turning Christianity into “Doctrinarity” (a term invented by European associates of Bercot and used throughout the book) theologians developed extremely complex systems of Bible doctrine that would have been completely foreign to the early Christians’ uncomplicated faith. As a case in point, Bercot contrasts the Apostles’ Creed (the common English translation contains just 63 words) with the Westminster Confession of Faith promulgated by the Puritans in the seventeenth century which contains 12,079 words. (p.53)

Complex systems of thought allowed prominent theologians like Augustine to “explain away Jesus’ teachings in the Sermon on the Mount...By the time these theologians got through with the Sermon on the Mount, the radical teachings in it had become meaningless.” And Christians now had theological license of the swearing of oaths and taking vengeance on an assailant, among various other misconstructions of Jesus’ teachings. (p. 86-89)

About this sort of theology, Kierkegaard says rather sarcastically: “Herein lies the place of Christian scholarship. Christian scholarship is the church’s prodigious invention to defend itself against the Bible, to

ensure that we can continue to be good Christians without the Bible coming too close. Oh, priceless scholarship, what would we do without you?" (*Provocations*, p. 201)

Significantly, Philip Schaff, the noted church historian, observed, "The men who, next to the apostles have exerted (and still exert through their writings) the greatest influence on the Christian church as leaders of theological thought are Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Calvin." (p. 168) If this is true (and if David Bercot is right) I fear a large segment of the Christian church has been led astray by "Theologians in Sheep's Clothing." (p. 95)

Exposing this very unfortunate

state of affairs is perhaps the major achievement of Bercot's book. This is jarring, and may not be so easy to accept if one has drunk a little too deeply from the theological systems that have "completely undermined the message of Jesus' Kingdom." (p. 109)

But Bercot does more than simply expose a false Gospel. His book is a call for Kingdom Christians to push all the way back to Jesus and the teachings of His Kingdom. It is a call to put one's faith in a Savior whose atonement on the cross is blessedly adequate for all our sin. It is also a call to apprentice one's entire life under the Master Teacher whose life and teachings can—and must—be followed.



Inner Controls for Electronic Living

Eldon Hochstetler, Aroda, VA

We were recently reviewing the Mountain View Handbook for our VSers. When we came to the part about electronic media, we quickly realized we had encountered a difficult section to address. With all the Ipods, social sites, wi-fi, "cell critters" of all kinds, etc., it is obvious that there is a mind-boggling assault being made upon common sensibilities and it is a scene changing with the speed of lightning. What is "revolutionary" this morning is outdated by tonight.

Almost literally.

So how do we as responsible believers deal with all this? I believe there is only one answer. **That answer is that we must teach our people how to develop their inner controls that will assure survival of this all-encompassing, all-consuming bombardment of life as we know it.** It is impossible to make enough "rules" in the Handbook to address every situation. Even if we were successful in doing so, it would be outdated tomorrow.


What is meant by “inner controls?”
We must learn what it means to give instant obedience to the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit. “No! 100 text messages a day is too much!” “Every word you ‘speak’ on that social site you will give account of in the Day of Judgment.” “Lust equals adultery. Adultery bars from Heaven. Don’t go there!”

We must decide **ahead of time** what our response will be in those situations that test the very moral fiber of our being. Yes, you can make that kind of decision! Ahead of time. We must make those decisions ahead of time if we expect to win this all-out battle for our souls! The enemy would have us think this is all light duty stuff. It is not light duty stuff. Decisions have consequences. Either we will responsibly allow our hearts to engage and connect with the source of all life, God Himself, or we

will succumb to the traps of a culture dominated by sin and destruction.

Much electronic equipment has a wonderful potential for good. It also has a dramatic potential for evil.

The assignment for the church today (yes, and for parents, VS Units, Bible Schools, etc.) is to teach by word and example how to develop a deeply sensitized, inner capacity to know where the “speed control” needs to be set for safe traveling on the electronic highway. Rules alone will not cover us. **Only a heart deeply in love with Jesus will survive this all out war!** That is a state achieved only by a genuine born-again encounter with the God of all wisdom who created the elements needed to make these things in the first place.

[From the *Mountain View Echoes*, Oct.-Dec. 2009. Submitted for publication by Marvin E. Yoder, Dade City, FL/Salisbury, PA] 

Commitment and Resolution

Elmer Schrock, Stuarts Draft, VA

David says in Psalm 118:27b “...bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” The four horns on the altar were covered with gold, and some of the sacrificial blood was ceremonially sprinkled on them during the sacrifice. Concerning David’s injunction here, ISBE says, “That, however, the ‘horns’ were mere conveniences for binding

the sacrificial animals (Ps. 118:27, a custom referred to nowhere else in the Old Testament) is most unlikely.”

I, however, like David’s idea of binding the animal to the horns to facilitate easier execution of the sacrifice.

How often have you enthusiastically committed yourself to supporting a certain mission or relief program? Did

you end up forgetting, or deciding that it's more commitment than you are willing to invest in the project? Or did you decide to buy another vehicle, or something else you'd wanted?

Even though using the horns to secure an animal may not have been the practice in Jewish sacrifices, yet the idea seems to fit modern-day Mennonites because it is so easy for our commitments to struggle free and escape the altar.

Let us imagine a goat, ready to be slaughtered. It may take both hands to hold it. Reaching for the knife with one hand allows the goat to break loose and escape. But tying it to the horns of the altar with cords would secure it until the sacrifice is complete.

Our call to sacrifice may be as simple as visiting an older person, or writing a letter of encouragement to someone who seems to be struggling. It may be a conviction that we should volunteer for a term of service in missions or one of the church service units. Or it may be giving a sizeable donation to a worthy cause. We want to. We know we should. And we finally decide to do it. That's the time to take the cords of firm resolution and tie it to the horns of the altar before the "goat" escapes. A backward look of re-consideration may be even more lively and powerful than a rambunctious goat.

More rational thinking may convince us that tomorrow evening I

would have more time for that visit or that next year it would suit me better to go into service. After further thought, I think I should take advantage of the discount they are offering on that pickup I'd like to have. Surely there will be ample donations from other sources for that India project. After all, I couldn't pay for a new truck if I were getting only a VS allowance.

Once the Lord's will is sensed and determined, some move on in willing obedience to the call to serve or give. Praise the Lord for those who are faithful in responding to needs. May their tribe increase! May their rewards be rich!

But for others, perhaps it would be well to find the horns of the altar and bind the sacrifice securely before the importance of a non-essential want acquires an artificial "must-have" status. How much more effective could our missions be if the goat could be retained on the altar until the execution is complete?

"It is required of stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). The Altar of Resignation has four horns to which the *will* defers:

I see the need. I *will* go.

God gave me the means. I *will* help.

I really do not need that; I *will* give time.

My time and material substance really is the Lord's. I *will* let go and let God have it.



A Writer's Prayer

Wilmer D. Swope

December 16, 1925 —February 1, 2010

Be with me blessed Lord today;
Teach me humility.
A common sense to always pray,
Attention, Lord, to Thee.


Speak to my inner writing heart,
Truth, honest of thy love.
A vision of Thy majesty,
Inspire me from above.

O, hymn of joy! O, hymn of praise,
Develop, Lord, today.
Deep in my mind, my soul, my heart.
The power of love, I pray.

Grant me the working power of words
In writing, Lord, today.
All fitting hymns of worship true
To write, to sing, to pray.

Abiding reverence, Lord, impress
Upon my mind, my voice.
In every word a scribe may write
Clear thinking to rejoice.

O God, with inspiration bless
The fruit of holy prayer.
The words I write may long endure
Lord, give me blessing care.
Amen.

(Written April 1, 2007.) 



marriages

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

Gerber-Ropp

Bro. Collin, son of James and Patricia Gerber, Gadshill, ON, and Sis. Becky, daughter of Larry and Susan Ropp, Lucknow, ON, at Cedar Grove A.M. Church, on March 20, 2010, by Arthur Gerber.

Miller-Mast

Bro. Luke, son of Jason and Ruth Miller, Concord, AR, and Sis. Michelle, daughter of John and Ruth Mast, Mountain View, AR, at Flatwoods Baptist Church for Shadylawn Mennonite Church on Feb. 27, 2010, by Brian Schlabach.

cradle roll

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

Almada, Lucio and Sheryl (Stoltzfus), Colonia Luz y Esperanza, Asuncion, Paraguay, second child and son, Kevin Joel, Feb. 13, 2010.

Garber, Lamar and Kimberly (Yoder), Clarkson, KY, first child and dau., Kezia Faith, Feb. 14, 2010.

Gerber, Glen and Karen (Wagler), Gadshill, ON, fifth child, third son, Jason Arthur, March 3, 2010.

Graber, Phil and Amy (Lengacher), Loogootee, IN, third child, second son, Ethan Ray, March 29, 2010.

Hershberger, Conrad and Esther (Koop), Stuarts Draft, VA, fourth child, third son, Brent Paul, March 4, 2010.

Hochstetler, Lavon and Karisa (Boll), Virginia Beach, VA, fourth child, second son, Chase Riley, Feb. 17, 2010.

Hostetler, Keith and Ariana (Stoltzfus), Plain City, OH, second child and dau., Samantha Lane, March 26, 2010.

Kanagy, Titus and Beulah (Peachey), Wytheville, VA, fifth child, third son, Joshua Layne, March 21, 2010.

Kauffman, Larry and Bethann (Wadel), Summerfield, OH, second child and son, Karlin Jay, Feb. 3, 2010.

Kreider, Nathan and Roberta (Vance), Myerstown, PA, first child and son, Ian Robert, Feb. 25, 2010.

Miller, James and Robin (Mast), Clarkson, KY, first child and dau., Margaret Jolee, Feb. 13, 2010.

Miller, Kevin and Christine (Yoder), Scranton, KS, seventh child, fifth dau., Mariah Joy, March 3, 2010.

Miller, Kristen and Rhonda (Brenneman), Knotts Island, NC, third child and son, Caleb Daniel, March 13, 2010.

Overholt, Lawrence and Beth Anne (Blank), Osage, KS, seventh child, second son, Jeremiah Lawrence, March 6, 2010.

Peachey, Samuel and Viola (Hostetler), Belleville, PA, second child, first dau., Shianne Marie, Nov. 21, 2009.

Wagler, Philip and Sheila (Schmidt), Wellesley, ON, second child, first dau., Nicole Sue, March 14, 2010.

Yoder, Eli and Judy (Mast), Millersburg, IN, first child and dau., Kaylene Rose, March 17, 2010.

Yoder, Reuben and Kathryn (Bontrager), Baltic, OH, second child and son, Cyrus Christopher, Jan. 19, 2010.

Zook, Jonathan and Geraldine (Lapp), Chesapeake, VA, fourth child and son, Noah Christopher, Dec. 27, 2009.

ordinations

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

Bro. John O. Beiler, 41, of Wytheville, VA, was ordained as bishop at Light of Hope Christian Fellowship on March 21, 2010. Preordination messages were brought by Tim Miller, Aroda, Va. The charge was given by Bennie Byler, assisted by Tim Miller and John Smucker.

Bro. Bill Yoder, 44, was called by voice of the church and ordained to the office of bishop at Sunnyside Menonite Church, Sarasota, FL, on March 7, 2010. David M. Yoder, Partridge, KS, ministered in preordination services. The charge was given by Lester Gingerich, assisted by David Yoder and Virgil Kanagy, Blackville, SC.

obituaries

Kuepfer, Marion, 94, died March 17, 2010, at Nithview Home, New Hamburg, ON. She was born March 12, 1916, in Wilmot Twp, daughter of the late Christian and Catherine (Nafziger) Gerber.

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

On Dec. 17, 1936, she was married to Benjamin Kuepfer, who preceded her in death. Their six children are: Willis Kuep-

fer, Milverton; Evan (Anna Mae) Kuepfer, Millbank; Irene Kuepfer, Millbank; Nelson (Elaine) Kuepfer, Kingwood, ON; Merrill (Laverne) Zehr, Cross Hill; Verna (Nelson) Jantzi, Brunner; 25 grandchildren, and 29 great grandchildren. Other survivors include sister, Katie Shellenberger, Sebringville, ON; and brother, Roy (Arlene) Gerber, Wellesley.

Preceding her in death were sisters and

brothers: Clara Kuepfer, Emma Martin, Valentine Gerber, Lloyd Gerber; brothers and sisters-in-law: Allen Kuepfer, Onias Martin, Stan Shellenberger, Clara Gerber, Frieda Gerber, Emma Gerber and Kathryn Kuepfer in Dec. 2009; grandsons: Brian and Russell Kuepfer; one stillborn granddaughter; great granddaughter, Angela; and one great great grandson: Kylon.

The funeral was held at Cedar Grove Church on March 23, with Arthur Gerber, Vernon Jantzi, and Steve Adams serving. Burial was in the Cedar Grove cemetery.

Lapp, Annie Mary, 96, died Mar. 4, 2010. She was born Jan. 30, 1914, daughter of the late Benjamin F. and Malinda (Glick) Lapp.

She was a member of Mine Road A.M. Church.

Survivors include a daughter, Rhoda (Mrs. Paul Nissley), Parkesburg, PA, four grandchildren: Carolyn and Kendall Nissley, both of Parkesburg; John and Jana Meulenberg, Kirkwood, PA; Marcia Nissley, Chiang Mai, Thailand. Also surviving is one brother, Ben F. Lapp, Jr. (Mary), Christiana, PA; and three sisters-in-law.

The funeral was held on March 7, with John Glick and Daniel Lapp serving. Elmer Glick (WV) conducted the committal at the Mine Road Cemetery.

Nissley, Esther Arlene, 67, died at her home at Burr Oak, MI, Feb. 19, 2010. She was born Oct. 6, 1942, daughter of the late Edwin and Mary (Hochstetler) Chupp.

She was a member of Rosewood Fellowship.

On June 12, 1966, she was married to Glenn Nissley. He survives. Their four

children are Galen (Gloria) Nissley, Millersburg, IN; Elaine (Daryl) Chupp, Sturgis, MI; Gary (Tina) Nissley, Shipshewana, IN; Ellen (Nelson) Miller, Burr Oak, MI; and 15 grandchildren and one sister, Mary Ellen (John) Miller, Burr Oak, MI.

She was preceded in death by two infant brothers, Alvin and Paul.

The funeral was held at Calvary Chapel, Sturgis, MI, Feb. 23, with the ministers of Rosewood Fellowship serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Yutzy, Minerva (Whitmer), 100, of Plain City, Ohio, died peacefully March 1, 2010, in her home, surrounded by family. She was born August 25, 1909, daughter of the late John P. and Martha (Hostetler) Whitmer.

She was a member of Canaan Fellowship.

On Dec. 16, 1930, she was married to Vernon Yutzy, who preceded her in death in 1988. Survivors include two daughters and one son: Martha (Abe) Beachy, Sarasota, FL; Dan (Edith) Yutzy, London, OH; and Leona (Philip) Hostetler, Plain City, OH; 10 grandchildren; and 10 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by two sons, Lester and Chester; grandson, Ron Hostetler, all of her brothers and sisters: Katie (Noah) Kramer; Sarah Whitmer; Gladys (Dan) Miller; Alberta (Melvin) Miller; Pete (Freda) Whitmer; and Dan Whitmer.

The funeral was held at Canaan Fellowship Church, on March 4, with Robert Beachy and Ray Stutzman serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.



The Miller family was moving 500 miles to another community. Their cargo included many boxes, furniture, tools and household items. Horses were led up the ramp to the waiting truck. The cows and heifers cooperated and were easily loaded on the cattle trailer. With lots of help things had gone well.

The three pet sheep were not loaded, however. A compartment on the truck was reserved for them. But the sheep were in no mood to cooperate. No amount of chasing or yelling seemed to help. They retreated to the far corners and stood trembling and bleating pitifully.

What should have been an easy task had grown men stumped. But Dad Miller had an idea. He summoned his young son. The son spoke softly and said, "Come, Sheepie." The sheep crowded around him as he petted their woolly heads. He turned toward the waiting truck. The sheep eagerly followed the young lad up three flights of ramp to the very top of the cattle truck.

These sheep had once been lambs that were rejected by their mothers. When the neighbor offered them to the Miller family, they were delighted. They fed the lambs by bottle, petted them, and spent considerable time with them. In time, the sound of the

children's voices would bring a happy response from the lambs. (*Family Life*, March, 2010)

This incident reminds us of several things that we should always remember:

- To lead is better than driving or using force.
- Kindness builds trust and relationship.
- We need to know our Shepherd well enough to recognize His voice and not follow "the counsel of the ungodly."

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Researchers are often attracted to Holmes County, Ohio, to study health issues related to heredity. Some 26,000 Amish persons are mostly the descendants of about 100 people, who settled there about 200 years ago. This is a relatively small gene pool. Recent researchers were surprised to find that cancer rates among this group of Amish are significantly lower than non-Amish Caucasians in Ohio.

The study found a rate of 390 cases per 100,000 among the Amish compared to 647 per 100,000 among non-Amish.

The researchers did not have an immediate explanation for these unexpected findings. (Courtesy James Hershberger, from *The Budget*, 2-10-10)

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Charles Swindoll is 75. When he was asked what he intended to do with his remaining years, he replied, "I want to preach till the last breath in my lungs runs out. Nothing is more bothersome to me than retiring. Weird things happen when you disengage; first, you get negative, then you start telling people about your latest surgeries and eventually, you lose touch. I want to stay in touch." (*Christianity Today*, March, 2010.)

It reminds me of what Ervin Hershberger said, "I would rather die in the harness than in the hospital." His "harness" was operating a sweeper, helping to clean the church building, when he was suddenly overcome of heart failure.

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Our Anabaptist forebears are fondly remembered for their steadfast faith, often in spite of severe persecution and martyrdom. It is correct to say that they were committed to following Christ and His teaching whatever the cost.

Since Christ was not physically present with them the record of the life of Christ was a written record. So it becomes difficult to separate teachings of Christ from the written Word.

It is possible to be selective and arbitrary in our response to the Word or to our following Christ. But ideally,

we see the two as totally compatible. To assume that we can faithfully follow the Lord without guidance of Scripture is simply misguided. The Word without the centrality and supremacy of Christ is but an empty shell. The lordship of Christ and the authority and inspiration of Scripture are twin foundation stones that guard our security in Christ.

The following is excerpted from *Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, Mennonite Publishing House, 1951. A number of scholars wrote the 24 chapters. John C. Wenger says: "The Anabaptists were distinguished by a diligent study of the Scriptures from the moment of their conversion."

Harold S. Bender says: "From the court records of the Anabaptists which were seized at the beginning of the Reformation era, it is at once evident that they possessed an amazing knowledge of the Bible. Untrained lay brethren often proved more than a match for Roman Catholic doctors of theology, who interrogated them. This was so overwhelming that it was sometimes explained as being due to demon possession." (p. 167)

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The January-March *Monitor* newsletter from Sharon Mennonite Bible Institute has an interesting report of 45 students who visited Los Angeles on a singing and mission tour. The tour provided a face-to-

face encounter with a segment of the population whose lives are miserably unfulfilled.

When a cashier asked Lauren Mong, “How are you doing?” she smiled and said, “Very well.” His mouth fell open in surprise and unbelief. “Wow, I never hear people saying they are doing well these days.” She told him that life really is good and she wished him a happy holiday. He shook his head and said with deep hunger in his eyes, “We really need more people like you around here.”

Another observer remarked, “Wow, you have such natural beauty... You look like, uhm, pure.” Several women showed signs of physical abuse. They explained it was their “boyfriends.”

Space does not permit a detailed description but the article describes “a quiet desperation” and haunting emptiness. The author asks, “What can I do to show them Jesus?” The author further observes, “Isn’t it strange? Hollywood is the center of fashion and pursuit of beauty; I’m told with a long dress and a ‘white thing on my head’ that I’m beautiful. And right there in the very heart of seduction and impurity, a girl longingly exclaims on our purity!”

A local sister who teaches English in Asia was told by a person who travels internationally, “You are the purest person I have ever seen.” Of course, we know that the essence of purity and godly attractiveness is not

clothing or head covering. But what is worn can be evidence of Christian character which is in the “sight of God of great price.”

By the same token wrong choices of outward appearance can effectively cancel any Christian awareness or witness. Outward appearance should complement, not contradict, Christian values.

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Bro. Laban Kauffman, Middlefield, OH, was with us for a series of meetings, March 23-28. On Sunday morning, he spoke from Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 on how the weak and the strong should relate to each other. An important thought he brought out is that this use of strength is not speaking of physical strength, authority or importance of position. It is not a sense of entitlement.

While a “strong” person may well be in some position of advantage, his strength is seen in his willingness to give. This includes an unselfish carefulness not to offend his weaker brother. Quote: “Strength is not defined by how much we can take but by how much we are willing to give.” This principle was dramatically exemplified by our Lord “who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6, 8b).

—DLM 

“Lord, Is It I?”

Matthew 26:20-25

Greg Wolf, Sawyer, KS

I know who betrayed Him,
On that darkening night—
The one name Iscariot,
To the devil's delight!

Yet the other eleven,
As they themselves drew nigh,
Asked Him with sorrow,
“Lord, is it I?”

And far down the ages,
I pause here this night;
A professing disciple, yet
I ask, “Lord, is it I?”

“Is it I?” in my actions,
My affections and my will?
Is my faith just a pretense,
Or selfish, or chill?

Reveal all my secrets,
My guilt may I feel,
And grant me Thy cleansing,
So precious and so real!

For there is a table
That is Thine and not mine,
Both here and in Heaven,
And I'm invited to dine.

May I find myself worthy,
And “Victory!” my cry,
By the blood of the Lamb...
“Lord, it is I!”

[From *The Vindicator*, April, 2010. Used by permission of the author.]

Minister's Meeting Messages — 2009

This is a condensation of two messages given at the annual ministers' meetings, hosted by Sunnyside Mennonite Church on March 24-26, 2009, at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Florida. The complete set of cassette tapes or CDs is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA 20136, for \$45, postpaid.

13. Well Done, Thou Servant

Sanford Yoder,

La Merced, Costa Rica

As we speak, think, and prepare subjects like this one, our own struggles, temptations, and victories are on our minds more than needs in the congregation.

We all want to hear "Well done!" some day, but from whom? Who is saying it in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25)? Jesus was speaking of His second coming when He gave that parable. He was leaving and giving talents to those men and He had come back after leaving them with this charge, "Occupy till I come." We are now in that time.

The one who had been given five talents had been given five more. The Lord immediately said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" It's beautiful. The one who had been given two talents also had an increase of 100%. He was just as faithful as the first one. Oh beloved, I want to hear that some day from my Lord!

Who do we seek to hear from here in life? Most of us probably like to have someone tell us, "You did well."

Usually my struggles in preparing for a message are not so much in finding material for a message but the struggle with my own self. Am I able to handle this truth and bring all the glory to God? It is easy to try to please our listeners when we speak. We like to hear, "Say, that was a good sermon." Paul in Galatians 1:10, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." When we speak to make men feel good apart from the Word of God, we are not serving Christ. If we are to be true to our Lord, we must sometimes speak things that are not pleasing to the ear.

We cannot avoid approving comments from coming. In fact, I think they have a value. Don't most of us need some encouragement, at times? It tells us that something's coming through. We need encouragement, but we must be extremely careful that praise does not become an end in itself.

I appreciate my wife; she has been a great blessing over the years. Quite naturally, sometimes after a message, she has said, "Sanford, that was a tremendous message!" Now what shall

I do with it? Shall I conclude that I am a tremendous preacher? NO! I like to say, “The Lord Jesus did it again!”

We need encouragement but we must be very careful where we put the credit. Who gets the glory? Paul admonishes us in Romans 12:3, “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.” Any wisdom, our voice, our ability to speak—all are given to us of God. We have nothing that we did not receive. So who gets the glory? The Lord alone is worthy!

In 2 Corinthians 4:5, the Apostle Paul said, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” The temptation to impress or to make people look up and appreciate us may partly reflect how we’ve been brought up. When preachers have felt acceptance from childhood, approval and some praise for what they did, those who come from a home like that are much more secure and need not seek so much approval.

I challenge parents of young children: Give them acceptance and approval. I’ve noticed in school programs that some will look over the crowd to find Mom and Dad, with the unspoken question, “How am I doing?” Sometimes they also look at Grandpa and Grandma to see what they’re thinking. The most important people in the crowd to please are

Mama and Daddy, and we need to express that approval. I think God expresses that to His children, too.

We are weak and we have flaws because we have this treasure in earthen vessels. We have definite limitations. But God has entrusted the treasure of His glorious plan of salvation to earthen vessels. He did that so that the excellency might be of God and not of men. Oh brethren, He gave this gift so that people would see and experience God!

In 1 Corinthians 2, the Apostle Paul also comments on that line of thought. “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” WHY? “That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (2:1-5). That’s what we need and want, brethren! The faith of our listeners is not in man, but in God! But God has chosen to give it through weak and insufficient human vessels.

While there is no room for self-glory before God, neither is there room for a false humility or self hate—despising ourselves and saying we cannot. Am I quitting? NO! I am not more important than anybody else, but I am important. He gave His Son to

die that I might live. He paid a price to salvage my soul. True humility is thinking rightly about ourselves. You and I have been called to the ministry. No apologies are needed, even though we feel our unworthiness.

Paul had a right concept of the ministry: In 2 Corinthians 3:5 and 6, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” Paul was saying that all his sufficiency to fulfill his calling as a minister came from God. Wouldn’t it be sad if we had to feel that we are failures and that we can’t do what God has asked us to do? God wants us to humbly do our best.

Any good thing is of God. He is the only One who can enable us, brethren, to do what He wants done. I’m so glad for that! I think God would have us have that kind of peace and assurance about our ministry. If not, let us check and see what the hindrances are, because God does want to give us all we need and His Spirit to guide us into His truth. Let us serve Him, humbly accepting the fact that God is using us in building His Kingdom! We may marvel that God can do that, but He can and He does!

Our first concern is not to be, *What do people think?* And *What are people going to say?* Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:15, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing

the word of truth.” Approved unto God! The word *study* might be better translated *strive with diligence*. To be approved of God and to please Him is to be our first and foremost concern. Only then can we rightly use the Word of God.

Any time we seek to please men so that our preaching is tainted with a desire to make everybody happy, something’s going to go wrong. If we want to please everybody, there will be times when we’ll brush over or skip saying something that might make somebody feel bad. Don’t get me wrong, I’m not advocating being mean from the pulpit. But if we want to please men, we will tend to water things down, so that everybody will feel good and say, “That was good!” *They will like me now.*

Above everything else, brethren, we need the approval of God. And in that final day, we need to hear Him say, “Well done.” That is what really matters.

My grandfather, Eli A. Nisly, an Amish bishop, was my boyhood hero. When he preached on Bible heroes or when he contrasted the broad way and the narrow way, I’d sit on the front edge of the bench, listening. As a young boy, I got the clear impression that Grandpa considered himself a servant of the church. True ministry is servanthood.

I have the impression that the Amish, God bless them, may have sort of “frozen” and brought some traditions over from Europe that were not very alive.

To their credit, we can gather what our forebears practiced in administration in the churches. Their concept of the ministry was servanthood. They had servants to the poor (deacons). They had servants of the Word, which could include evangelists and teachers (Ephesians 4). The overseer was responsible to take charge in leadership. He had a full servanthood and ministry.

We should remember that we too are serving the church. In my mind's eye, I see the congregation sitting around the table, whose plates are empty, waiting to be fed. The ministers (all three offices) serve the tables. When I was in Kenya a number of years ago, it struck me when the hostess first came with a bowl of water to wash our hands. Later, they began to bring the food and set it down before us. They served us royally. After we had eaten (mostly with our fingers), the bowl of water to wash our hands was brought again. That depicts our place in serving the congregation.

In any given service, there are people present with needs. One thing that is needed is encouragement. We all need encouragement. The brethren also need to hear a message of hope. They need to hear words of faith. God is real. God is working.

The area of correction must not be overlooked. But if a minister gets up and corrects every time, he will soon destroy the spiritual morale of the congregation. Then there will be discontentment, loss of confidence,

and accusations between brethren. If you want to destroy a church, always be correcting them. Yes, we must speak the truth in love. Our congregations need a listening ear.

When there are decisions to be made, the church needs us to take the responsibility of leading to a biblical decision: Putting before them what the Bible says is not democracy. Not, "What do you like?" or "What don't you like?" but, that they are faced with the Word of God. We have such an example in Acts 11, (the testimony of Peter when Cornelius was received); in Acts 15, in the case of the faithful witness of Paul and Barnabas who had taken the Gospel to Asia. When James, bishop of Jerusalem, took the floor and made a motion of what seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them. Thus were the churches established in the faith and increased in number daily.

As God worked in their situation, so He can work in our situations when we are following the will of God together. This brings peace, stability, security, brotherhood and attraction. What love! Let us not be swayed away from the simplicity of the Gospel, by giving ear to the Protestant influences around us, which exalts the pastor and gives us a totally different picture.

We will make it safely into heaven only by God's grace. Heaven is for those who love His appearing. Around the throne, in Revelation 4, the Apostle John saw in a vision the twenty-four elders bowing down low

and worshiping Him that sat on the throne. They cast their crowns before the throne of God, saying “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honor, glory, and power for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” We are promised crowns if we are faithful, but it appears to me that when that happens, we will feel so unworthy, that we will place those crowns at his feet.

14. Faithful to the End

Jason Kauffman

Gympie, QLD, Australia

I have recently been made more aware of the power of Jesus’ name. Please join me in singing the song: “His name is wonderful.”

It was David’s desire to be faithful to the end. He said in Psalm 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.” If we are live a life of no regrets, it requires two things of us: 1) to behold the beauty of he Lord 2) to enquire in His temple.

One of my favorite verses is 2 Chronicles 16:9a, “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” I get the picture that a holy God is scanning across this globe, looking for faithful ones among us. We would like to

think that those eyes of flame rest upon conservative Christians and missionaries. I fear that sometimes His eyes keep right on moving.

Psalm 101:6 says, “Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me....” He is looking primarily for people that are faithful. In Timothy, an important theme is avoiding shipwreck. A songwriter said it well, when he said, “The shipwrecks of faith line the shore all along.” We can’t afford shipwrecks! They are too costly! The spiritual economy is too far gone for us to have the cargoes of our ships wrecked. My burden is that we would make it through the turbulent waters of heresy, false doctrine, lukewarmness, dissension and division, persecution and affliction. He wants to go with us to navigate safely through all those hazards.

Faithfulness is more than a correct creed. It is a life full of active participation as a laborer with God. I hope you are attempting to labor with God. Notice the verbs used: *continue, preach the Word, be instant, reprove, rebuke, exhort, watch, endure*—those are things we *do*. They are not things we merely believe in. We put them into practice.

We need a willingness to bear the marks of the Lord Jesus. *Marks* is an interesting word. It suggests *stigma*. Do you have any battle scars to prove that you serve Jesus? Australians can easily tell that I am not a native Australian. When I come around, they may say, “You’re not from here.”

I have the stigma of being American. I talk differently. That's okay, but it's not okay if we have no stigma because we follow Jesus. This vile world is not a friend to grace.

We must preach the Word of God as absolute authority. One enemy of absolute truth said with all earnestness: "There absolutely are no absolutes!" Apparently, she did not see the absurdity of her comment.

Faithfulness comes from faithfully fighting. Paul said he "fought a good fight." Good fighting comes from faithfully defending the absolute qualities of God's truth. That's keeping the faith.

We have been asked to address apostasy. Very likely, from someone's perspective, you are apostate. Some may put that on you because of the denomination you left or because you changed in some way. Is that what the Bible calls departing from the faith? Matthew 24: 13 and 14 says that the love of many shall wax cold, but he that endures to the end shall be saved. That gives us the picture of blowing across a hot liquid to cool it off, which works for hot tea. I once asked a brother what he thought was the greatest apostasy. He said it's when we lose our first love. I agree with that. This may be illustrated by taking a good, clear picture and putting it on your copy machine. Take each succeeding copy to make the next one. Do that for 20 or 30 times. A marked difference is seen comparing the first and last of these, even though each change is minute. Apostasy is gradual.

The world has become apostate because the church has apostatized. The church has apostatized because individuals have become apostate. We may blame others or circumstances, but let us be willing to face apostasy.

We must refuse to accept inferior models of Christianity. We must have a firm view of the new birth and what it takes to get to heaven. We may make it too easy to be born again by using this simple formula: "Just say a little prayer." Unless there is travail, there is no birth. Let us have and preach the real thing—the authentic new birth that holds out faithfully to the end.

People may not like it when we say, "This or that is not right." They may ask, "Who are you to say I'm going to hell?" I think we make just as strong a judgment when we say people are going to heaven as when we say people are going to hell. Let's be very careful about such statements. I believe we should consider not so much people's level of progress but the direction they are going.

We must also be careful to make more than church members. We are called to make disciples. Jesus preached repentance. His second command was, "Follow me."

We also must not just look to history for our model, but rather look to Christ. I love our Anabaptist heritage. I believe if we would go back into history and have a time of discussion with Felix Manz, Michael Sattler and others, and if we asked them what to do, they would tell us

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We must also be careful to make more than church members. We are called to make disciples.

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you're looking to the wrong crowd. You must look to the same Man we looked at.

In the early sixteenth century, there was a ship that left Indonesia. Its captain was the man that put Australia “on the map.” As he was sailing, he saw the eastern shore line where we now live. He began charting the shore line. Just a few years ago, in 1997, some people got the idea that his boat has not received enough recognition. Thus they set about importing timbers from around the world and built a replica of it. It now sits in harbor about two hours from where we live. You can see it and imagine how they lived. They got some old instruments and material to make it more authentic. They got copies of the original charts. It is a museum. If we want to sail in the troubled waters of the 21st century, we cannot sail in replicas. We must get out there and go. We are not museum pieces.

We must also keep politics out of our arenas. The kingdom is a monarchy with a King at the top. He said He is building His church. We must pattern our lives after Him. I believe it grieves the heart of God when people clamor for leadership positions. I have a dear brother in

western Australia, who is Russian, a contemporary of the man who wrote the book, *A Small Price to Pay*. He said that years ago when the KGB was still operating, there was strong hesitation to say that you were the leader of a congregation. It could mean death. Finally, usually someone would get up the courage to say, “The call of God is on my life and I will do it.” But since Communism has fallen, he notes that people seem to be clamoring for those positions. God help us when that happens!

We must avoid a warped view of the individual's and the church's role in this world. We must have a proper perspective of who we are. If we want to change the world, we must get out there and shine the light in the darkness. We may get the idea that we can get involved politically and get the right man in office then things will get fixed. Political maneuvering will not fix things. The Lord has given us a better way.

Now to get to the positive, let us endure to the end. We need a vision for the perpetual passing on of the Gospel. We are to commit God's work to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also, who shall be able to teach others also—on and on.

Michael Pearl once wrote: “The church is in retreat. It's backing up. It's withdrawing its troops and hoping to salvage that which remains. But its small reserves are dwindling. The love of many is waxing cold. Blame and accusations are thrown around everywhere. Everything is too big,

too fast, and too impersonal. Where did America go? The big impersonal cities have eaten the communities. Any magazine with a peaceful, idyllic scene is an instant hit. People pay a high price for dreams. For many, the only sanity left is in their imagination. The tie that binds is no longer family. It is in economic responsibilities and worldly associations. There needs to be a change, but there are so many weak and wounded Christians with the 'Bless me' mentality. They are looking for a church or a man or a community to minister to their needs. **Looking to the church for your family's spiritual health is like watching organized sports to get your exercise.** No church or community can reclaim your family, restore your marriage, or assure your children of godliness. The father is the spiritual head, not the single source, but the leading member in religious instruction and example."

I have a heart for fathers. Fathers, you must take responsibility. You must be there. The hardest place to be an overcomer is where there is little to overcome, except that which is within. It is the take-charge attitude that makes a difference. This world is like a snowball coming down the hill. It is all mixed up with religion and all sorts of wrong theology and is growing bigger every day. It is coming our way. We must not play spiritual dodge-ball. If all we're doing is trying to dodge the ball, we will fail. Be a mover and a shaker in this world.

We must also anchor ourselves

in the grace of God. The Bible says, "Some will depart from the faith" but by God's grace, it won't be you. You can't do it on your own, it is only by God's grace.

The marks of a faithful church may be likened to the spokes of a wheel. John H. Yoder identified these marks as:

A sense of mission

Holy living

Brotherly love

Witness

The cross

The words "united" and "untied" provide an object lesson. Let the "T" stand for the cross. When I bow in front of the T, it brings unity. When I bypass that cross, and do my own things, things will become untied.

[Here Bro. Jason held up a working boomerang, made by Australian Aboriginal friends.]

This boomerang will return to you because it has two equal sides. As there are two sides to this boomerang, so there are two sides to our service for Christ. We are to exhort with longsuffering and doctrine and to speak the truth in love. Sometimes you may feel that all I'm doing is sending it out. It never comes back in. In the ministry, God's truth and God's love must both go out if we expect the results to come back in.


I wish to commend those who make their Sunday morning services available on their website on the internet. It is a blessing to us who are on the mission field.

We are involved with Christian

Light Education material. I don't know what your curriculum choices are, but I encourage you to use material we consider to be accurate and biblical.

The Bible says that in order to have power and energy to be faithful to the end, we must go beyond a form of godliness. There is nothing wrong with having a form of godliness, but don't deny the power thereof. Empower that form.

I think trouble could be coming. Let's not "board up our houses." Let's build our houses so that they're hurricane-proof.

Let us personalize Paul's testimony as our goal: "By God's grace, I will fight the good fight of faith; I will finish my course; I will keep the faith, for there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 

mission awareness

God's Marvelous Gifts

A Report of Calvary Bible School, 2010

Floyd Stoltzfus

At Calvary Bible School we are conscious of God's marvelous gifts. Here in the Ozarks God shares a small part of His majestic universe that draws us to Him in true worship: the deep blue and unpolluted skies, the quietness and purity of the rippling brook that quiets a person's anxious fears, the waterfalls off the beaten path that teaches us of God's humility, and Salt Peter's Cave where lessons of watchfulness and carefulness are learned. Everyone remembers the feeling one gets while walking on top of the gigantic bluffs (a national tourist attraction) with the winding river far below. It leaves one with a

sense of awe toward Almighty God.

In this small spot on earth we are made keenly aware of our sinful nature and our need of Calvary where the gift of our precious Lord Jesus shed His own blood for the remission of sins. Then the gift of the Holy Spirit is such a personal reality at CBS. He is tender and loving, giving comfort and wisdom in times of difficult homework assignments and tests. He convicts us when we do wrong. The Holy Spirit prompts us to share a testimony during the Bible reading and prayer period and after a message that has touched our hearts. He sends a deep-settled peace into our souls when we willingly obey.

And what would Bible School be without the Bible? The inspiration and formation of the holy Scriptures is a miraculous gift that provides heavenly manna for the pilgrim and guides us homeward. To actually handle a copy of God's Word is to touch the most valuable treasure in the world! Why did God move men to write? Books are the best method of preserving truth in its entirety, transmitting it from generation to generation. Memory and tradition are not trustworthy. Books are the clearest and simplest vehicles for conveying facts.

We tell teachers and students to allow the Bible to be its own interpreter by comparing Scripture with Scripture with the aid of our all-knowing Teacher, the Holy Spirit. A passage that must be held in high esteem in a Bible-centered institution is 2 Timothy 3:16,17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

We believe that every word, including the jots and tittles were God-breathed. Another Scripture that should be noted in relation to Bible inspiration is 2 Peter: 1:19-21: "We have also a more sure word of

prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed...Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Greek word translated *moved* in this passage signifies *to be carried along as by a strong current or mighty influence*.

An elderly Mennonite church statesman wrote, "Whenever there was a high view of holy Scripture the church progressed. People were brought to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and many enjoyed the forgiveness of sin. Whenever there was a low view of Scripture, the church lost her cutting edge and reverted to lesser tasks."

Students expressed their deep appreciation for the gift and devotion of teachers and evangelists who presented the truth of God's word in an orderly manner with a caring spirit. We thank God for the gift of ample facilities. "Lord, may each classroom be a holy sanctum of your divine presence where your doctrine shall fall as rain, your words shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (See Deut. 32:2)

This year there were more than

140 people on campus in each three-week term and more than 100 in the six-week term. And without the gifts of food and monies CBS could not operate. Our Heavenly Father is so caring and wise in providing a variety of gifts and talents in the operation of an institution of this endeavor. Many labored diligently with overtime.

We thank God for the gift of 220 students (103 men and 117 women, ranging in age from 16-24). There were 103 in first term, 104 in second term, and 74 in the six-week term. They enrolled from Florida to New York to Ontario, to Colorado and Texas, and 18 states between. Interestingly, 13 students of missionary families represented

countries such as Ireland, Romania, Kenya, Belize, El Salvador, Paraguay, and Australia.

Many studied hard and earned good grades. In general, wholesome respect was expressed in good attitudes, godly character, and discreet conduct. We believe the Holy Spirit is deeply grieved when people relapse to their old fleshly patterns. We trust that all have been changed from one degree of glory to another, even as by the Spirit of God. Many have assured us, "We are praying for the ministry at CBS." Prayer is a uniting network of support and a marvelous gift of God! We are unworthy.

"To the praise of His glory!"



helpers at home

A Mother's Day Meditation

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

May is the month for Mother's Day, a day of joy and blessing. It is a day to bless our mothers and to rejoice in that God-given role. I believe motherhood is one of the greatest callings we will ever experience as a woman. However, I hasten to say that God has a unique role for each woman, even if she never experiences

giving birth to a child. There are different ways of being a mother. There is the birth mother, but there is also the stepmother, foster mother, the mother-in-law and the grandmother. Some women simply have a mother heart and mother others with a kind look, word or touch. All women can find a place in the wonderful business of mothering.

A mother communicates love.

Love is one of the strongest forces on earth. Each of us respond to love, whether from our husband, our family, or from strangers. We want love and acceptance. We need love to carry us through the difficult times of life. We can survive when surrounded by love. We communicate love by acceptance. By accepting our child even if he or she does not come up to our expectations of them, we prove our love for them. Our children will make mistakes; they may make choices that differ from our way of doing things, and they may injure our pride. However, we love and accept them, even though we cannot always approve of their choices.

A mother communicates strength.

We probably all remember times in our childhood when we felt afraid and ran to Mother for comfort. We fell and hurt ourselves. Mother soothed our wounds, put on a band-aid and dried our tears. A mother hides her own fears to protect her child from fear. However, it is okay for a mother to admit her fear and then to teach her child to bring those fears to God and allow Him to care for us. A mother draws her strength from God. She will teach her child valuable lessons of faith as she teaches him to bring his problems and concerns to God, and to leave

them with God.

A mother communicates kindness.

One of the first verses a small child will learn in Sunday school is “Be ye kind one to another.” Children are not naturally kind. Each child is born with a selfish nature, expecting life to revolve around him. “I want to be fed; I need a dry diaper and I want it right now!” A mother has the responsibility of teaching that child about others and to be kind. She does it by example. A child catches much by observing his mother, especially as he grows older. A mother teaches kindness by the way she responds to others, including the child and even the dog or cats. We also teach kindness by our response to those who look different or seem to be on a different social level from us. Do we make unkind, judgmental remarks? Or do we respond in a loving, caring manner? Our children are listening.

A mother communicates truth.

A Christian mother would not consider telling a lie. However, she may be guilty at times of stretching the truth or of not being completely honest. A child needs to know that if Mom says she will punish if he does not obey, she *will* punish. She will keep the confidence shared with her. If she promises to go on a picnic or tell a story, she will do it. There may be exceptions in which plans need

to change. If so, she will explain it to the child. The child hears the words we say to our friends; are they like the words we speak at home? A child feels secure in truth.

A mother communicates a godly life.

A godly mother is a woman of prayer. She teaches her children to pray and to expect answers to prayer. She is a woman with a thankful heart. She does not complain about her

situation or circumstance (at least not usually), but thanks God and expresses verbal appreciation for all the blessings God gives her. She is a joyful woman. A godly woman reads her Bible and teaches it to her children, starting with Bible stories at a young age.

A godly woman loves the Lord with all her heart. Her children rise up and call her BLESSED!



junior messages

The Challenge

A Sketch of the Life of Robert Morrison

Anita Yoder, Ligonier, IN

Give me something hard to do, Father,” begged Robert. “I’ve been polishing shoes all summer. Don’t you believe I could learn to stitch leather soon?”

“Yes, you have done good work, Son. I’m sorry; I’ve neglected seeing that you are ready for more responsibility. I must say you did very well in reciting Psalm 119—all 176 verses without a single mistake.”

“I propped it here at my workbench so I could read and look at it every day. Somehow I love to do difficult things.”

“Mother and I have observed that in you. Just because you’re the youngest of our eight children doesn’t mean

you are the most unmotivated.”

After Robert turned 14, he worked full-time as an apprentice in his father’s shoe making shop. He loved reading, but not many books were available in those days. Almost always a book could be found propped at his workbench—often his Bible.

Robert had dreams of doing hard things. Making shoes wasn’t an easy thing to do, but somehow it lacked in keeping his attention. He wanted to become a missionary—a missionary to the hardest and most difficult place possible. He kept all this to himself, though. How could he leave his own dear mother? Especially not now when he sensed that her health was

failing.

“Mother, are you sure you should ride along to church this morning?” he asked kindly one Sunday morning.

“I have a really hard time staying at home, even though I do not feel well,” she admitted. “Why are you so concerned, Robert? Since the Missionary Society started, are you thinking of becoming one? Are you hesitating because of me, dear Son?”

“Yes, I am thinking of it as a great calling, but I would not want to neglect taking care of you. In fact, I could not go seeing you become weaker.” In 1804 his dear mother died.

He felt strongly that he should give his life for further training. Robert started the study of Chinese at the Greenwich Observatory. He learned the Chinese language from his roommate. One evening, he absentmindedly burned a piece of paper with some Chinese characters on it. His roommate became very angry. Robert finally made friends with him again and continued learning the language from him.

On September 4, 1807, he arrived in China. Met with bitter hostility, he realized the Chinese did not trust a Chinese-speaking Englishman. Robert Morrison needed to live alone. He tried befriending three

boys that lived in the streets, but they treated him badly. He decided to dress like the Chinese, but this only caused more suspicions.


Alone in his narrow room, he prayed, crying out to God in broken Chinese. He was very discouraged, especially when he felt he was being unfairly treated. Living with no friends was a miserable existence.

Finally, a job as a Chinese translator for the East India Company became available to him. About this time he met Mary Morton and soon married her. Life was not easy for them. Their first baby died at birth and they were not granted a proper burial, so they trudged out to the mountainside to bury the baby. Two more children were born to them, only to have Mary die in 1812.

Robert worked at translating the Bible and also started a Chinese dictionary. In 1824, when he no longer could work at the company as a translator, he returned to England.

After his second marriage, he returned to China in 1826.

He died at the age of 52, with ten converts, having translated a complete Bible into Chinese and developing a Chinese dictionary.

Robert Morrison had taken the challenge of doing something harder than making shoes. 

CBS ANNOUNCEMENT

Calvary Bible School is again planning for a

Young Men's Leadership Training Course

to be held October 1-11, 2010, D.V. This course provides an environment for young men to evaluate their walk with God, experience spiritual growth, and develop leadership skills by serving each other and the local community. Elementary training in wilderness survival and first aid will be included. Men 18 years old and older are invited to apply. All applications received prior to July 1 will be reviewed the first week of July. Applications will continue to be processed through August 31, but space may be limited. To receive a brochure and application, contact Ernest Eby at 870-269-3338 or ec.eby.ar@gmail.com



youth messages

Serving God Singly,

This Month's **QUESTION**

How can youth prepare to serve God singly, should singleness be their calling?

Several months ago, responders shared how youth might prepare for raising a godly family should God call them to that responsibility. Many of the principles they mentioned are the very same principles that prepare

youth for singleness. Here are a few excerpts: "Develop Godly disciplines, attitudes, and desires." "We need to be what God wants us to be—today... When our hearts are open to our Heavenly Father, and we follow in

His steps wherever or whatever He has called us to, He will continue to lead us on step by step.” “Learn to accept God’s will NOW and serve Him with your all so that no matter what He calls you to, you’re ready to do it.”

Since there were no responses to this month’s question, let me tell you about a young man I interacted with yesterday—a young man who is preparing for a life of service for God.

This past fall, those enrolled in the CBS Leadership Training Course, as well as some folks from Shady Lawn Church, were singing Gospel hymns on an open porch in Mountain View, Arkansas. Brandon, an 18-year-old, “happened” to hear us singing and went out of his way to find the source of the sounds. To his great surprise, he discovered a group of believers that he didn’t even know existed. He discovered Christians who from all appearances practiced what he believed. He could hardly believe his good fortune and what seemed to be a direct answer to his prayers.

Like all of us, Brandon had no choice as to where he was born. Brandon grew up in an urban setting south of Little Rock. The negative values that permeate American society were all alive and well in his community. He experienced firsthand

the temptations and consequences that accompany intemperance, teenage pregnancies, divorce and remarriage, and public indecency. Yet, Brandon chose a different path than that of his peers. At age 11, he sensed a strong call from God to commit his life to being a preacher of the Gospel. Being timid by nature, Brandon waited on the Lord for further confirmations. Numerous conversations with Christian elders in more recent years have confirmed the call that he sensed as an adolescent.

At 16 years old, Brandon was baptized and became an avid reader of the Bible. He can cite a chapter and verse for nearly any doctrine or conviction he believes. Ask Brandon what his hobbies are and he will tell you it is reading the Bible. He even takes his Bible along to public high school and teaches his fellow students what the Bible has to say about current issues and the importance of fleeing youthful lusts. These verses from 1 Peter have become somewhat of a motto for his life. *For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them*

that do evil. (1 Peter 3:10-12)

Taking his baptismal vows seriously, Brandon took practical steps in avoiding unnecessary temptation. After enrolling in a “cross country” course, he became uncomfortable with the immodesty that was prevalent among the students. He decided to discontinue the course. Noticing the dangers that television and computers were having on students, Brandon asked his mother to write and sign a letter, requesting that he be exempted from classes in which TV and computers were used. His request was granted by the school officials, but not without ridicule from his teachers. He also faces considerable rejection from fellow students who espouse a watered-down Gospel.

Brandon plans to graduate at the end of this school year. He hopes to land a job as a cement truck driver. He wants a simple job that will pay well—a job that will allow him to give more money to the church.

Brandon anticipates being a student at Calvary Bible School. Having the opportunity to attend CBS has become nearly an all-consuming dream, ever since he met us last fall. Yesterday we drove back the winding gravel road to CBS to introduce Brandon and his mother to the

campus. As we arrived at the deserted facility and began our tour, the expression on his face resembled that of a young man who had just been given the keys to his very first car. As we walked from room to room in the main building and explained the purpose of the rooms, his face was alive with delight. When we entered the chapel, Brandon attentively read the mottos and wall paintings crafted by students and staff from former years. He noticed the motto on the back wall that says, “The world has yet to see what God will do with a person who is wholly consecrated to Him.”

Maybe you are wondering what this story has to do with preparing to serve God as a single. The point is this: We as Christians need a single eye. Brandon is a good example. His eye is set on harnessing every thought and passion, with the goal of presenting his life as an offering to the One who created him and redeemed him. Regardless of whether Brandon stays single or raises a family, he is cultivating a heart that can be used mightily for God in either capacity. Likely, your opportunities for becoming wholly consecrated have been significantly greater than his. What are you doing with your opportunities? —EE



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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

The test of a man's character is shown in how he takes praise.

• • • • •

When tempers grow hot, Christian testimony grows cold.

• • • • •

Have you met a critic of the church who was trying to make it better?

• • • • •

Cigarettes are killers that travel in packs.

• • • • •

Alcoholic pleasures are brief, but the effects last a long time.

• • • • •

Common sense is often wisdom dressed in working clothes.

• • • • •

Any fool can criticize and complain—and many do.

• • • • •

The line between self-confidence and conceit is sometimes hard to see.

• • • • •

Unless your sin is confessed, it will fester.

• • • • •

Conscience, like a pencil, needs occasional sharpening.

• • • • •

Profanity marks the verbal cripple.