



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 2012

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 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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Peace

Matthew R. Stoltzfus, New Holland, PA

Like the stillness of the night,
And the calmness of the sea,
Is the peace that God does bring,
To the soul of you and me.

If we ask Him, He will bring
A sweet peace that helps us live
Like He wants for all His sheep,
That to Him their hearts do give.

People seek to find this peace,
That will give them rest and ease.
They get cars and mansions bright,
But their longing's not appeased.

You must ask the One who knows
All the answers that there are;
Then you'll find real peace of mind,
That calms the storms of every kind.



Fire On the Family Altar

One barometer of family welfare declares: “The family that prays together stays together.” While that statement does not consider every aspect of the family’s well being, it contains important truth. Family worship provides a strong pillar in the development of Christian values.

I grew up on a dairy farm in a home where our parents and we children would gather daily in the living room after several hours of chores, then breakfast, for a time of Bible reading and prayer. We took turns reading (one verse at a time) a portion of Scripture, typically working our way through a book of the Bible one chapter a day. This reading was often followed by a few remarks and observations. We then knelt for prayer, led by Dad (or one of the sons on whom Dad called, after we sons had reached sufficient maturity and interest). These prayers were spontaneous and closed with the Lord’s Prayer. The Levi and Clara Miller family altar of the 1930’s, 40’s, and 50’s followed a predictable pattern and I have fond memories of it. I believe it had a positive impact on my growing faith in Christ.

How is your family altar? Is it lit or has it been altered?

Some things about life today are still about like they were in yesteryear: Christian families still prosper when parents and children regularly read the Bible and pray together. Of course, other activities also bond the family, such as singing, playing, and working together.

But some things are now different: These days, it is quite common for the head of the family to earn a living off the farm. Many breadwinners leave for work at an hour when one would hardly expect even school-age children to “rise and shine.” Then, in the evening, with current mobility, there seem to be many things that beckon the family away from home. How is today’s family to provide for meaningful family worship?

I’ve traveled enough in our constituency to think that some of our family altars are in need of repair.

May I ask readers of *Calvary Messenger* to participate in a project reporting on what you do to preserve this vital part of Christian family life? Here are some questions you might address:

• *Of what benefit is a regular family altar?*

• *How do you conduct family altar?*

• *Is this different from what you did earlier?*

• *What obstacles have you encountered?*

• *What solutions have you found?*

I think many of our readers would really benefit by hearing from a cross section of families on this important issue. Please don't feel that you're boasting. Paul and other writers of Scripture told us with humility about their spiritual struggles—and so can we. Testimony can include both success and failure. Sharing with others strengthens our courage. (See Malachi 3:16)

This invitation reaches you at the beginning of June. Let's see what we

can bring together on this subject for one of the fall issues of *Calvary Messenger*. Ministers, young fathers, middle-aged fathers, grandfathers, great grandfathers—don't wait until this fall to write. This matter does not belong on the "back burner."

Here's what would work best: **Put this in your goals for June.**

Be sure to include your name. I would prefer to attach your name to your writing, but will honor requests for anonymity. What I ask of you, I will also give: I shall include what's been happening on the family altar of Paul and Martha Miller.

Give God the glory and see what you can do for the *Calvary Messenger* family in June! (If you miss June, send it in July!) Thank you!

—PLM 

Who Owns Israel and Jerusalem?

Ervin Hershberger (1914-2003)

This question was raised 3,000 years ago, and remains a perpetual conflict today. We are told that 1996 is the three-thousandth year since the Jebusites defied David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here" (2 Samuel. 5:6 NKJV). That compares

well with Luther's translation: "Du wirst nicht hereinkommen, sondern Blinde and Lahme werden dich abtreiben." "Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David" v. 7, KJV).

At that time David moved his headquarters from Hebron to Jerusalem. Consequently, Israel claims Jerusalem as the legal capital

of their nation today. Some of their enemies feel Israel has no right to exist. Even some Christians have referred to Israel as “the nation that is built on a lie.” Let us hear what the Bible says about the land and the people of Israel, and about Jerusalem.

Before bringing Israel into Canaan, God told them, “*The land is mine,*” Therefore it was not to be sold permanently. “In all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land” (Lev. 25:23-24). Seven times in Holy Writ, God used the term, “*My land*” (2 Chron. 7:20; Isa. 14:25; Jer. 16:16; Ezek. 36:5; Joel 1:6; 3:2); and three times the Bible calls it *His land* (Deut. 32:43; Ezek. 36:20; Joel 2:18). this implies something more than merely universal ownership. It indicates His unique interest in it.

Why is it that the nations of the world focus on this little spot of earthly real estate, way out of proportion to its monetary value? Is it because of what God promises to do with that land?

And why is Satan so desirous to annihilate the Jews, as demonstrated through the likes of *Haman* and *Hitler*? Is it perhaps because 23 times in the Bible calls them *the Lord’s inheritance*? (Deut. 4:20; 9:26, 29; 32:9; 1 Sam. 10:1; 26:19; 1 Kings 18:51, 53; 2 Kings 21:14; Ps. 28:9;

33:12; 69:9; 74:2; 78:62; 71; 94:14; 106:40; Isa. 19:25; 47:6; 63:17; Jer. 10:16; 51:19; and Joel 3:2)

Several of these references tell how God gave them over to their enemies to punish them for their disobedience. Of Israel God said, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities” (Amos 3:2). That is not rejection, but redemptive discipline. “For the Lord will not cast away his people which he foreknew” (Rom. 11:2).

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover *the remnant of his people*, which shall be left,...And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah *from the four corners of the earth*” (Isa. 11:12). He’s been doing that now for 48 years.

Five times in the Book of Jeremiah (4:27; 5:10, 18; 30:11; 46:28) God promised that He would not make a full end of Israel. “Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I *will* make a full end of *all nations whither I have driven thee [and that includes America]*: but I *will not* make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will not leave thee

wholly unpunished” (46:28). See also Jer. 32:37-42; 33:7, 14-21; 50:4-5, 20.

“After many days thou shalt be visited: in the *latter years* thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people,...and they shall dwell safely all of them” (Ezek. 38:8). See Ezek. 36:24-28. These are some examples of what God says about the people. There are many others.

What does the Bible say about Jerusalem? Less than 40 years before the destruction of Jerusalem, in 70 A.D., Jesus said, “Behold, your house shall be left unto you desolate” (Matt. 23:38). Satan no doubt rejoiced about that. But there are many other Scriptures with future dimensions, which Satan despises.


“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (Isa. 62:1). along with the “new heaven and a new earth” (65:17), He adds “Be ye glad and rejoice for ever...for, behold, I create

Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (65:18).

“So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy,...Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion” (Joel 3:17, 20-21).

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO HE LORD;...” (Zech. 14:20,21).

I freely confess that I do not understand all that God is telling us. Neither Abraham, Zacharias, nor the Virgin Mary fully understood everything that God told them. But Romans 4:3, Luke 1:20, and 45 prove that He expected them to believe even when they did not understand. Faith precedes, surpasses, and enables understanding. “Through faith [and ONLY through faith] we understand” (Heb. 11:3). When God says it, so be it.

[From *Calvary Messenger*, Jan., 1996. Submitted for re-publication by Floyd Stoltzfus.] 

We must be delivered from fleshly lusts, and from being contentious and rebellious.

Chance and Change

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Opportunities come in multiples. A newspaper article says even adult attention spans are shrinking. TV spots are reduced. Sermons need to be shortened. Even general conversation has to be brief, or else it is boring.

We look for *change* and a *chance* to better ourselves.

If ever there was a need for a short article, this ought to be one, since it deals with this very subject. We all have some old-timers among us who habitually make a short story long. We will never outgrow our need for patience.

1. There is the *nuisance* of change. Change is such a bother. Besides, who needs it? The old ways wouldn't have been around for so long if they hadn't been good. One day in an old church the ministers were going around to each member for council. One old man was hard of hearing. They asked him if he was agreed. He responded with, "I couldn't hear your proposal, but whatever it is, I'm against it."

For some people, any change is suspect. More demands. More restrictions. More chance to reduce, subtract, limit, or diminish whatever. My food is good enough—don't change it! Our church service is good enough as it is—don't change anything. My life passes for communion twice a year just like it is—do not disturb. "God doesn't change; why should I? My comfort zone's rocking chair is going nowhere, except back and forth. I'm okay with myself just as I am, which is reason enough for you to be satisfied with the same."

Not only is change a nuisance to such a person, he may be a nuisance to others as he stands in the way of positive change. Some churches boast of no change, which somehow makes them more right than the rest of us. They are grounded and settled with sameness.

2. There is also the *novelty* of change. By contrast, some churches boast of all the changes they have made. You never know what they

might try next.

The novelty of change has endless possibilities. Never mind the bizarre and imprudent. Being different is the name of the game. Showmanship is expected and developed. Every Sunday morning's service is different. It gives them something to talk about.

The novelty of change can be subtly addictive, but unsettling. While it supposedly adds to life's fullness, it takes away from it. Those who take chances in making changes seldom have the opportunity to return to their former state.

3. Then there is the *necessity* of change. All growth is change, but not all change is growth. Because of our carnality and selfishness, we tend to change when we shouldn't, and not to change when we should.

God, the Creator of heaven and earth, even He who made us says, "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). The Almighty God, the Sovereign One, eternally in charge—is predictably the same through all ages. Who can comprehend such a fixed position?

But God says of mortal man, "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God" (Ps. 55:19).

Change for change's sake can be short-sighted and vain. Conversely,

to categorically be against all change can be quite meaningless, and even ridiculous. Because of our bent toward carnality and selfishness, before God our lives need to change toward His purposes.

"But time and chance happeneth to them all" (Ec. 9:11). Every business faces the need to change, even among those who for generations have been earning a living off the land. This is not meant to be confusing, but sometimes businessmen who resist change fail. Whereas, some who make every possible change also fail. Why? Timely change can increase production and profits. But one who reads all the magazines and attends all the seminars and makes all the possible changes, may overspend to the point of being hopelessly over-leveraged financially.


That is also true in our churches. Being against all change for the sake of the honor of being able to say: "No change while I was bishop!" seems carnal to me. Whereas, to seek honor "for all the changes made during my administration" reeks of the same dead works.

The churches we relate to are in a period of incredible pressure to change. Some are already seeing that too many changes too fast causes certain undesirable consequences. Overspending our congregational

pennies can bankrupt brotherhood interchange.

Change may be inevitable. Our reasons for change provides an index to the soul. As in business, we had better keep in mind the purpose for our congregation. By it we can make changes that advance our purposes

and resolve to make no changes where those purposes are compromised.

The Bottom Line – Blessed is the man who holds on to the old as long as it contributes to the common good, but changes to the new after it is seen to hold promise that contribute to the common good. 

Takers and Givers in The Church

Alfredo Mullet, Lott, TX

The Church has *so many problems* within it, it is a wonder it has not already fallen apart. To begin with, the leadership is very incompetent, and the laity is too self-centered. As if that were not enough, the worship services are boring and the preaching uninspiring. Furthermore, the members do not know how to minister to other hurting ones. There is also an inconsistency between what the church says it believes and what it actually practices. And oh, communion time is so stressful; I do not understand the pleasure in it, and how anyone could enjoy the foot-washing ceremony is beyond me.

The Church has *so much good* going for it, it is no wonder its members stay together. To begin


with, the leadership does its best to function biblically, and the laity is very caring. As if that were not enough, the worship services are so meaningful and the preaching is quite spiritually uplifting. Furthermore, the members are compassionate with other hurting ones. There is also a concerted effort to close the disparity between its creed and what it actually practices. And oh, the communion time is so joyful; I find such pleasure in it. How anyone would not enjoy the foot-washing ceremony is beyond me!

This speaks of two different churches—right? Wrong! It is the same church as observed from the view point of two types of its members: **takers** and **givers**. What produces such a striking difference

is really a matter of perspective. On the one hand, there are those who are in the church primarily to receive. When these do not get what the membership owes them, they center their attention mainly on what the church is not. However, instead of doing their individual duty to better the congregation, they are waiting until the rest fall in line before they take personal responsibility.

On the other hand there are those who are in the church with the desire to give it whatever God has

entrusted to them. While these realize the church does have its share of problems, they focus primarily on the church as it should be. Moreover, instead of constantly criticizing the congregation for its imperfections, they assume personal responsibility to do their part to improve the Body. They will not wait until others “get on with the program” to get involved.

In the end, it is up to each individual member to choose how much he or she will either dread or enjoy his or her place in the Body of Christ. 

There Are Two Secret Places

Dave Miller, Mill Spring, NC

*Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in **secret places** that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. (Jeremiah 23:23,24).*

The first secret place is **the secret place of sin.** When someone is giving in to a continual lifestyle of sin, it is often done secretly. You don't want to be discovered. You think no one else knows, but God will always know. I heard this quote some time ago that really challenged my heart, “The power of sin is in its secrecy.” What does this mean? I believe it means that when we continually give in to sin, eventually there is a power that will grip us—the power of sin.

How do we escape? What do we do? How do I get rid of this? We feel stuck. Psalm 17:12 says, *Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in **secret places**.* A lion ready to make an attack does not want to be discovered, just like you and I act in the secrecy of sin. *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.* (Proverbs 9:17,18) In the secrecy of sin we often forget the consequences and

are just living for the moment. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove [expose] them.* (Ephesians 5:11) I am so grateful we don't have to be stuck in the secrecy of sin.

In order to escape the secrecy of sin, there is a second secret place the Bible tells us about. That secret place is **the secret place of prayer.**

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. (Psalm 91:1) *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant* (Psalm 25:14) How do you dwell in the secret place of the Most High? Let's see what Jesus said in Matthew 6:6, **But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and**

thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. The secret place of prayer empowers us to escape the **secrecy** of sin. Praise Jesus!

I want to encourage you to take a serious look at what it is to pray in **secret**, to lock in with Jesus and shut everything else out, with no one around. We are only as effective in public as we secretly pray in private. In several places in Scripture we see that Jesus got alone to pray. As we see earth's final day approaching and observe the conditions of our world, may God's people rise up and become men and women of prayer. The world should witness and be drawn to the power of God working in us and through us!

[From Gospel Express Evangelistic Ministries Newsletter, May-June, 2012. Used by permission.]



Members in Particular

Ed Hochstetler, Hicksville, OH

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).


The Bible is clear in what the church is and how it is to be maintained. It is to be holy and without spot or wrinkle. It is given authority to govern its members that they be taught, nurtured, and disciplined, so that the body be kept pure and holy.

Every member in the church must demonstrate by his life that he is fully given to obeying the Word of God and is in accord with the church in its doctrine and practice. For the purity of the church to be maintained it needs to be regulated.

Reservations in our commitment

and clinging to our own way, or disregarding a church decision will weaken the unity of the body. There needs to be an accountability without which brotherhood will be destroyed. Deviation from truth, disregard of agreement, breaking of vows, or relinquishing of our confession is very serious. The Scripture says that those who love and make lies are in a class of

sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, and idolaters. (Revelation. 21:8)

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular...” (1 Cor. 12:27). 

Mode of Baptism

Howard Bean, Tavistock, ON

Which method of baptism—immersion or pouring—is more fitting? Some groups advocate pouring, also known as affusion or sprinkling. Others strongly teach immersion, with the applicant being put under water. Some teach the applicant needs to be immersed forward; others backward; some say three times, some say only twice, and so on.

Here are a few reasons advanced for immersion. One is the etymology (origin) of the word *baptism*. The construction of the word *baptism* suggests repeated dippings, immersing, or submerging. Another main reason for advocating

immersion is the impression of some church historians that immersion was common in the first few centuries of Christianity. Still another idea advanced by immersion proponents is the imagery in Romans 6:1-6 of “Being buried with him by baptism....”

However, I believe reasons for pouring are more biblical and compelling. Why?

1. Pouring corresponds to what water baptism symbolizes, that is, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. With reference to Pentecost, Acts 2:17 says, “I will pour out my Spirit.” At the house of Cornelius, “On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 10:45).

2. Bible examples point to pouring as the method used:

(a) On the day of Pentecost, 3,000 were baptized. They didn't go to the Jordan; it was miles away. It seems most reasonable that the apostles were baptized with sprinkling.

(b) At Paul's baptism in Ananias' house, it seems unlikely that he would have been immersed if he was baptized on the spot when he stood up (Acts 9: 17, 18 and Acts 22:12-16.)

(c) In the case of Cornelius, "Can any man forbid water?" suggests bringing a small quantity of water.

(d) At the baptism of the Philippian jailer, it seems unlikely that Paul and Silas went to a river in the wee hours of the morning and immersed the jailer and others.

(e) In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, both Philip and the eunuch were in the water. Whether the eunuch was immersed or not, we don't know. The earliest sketches of Christian baptism (in the *Didache*) show the pastor and the applicant standing in a shallow stream and the water being poured on the head of the new believer.

3. Old Testament incidents to which the New Testament refer concerning baptism indicate pouring. For example, 1 Corinthians 10:1,2, says, "I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our

fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." It was not the Israelites who were immersed. Psalm 77:17 says, "The clouds poured out water."

4. Jesus' baptism was by sprinkling if it corresponds to the consecration of priests at age 30. (See Numbers 4:3, 47, and Numbers 8:6,7.) Interestingly, *Christ* means *Anointed One*.

5. The etymology of the word baptism is not likely to be significant. The meaning of lots of words bear little resemblance to their origin. For example, the origin of *google* was the number one followed by 100 zeros; the word *commencement* means beginning, but it is now used as a term meaning completion at a graduation.

6. In terms of history, it seems that the sketches of Christian baptism in the first centuries show pouring in the first years, followed by immersion some time later, about 150 A.D. (Sometimes the applicants were unclothed for baptism, a practice advocated by such leaders as Hippolytus). If you have studied church history you are, no doubt, familiar with Philip Schaff. In his series of history books, Volume 2, page 249, we read, "It is remarkable that in almost all the earliest representations of baptism

that have been preserved for us, this [the pouring of water from a vessel over the body] is the special act represented.”

7. Romans 6 is teaching identification with Christ—a basic idea of baptism—not the mode. As I’ve heard Richard Herr say, “There’s not a drop of water in Romans 6.”

8. In practical terms, pouring can be used universally. It can be used in all climates and exceptional circumstances such as the baptism of the person in a hospital bed or in a prison.

If the person who has been

immersed wants to join a church where I have oversight, I would not be inclined to rebaptize. I recognize immersion as valid. I do, however, resist the teaching that immersion is the only valid mode of baptism. I think it is unfortunate that thousands of people in the past several centuries in America have abandoned the Mennonite Church because of the teaching of certain groups that only immersion is valid. I think pouring is preferable and thoroughly scriptural.

[From *Midwest Mennonite Focus*, March-April, 2012. Used by permission.]



Who Does God Use?

Harry A. Ironside

God is not looking for brilliant men, is not depending upon eloquent men, is not shut up to the use of talented men in sending His Gospel out in the world. God is looking for broken men, for men who have judged themselves in light of the cross of Christ. When He wants anything done, He takes up men who have come to an end of themselves, and whose trust and confidence is not in themselves, but in God.



cradle roll

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

Burkholder, Scott and Suzanne (Troyer), Bourbon, IN, third child, second son, Alec Gavin, April 24, 2012.

Chupp, Devon and Meghann (McGurrin), Topeka, IN, first child and son, Blake William, April 8, 2012.

Garber, Alton and Faith (Miller), Lincoln, MO, sixth child, fifth son, Alex Logan, April 6, 2012.

Horning, Leon and Jennifer (Burkholder), Lincoln, MO, third child and son, Ashton Ben, Nov. 7, 2011.

Hostetler, Chris and Donna (Martin), Auburn, KY, first child and son, Alex Ryan, April 29, 2012.

Miller, Henry and Sharon (Miller), Auburn, KY, third child, second son, Tyrell Andre, March 14, 2012.

Miller, Josias Lael and Sharon Jean (Miller), Baltic, OH, third child, first dau., Kylie Raquell, Jan. 4, 2012.

Miller, Nathan and Regina (Beachy), Dundee, OH, first child and son, Cade Ashton, Feb. 4, 2012.

Miller, William J. and Gwendolyn (Stauffer), Sturgis, MI, third child, second dau., Kianna Rayne, March 7, 2012.

Mullet, Jeffrey and Denise (Swartzen-truber), Fresno, OH, fourth child, second son, Logan Anthony, Jan. 15, 2012.

Nissley, Wayne and Sharon (Miller), LaRussell, MO, sixth child, third son, Anson Jay, Feb. 12, 2012.

Otto, Joshua and Regina (Wagler), Crossville, TN, first child and son, Rodrick Braydon, April 3, 2012.

Otto, Marcus and Nancy (Miller), Crossville, TN, second child, first dau., Jennika Rose, March 29, 2012.

Overholt, Ronald and Marcia (Schrock), Windsor, MO, fifth child, second dau., Ranessa Joy, Sept. 29, 2011.

Ropp, Hubert Melvin and Joanna Kay (Miller), Centreville, MI, second child and dau., Annie Cherisa, April 2, 2012.

Ropp, Mike and Monica (Eash), Romney, WV, second child, first dau., Mikayla Jo, April 13, 2012.

Schrock, Don and Jo (Yoder), Windsor, MO, third and dau., Shania Jo, Nov. 29, 2011.

Schrock, Jonathan A. and Myra Doreen (Gingerich), Colon, MI, second child, first dau., Kiersten Jo, Dec. 25, 2011.

Stauffer, Lawrence Lee and Julia (Weaver), Sturgis, MI, fourth child and son, Jeremiah Lawson, March 5, 2012.

Yoder. Dwight and Jennifer (Stutzman), Montezuma, GA, fifth and sixth children, fourth and fifth sons, Lincoln Joseph and Logan Eric, March 29, 2012.

Yoder, Eli and Judy (Mast), Crossville, TN, second dau., (first daughter deceased), Jennica Denae, April 3, 2012.

Yoder, Wesley and Rose (Yoder), Lincoln, MO, ninth child, third son, Aaron Wesley, Sept. 22, 2011.

ordinations

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

Bro. Rodney Musser, 32, was ordained as deacon at Cold Spring Mennonite Church, Abbeville, SC, on April 22, 2012. Preordination messages were given by Phil Beachy, Millersburg, OH. The charge was given by Merl Beiler, assisted by Ernest Hochstetler and Phil Beachy. Javan Bender was also in the lot.

Bro. Marvin Yoder, 48, was called by voice of the church and ordained as minister for the Fair Haven congregation at Danville, AL, on April 22, 2012.

Preordination messages were by Marlin Weaver, Orville, AL, Dan Miller, Osceola, TX, and Ben Horst, Olive Hill, TN. The charge was given by Noah Yoder, Montezuma, GA, assisted by Dan Miller and Marlin Weaver.

obituaries

Smoker, James Z., 86, died peacefully at hospice on Feb. 26, 2012 at Lancaster, PA. He was born at Talmage, PA, son of the late John F. and Emma (Zook) Smoker.

He was a member of Pequea A. M. Church, Narvon, PA.

On Oct. 31, 1946, he was married to Rebecca Stoltzfus. She survives. Children surviving are Ruth, wife of Edwin Zook, Leola; Lillian, wife of Daniel B. Stoltzfus, Kinzers; Lester, husband of Martha (Stoltzfus) Smoker, Grand Ridge, FL; Arlene, wife of Arlan Martin, East Earl. Also surviving are 13 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren.

Preceding him in death are a brother, Simon; and four sisters: Lydia Huyard, Naomi King, Priscilla Bawel, and Ruth Fisher.

The funeral was held on March 1, at Pequea Church with Ben A. Stoltzfus, Melvin Lapp, Rufus Burkholder, and Jonathan Stoltzfus serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Mennonite Weekly Review has recently become a bi-weekly, renamed *Mennonite World Review*. Postal costs were a major consideration in making this change. The two issues that I have received indicate a marked increase in news coverage. (MWR 4-16)

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On March 17, 1972, the first MCC thrift shop was started in southern Manitoba. At present there are 56 such shops in Canada and 57 in the U.S. Contributions the past 40 years have totaled 167 million dollars. Last year, the shops in Canada contributed 7.2 million and U.S. shops 5.2 million. Volunteer labor and no cost inventory are factors that help make such ventures profitable. (MWR, 4-16)

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New Horizons at Canon City, Colorado, has started a second thrift shop to help support their ministry to prison mothers and babies. Menno Nisly, local, built a building to accommodate a thrift store idea with proceeds going to our local church schools. It is usually unattended and operates on the self-help honor system.

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Lyle Yost, 99, died recently at Hesston, KS. He is considered the founder of Hesston Corporation, which is now owned by Agco, with products including Gleaner combines. Yost was a Mennonite and had a partner whose name was Aden Holdeman, who apparently had a strong inventive aptitude. An important item that Holdeman designed was the grain auger unloader for combines. This was eagerly received, especially by custom operators. Gravity unloading was slow and inconvenient by comparison. Swathers and a variety of other farm equipment was manufactured. At some point, the company outgrew Holdeman's comfort level. He sold his interest. At their peak, they had 2500 employees. (MWR and conversation with Kenneth Dyck)

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Our three-member Reno County commission has a long history of praying before their meetings. They usually invite a local pastor to offer prayer. Recently, they received a letter from Americans United for Separation of Church and State, saying that they had received a

complaint that the commission was opening their meetings with a Christian prayer. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling says that opening prayers at legislative meetings are permissible only if they do not use language specific to one religion. Praying in the name of Jesus is therefore illegal. The commissioners consider this an unwelcome imposition. But they do not feel free to ignore the ruling. Others argue that this is based on the ruling of several lower courts and that the U.S. Supreme Court has not ruled on the matter. Some local church leaders have been very vocal on this perceived encroachment on freedom of speech and religion. Several have said they will pass by the invitation to pray if they cannot pray in Jesus' name.

It seems apparent that there is a presence in the country that would want to twist freedom *of* religion to freedom *from* religion. Let us be thankful that we are legally free to meet with like-minded Christians to worship God without outside interference.

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One of the County Commissioners, Dan Deming, is also one of several columnists who contribute regularly to *The Hutchinson News*. He recently wrote about his trip to Washington, D.C. To get a closer look at the

nation's capital. He says that one could probably live in Washington, D.C. for several years and only scratch the surface of exhibits and attractions. He recommends a visit to the Holocaust Memorial Museum. He calls it an emotional experience. It is housed in a three-storey building. Tours are self-guided.

As a conservative, he feels that the country could operate a lot more efficiently and for less money if many programs and employees were eliminated. One has to wonder if in some cases the number of government employees in a department outnumbers those being served.

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Our branch of conservative Anabaptists have chosen congregational autonomy over centralized oversight. Certainly a case can be made for grass-roots involvement and local ownership. It has been observed that conference authority can become an influence that is more friendly to blending in than in standing out, even when things clearly taught in the Scriptures are involved. At this point, it seems right for us to evaluate how well congregational autonomy is working.

Is it not true that local autonomy should not be considered a license for congregational independence?

We elect boards to provide leadership for Christian service and evangelistic outreach. Our Bible schools attract students from many congregations.

It seems obvious that we need inter-congregational harmony in our response to how biblical authority affects our lifestyle. Ideally, every Christian should have personal convictions concerning these things. Realistically, individuals need the loyalty and support of like-minded peers. This combination is at odds with the individualistic spirit that permeates our western culture.

To fail to learn from history is to repeat its mistakes. But God does not want us to fail. His grace is sufficient that we need not fail; nor do any of us want to fail. Failure is never God's fault; it is always human—and it is all too common. It seems apparent that failure comes when we choose, perhaps unintentionally, to follow self instead of our dear Lord. Let us appropriate God's sufficient grace to choose wisely.



A 17-year-old wrote a passionate letter to advice columnist, Annie's Mailbox, decrying tobacco companies' wicked methods to induce young people to start the ugly tobacco habit. Annie agrees with her concern. She wants young people to know: "Smoking is not cool; it stinks."



Foot-washing in conjunction with communion is a long-standing practice among conservative Anabaptists. An article in *The Tennessean* is a reminder that the practice is not exclusively Anabaptist. The article says that most Free Will Baptists practice foot washing at least once a year. Some Episcopalians have been known to practice it some time during holy week.

The article brings out the value of both parties as they wash "each other's feet." To offer our feet for washing is to expose our walk to a fellow Christian and to acknowledge that our feet tend to get dirty on the journey of life. The one who washes assumes a servant's role whose role is to serve rather than to rule. This practice was vividly exemplified and taught by the Lord Himself. As we continue this practice may our lives express these Christlike principles in our walk of life. It is easier to maintain the practice than the attitude and lifestyle that it so richly symbolizes.

Most churches do not observe this literally. Perhaps the reason that such a practice is an insult to cultural refinement and deserves only to be spiritualized. Anabaptists should note that there are other groups that believe obedience is more

important than to do only that which seems culturally inoffensive. (*The Tennessean* article was sent to me by Tim Yoder. Thank you!)



Our local livestock auction facility in South Hutchinson has been there at least 60 years. Some changes of ownership need to occur due to aging. Financial instability and unethical conduct have also been factors that led to changes of ownership in the recent past. It came to the place that a local bank had to assume operation of the market to keep it afloat. An employee of the bank who had rural upbringing became the general manager until a suitable buyer could be found. During this time he started offering a prayer before the auction started. The bank has now sold the auction. The opening prayer is being continued under new management. I wonder how many community livestock auctions begin with prayer.



Charles W. Colson, 80, died on April 21. His passing received widespread mention in a number of news media, including our daily paper and a number of news magazines. The following is taken mostly from *Mennonite World Review*, 4-30-12: Colson’s pre-christian philosophy seems to have been that the end justifies the means.

To do what was right was secondary to getting the job done. Such a mindset earned him the nickname of “evil genius.” In his determination to protect the Nixon presidency, his actions crossed the line of being unethical to illegal. Nixon was forced out of office and Colson was sentenced to one to three years in prison. Being found guilty and facing the prospect of imprisonment was a jolt that caused some major heart searching. During this time, he had an encounter with the Lord that drastically changed his value system and his life mission.

His brief experience in federal prison convinced him that people in prison are mostly forgotten. He wanted to reach out to inmates and their families. In 1976, he founded Prison Fellowship which today has 14,000 volunteers in 1,300 prisons. More than 150,000 inmates participate in its Bible studies every year.

He became an outspoken advocate of prison reform. He believed non-violent offenders should be sentenced to community service instead of prison. He championed what he called “resorative justice.” He advocated grass roots resistance to abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriage.



The VS unit house in Hutchinson, KS, served three work crews in January, February, and March, 2012. Two of these groups were staffed by Beachy couples and volunteers. Some Amish people from Nappanee, Indiana were here during March. We continue to get very positive feedback from those who serve and those being served.

Presently the CASP board wants to do at least two four-week periods early in 2013. We welcome other groups who would also want to participate. Groups or volunteers may contact Elmer J. Miller (574-642-3056) or David L. Miller (620-567-2376).

—DLM 

CHURCH *in* SOCIETY

Lester Troyer, Stone Lake, WI

[Bro. Lester Troyer has been writing for Reaching Out for several decades. He has written for other evangelistic efforts and now has brought many of his writings into a 275-page book, entitled, Church in Society, with this subtitle: Perspectives of an Anabaptist Pastor.

I have Lester's permission to reprint selections from his book in Calvary Messenger, from time to time. Obviously I can't use very much of it because of space limitations. Here I am excerpting a selection from Section IV, which comments on different cultural issues in America.

This book is available from: Mennonite Outreach Ministries, 16131 W. Boylan Rd., Stone Lake, Wisconsin, 54876. (Phone: 715-865-5561). E-mail: lestroyer@emypeople.net Price: \$9.75, plus \$3, S & H. If individuals or groups want multiple copies, you may call for reduced shipping prices.

The Dilemma of Atheism

(pages 174-177)

There are Christian writers and thinkers who claim that no one knows enough facts about nature to rule out the existence of God. Their argument goes like this: At best one may know a mere fraction (less than

1%) of everything there is to know of the natural world. We don't know how many grains of sand are on even one beach in Florida. We don't know the sheer volume of oxygen in the air. We don't know how many ground hogs and water snakes are in Wisconsin, etc. So, the argument

goes, the atheist would need to know everything in nature to prove that God does not exist. (Presumably the evidence for God might be found in what he doesn't know).

Now, for the fallacy of that argument. Everyone (atheists included) believes in builders. Every house is the transformation of various materials into a final completed structure through the intelligence and energy of the builder. However, the builder is not the materials, neither is he the building. The first 1% of the construction provides the same evidence for the builder as does the remaining 99%. Once the job is complete, and the builder has packed his tools and left, we do not take core samples of the foundation, nor do we take the house apart, looking for evidence of the builder. Has the evidence of a builder disappeared into thin air? Now that we cannot find tangible evidence shall we no longer believe in builders?

But that is not the premise of believing in builders. Neither is that the premise for believing in the Creator. Less than 1% knowledge is totally sufficient. We will not find God's footprints in prehistoric rock, or some leftover lunch that God didn't need, nor in forming materials God left behind from pouring the foundations of the earth. We can

reach our conclusions without going through the universe looking for evidence of God. We can be assured that 100% knowledge of construction materials will yield the same results as the 1% already known. No lookout towers need to be built, nor space flights taken to look for a builder, nor to find God.

Even as builders are not houses, so God is not the creation. So the kind of evidence needed to believe in a builder or to believe in God, really is one and the same. The sheer volume of knowledge has nothing to do with it. You may be a complete ignoramus when it comes to construction. Yet this ignorance does not keep you from believing in a builder. However, if you refuse to believe in builders, no amount of evidence will protect you from the foolishness of your wrong conclusions.

We have just let the atheist off the hook on his degree of scientific knowledge. Are we saying then, that there is no folly in atheism? Indeed we are not. The great folly of the atheist is not in the volume of his knowing. It is the refusal to consider the obvious. He lives under a vast canopy that reverberates with beauty, order, and harmony, yet he defies the possibility of divine cause, insisting instead, that there is no God. He looks in the mirror and sees a complexity of intelligent

arrangement beyond comprehension and beyond chance. This evidence points to a Creator, par excellence. Yet he attempts the impossible feat of attributing tremendously complex effects to absolutely no cause at all. Finding himself stuck between believing nothing versus believing in God—well, he chooses nothing. He has just forsaken the sanity of his belief that various building materials never become houses apart from builders. He calmly asserts that he cannot believe in an unseen God, only to leapfrog into insisting that an equally unseen but causeless, unintelligent nothingness is sufficient cause for all that exists. This is not the equivalent of declaring that a newborn calf will eventually produce milk. It is like blindly insisting that milk (or more accurately, no milk) given millions of years, must ultimately produce a cow. Science is always tortured and violated in the process of claiming to believe nothing but science.

If a boy of eight doesn't know the difference between a pine tree and an oak, yet knows that God made the tree, he is light years ahead of the brilliant naturalist who studies trees for 50 years, and yet doesn't know where the trees come from.

Atheists like to claim that the concept of God only removes the problem of existence by a factor of

one. So where did God come from? Every builder pre-exists his house. However, he never becomes part of it. True, he finally builds his last house, and rides off into the sunset. Not so with God. In creating the heavens and the earth all things therein, God also created the time frame in which we exist. We can but move forward at the created time pace toward final destiny. We must expect that God will meet us there. This is not because the Creator shares the time frame of the created (for He is outside of time), but because God is equally present everywhere, whether past, present, or future. Atheists claim it took billions of years of time to produce what exists today. If they don't have unlimited time, they lose their claim to evolution, and with it, their credibility as atheists. We believers know the difference between billions of years of chance, and the eternal God who has existed, does exist, and will exist forever.

The Bible clearly describes the development of atheism thus: "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21). Since wickedness is contrary to the role for which we were created, it is hardly surprising that wickedness would also discredit

the Creator by denying His existence.

An atheist may claim to share many of the same values that Christians do. Perhaps this is one area where plagiarism is helpful. There is nothing inherent in atheism that would logically lend itself to any form of good or morals or ethics. On the other hand, the belief in the Creator God lends itself perfectly to

the human need of moral constraints and judgments.

Now for the final dilemma of the atheist. He comes to the end of life. He believes himself unaccountable. He expects to go off into the abyss of nothingness. But faulty logic changes nothing. Unbelief does not cancel his appointment with his Maker (2 Corinthians 4:10).



The Delivery Angel

Submitted by Mark Beachy, Dundee, OH

My friend, Mattie, gave me a hand-written copy of this old story, which shows God's love and provision for His children. Whatever our need, God knows. God provides. Nothing is too small or too large to pray about. -MB

I had a happy childhood. My parents were praying people and my father was a preacher of the Gospel. I never even thought about it that life was difficult financially for my parents. We lived in a small Minnesota town. My dad had to work at whatever job he could find to support his wife and three children.

God blessed our small garden. Most of the time we had plenty to eat. I thought everyone had to live like we did. The memories of those years bless me yet today. However, one particular night stands out like a warm light in my memory. Dad was not at home. Mom set the table for our family. "What are we going to eat tonight?"

one of us questioned. We looked around . There was no kettle on the cold stove. On the table there was only water in our glasses. The refrigerator was empty. There was nothing in the cupboards. We did not even have one potato to make a watery soup. There was not even one cup of flour to make biscuits. We did not have any noodles to make a hot dish of any kind. How strange! The house was bare and two boys were ever so hungry!

"Let's sit down and ask the Lord to bless our meal," my mother said. We sat and respectfully bowed our heads and listened to our dear mother talk to God.


"Dear Lord," she prayed, "We thank

You for the food of which we are about to partake. In Jesus' name I pray," and before she could say "Amen," we heard a noise on the back porch. We boys hurriedly shoved back our chairs and ran for the back door which was about six steps from the kitchen table. We flung open that door and there on the porch was a wonderful big box of groceries. We looked up and down the little dirt street in every direction. In our little country town everyone knew everyone else and everybody knew their neighbor's business. We could see no one—no car, nothing!

Oh, we were so happy! With great excitement we hauled the groceries inside. We happily dug through that box and helped Mom put everything away. Our refrigerator and cupboards now held lots of food. We thanked the Lord and after a while, sat down to a wonderful feast.

"Mom," we asked, "Who do you think brought us all this good food?"

She smiled and simply replied, "Let's just thank the Lord for providing!"

One thing we did know: God heard and answered our mother's prayer of faith. 

He Could Have Called Ten Thousand Angels

Paul A. Miller, Millersburg, OH

In a message given given at a communion service on April 22, 2012, at Center A.M. Church, Bro. Paul addressed the topic of angels. This is a condensation of that message. In the course of the message the congregation sang the song with the refrain in the title. —PLM

Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Who carries out God's will in heaven? The angels do. Who carries out God's will on earth? To a much larger degree than I used to realize, the angels do.

The Bible is permeated from beginning to end with angels. The first appearance of angels in the Bible is in Genesis 3:24 where the cherubim were sent to guard the way to the tree of life lest the fallen state of mankind

become permanent. The last mention of angels is in Revelation 22:16, where it says, "I Jesus have sent my angels to testify unto thee these things in the churches."

Think about the hymns we sing. They frequently mention angels. It is difficult to focus on one text for this message, but we read in 2 Kings 6:15-17. "And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.

And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

Too often our eyes are dim and our faith is weak when it comes to recognizing God’s legions of angels who work on our behalf. When Peter was in prison in Acts 12, the church was praying. An angel was at work in response to the church’s prayers and delivered Peter from prison. When Peter arrived at the door, they said that it was his spirit. It illustrates how hard it is for earth-bound mortals to see the activity of heaven’s angels working here on earth on our behalf. That’s why we should pray the prayer that Elisha prayed for his servant.

I think we tend to acknowledge the presence of fallen angels more than the presence and activity of holy angels. We want to consider God’s holy angels, who work to protect and preserve God’s people. The whole world is a battle field between God and Satan, between good and evil, between good angels and fallen angels, and between holy men and wicked men. (Ephesians 6:11,12). We need not fear, for God is dispatching His holy angels to minister to the physical care,

protection and guidance we need. I hope looking at this topic will give us greater confidence to walk faithfully before Him without fear. We trust in Almighty God, whose power is greater than Satan’s power.

First we shall look at how angels minister to mankind. We shall note how they minister to believers and to unbelievers. Hebrews 1:14 says, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Angels watch over us. As Paul engaged in ministry, he did battle. He said, “I die daily.” He meant that he was daily at risk of death. When he woke up in the morning, he would consecrate his life to Christ and was prepared to die that day for The Faith. He said in 1 Cor. 4:9, “For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.” He acknowledged that the angels in heaven are watching and observing the affairs of mankind, especially God’s children, on earth.

Angels watch over the church. The different orders of angels are observing what goes on here in the church. (Eph. 3:10) Angels watch over the sisters in our churches. Special mention is made of this in 1 Corinthians 11:10, “For this reason ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels,” who are observing what goes on in the church. Are they not also watching over the brethren? Of

course, they are. In case we think we do not merit angelic care, I think the angels are very busy watching over man's foolishness. Men also need to be in submission to God. It is noteworthy that the covering which Christian sisters wear to acknowledge that they are finding their place in God's order, is observed by angels.

While Philip was ministering in Samaria, an angel came to him and told him to go toward Gaza. His obedience laid the Christian foundation of what is found in Ethiopia today. In Acts 10:3, an angel of God came to Cornelius in a vision. In Acts 11, Peter cited that angel's appearance as God's inclusion of the Gentiles in salvation. Just think of the magnitude of this decision! Christian Jews decided to include the Gentile believers as equals in the church on the basis of a message delivered by an angel.

Angels chasten us. For instance: David's foolish census and Balaam's speaking donkey.

Angels provide for us. Hagar needed water for Ishmael and God sent an angel. Psalm 78 refers to manna that God gave as "angel food." An angel brought nourishment to Elijah which carried him through the next forty days. Today He still provides for us in supernatural ways that are sometimes hidden from our eyes.

Angels protect us. When the three Hebrew men were thrown into the furnace, a heavenly being was in there with them. When Daniel spent

the night in the lion's den without being harmed, he said, "God has sent his angel who hath shut the lions' mouths" and they didn't hurt him. In the shipwreck in Acts 27, Paul said an angel stood beside him and assured him they'd all be saved. One of my favorite incidents about angel's delivering God's servants is given in Acts 5. Several apostles were put into prison for spreading the Gospel by men who did not believe in angels. That night an angel of God went into the prison and led them out and told them to go back to the temple and proclaim "all the words of this life." When men went to fetch the escapees for trial, they found the prison secure, but the prisoners were gone. They finally found them in the temple teaching again. You no doubt know of miraculous angelic deliverance that has occurred, especially on the frontiers of Gospel outreach.

Angels also attend us when we die. In Luke 16, Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom.

Angels will gather the "elect from the four winds" at the last. (Matthew 24:31)

Angels minister to unbelievers in only one way: They are God's executioners. The angel of the Lord smote Herod so that he died (Acts 12:23). In Revelation, repeatedly angels appear as emissaries of judgment. They will bring vengeance upon wickedness. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, includes this description: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not

God....” Angels are the instruments of God’s wrath and judgment.

Sooner or later, all of us will receive the ministry of angels. It is our decision as to what kind of ministry that will be. Which do you think the angels of God would rather do? Would they rather minister to a believer or carry out the judgment and wrath of God? In Luke 15, where Jesus gave three incidents of lost things being found, He said, “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” The answer is obvious.

The angels minister to God. In Isaiah 6, we see how busy they are. In Revelation 4, it says they rest not day or night. In Revelation 5, innumerable angels bring praise to God. They are ministers of service. Luke 1:9 says that a messenger was sent to Zacharias, an angel answering which said, “I am Gabriel and I stand in the presence of God.”

The law was delivered by angels. In Acts 7:38, Stephen says that an angel spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai when he received the tables of the law. Angelic assistance was given that was not recorded in Exodus.

Angels restrain evil here on earth. While the Holy Spirit is given as a restrainer who restrains evil from within. He appeals to our internal values. Angels are more outward in their protection from evil.

Angels repeatedly ministered to and protected Christ. An angel predicted

Christ’s birth. Before Christ’s birth, the Angel Gabriel was sent from heaven to earth to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin whose name was Mary. Here was the angel’s message: “Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.” (the Son of God) How might this have seemed for the angels that their Lord should be made a little lower than they and go to earth? I wonder how Gabriel felt about that.

The second thing recorded that angels did for Christ was to announce His birth. When He was born, the sky over Bethlehem lit up with heavenly glory. “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace good will toward men.” Such was their response as they saw that their Lord would indeed walk on earth.

Angels cared for Him during His life on earth. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to go to Egypt, then back to Israel, and on to Nazareth. It seems that Satan was always nipping at Jesus’ heels, to kill Him before He could carry out the work of redemption. The angels repeatedly kept Him safe.

Apparently, the devil knew what was up, so he took Him to the pinnacle of the temple and said, “If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their

hands they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” He left out a key point. While that may not be important, it is clear that he knew that the angels were taking care of Jesus. After Jesus had fasted for 40 days, He was very hungry. In that time, Satan threw his worst temptations at Jesus. Jesus stood firm and behold the angels came and ministered to Him.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Luke records that as Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweating blood, He prayed, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.” In that hour of extreme agony, there appeared an angel from heaven to strengthen Him. Compare that with His disciples who fell asleep. Perhaps this is a comment on the inability of mortal men to care for their own spiritual needs and how dependent we are upon heaven.

Angels attended Jesus’ resurrection. An angel of the Lord came and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb and sat on it. Angels invited Jesus’ followers into the tomb and stood by attending the resurrection of Jesus. They asked, “Why seek ye the living among the dead?”

When was it that there were no angels caring for Jesus? It was when He was crucified. God did not strengthen Him when He staggered under the load of carrying the cross on the way to Calvary. Another man was drafted

to do it. Nor did God send an angel in those hours of agony on the cross. That’s when Jesus cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The Bible does not tell us this but I believe that Gabriel would have been eager to go at God’s command and rescue Jesus from His excruciating suffering. Perhaps Gabriel was waiting for the nod that never came. When Jesus was arrested, Peter drew his sword. Jesus said, “Put it away. Don’t you know that legions of angels are available to rescue Me?”

The lifting of the cup of suffering and death must have been an enormous undertaking and unwelcome price to be paid for our salvation. When Jesus asked if there was not another way, the answer came that there is no other way. If there is no other way, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, “not my will, but Thine be done.” Then He drank that bitter cup of the wrath of God. But He did not have to do it.

Some of those who stood around the cross are mentioned. Some are actually named. A number walked by who wagged their heads and looked up at Jesus and said, “Others He saved, Himself He cannot save. If thou be the son of God come down from there.” Is that not the height of audacity? The created were mocking their Creator.

What was it that held Jesus on the cross? Not the nails or the ropes. It was His love for us.



The Beachy Amish Mennonite Website: Connecting Seekers and Churches – *Part 2*

Cory Anderson | 28539 SR-751, Newcomerstown, OH 43832

330-897-1426 (home)

Last month, we observed how many people in today's society are looking for a church like conservative Anabaptists offer. They may find the Beachy-AM.org website and get referred to a church. Then, the Sunday comes when they show up.

So, what can insiders do to help when a seeker shows up in your church?

First, truly desire these people. Jesus gave the Great Commission. Many Beachy churches started largely because of a desire to reach out to non-plain people. Do we really want them, even if they upset our fruit baskets? Maybe we don't mind if one or two families join, but what if we have the goal of making our churches 50% or more first-generation Anabaptists? There are enough inquiries from seekers to attain this number, if we could keep all the people who come. Only one domestic Beachy church has attained this percentage: Little Flock of Harrison, Arkansas.

Second, learn to know these people. When they first visit, talk to them. If you're at a loss for conversation starters, try these: Ask them what their job is and what it is like to do *that* where they grew up; what their hobbies are and what *that* is like, how far they have ever traveled, and what interests them about your church (this is an easy segue into a spiritual conversation). Hold off on personal questions, beliefs, religious background, family issues, and so on. Their standard of what is too personal to ask is often somewhat different from ours. They may have more questions for you if they see you're interested in answering them. Don't apologize for your church! No young man tells a young lady all his

bad points on their first date. Seekers are not expecting perfection, but they are looking for people who are striving for it.

Third, like your church and like your Christian heritage. They liked it. They liked it so much, they were willing to sacrifice their relatives, friendships, clothes, gadgets, sometimes jobs, sometimes homes and familiar settings, sometimes even spouses and children to join you. If church members have contempt for the church and the church's ways, seekers will easily despair. They may reason: why pay such a high personal price to be with people who don't even seem to like being where they are?

Fourth, let them learn and explore. If they want to see how their views on Calvinism measure up against yours, let them. If they want to dress Swartzentruber Amish, let them. If they are divorced and remarried, don't run them off with gossip. If they talk at length during testimony time, give them that opportunity. It will take time for them to learn how well they fit in, time to pick up on the patterns and behaviors of others and adopt those behaviors. If we censor them, gang up on them, tell them that "all these things we do" aren't really that important, or try to force them through our ethnic-religious "play dough factory," we will likely chase them off. If something really does

get out of hand, and the informal lack of approval of the people is not enough to handle the situation (2 Corinthians 2:5-8), a one-to-one talk is most effective. In the contact, be willing to have your own world stretched a little bit, too.

Fifth, be slow to conclude that they are not coming for religious reasons. Seekers may say kind things about our food, dress, a capella singing, sewing and quilts, and other lifestyle features. Are they coming only for culture? They suspect these things are important to you and want to show their approval. They may also be implying that they see Jesus' teachings lived out in practical ways in our culture. Even for the rare ones that come *only* for the lifestyle, we hope they can see Christ in it.

Finally, if they do end up leaving, reflect on where the church may have let them down instead of how they brought upon themselves their own retreat. These people are seekers. They are vulnerable. They opened up to you like curious and learning children. We must be on guard against offending them, for our soul's sake, if nothing else. (Matthew 17:5-7; Luke 17:1-2). It may have been a specific incident, but it is more likely a broader pattern that turned them off.

As an addendum, in carrying out this internet-based project, I certainly seek to bless and encourage

those churches which have chosen to embrace a Christian lifestyle free of this technology. There are blessings to be harvested. I place priority on getting seekers to a congregation where face-to-face relationships may develop and deepest knowledge acquisition occurs, away from the computer. Also, while this is a

personal project, I strive to represent our people accurately and well, and I invite input.

Also, there are frequently requests from women looking for a pen pal. Most do not live near a plain church. If any women would like to make themselves available, please let me know.



helpers at home

And Ye Fathers

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

Summer arrives along with special occasions: graduations, weddings, vacations and so on. One of these special days is Father's Day, which affects all of us. We all have or have had a father.

I realize that there are some of you reading this who may have never known your earthly father. You may experience an emptiness in your hearts because of this lack of care and protection. I hope you have found the love and security of your Heavenly Father. There are others who have never felt loved by their earthly father. They may have experienced verbal or physical abuse from him. If that is your case, I encourage you to find someone with whom you can share your heart. A child's picture of God is according to

what he experiences with his earthly father. I have had grown women tell me they find it difficult to see God as a God of love and mercy, because of the harshness they experienced from their earthly father.

Imagine with me the many children today growing up with a single mother. Many have never experienced a loving father in their lives, so their perspective of God is extremely distorted. However, we must remember that no parent is perfect and all will make mistakes. I believe a key for fathers (or mothers) is the ability to ask forgiveness. A child sees the parent making a mistake, getting angry or whatever it may be. When the child hears the parent ask for forgiveness, it will help to erase that incident from his mind.

At the same time, we may not blame a parent for all the bad choices a child makes or excuse ourselves because of our parents. Finally, each one is accountable for his or her own life.

Perhaps we do not remember our parents (especially father) telling us that they love us. Maybe our father did not give us hugs and kisses. In the past many men were not accustomed to showing physical expressions of love to their children. They did not read books on parenting, go to seminars or hear messages with such specifics. However, many of us knew by our father's actions that we were loved. I do not remember my father giving me verbal expressions of love, yet I did not doubt his love for me. He showed love by the things he did for us. After he became older and especially after my mother died, he became more emotional and more vocal about his feelings. A special memory I have is seeing him at the kitchen table with his open Bible. I remember one day I walked in and found him crying. When I asked him why he was crying, he replied, "I was praying for you." Today, I honor that memory.

Probably most of you who are reading this have had fathers whom you love and respect. Thank God for this blessing, not just on Father's Day, but every day. If your father is living, use Father's Day as a time to express your love to him. We can express

our love through cards or telephone calls. Take time to write a letter and tell your father what you admire and appreciate about him. Talk about things that meant a lot to you when you were growing up. I can nearly guarantee that letter will never find its way to the waste can, but will be read many times.


The Bible tells us to honor our parents. Other words used to express honor are: *show respect, esteem, admire, appreciate value, cherish, adore, and reverence*. You could do some work around the house for him. Take him out for dinner, just the two of you. Visit him, and ask him for stories about his childhood.

Now, for a word to us wives. How can we honor our husbands this Father's Day? Maybe you thought love on Father's Day refers only to our fathers. Our husbands are the fathers of our children. We need to honor them for that. We can help our younger children do something special for Daddy on his important day. They might make homemade gifts or cards. Show the children how to treat Daddy like a king. He is to be a king at home.

Prepare his favorite meal. Perhaps you could surprise him with a picnic or a barbecue. It is important that your children see that you respect and honor your husband—not only on Father's Day, but always. They will know if you look up to him as the leader, the head of

the house. They will learn that the final decision is up to Daddy; they can't run to Mama and use her to change that decision. We value our husbands when we recognize their physical limitations. If they come home tired after a hard day's work, give them opportunity to rest before loading them with more work.

Do not cause the children to fear

Daddy by using him as a threat or disciplinarian. Respect your husband as the spiritual leader of your home. He needs your support; allow him the freedom to be himself. Praise your husband in front of the children. Honor your husband's integrity, his high principles, his character, his trustworthiness. A good man deserves a good woman's praise. 

junior messages

From Poverty to Professor

The Story of George Washington Carver

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

The small black baby was sleeping peacefully beside his mother. Suddenly, the quietness of the dark night was shattered by pounding hooves. The door burst open. The mother and her baby were stolen away, kidnapped by "night raiders" in the deep South in 1864.

The young woman was never seen again, but the tiny baby, George, was found and brought back to his mother's owners, the Carvers.

Susan Carver was a kind and gentle lady. She did all she could to nurse the thin, sickly baby back to health. As soon as he was old enough, she taught him to be handy around the

house. She also kindly taught the frail child to sew and knit.

Young George was keenly interested in plants and flowers. He loved all growing things. He would sometimes fall asleep with a bunch of blossoms in his hand. At times, he'd smuggle frogs, toads, or other creeping things into his bedroom. He always wanted to know the name of every stone, flower, or insect.

George greatly longed to go to school. The nearest school for black boys was eight miles away. He begged and pleaded so much that finally, when he was 11 years old, the Carvers consented. Tears ran down Susan's cheeks as she waved

him good-bye.

It was late that evening when George reached the school. He sat on a pile of logs nearby. His stomach growled. He felt lonely and forsaken, but his desire for an education kept him there.

Thank God that a kindhearted black lady, Mrs. Watkins, took pity on George. She not only gave him supper, she also gave him a home for as long as he attended school in her town. George was delighted to help with the laundry and keep the yard raked and the chickens fed to pay for his room and board.


Best of all, George attended church with the Watkins family. Mrs. Watkins (or Aunt Mariah, as George called her) taught him of Jesus, the children's friend. She taught him how to pray and to love the Bible. As soon as George could read, he read the best of all books.

On Christmas day, Aunt Mariah gave George a special treasure—a small black Bible. He loved to read it. Within the year, George had memorized large segments from

Genesis, Psalms, Proverbs, and the Gospels. The Word of God guided his life. When George was nearly 80 years old, he was still reading the same Bible daily!

With much hard work and diligence, George overcame poverty and racism. When treated rudely, he gave kindness in return. He became a brilliant scientist and professor, winning international fame for his agricultural research. He loved helping his people, teaching poor farmers how to grow better crops and how to save money. His goal was not wealth but service to whomever needed him!

Thomas Edison, the famous inventor, offered George W. Carver \$50,000 a year if he would work for him. Henry Ford would have given him large sums of money, if only he would come to Dearborn, Michigan. But George refused them both.

Dr. George Washington Carver led a long and useful life. He said, "It has always been one great goal of my life to be of the greatest good to the greatest number of people possible." 

I cannot recall of a single instance, in any of my reading, of a prophet who applied for the job.

Dear Youth,

This Month's QUESTION

This month's question: What changes would you expect to see if everyone were as dedicated to the Kingdom as the poor widow who gave her last two mites? —EE

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

This is what I would expect to see in a church where the members were dedicated to the Kingdom of Heaven like the poor widow:

- I'd expect that everyone would live in a modest but adequate house—no McMansions.

- I'd expect that everyone would drive a car that was reliable, but not new or fancy, i.e., a “tool” and not a “statement.”

- I'd expect everyone to have an amount of money that they needed to live on and give anything above that to the Lord—following the example of John Wesley.

- I'd expect everyone to have a mission field that they served in, whether it was in their neighborhood, the local jail, or the jungles of India.

- I'd expect 10-20% of the church to be in foreign missions with the money available to support them.

- I'd expect no one to have a retirement account, stock market holdings,

or a “nest egg.” Instead, these funds would have been invested in Heaven instead.

- I'd expect everyone to look for opportunities to witness. They wouldn't wait to witness until they were asked.

- In short, I'd expect the church to live as the Moravians did for over 100 years—to live as if Christ would return tomorrow and ask them what they did to further His Kingdom with the resources that He had entrusted to them.

Joshua Smith, Culdesac, ID

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As I read that account as recorded in Mark, my mind immediately goes to the poor, unselfish widow who in reality was far more rich and blessed than many of us today and those in that day that gave out of their abundance. I mean, look at her unselfishness and trust in God. She gave without any hesitation, out of her want, she gave all that she had, even ALL her living! That puts me to shame!

I think if we were all as sacrificial and unselfish today as we relate to the many needs around us like Paul and Silas, we would turn the world upside down! That's how powerful giving is, not only of our materiality, but also of ourselves, as well. I think our churches would stand out to the lost of the world even more because no matter how much or how little we have, we would always be happy and joyful just giving and giving. We would also be more like Christ. Jesus gave. He gave everything from leaving His home with the Father to suffering pain, mocking, beatings, rejection, and even giving up His body to be killed for us. That's what I call really giving!

Also I think as individuals in the body of Christ we would have not only a physical satisfaction, but also a spiritual satisfaction that only comes when giving unselfishly and without any reserves. The Apostle Paul gives us this instruction: "I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." God gave. Jesus gave. There's no reason we can't give without any hesitation!

Michelle Yoder, Gambier, OH



Commitment, surrender, unselfishness, and faith are the first words that came to mind while thinking about

the poor widow who gave her last two mites. I believe we would see a stronger commitment, first of all, to God, but also toward one another in the church, if we would give everything. Total surrender and unselfishness is very visible in this widow's life. She dedicated her life to the Kingdom and relied on the Father to take control. We give and are dedicated to the Kingdom, but many times the total surrender is not present. With total surrender to the Kingdom, and a more active faith, I believe the fervency in the church would rise to a whole new level.

Andrea Nisley, Meadville, PA



Revival! We would intentionally prepare our hearts before entering the worship service. Complete focus on God shows us more of His greatness and how small we really are.

We will look for ways to give. It takes care of the attitude of "what can I get out of this" that so easily sneaks in and lurks around, sowing discontentment and selfishness. When we think of doing everything for God, our responsibilities in the church become privileges rather than duties.

We would not waste energy pursuing what does not matter. If we direct that energy completely to God's work, we are able to do so much more. If everyone does his part, no one is left with too much to do because the load is shared. There would be no overload!

When everyone gives more than he takes, there is more than enough for everyone. We will be able to lean on each other and point each other to our Creator and do what we were made to do—to worship Him. Worship and fervent prayer are the result *and* the way to have the dedication that the poor widow demonstrated.

Even if we think our efforts are insignificant, we have a God who can take our feeble efforts and do “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph. 3:20)!

Keturah Yoder, Leesburg, OH

• • • • •

We would see growth in Attendance, Membership, Spirituality, Unity, and Persecution. We would see a decrease in Personal Possessions, Wealth, and Popularity.

Mission boards would have no problem recruiting workers. Churches would be overflowing with converts. The youth would be inspired to live whole-heartedly for God. Our hypocritical members would leave. And we would be poor as the widow who gave the meager sum of two mites, and that scares us.

The early Anabaptists and Hutterites gave everything they owned to the cause. They sent out missionaries. They were persecuted horribly, most often living in holes and caves, wherever they were allowed to live. They were hunted like animals. If we, the church, would live in this way, we

would find that Christ and what He offers us is more than Enough.

How can we begin living sacrificially? Step out in Faith, even if those around us do not. Even if others look down on us. Even if we feel like what we have to offer will not make a difference, just like the widow who gave her last two mites.

Andrea Webb, Aroda, VA

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Our churches would definitely be better places if we all had the concept of dedication that this poor widow had. She basically had nothing, but was willing to give everything she did have for the cause of Christ. We as Christians can be so selfish and think only of ourselves and what would be beneficial to us. I think if we are sincere about following Jesus and walking His way we need to be willing to give everything for the church. If we would do that, I believe that there would be more love and unity among the brotherhood, instead of discord and strife. We would learn to help each other and be willing to lay down our life for our brother. I think we would also be more willing to serve others and to recognize that we are all made equal in God’s eyes and that everyone has value and worth. Let us be faithful and dedicated to the Kingdom and make a difference wherever we are!

Katelyn Yoder, McVeytown, PA



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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

When we become too glib in prayer, we are most surely talking to ourselves.

• • • • •

Pride and arrogance sometimes get into the church of God, and that's bad,
Brother.

• • • • •

God will not let you high-hat somebody else if you are a Christian.

• • • • •

Jesus had no servants. He bossed nobody around. He was the Lord, but He never
took the tyrannical attitude toward anybody.

• • • • •

Moses said, "I can't," and God said, "Moses, I know you can't; but go and do it!"

• • • • •

God can work through a talent if it is consecrated to Him. But you can have the
talent and still not have Him working through you.

• • • • •

Christ is not a member of any political party. He stands outside of and above
every party. His kingdom was not of this world.

• • • • •

I love Jesus because He is my Savior and I fear him because He is my Judge. I
don't want to be judged by a seraphim who never felt a pain.

Quotes from:

From A. W. Tozer