



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

Galatians 6:14

JULY 2012

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July 2012

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 To propagate sound Biblical doctrine;
 To stimulate a deeper study of God's Word;
 To anchor and fortify the faith of Christians;
 To point lost and dying souls to Christ the Savior;
 To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;
 And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.

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

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 P.O. Box 400, Slanesville, WV 25444
 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
 11558 Hwy. 198, Guys Mills, PA 16327
 ec.eby.ar@gmail.com | 814-789-3209

Junior Messages Editor:

Mrs. Mary Ellen Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624

Helpers at Home Editor:

Mrs. Mary June Glick
 1080 Return Church Rd., Seneca, SC 29678

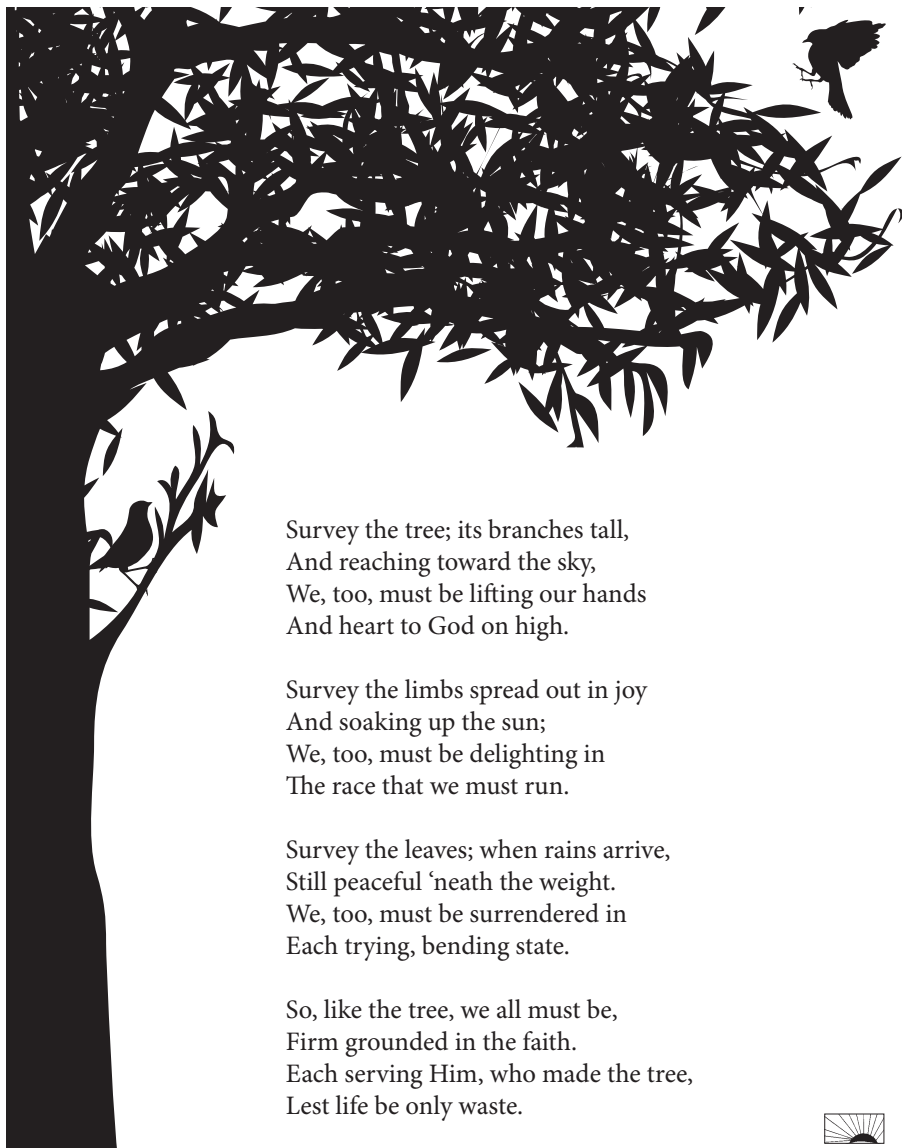
Circulation Manager/Treasurer:

Mark I. Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624
 markbeachy@afo.net | 330-852-2982

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Like the Tree

Janette Hooley, age 16, Osceola, TX



Survey the tree; its branches tall,
And reaching toward the sky,
We, too, must be lifting our hands
And heart to God on high.

Survey the limbs spread out in joy
And soaking up the sun;
We, too, must be delighting in
The race that we must run.

Survey the leaves; when rains arrive,
Still peaceful 'neath the weight.
We, too, must be surrendered in
Each trying, bending state.

So, like the tree, we all must be,
Firm grounded in the faith.
Each serving Him, who made the tree,
Lest life be only waste.



A Walk Through Ephesians

I grew up walking with a slight limp. After I was grown, doctors figured that Perthes Disease had hit me as a young child. My mother had noted that I seemed more eager to walk at one year than at two years, but in the Great Depression not every discomfort got prompt medical attention. Leg Perthes probably hit some time in my second year. It left a damaged ball joint that seriously impacted my mobility. Finally, many decades later, with two right hip replacements (the first in 1990, the second in 1999 to correct the first) my walking has greatly improved. Do I run now? No! But, thank God, my cane and crutches are gathering dust!

But let us go on to more important things. How one walks physically is not nearly as important as how one walks spiritually. That's where Paul's letter to the Ephesians (and to us all) applies. So let us consider seven times that some form of *walking* appears in Ephesians (plus one in Isaiah). Some warn us, some encourage us, but all bless us:

- **Regeneration.** In 2:2, Paul mentions a time in the past when our progress was poor. "Wherein in time past ye *walked* according to the

course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." This fact needn't stop us, but it bears out the fact that the battle for virtue could never have been won in our own strength.

- **Reality.** In 2:10, we are reminded how better things are made possible: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should *walk* in them." Although good works do not save us, Christ within produces good works. These do not show how good we are; they show God's mercy and grace. The fruits of the new life are the result of life within.

- **Dependence.** In 4:1-3, Paul challenges us to *walk* worthy of the Lord. This worthiness makes no big splash. It is shown in "lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" and in serious effort for "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." God gives His children peace within, so naturally, we look for ways to be peacemakers. Humility just does what it can. Self-exaltation blesses no one. Humble testimony

causes men, when they see it joined to good works, to glorify God.

• **Freedom.** In 4:17, we are warned about walking in step with unbelievers, who “*walk* in the vanity of their minds, having their understanding darkened,” because they still are “cut off from the new life” of Christ in God. Such willfulness causes them to walk in lasciviousness (moral impurity), uncleanness (dishonesty) and greed (covetousness). Even believers must be careful about habit. It should be the pull *up* of a good habit—not the pull *down* of a bad habit. We may be tempted to indulge in degrading acts and attitudes, but we must never succumb to them. Christian freedom is not freedom to sin—neither in sins of the flesh (for example, drunkenness) nor in sins of the spirit (for example, harshness).

• **Beauty.** In 5:2, the Apostle admonishes us to *walk* in Christlike love, which is expressed in sacrificial service that is the delight of all who love Him. Like the perfume of lilacs and roses in spring, grateful testimony invites grateful pause. The beauty of a redeemed spirit produces attractiveness that is out of reach of those who have climbed up some other way (John 10:2). Any self-righteous attitude we may wear, cannot compare with the garment of grateful praise. This godly

magnetism is reserved for those who are forgiven—who know it and show it.

• **Openness.** In 5:8, he reminds us of the futility of our former *walk*. To walk in unbelief, guilt, and shame is to walk in darkness. After we confess our sins to Jesus and He sets us free, we can *walk* with free conscience and genuine joy. There’s no need to be secretive lest people know what we do in private. We have nothing to hide.

• **Overconfidence.** In 5:15, he tells us to walk carefully. To *walk circumspectly* is to walk with awareness of danger ahead. He tells us to walk “not as fools, but as wise.” Fools may joke about carelessness; wise people watch their step.

• **Stamina.** Finally, Isaiah 40:31 ensures endurance for the Christian’s walk: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall run and not be weary, and *they shall walk and not faint.*”

Jesus promised us His staying power in trial: “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 10:22). So the good news from Jesus is that when we walk with Christ, because we know Who walks with us, our hesitant shuffle is changed to a purposeful stride. He gives us grace, direction, strength, and joy for the journey. *Thank you, Jesus!*

—PLM 

Overstirred and Overstimulated

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The seed thought for this article comes from an article in *Sword and Trumpet*, Sept., 2009. Author James Rudy Gray says Americans have a new addiction. It is being overstimulated. He says our society is being consumed by “the proliferation of high-tech communication, education, and entertainment.” He says the measure of success in almost any endeavor has become the measure of excitement it brings.

Gray speaks from an American and Protestant perspective. We as Mennonites are often running on parallel tracks with such and console ourselves with the supposition that our slower speed gives us different direction. Worldly people are driven with very high speed, we say. Meanwhile, we might only be going in the same direction at a slower pace.

A recent news article said people are driving less and use texting more as a way to connect. The “skype” connection allows people to see and talk (and laugh or cry) without the bother of going across town to visit in person. Such instant

electronic communication makes poor connection.

Radio and TV make a barrage of constant stimulation. News magazines and newspapers keep up their own type of agitation. Cell phones and E-mail are daily presenters of news and views. Multi-connections become our daily diet. After one day without any of the above, we may feel starved. Why? Overstimulation is the new normal. We have allowed ourselves to be geared up by it.

Summer is here. Let’s go on vacation and unwind. Two full days is all we can spare. We leave some time on Friday and need to be back by Sunday evening. Our business or our job can hardly go on without us. The vacation agenda of fishing and boating, playing volleyball and grilling steaks keeps everyone on the move. The only part that is laid back is literally that—sleeping in every morning. But, no wonder, with playing games at night until 1:00 a. m., sleep becomes the wonderful diversion!

Now that vacation is over, getting back in the fast lane is great. We didn’t miss much, thanks to E-mails and cell

phones. The two days before and also after vacation are pretty hectic. There was so much to do before going and so much to catch up on at returning, that it feels good to have vacation out of the way for another year.

Overstimulation. We learn to live with it. But how did this treadmill start?

For one thing, family budgets are tighter. Buying, and even borrowing, by credit card is much too easy and becomes a trap to some of us. We presume on tomorrow, assuming it will be easier to pay off as a charge account than to save money in advance.

Employment is demanding, as is being self-employed. We have created a life style under peer pressure and self-chosen desires that cost extra money.

Many of our communities are within an easy commute to shopping malls and eye-catching attractions. Time and money can easily be consumed away from home in our pursuit of pleasure and leisure.

Our own church schools may add to overstimulation. My wife and I raised our family in an era that brought an increase of home work with term papers and required extra-curricular projects. It becomes an encroachment of family time. It has taken away the child's creativity and time to dream. Time at school has to be exciting now, so the students don't become too bored. Stimulating, isn't it? Then

do your school's home work at home. It used to be that school was for doing school work and home was family time of play and some chores.

That's the problem. What is the cure?

Nowhere in life does one size fit everyone. One family among us decided they would go away from home only one night per week. That's it. Does this family have children? Young people? Will that one night be to visit aged parents, or prayer meeting, or school PTF, or a supper invitation, or visitation to a friend's mother who died? To go away only one night per week? That may be a bit much at first.

Another family made one night per week as family night. No exceptions—each Thursday evening. That seems like a better place to start. Or consider making it two evenings a week at home. Sometimes something has to be cut out. Make it workable; be flexible. Don't make it a tyrannizing idol.

School spirit is a good thing. Somehow, probably unintentionally, the typical family is more controlled by the school's schedule than either the home's or the church's schedule. School comes first. Schools make their calendar for the school year. Everyone obliges. Even at home, school work comes first. Some children have missed going with the rest of family to church because of it. An older teen can stay at home with the child needing to

do school work.

A few ideas about the church's program: At Weavertown, we do not have prayer meeting at church. We encourage people to participate in a Bible study group who meets in their homes once per month. Sunday evening services are only once per month at church. We encourage families to visit each other. Friends and families get together; youth are entertained in homes; and shut-ins and the aged are visited on other Sunday evenings.

Overstimulation can make people weary from too much going. They still show up, but hope others will engage or entertain. They end up giving minimums rather than full strength. Sometimes "the blower keeps running after the fire has gone out."

Overstimulation can cause burnout, which is caused by too much, too long, too often. It is aggravated by having people fail to keep their commitments. Here it's not the size of the church that matters. The question to ask is, "Is this serving us or are we serving it?"

Overstimulation can drain spiritual adrenalin. The initiation of a new program is great for those who had a vision for it and got it started. A generation or two later, people become weary of it. Meanwhile, they start something new and eventually they get weary of it. Meanwhile, others start something new and they are

expected to keep the old programs—plus the newer ones—in motion.

Overstimulation can rob us of quiet time. Quiet time is vital, and revitalizing. Just to sit and think. Reminisce. Plan. Write. Draw. Pray. Read. Practice your whistle. Get out your old harmonica. Check up on your diary tens years ago.

Overstimulation has no time to stop and chat with a neighbor, or stroke the bothersome family cat, or tend to a pen of half a dozen laying hens, and other such things that don't pay.

Some of us are wound too tight. Unwinding must not be something that makes too many demands on our schedule, our wallet, or our energies. A fast-paced vacation can end up actually adding more stress than it relieves.

God gave us one day in seven as a day of rest. Quite suitably, the first day of the week is a day to be renewed in spirit, soul, and body. Beginning the week with a day of rest is a help toward a good week.

When Sunday is mostly just sleeping in, grudgingly attending church, engaging in travel, spending time in sports, or worrying about business matters, the week neither gets off to a good start nor does it end well. Likewise, brooding over soured relationships adds to our stress factors, despite singing and praying at church.

Physical rest does not automatically produce rest for the soul and spirit.

It can take an incredible amount of energy to nurse a grudge, or to combat anger in the heart, or to argue internally with a brother.


Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Rest is noted with *trust*. Trust gives the power to wait on God. Waiting in trust is restful.

Rest is rooted in *thanksgiving*. Being thankful is an expression of satisfaction, of contentment. Thanksgiving makes much of its bounty.

Rest is clear in its *testimony of peace*.

Peace makes few demands, is blessed in its supply. Peace is a gift from God.

Rest is expressive in its *joy*. The eyes are clear, even sparkling. The exuberance is real and contagious. The mouth curves upward, smiling.

The Bottom Line is that our spiritual electric meter may be running too fast by reason of a fast-paced life. When the bill comes due, it is too high. We can't get a refund of time and energy spent, but we can repent and get a new start. Begin with the Lord, His Word, prayer, meditation, and set realistic goals. Slow down the overstimulated activity and gird up the loins of the mind. 

A Look at Christian Counseling

David L. Miller, Partridge, KS

In the medical profession most of the practitioners are specialists. Family doctors and general practitioners are a small minority of medical doctors. Special training and a narrowed field of practice should provide better health care in a given field. Of course, there are many minor ailments that do not require trained medical attention.

We humans are not just physical beings. We also have emotional and spiritual dimensions that sometimes need outside attention. In most cases, such needs do not require medical intervention.

Such needs are often such that

local pastoral care would seem the most likely resource to help bring emotional and spiritual healing. When the counsel of non-local "specialists" is sought, it incurs the risk of simplistic, mistaken diagnosis, based on perceived symptoms of the counselee and others who may be negatively implicated by false conclusions.

People who struggle with emotional needs often suffer silently. They should feel free to seek counsel from within the body of like-minded believers. It is important that they do not feel isolated or neglected. They are entitled to get help. They are also entitled to

guidance that would protect them from damaging counsel.

I am inclined to agree with a non-local brother who believes that our constituency urgently needs to carefully review counseling options that are available. Such a review might well call for closer practical involvement.

These comments should not be understood to cast negative suspicion on all counseling ministries being carried on in our communities. There are reasons to believe that much good is being accomplished. A careful review should include examination of basic doctrines held by the counselors, their perception of accountability, and whether or not counselees are being helped to emotionally stable and useful living.

I am aware of two separate instances of rebellious daughters who received counseling, then accused their father of sexual misconduct, but later admitted that their earlier accusations were simply not true. Those confessions were needful, but could not possibly repair the damage done by their earlier falsehood. This underscores the importance of receiving negative reports with reservation. Eagerly

spreading negative reports is not a mark of Christian maturity.

Self-proclaimed specialists who are only accountable to themselves are one good reason why this issue needs serious attention. Mistaken conclusions can cause accusations by counselees and untold stigma to innocent victims. People of integrity will sincerely regret having spread wrong information. Church leaders may want to make provision for public, personal confession.

The concerns expressed in this article are not meant to downplay the seriousness of sexual misconduct. Offenders have sinned and may also have broken civil laws that could result in court-ordered penalties.

Victims need someone who will want to help them recover from a horrible injustice that can leave deep emotional scars. The burden of this message is two-fold: We need group awareness of counselors whose counseling philosophy is doctrinally safe from a Christian perspective. Counselors who are accountable only to themselves are inherently suspect. A second concern is that we realize the seriousness of unwittingly or otherwise spreading unfounded allegations.



***Beware of using a ton of words
to express a pound of thought.***

Israel Report

Donnavon Graber, Jerusalem, Israel

May 13 – In 2006, during Hebrew studies, I saw firsthand the bewildered and amazed Israeli reaction to the forgiving and loving Amish responses to the Nickel Mines shooting. Jesus’ call to overcoming evil with good has certainly been proven effective. Unfortunately, it is considered ineffective because of the difficulty of practicing it. Indeed, it is only possible to exercise Jesus’ love through His power and it is precisely the impossibility of loving like Jesus that makes us turn to Him for the power to love as He loves.


This region needs more examples of responses like Nickle Mines. Instead of this attitude, there is an attitude of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” Earthly kingdoms have to operate on this principle to restrain evil and it is not our business to interfere with their business. God has ordained them for this. However, God’s children must not descend to that level of operation when God has called us higher. We Anabaptists must beware of this trap. I well remember speaking to a conservative

Anabaptist during Operation Cast Lead who told me he wonders why “they don’t just go in there and take care of them.” I have heard many similar responses from among our people that seem to come from an unforgiving attitude rather than a loving one.

Jesus forgave us completely and unreservedly for sin that deserved death and He died for us to redeem us from this deserved death and judgment. Jesus also said that in the same way that we forgive, we are forgiven. When we have the attitude of “an eye for an eye,” we forget that in this judgment of others we are judging ourselves. We are condemning ourselves because we are insisting that others pay the price for their sin, while we ourselves have been forgiven and someone else paid the price for our sin. If we truly recognize how amazingly generous God has been to us, we will be truly generous in our attitudes towards others. When this attitude spreads, the world begins to change!

Lag BaOmer fell on Thursday of the past week. This is the 33rd day of the

49-day countdown from the firstfruit offering of barley to the firstfruit offering of wheat. This 49-day period is generally a period of mourning because according to the Talmud, 24,000 disciples of Rabi Akiva died during this countdown. However, a

certain respected rabbi died on the 33rd day of this countdown, and because he told his followers that his death should be marked by celebration instead of mourning, today is being celebrated with bonfires, music, and (segregated) dancing. 

Preparing For The Days Ahead

Linford Bontrager, Goshen, IN

I was asked to write on this subject for *The Woodlawn Chronicle*. I quote Marv Rosenthal from a letter he wrote to the subscribers of his magazine, *Zion's Fire*. "These are difficult days that try the souls of men and quite frankly, I think that living a godly life is going to get much more difficult in the days ahead. I realize that not one of us wants to hear that life is going to become more difficult. That is simply not a pleasant subject. But, as believers, we must discern the signs of the times. And we must not run from the truth.

"Young people don't like the message of difficult times because they want to pursue their dream of 'the good life,' and what that may mean to them."

"Older people don't like the

message because they want their children and grandchildren to experience 'the good life' as they remember it."

"And many people, of all ages, don't like the message of increasing difficulty because they find it to be, in their words, 'an unpleasant, and even fearful message.'" (end of quote)

So, let me ask, what can help us prepare for the future? Time and space will allow for only abbreviated comments. These are not listed in order of importance, necessarily. They are interrelated. Each person must mind the Spirit of God, responding to what He calls us personally to do to prepare for the days ahead. When God puts His finger on an area in our life that needs changing, may we not be as

the rich young ruler who was not willing.

1. We need a vital, ongoing relationship with Jesus, fellowship, connection. This abiding in Christ is the key to having the “oil in our lamps.”

2. In facing the coming storm, we must try to have Jesus’ mindset in all things. (1 John 4:17) Jesus was not moved (agitated, shaken, or disturbed) by problems, evils, or coming events. What is the secret for Jesus not being fearful or panicky? Jesus continually sought out secret places to be shut in with His Father. And it was only after being in God’s presence that Christ came forth to minister, fully persuaded that his Father was in complete control. Therefore, He had confidence.

If we are going to face the coming storm, we need to be prepared so that our spirit is not easily disturbed. The only way to do that is to spend time in the Father’s presence, beholding his face. We have to be shut in with Him—on our knees, practicing his presence, seeking Him—until we are thoroughly persuaded He’s at our right hand.

3. These times demand special trust. Intimate fellowship gives birth to great trust. Let’s pour out all our worries and our hearts before the Lord. As the days become more

frightful, there will arise a people of God who become bolder and bolder. These are believers who call daily on the name of the Lord, “so we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Heb. 13:6).

This special faith is a faith that endures, is obedient, is willing to step into the unknown, and does not despair when our livelihood is threatened. When calamity or a crisis comes, it sees the bigger picture. It is not offended at God when prayers are not answered as thought best. God is a sanctuary for those who have that special trust in Him. (Isa. 8:12-14).

This enduring faith is the committing of all things into God’s hands. Whenever we face afflictions and persecution, Satan sometimes comes to us whispering fears and lies: “How are you going to make it through this crisis? What will you do now? If God is faithful, how could He allow this to happen to you? How could He put your loved ones at risk this way? What will become of you, your family, your job, your ministry?” But enduring faith rises up and answers the enemy’s loaded questions: “Devil, you’re asking the wrong questions. The question for me right now is not how I’m going to make it. It is not what shall become

of me and mine. I have already placed everything—all afflictions, all trials, everything that concerns me—into my loving Father’s hands. I have trusted all future events to Him. And He has proved himself time after time. He is trustworthy with my future.”

With this established in our hearts, the question for us is, “How can I love, serve, and glorify my Lord better?” Enduring faith means casting ourselves wholly on the will of God. It seeks God’s concerns first and the desires of our hearts will then be given to us. (Matt. 6:33)

4. Be part of a sub-culture. We will not elaborate much on this point. Suffice it to say, we do well to maintain the good qualities and values of our heritage and brotherhood. These will stand to be a blessing and support as we face the days ahead.

5. Be serious about tearing out other gods in our lives. Fellowship with God, Jesus, and His wonderful Spirit will be stifled if we allow other loves to be foremost. If we really want to get ready for the days ahead, we must be in the way with Jesus. If we are halfway onto Jesus, we give place to the enemy.

We must grow in coming to the place where we are desensitized to the world with all its venerated

pleasures and magnetism. Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to bring about and to cause in our lives what Paul testified in Gal. 6:14. And let’s do what John says at the very end of his first epistle. (1 John 5:21).

6. Let go of pride. God will not give grace to the proud. (1 Pet. 5:5,6) Grace is that all-important key dynamic so necessary in the last days.

7. Redeem the time. (Eph. 5:16) We use our time for kingdom purposes, building God’s kingdom, not for frivolous and selfish pursuits. Lay up for future pleasures. Pursue entertainment less.

8. Be continuously filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 5:18) Walk, make choices that are according and after the Holy Spirit. Make our decisions daily, moment by moment with a consciousness of the presence of Jesus by the Holy Spirit and make those steps of decision like Jesus would want, that is walking and being filled with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a wonderful and precious Gift and He will make all the difference in our lives as we go through the days of tribulation. The Holy Spirit was given in love to help us. He is a dispenser of grace.


We are commanded in Eph. 4:30, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed

for the day of redemption.” “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God” essentially means not to hurt the One who loves us and is here to help us. When we grieve the Holy Spirit by our actions or attitudes and it continues, we may begin to feel guilty and dissatisfied with life. Then, joy and vigor diminish within us, only to be replaced by listlessness and lethargy. The oil in our lamp diminishes. Let us not mess with this all-important, life-giving dynamic, the One who gives the oil for our lamps. He seals us. He gives us an identity. We belong. And when hard tribulation times come He will at the right time deliver us.

9. Love God (all three in one) with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Discover His love for us and the treasure He is. Realize, understand, and experience the bride and bridegroom spiritual love relationship.

10. Develop sustainable living

methods and practices. Have less dependence on society around us. Choose to have little or no buying of luxuries. Cut down on spending. Sell unneeded items. Give to ministries that serve the poor and needy. Downsize. Be content with having food and raiment (clothing). (1 Tim. 6:8) Build our faith by reminding the Lord daily of his promises. Learn to pray for our daily bread.

In conclusion, amazing days lie ahead. It will be awesome to see the glory of God being revealed more and more. And some saints—perhaps even some of us—will run the final leg of the race. So let’s run, watch and be prepared. “Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith” (Heb. 12:1,2 NIV). It will be the grandest of all grand finales the world has ever known. 

***Fast transportation may have
made us neighbors, but it hasn’t
made us brothers.***

marriages

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

Eby-Yoder

Bro. Darrel, son of Donald and Linda Eby, Clearville, PA, and Sis. Lori, daughter of Jerry and the late Ruth Yoder, Grantsville, MD, at Cherry Glade Mennonite Church for Mt. View Mennonite Church on April 14, 2012, by Jerry Yoder.

King-Overholt

Bro. Paul, son of David and Linda King, Parkesburg, PA, and Sis. Kimberly, daughter of Joseph and Ruth Overholt, Minerva, OH, at First Christian Church for Calvary Chapel on April 14, 2012, by Leonard Overholt.

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Peter, Jr. and Melody Rose (Sommers), Salisbury, PA, third child, first son, Tyler Dante, May 21, 2012.

Coblentz, Glenn and Abigail (Brumbaugh), Bluffton, IN, sixth child, fifth dau., Sonia Renae, Feb. 26, 2012.

Coblentz, Kevin and Rebecca Anne (Petersheim), Oakland, MD, first child and dau., Emma Ruth, May 23, 2012.

Helmuth, Ernest and Danelle (Helmuth), Cumberland Furnace, TN, fifth child, fourth dau., Kari Ivanna, March 28, 2012.

Helmuth, Joseph and Grace (Horst), Lott, TX, first child and dau., Amy Grace, March 24, 2012.

Kuhns, Vernon and Christina (Gingrich), Lovington, IL, fourth child, third dau., April Genevieve, April 27, 2012.

Lengacher, Marcus and Glenda (Coblentz), Summersville, KY, third child, second son, Joshua Edison, March 26, 2012.

Mast, Lloyd and Ruth (Nissley), Millersburg, IN, fourth child, third dau., Kezia Faith, May 29, 2012.

Mast, Mark and Margaret (King), Vanleer, TN, fourth child, first son, Dwight David, May 15, 2012.

Miller, Aaron and Denise (Hershberger), Lott, TX, fourth child, second dau., Ellise Danae, May 18, 2012.

Miller, Lowell and Martha (Miller), Summersville, KY, second child and son, Jamin Lowell, March 2, 2012.

Nissley, Sanford and Renita (Schrock), Montezuma, GA, first child and dau., Delcia Faith, Feb. 24, 2012.

Overholt, Len and Naomi (Stoltzfus), Warsaw, IN, third child, first dau., Alicia Brooke, May 4, 2012.

Schlabach, Norman and Doreen (Martin), Auburn, KY, second child and son, Jared Lynn, May 6, 2012.

Stoltzfus, Daryl and Megan (Troyer), Advance, MO, first child and son, Wynston Cole, May 7, 2012.

Weaver, Lonnie and Evelyn (Glick), Antrim, OH, fourth child, third dau., Kyleah Grace, April 18, 2012.

Yoder, Andrew and Judith (Swartzen-truber), Montezuma, GA, fourth child, third dau., Lanelle Renae, April 20, 2012.

Yoder, Marlin and Anna (Raber), Cedar Creek, TX (serving in Kenya), fifth child, fourth dau., Zelah Ann, May 24, 2012.

Yoder, Steve and Charlene (Miller), Newcomerstown, OH, fourth child, first dau., Kiara Nicole, April 26, 2012.

Yoder, Victor and Marlene (Summy), Belvidere, TN, eighth child (one deceased), second dau., Monica Joy, April 26, 2012.

Miller, Harry, 86, died at his home in Arlington, KS, on May 3, 2012. He was born August 7, 1925, a twin to Perry, son of the late Levi D. and Clara (Nisly) Miller, in rural Hutchinson, KS. Harry served in CPS during World War II and in rebuilding in France after the war. He exemplified a grateful spirit and the gift of encouragement.

He was a member of Cedar Crest A.M. Church, Hutchinson.

On August 28, 1949, he was married to Orpha Wagler. She survives. Other survivors include six children: Yvonne, Chicago, IL; Leon (Holly) Miller, Millersburg, OH; Michael (Lois) Miller, Partridge, KS; Jean Ann (Wesley) Schrock, Arlington, KS; Erlis (Gesine) Miller, London, England; and Arlyn (Loretta) Miller, Arlington, KS; and 10 grandchildren. His brothers and sisters are Edwin (Nellie, deceased) Miller, Willis (Susie) Miller, Elizabeth (Raymond, deceased) Wagler, Perry (Judy) Miller, David (Mary) Miller, Mahlon (Fannie) Miller, Paul (Martha) Miller, Fred Miller, and Emma (Oliver) Troyer, all from the Hutchinson/Partridge community, Mary (Joseph) Beachy, Kalona, IA, and Daniel (Anne) Miller, deceased, Harrisonburg, VA.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Daniel.

A viewing and burial was held on May 5, with nephews Gary and Kenneth Miller serving. Burial was in the West Center Cemetery. Because two sons

were not able to return from Europe for the burial, a larger memorial service was then held on May 12, with pastors Lee Nisly, David Yoder, nephew Eldon Wagler, and grandsons Peter and John Miller participating.

Nafziger, Christina (Erb), 91, died peacefully, surrounded by her family at the Stratford General Hospital, Stratford, ON, on Feb. 28, 2012. She was born Dec. 30, 1920, in Wellesley Twp., daughter of the late Michael and Barbara (Gerber) Jantzi.


She was a faithful member of Fairhaven Amish Mennonite Church.

Her first husband was Dan W. Erb. Survivors include: children Nancy (Harold Wagler); Margaret (Peter Kuepfer); Delmer Erb (Mary); Harold Erb (Marie); Daniel Erb, Sandra Erb; Shelley (John Erb); Sheila (James Jantzi); Denise Bannerman; son-in-law, Melvin Roes (Marietta). Stepchildren: Calvin, Twila, Joyce, Leslie, Lucille, Bonita, Robert, Sara, Shirley, Cynthia, Yvonne,

and June; 34 grandchildren; 84 great grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by brothers and sisters-in-law: Jessie Jantzi, Annie Ropp, Annie Martin, Mary Zehr, and Amy (Norman Zehr), Melville Nafziger, Andy and Ruth Nafziger, Adeline King, Katherine Erb. Her brothers and sisters were: Peter, Daniel, Michael, Christian, Valentine, Rudolph, Benjamin, Magdalena, Annie, and Veronica.

Her adoptive parents were Joseph and Mary (Wagler) Gerber. Gerber siblings: Noah, Ezra, Emmanuel, Barbara, Nancy, Katie, and Mary.

She was preceded in death by daughter Mary Ann Roes (1992), grandson Nathaniel Erb, grand son-in-law, Ronald Steckly, and two grandchildren. She was the last surviving member of both Jantzi and Gerber families.

The funeral was held at Faith Mennonite Church for Fairhaven Church on March 3, with Melvin Roes officiating. Burial was in the Mornington Amish Mennonite Cemetery. 



Mennonite World Review (4-30-12), reports that Bernard and Grace Geiser from Orville, Ohio, have been married 77 years. They have both celebrated their 100th birthday this year.

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Preparatory services prior to communion in some Amish circles give opportunity for members to express their willingness to participate. A more or less formal expression includes a testimony of peace with God and fellow members. The expression also includes willingness to be approached for resolution of difficulties, in case a person has grieved another person.

I do not know how widely this custom has been continued in Amish Mennonite circles. Locally, we like to hear members express their desire to participate in communion and testify of their peace with God and fellow Christians, also a willingness to be approached and to hear concerns pertinent to the welfare of the larger body is desirable. Members also express their willingness to contact others to make peace, if necessary.

Such expressions, when made

sincerely, can be an important feature in maintaining good body health. It acknowledges the possibility that a person may have needs that are apparent to others. An openness to hear such concerns suggests honesty and humility. Perhaps the greater challenge is to have the courage and grace to approach another person with our concerns.

It seems that some leaders who put such a practice in place were aware that good body health also resides in the pew, not only in the pulpit. A willingness to receive or to give counsel speaks of open communication and mutual trust. To analyze these high ideals is easier than to carry them out. But to personalize high ideals is realistic and needful.

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Our daughter, Linda Rose, subscribes to *The Budget*. I appreciate her sharing it with us and I like to browse for letters of interest to me.

Roy Gingerich, Uniontown, OH, touched on a subject (5-2) that I have often thought of mentioning in this column: naming babies. It would seem helpful for parents to remember that the baby will live a lifetime with

a name it has no part in choosing. Why not choose a name that is easy to spell and easy to pronounce?

• • • • •

Two men were overheard exchanging personal tidbits at a fishing pier in Ontario. “Frank” mentioned to “Bob” that he was a member of _____ Church. “How about you?” he asked Bob.

Bob’s face clouded, “I’m not a member of any church, nor do I see a need of it. The way I look at it, is all true Christians will go to heaven anyway, so it really does not matter where we go to church. Fact is, I attend about a dozen different ones. That way I get to hear a different preacher every Sunday, and it makes life more interesting. However, I’ve got my favorites. There are five or six churches I go to most regularly. But there is one church I have crossed off my list entirely” Bob explained. Bob went on to explain that they were too friendly and wanted him to join. “And the preacher is too outspoken. He makes me feel like a sinner, and I don’t go for that.”

This scenario makes one wonder if the man’s selective exposure to Christian teaching was more of a vaccine that gave him immunity to that which is genuine.

(Gleaned from an article by David Bender, *Family Life* (5-10-2012). The

following item is gleaned from the same issue.)

• • • • •

The question is raised whether Amish people should use the “Amish” label to enhance sales’ potential of a given item. The five persons who responded were strictly opposed. One response: “Advertising is necessary for many businesses, but using the Amish Mennonite name to gain commercial advantage is cheapening our witness. It reveals pride and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Eph. 5:5)” Another said: “Why advertise that which is not for sale?”

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I don’t remember where I read this quote: “Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.” A tidbit from an article by Colin Powell says, “Always show more kindness than seems necessary, because the person receiving it needs it more than you will ever know.” Powell also mentions that being kind doesn’t mean being soft.

• • • • •

About 18 months ago, Efran Hernandez was on a mission. He was from California, but stopped off in Berlin, Ohio. He was armed with plans to carry out his threat to kill President Obama. While in Berlin, he visited Sommers General

Store where he bought a Gospel CD. The hymns brought back childhood memories when his grandmother used to take him along to church. His heart was touched and he came under conviction so much so that he has had a radical change of plans. He turned himself in to the authorities. He spent some time in prison, but is now eager to share his testimony when he has opportunity. He recently shared his story with about 125 people in Jonas Coblentz's shop in the Berlin area. (*The Budget*, 5-9-12)



S. Lewis is credited with the following quote: "There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done' and those who say 'All right, have it your way.'"



In 2003, Mary and I met briefly with an older couple to renew our earlier acquaintance which dated back more than 50 years. This friendship started before we were married. This couple had lost their first companions and were apparently experiencing a good second marriage together.

Five decades bring many changes. My earlier contacts with this brother were brief, but I was favorably impressed. He was an active leader in the Christian day School movement when consolidation of public schools became widespread. He

is remembered as a man of vision who very ably led out. His quiet, well-organized manner seemed exceptional to me.

At this point in life, he was no longer in his prime. Leadership in worthy efforts were a thing of the past. He was friendly, but his mood was reflective. With a note of sadness, he said, "I should have been more patient." I do not know what all this meant. But I was aware that his family had transferred church membership to participate in service opportunities not offered or organized where they had been, but this changed a few years later.

When a serious-minded, diligent Christian looks back on his life and expresses regret it makes me want to know what can be learned.

A niece remembers her uncle very well. She has a very high regard for his sincere Christian life. Her widowed mother and her family were recipients of his kindness. But she understands his sadness in the decisions many of his family have made. The Lord blessed them. I know one of their seven children. He and his wife have invested their lives in Christian service. One other family member has been faithful in her marriage commitment. The others are regrettable examples of marital and spiritual instability. How sad!

What can we learn?

•Major life-changing decisions have implications far beyond the present. It is the part of wisdom and stability to consider not only what is wrong in a given situation, but also to appreciate what is right. It may be better to help improve than to sever relationships.


•Our children should be provided a safe place to grow from childhood to adulthood.

•••••

Will the Theologians Please Sit Down, by David Bercot, Scroll Publishing, (717-349-7033) is a helpful reminder that “scholars” and “commentators” are not a satisfactory alternative to personal and corporate Bible study with like-

minded believers.

Whatever their educational background, they are human. And they can have explanations and make claims that seem credible to persons who lack advanced training. Bercot points out that many such claims are simply unfounded. A prime example is the variety of reasons given why Christian women no longer should wear a head covering.

Let us remember that the letter to the Christians at Corinth was also addressed “to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:2). If for some reason we decide to consult a commentary let us remember the Word of God itself is the final authority. —DLM 

mission awareness

How Mexico Mennonite Aid Came To Be

Melvin L. Yoder, Gambier, OH

On May 5, 1995, Steve Yoder received a letter from Isaac R. Fehr, of Buenas Aires Mennonite colony in Chihuahua state, in northern Mexico, requesting help.

It was during 1922 that thousands of Mennonites of Russian Mennonite descent settled there. The area is a plateau in the Sierra Madre mountains. The land is fairly level and fairly productive when it has enough water.

The Mennonites drilled wells 500 to 600 feet deep and found abundant water. They installed large pumps with diesel engines. They built land levelers to level the land. They dug ditches. They ran water as far as a mile in some cases to water their crop. For some years, they did fine. They were building bigger houses to replace the little *stelle*. The little house was then used for chickens, pigs, or other livestock.

But the Lord had other plans for them. From early 1992 till mid 1995 there was no rain. With the ordinary amount of rain the irrigation pumps had to run only about half time. Now suddenly, they had to run all the time. At the same time, fuel prices rose considerably. So when the crop was harvested and sold there was not enough money to pay for fuel, seed, and fertilizer—and no money to feed the family.

When Bro. Steve received the letter, we had no money to give them and the Buenas Aires bishop could wait no longer. He took 20 families and moved to Argentina. He took the ministers with him, thus leaving El Cuervo colony without ministers. Now we had also this to deal with. Fortunately for us, Bishop Isaak Dick from the Las Virginas colony, only one and one-half hours away, consented to take the people left over from both colonies, bring them together and give them leadership. The Las Virginas colony had just shortly before this consented to ownership of autos.

By experimenting a bit, they learned that by using electric motors the cost of operation would be much less. The government subsidized electric power for irrigation. Also with a pivot system, they would use much less water, and could operate for about one-fourth the cost of flood irrigation.

But these ideas split the church.

Isaak Fehr, who had contacted Steve

Yoder for help, represented the most conservative part of the church left at El Cuervo, of about 100 families. They wished to move where there would be more rainfall and no irrigation would be needed. They were the ones who asked for our help. So we chose to help them first. Land was found in the Yucatan Peninsula of southern Mexico. We promised them \$300,000 (U.S.) to purchase it.

At that time the high power lines only came to the corner of Buenas Aires colony. We promised the Mexican government \$200,000 (U.S.), to run these lines five or six miles to El Cuervo colony. Both of these amounts would be needed within two or three months.

We had no money, but we knew a God with whom nothing is impossible. Our faith was bolstered by the realization that these people needed help spiritually. Helping them with material things would open a door to greater things. We started asking for interest-free loans and donations. We say to the glory of God we have never lacked funds to operate as planned.

Many well-meaning people warned us, “Do not give these people any money. They will never repay.” We knew there is a risk involved, but many souls were at stake. We have never regretted trusting them. They have been faithful in making payments, and many souls have been touched and lives have been changed.

There is, however, still much to be done.

We now have a center in the town of Hopelchen in Campeche state, which has 14 colonies in it. Most of them do their trading in Hopelchen. Most of these drive horse and buggy and farm with steel-wheeled tractors. They come to town by bus. There is a constant stream of people coming into our book store, where we have a large inventory of Bibles, books, tracts, and Christian literature. They come to buy books and to use our phones. We do not supply a taxi service for them, but are available to them for emergency runs to the hospital, and so on.

Under the old school system no maps, globes, dictionaries or work books were permitted in the school room. Some time ago, an open-minded teacher approached us with a request. He had put together some questions and made up a workbook. He asked us if we would print it for him. Yes, we appreciated what he was attempting to do and printed it for him. It is a sure sign of change coming to the class room.

One very hot-tempered lady who operated a small colony store stayed open seven days a week and sold tobacco products. When she needed work done on her well, we went more than the second mile, even when she was unreasonable in her requests. Later she became a new creature in Christ and confessed her earlier wrongdoing.

Slowly, spiritual teachings are coming through to the laity.


We wish we could say thousands have been brought to the saving knowledge of the Gospel because of this work, but we cannot. We are aware that some have experienced the new birth and many have a new knowledge and vision they didn't have before. Praise God that many lives are being changed! We are aware that this is only a beginning. Please pray for us and them.

The Yucatan land purchase brought with it some unwanted surprises. We handed the money over to the colony leaders trusting it would all be handed over to the seller. Instead, they kept some for present needs. This worked out in our favor. We had a second surveyor do a survey just to make sure everything was above board. He gave assurance that everything was right. But when the colony wanted to borrow money for seed and fertilizer, the bank sent out their own surveyor to check things. The seller had included a tract of land which he never owned. This was found out before the seller got his money, so no one was cheated. This was a tract of government land and the Mennonites got to buy it from the government for \$3,000 (U.S.) less than was stated in the original contract.

We have found that working closely with the ministers and "Vorsteher,"

has built trust between us. We have never tried to introduce something new or different without consulting the ministers. When introducing the 101 Children's Bible Story books to them, we always went to the bishop first. We would give him a book, ask him to look at it and tell us if we would be permitted to give it to his people. MMA has now distributed

6,000 of these books, free, one per home. Since then, many thousands have been sold and gone into homes, where previously no such literature had been permitted.

One of their young men is translating the book, "Awaiting the Dawn" for their people. All these experiences were good for us and we have enjoyed the challenges. 

Ministers' Meeting Messages — 2012

This is a condensation of a message given at the annual ministers' meetings held at United Bethel Mennonite Church, Plain City, OH, on April 3-5, 2012. The complete set of nine CD's (five sermons and four women's sessions) may be ordered from Victory Music Services, P.O. Box 1498, North Highlands, CA, 95660 (Phone: 443-480-1489) for \$50, postpaid.

1. Knowing the Good Shepherd

Anthony Miller, Taylorsville, NC

Someone once gave me a book with a title something like, "Learning Lessons from the Greatest Person Who Ever Lived." It was about Jesus. As I began to read that book, I realized it was about learning to be successful as a leader by learning from Jesus. There was very little about personal experience, personal growth, and a personal walk with the Lord. It was about how I can enhance my own leadership abilities and become more successful.

Tonight I would like to take a different direction in this assignment. Although we've been called by God to be undershepherds to His flock, we are sheep that belong to Christ. It was David, God's great undershepherd in Israel, who penned these words in Psalm 100:3, "Know ye that the Lord, he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." He included himself as one of those sheep.

We need a shepherd. We are so much like those four-legged animals that go, "Baa!" in so many ways.

We are timid, at times. We can be

very stubborn, at other times. We can sometimes be easily frightened, and at other times we can stand dumbly in the path of destruction. We are creatures of habit. We love our little ruts and familiar paths in search of sustenance, while we miss lush pastures. We are defenseless. We lose our way. We are unprotected, unless we have a shepherd's watchfulness. We would perish without His care. We need a shepherd—the Good Shepherd!

The Model Shepherd is also a model sheep: “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” John 10:14 and 27 are our text verses: “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

John 10 is a beautiful portion of Scripture that was spoken to a hostile crowd of Pharisees, whose motive was to get rid of Jesus. Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath. These Pharisees rejected both Jesus and the man He had healed. Many who read this Scripture today also reject Jesus, the Good Shepherd. But for those of us who have accepted Him into our life, He is exceedingly precious.

Christ is the Good Shepherd. There are examples in the Old Testament used by God to describe Himself. One is a rock. The other is a shepherd. The Hebrew word for shepherd means: to tend a flock; to

rule; to associate with. But let us not forget, a shepherd is a friend to the sheep. When people reject God, they choose other shepherds by default.

Ezekiel 34 is a pronouncement against shepherds who have taken God's people and almost destroyed them. God said to them (v. 17), “For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.” My people will have a shepherd.

Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, said, “I am the Good Shepherd.” To those who exploited the people, “You're not shepherds; you're not even sheep. You don't hear me. You don't follow Me. But I am the Good Shepherd.” Jesus is intrinsically good. It is part of His nature. He is perfect in every way.

He is the beautiful Shepherd. That is more than just a title. We too should aim to present an attractive image of Christ. Leonard Ravenhill said, “Your doctrine can be just as straight as a gun barrel and just as empty.” Let's have our doctrine full of usefulness and beauty.

Jesus is beautiful in His *integrity*. He's not a sheep stealer or a sheep killer.

He is beautiful in His *authority*. “To him the porter openeth the door.” We ask, “Who is the porter?” Is it John the Baptist? He certainly opened that door for Jesus, then deferentially stepped aside and said, “He must increase; I

must decrease.” As undershepherds, we are porters who stand at the door. We have many opportunities to open the door for Jesus Christ. When we preach, we must step aside and preach Jesus Christ, so He can enter in.

He is beautiful in His *familiarity*. He calls His own sheep by name. He has many sheep in His worldwide flock. He knows all the names of the sheep in your flock. Do you? He knows their strengths and weaknesses. Psalm 139 says everything about me is open to Him. “O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me...” I struggled as a young person to accept the fact that my sins are forgiven. This is beautiful; He knows me. He knows whatever struggle you and I are going through.

He is beautiful in His *ability*. He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him. He leads His sheep out.

He is beautiful in His *responsibility*. He leads His sheep forth to pasture. He always looks at the needs those sheep have. He does not drive His sheep; He leads them. A group of tourists were traveling in Israel. Their guide told them that Middle Eastern shepherds lead their sheep. Then they saw a man hitting and driving sheep. Their guide checked and found that the man driving and hitting sheep was a butcher, not a shepherd.

Jesus is beautiful in His *security*. He is the door for salvation and for abundant living. Whoever enters by

the door shall be saved (protected). This going in and out is not going from one church to another. This is not going out on a limb of my own. This speaks of liberty in Christ. This sheep is never far away from his shepherd’s watchful eye.

He is beautiful in His *deity*. There is a perfect relationship here. The relationship that God the Father and God the Son have is the model He has for us in our relationship to Him.

Jesus is beautiful in His *humility*. Though He is equal with God in Deity, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

He is beautiful in His *unity*. He brings sheep together—the Jew, the Gentile. Thus there is one flock and one shepherd. He has many individual sheepfolds, worldwide, of differing size and construction, with sheep of different colors, but there is one flock. Do all the sheep know that?

He is beautiful in His *invincibility*. They didn’t take His life—He gave His life. He is alive.

He is our beautiful Shepherd for eternity. John 10:28 and 29 is not a proof text for unconditional eternal security. Sheep need to realize that some conditions need to be met. He remains the Good Shepherd. He’s not going to retire or give up. He will have sheep whom He leads and feeds.

Characteristics of Sheep. This word *sheep* in English has no separate plural

form. Christianity and following Christ is both an individual and a corporate dynamic. One error afloat today is that I can follow the Good Shepherd myself apart from the flock—a local and accountable brotherhood. However, the Good Shepherd is portrayed as leading a *flock* of sheep. The *lone* sheep in the Bible is a *lost* sheep. What does the Good Shepherd do when He finds a lone sheep? He takes that lone sheep and carries it back to the flock, the fold. Brothers and sisters, there are far too many “lone ranger” sheep today.

There is also an opposite error. It is equally wrong. It is blending into a flock with little or no personal relationship with the Good Shepherd. “I like it here. The other sheep are all so friendly. We’re like a big family of sheep. I like the lambs’ club. The ram (undershepherd) is my hero.” Interpersonal relationships in the flock are very important, but they cannot replace a personal relationship with the Good Shepherd. We need both. They must be in balance. It must be a living reality.

They hear the Shepherd’s voice. Why do sheep perk up when they hear the shepherd’s voice? There is familiarity and a relationship in that voice. There is love for that voice. Hearing His voice includes claiming His message. They understand His purpose. They spend time with the Master.

How do we hear His voice? We hear it in the written Word. The very words of Jesus are inspired of God. The whole Bible—from the very beginning to the final amen—is the inspired Word of God. I believe we should look at what Jesus said to interpret the rest of the Bible. It is sad to have people conclude that the words of Jesus are for a different dispensation or for a different culture, and not relevant for us today.

His Spirit speaks to my spirit. Sometimes his voice is heard from the sheep. Are you listening to your sheep? Many voices speak today—some from without, some from within. Some voices from within are saying, “Our voice is not being heard.”

Oh, that we could block all that’s not helpful and hear His voice! “Be still and know that I am God!”

We sometimes need to take a fast from reading other materials, or from work, and just listen and spend time with Him and hear His voice.

The sheep believe Him. He said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me.” That’s obedience—our faith in action. It is saying, “Yes, Lord, I will.” Obedience is an act of the will. He does not force us to obey Him. We have heard the story of the shepherd who breaks a willful lamb’s leg and nurses it back to health and to a close relationship with the shepherd. I believe that’s a myth. I have not been able to find its veracity

in the historical care of sheep. The Good Shepherd does not abuse His sheep. He does not force His sheep to obey Him. Sheep make the choice to obey.

The sheep know the Good Shepherd and the Good Shepherd knows them. *Know* means more than having an intellectual awareness of or to collect a lot of facts and data about. It's an intimate word. It means to experience. It's a daily dependence upon and communion with the Shepherd.

A Call to Christ's Shepherds. Shepherds are pastors. Pastors are shepherds. It is not so important what we are called as that we are faithful to our calling.

We are to be ensamples (a die, a prototype, a model) to the flock. We are to be a model of a sheep who is faithfully following Jesus Christ. It is reflected in our conversation after services, in how available we are for outreach, and so on.

Jesus spoke of the hireling shepherd. Today there are voices that would lure the sheep away. There are thieves and robbers that are plundering flocks, wolves that are devouring sheep, and hirelings who care not for the sheep, but flee. If my reputation, my status, or my income is more important than Christ's will for the flock He has called me to serve, then I am a hireling shepherd.

We tend to think that when a church forsakes the truth and goes


into apostasy, that the congregation leads the way and that the pastors are reluctantly following. I believe the truth is the opposite. Brothers, we have a serious responsibility. Let's be accountable.

I have had the precious experience of teaching at Calvary Bible School these last few years. To sit with those students and study the Word of God has been a tremendous experience for me. I love it! I gave an assignment this year for them to write about a pastor in their church whom they admire and who has been an inspiration for them in their Christian life.

This is about you. I found out some things I didn't know. Many of your names are mentioned here. I found out that some of you are quite the interesting preachers. Though these young men and ladies do not always express it to you, they do appreciate you. They are encouraged by the sermons you preach. They are grateful for the personal touches, like calling them when they're away, eating breakfast with them, and just chatting with them. They appreciate it when you ask their counsel on issues facing them and the church. But what is more influential than anything else is the "voice" of your example.

One young person wrote about one of you: "When I think of a humble man, I think of him. He realizes that he is only an instrument in the hands of God. He is so passionate about

following God and serving Him. It is obvious to me that he has an incredible relationship with God. He knows so much about God's Word and his wisdom seems endless, at least from my viewpoint. He speaks

slowly and it is obvious that he thinks before speaking. He has been such a challenge and a blessing in my life. I greatly respect him, his passion for God and people and his desire to live a righteous, holy lifestyle.” 

One School at a Time

Roman Miller, Grabill, IN

[This is the story of an organization that does schools in Uganda. I'm passing it on for what it's worth. -R. M.]

One School at a Time follows guiding principles to ensure that each Ugandan school project is poised for enduring, sustainable success:

- Each school establishes a governance policy, a functioning school board, and involved parent community; they also complete a needs assessment and a five-year strategic plan before any project's work with *One School at a Time* commences.

- Each school is required to assist and encourage the next selected partner school, thereby building a network of local resources and support.

- The organization should avoid the often ineffective pitfall of focusing most or all resources on capital improvements, and instead instigates a holistic approach to each project.

- Training and support for teachers is critically important for success.

- Support to enhance each partner school's administration with relevant technology, financial training, long-term planning, and governance and leadership training is integral to building successful schools.



She Hath Done What She Could

Suzi Garcete, Crossville, TN

“Fear not daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh,..” (John 12:15).

“Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children” (Luke 23:28).

Dear Sisters, no matter what your circumstances or lot in life, you can hear the words of Jesus, *“She hath done what she could.”*

RUTH: “Whither thou goest, I will go, thy God shall be my God,”

UNNAMED WOMAN: The desperate faith that touched the hem of Jesus’ garment and told Him all.

RHODA: Ready to be useful in little ways, answering the door.

DEBORAH and JAEL: Judging rightly, courageously seizing the opportunity to help in the battle.

ELIZABETH: Faithful in spite of disappointment, rewarded with the blessing and joy of a son.

TRYPHENA, TRYPHOSA, JULIA,

PHEBE: Women that labored for the cause of the Gospel.

MARY: “Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.”

SARAH: Obeyed her husband, believed God’s promise, experienced a miracle.

THE HEBREW MIDWIVES: Feared God more than the king of Egypt.

RAHAB: Dared to be different, helped God’s people, saved herself and her family.

LYDIA: Followed the Gospel’s teaching and gave lodging to traveling preachers.

EUNICE and LOIS: Passed on saving faith by word and example.

MANOAH’S WIFE: Told Manoah the angel’s message and reasoned with him to believe.

PRISCILLA: Worked with her husband, both in physical and spiritual ways.

HANNAH: “For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition.”

MARY MAGDALENE, JOANNA and companions: followed Jesus to the cross and the grave, purposing in their hearts to do all they could, and so were the first to see the empty tomb.

ESTHER: “I will go in to the king, and if I perish, I perish.”

ABIGAIL: A woman who was interceding, peacemaking, pleading for uprightness in spite of a froward husband.

MARY and MARTHA: Served Jesus and learned from Him; believed

and saw the glory of God.

DORCAS: Was full of good works and alms deeds; blessed others.

JOCHEBED: Cared for her son to the best of her ability and committed him to God.

UNNAMED WOMEN: By faith received their dead raised to life again, physically and spiritually. And countless others, down through the years, were virtuous, hard-working, trustworthy, fulfilling plans and purposes, meeting needs, living for and believing in God to the extent that Living Water of Life flowed from their inner beings.

They did what they could. And so can we!



1 Chronicles 16:29

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

A Woman's Freedom

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

We celebrate our country's freedom this month. Even though we lament the fact that our country has lost some of the values we hold dear, we still have much for which to be grateful. The Bible tells us to "pray for those in authority so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." We also realize that many people that have prayed for their leaders have still experienced trials and persecutions. However, I believe if we pray, our hearts will be at peace, in spite of the circumstances around us. Many Christians, even Anabaptists, are speaking harshly about our leaders. I wonder if they are diligently praying for them.

Women tend to struggle with fear as we contemplate the conditions of the world around us. We especially are concerned about our children and grandchildren. We wonder what they may need to face in the future. Jesus invites us to cast our burdens upon Him. He gives peace as our hearts and minds are focused


on Him. I believe God desires for us to be free. Free from the fears, the worries, and cares that we tend to carry on our shoulders. **Freedom is found in Christ.**

Throughout the years women have not always experienced freedom. In some places of the world today, women are merely possessions of their husbands and are treated virtually as slaves. Women's rights advocates changed the status of women in this country many years ago. Some of the changes are good, others have affected the atmosphere of the Christian home in a negative way. Jesus Himself raised the standard for the treatment of women, giving us value equal to men. However, God planned for order in His creation and He has given man the responsibility of caring, loving, and providing for woman. He has also given us the privilege of submitting and coming under the protection of our husband. **Freedom comes in accepting that role.**

We face everyday irritations and

frustrations in our lives. Many times we major on trivial circumstances. The dishwasher is broken down, a child spills a glass of milk, a new dress doesn't fit, and many other small disruptions which we may allow to ruin our day. Who suffers for our impatient and discontented attitude? Most times, it is the people we love the most. Recently God reminded me of a complaining spirit. This will probably seem like a very insignificant problem to some of you. However, it felt like a major hurdle for me. Our computer has been giving us difficulty. We had different people look at it. The main problem was with my photo scrapbooking and card program. Two granddaughters are graduating this spring. I like to make a personal scrapbook for each graduate. I prayed and it seemed like God did not answer. Finally, I realized God wants to do a much bigger work in my life. He wants me to experience freedom in accepting the fact that I can't use my program right now. (We do finally have an appointment with the computer company tomorrow.) **I am so thankful for freedom to be okay with my circumstances.**

Women like to please. We want to please God, our husbands, our families, our friends, and the people we meet. God made us with a desire to be pleasing to Him. That is a worthy goal. It is right to make others happy; to delight and satisfy others. However, questions remain: "Why do we want to please others? Is it for their benefit or is it to satisfy our need for acceptance and recognition?" I believe if we are honest, we have all had selfish motives. We want to be appreciated. After all, everyone needs to know they are loved and wanted. However, people can never completely fill that need in our life. We may demand more from our husbands and families, even our friends, than they are able to give. We must come to the realization that only God can completely fill the longing in our heart. God alone accepts and loves us with a perfect love. **There is freedom in being satisfied in God's love.**

Freedom brings contentment. It gives peace. It quiets our spirit and puts our mind at rest. **I trust you will experience this freedom in your life and in your role as a woman.** 

Truth, like iodine, helps when it hurts.

My Chicken Taught Me Trust

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

What is trust? To trust is to put my confidence in something. Where is your trust? Psalm 62:8 tells me where to put my trust. “Trust in Him (God) at all times ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.” Trust reminds me of my friend Michelle, from Iowa, and her pet chicken. I will share her story with you:

I had a chicken and a duck who were best of friends. The chick and the duckling were hatched in the same clutch. Whatever a little duckling sees first it becomes attached to. The Golden Polish chick was the duck’s love and security; he claimed her for his very own. I called my chick Fluffy Top and the duckling was Quaddler—a combination of *quack* and *waddler*. Fluffy Top had a mop of pretty feathers on her little head that bobbed up and down when she ran. Oh, she was a cute little chick! Her feathers were a rich dark brown with a tint of gold.

Fluffy Top was my favorite pet. I let her run loose. She was tame. I enjoyed holding her and often carried her around. My little chicken

loved being held. When I stepped outside the house she would come running to me.

Quaddler was very attached to the chicken, too, but he was not always kind to her. He was possessive. If he wanted Fluffy Top to go somewhere, he would grab her feathers in his beak and pull and jerk her around.

One spring the chicken sat on a nest of eggs hidden away in a dark corner of the barn behind some bales. Quaddler couldn’t see her and missed his best chicken friend. We were glad Fluffy Top was nesting, because the strawberries were ripe in the garden and that way she left the sweet red berries alone. But finally, Quaddler became so forlorn and sad he stopped eating. I thought he might

die so I took my little chicken off her nest and, just like that, the duck was happy once more.


One day Quaddler was jerking Fluffy Top around again and she was desperately trying to get away from him. She ran around for all she was worth with the duck in hot pursuit—right on her tail. All of a sudden, Fluffy Top caught sight of me and made a beeline straight for me with Quaddler still trying to catch her. I quickly reached down and picked up my pretty little chicken. I held her quietly and calmed her down. That bossy Quaddler sat at my feet quacking his protests that Fluffy Top had managed to escape out of his reach.

Within a minute after picking her up, I noticed she was holding very still and after a closer look, I discovered she had fallen asleep in my arms!

That spoke to my heart about trust. To be able to relax to such a degree and fall asleep with her enemy close by was amazing. My chicken trusted me. She knew I would not let her fall. She was safe and secure.

All of us have disappointments and hard things that happen in our lives. Whatever age we are the devil tries to make us stumble and fall. Children have struggles too. A friend may be very unkind. A good pet may get run over. It is very difficult if a family member is suddenly called home. You may have to move and changes are tough. We need to trust our Father and remember that God is with us. God is so much stronger than the enemy of our souls!

With God I am safe. I want to trust Him more. When the devil is hot on my trail, when I feel his breath on my neck, when death and destruction are all around, I can run to God and He will pick me up. The enemy may be right below protesting loudly, but I am safe! God will not let me fall. “The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deuteronomy 32:27).

What is the end result of trust? Psalm 5:11 says, “But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them. Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.” 

If you don't know, just say so.

Dear Youth,

Do you love the Church of Jesus Christ? Are you committed to your local church in spite of its growth pains and its imperfections? The following article was written as a term paper for the 2012 Doctrine of the Church class at Calvary Bible School. Students were assigned to write an essay picturing what a local church might look like today if it were to capture the biblical vision God had for the New Testament church. I hope your appreciation and commitment to your local church will be strengthened as you read and study this writing.

—EE

The Bride of Christ

It is the long-awaited day. The bride has been extremely busy making preparations for her wedding. A church house has been reserved, cleaned, and beautifully decorated. Servers have been appointed, guests invited, and ample food prepared. Anticipation mounts as the bride prepares herself for the wedding ceremony. Her hair is combed in the manner that she knows her bridegroom likes best. She is dressed in a spotless white dress. Her face radiates a breathtaking glow. The moment she will meet her bridegroom draws nearer and nearer. Will he be satisfied? She wonders, but knows in her heart that the bridegroom will be completely happy, because he loves her above all other women. The moment has come. A joyful congregation

watches silently as the bride's father walks his beloved daughter slowly down the aisle. The bridegroom's eyes are fixed on his bride's face, reverent love evident in his expression. It is a happy day for the couple!

In the Word of God, the church of Christ is compared to a bride prepared for her husband. As I consider this, I am ashamed of the deplorable state in which the Bridegroom would find His bride, should He return today. I am afraid she looks more like a dirty, battered harlot than a radiant, eager bride. Love for her bridegroom has taken second place. Rather than applying herself to discovering His likes and dislikes, she has gone her own way, eager to gratify her own desires. Only if Christ's wishes line up with

her way of thinking, she may submit to His will. This is lukewarmness, which God hates. Revelation 3:15 & 16 says: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot! I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

If we truly are to be part of the Bride of Christ when the Bridegroom returns, something must change. Something inside us, not our house, our car, or our clothes. Our identity must change. When a couple is engaged, they stop looking at people of the opposite gender as “options.” They are committed to each other. Their identity changes from “Single” to “Engaged” or “Married.” Once they are married, the wife’s last name changes—she now shares her husband’s last name, because they are one. She has a new identity. So it should be when we give our lives to Christ. Our old self must die. We must surrender that strong desire in us to rise up and be our own person, instead embracing our new identity in Christ and the church. We can trust the one whose name we now bear to give us a clean identity in Him, for He has called us by name.

Another change that must take place inside our hearts before we are ready to be a part of the bride of Christ is that we must have a new purity. A bride doesn’t want you to come to her wedding in clothes with last month’s dirt all over them. In honor of her special day, we

attend her wedding in freshly washed clothes. So it must be in our hearts. If we truly want to be a part of the Bride of Christ, we will have a new purity. We gain that new purity when we call on the name of the Lord, recognizing that we are sinners that need His blood to cover our sins. He gladly forgives us, and removes the dirt that has stained our lives to bring us a cleanness we have never experienced before. Only when we have experienced this cleansing can we be a part of the Bride of Christ. Even after Christ has cleansed us, we will still be susceptible to sin. That is why Christ also gives us a new inclination. Even if we do fail the Bridegroom at times, our new hearts will WANT to do what is right.

God gives us His Holy Spirit to guide us through life and let us know the difference between right and wrong. He will help us continue to grow in Him. We will also have a new power—a power from God that gives us a passion to obey the commands of God, and any commandments the church decides it would like its members to adhere to. We will no longer obey because we have to. Rather, the Holy Spirit will help us understand that it is a privilege to obey, because God’s ways are the right ways. We desperately need that Holy Spirit power in our lives if we are to be an asset to the Bride of Christ.

When God has made our hearts new in these areas, we will want to be baptized. Romans 6:3 & 4 explain

baptism like this: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Baptism is an outward symbol of the cleansing our heart has received. It is part of the promise to be faithful to Christ and His Bride to the end of your life. This could be compared to a couple announcing their engagement to each other. Once the man has asked the woman to be his wife and she accepts, they usually don't keep it a secret. They joyfully call all their friends to let them know that they are promised to each other. I feel that in a similar way, we as part of the Bride of Christ should baptize new believers as soon as they have accepted Christ into their lives. In the account in Acts 16 of the midnight earthquake that loosed Paul and Silas from prison, the jailor realized his need of a Savior. When the men explained to him what he needed to do to be saved, he followed their instruction and he and his whole household were baptized immediately. People who are ready to be baptized are also ready to be sincere members of the church. In the Bride of Christ, conversion, baptism, and membership are a package. We will truly want all and not just part of it.

(to be concluded)

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Sticking with the Pokey Little Church

Dave Goetz

For all of its foibles—lousy preaching, political infighting, self-centered focus, stagnation, a gaggle of special interest groups—the pokey local church is still the most fertile environment for spiritual development. In fact, there can be no genuine spiritual progress without the long-term attachment to a pokey local church. Disillusionment with one's church, then, is not a reason to leave but a reason to stay and see what God will create in one's life and in the pokey local church. What I perceive to be my needs—"I need a church with a more biblical preacher who uses specific examples from real life"—may not correspond to my true spiritual needs. Often, in fact, I am not attuned to my true spiritual needs.

Thinking that I know my true spiritual needs is arrogant, narcissistic, and so American. Staying put as a life practice allows God's grace to work on the unsanded surfaces of my inner life. Seventeenth-century French Catholic mystic Francois Fenelon wrote, "Slowly you will learn that all the troubles in your life—your job, your health, your inward failings—are really cures to the poison of your old nature."

(From "Suburban Spirituality," *Christianity Today* (July 2003), p.33. Selected by youth editor Ernest Eby.)



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Many young folks of today have the disadvantage of having too many advantages.

• • • • •

We are young only once, but can continue in immaturity indefinitely.

• • • • •

Too many dads are more concerned about their golf swing than their offspring.

• • • • •

The world always looks brighter behind a smile.

• • • • •

Hard work is the yeast that raises the dough.

• • • • •

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

• • • • •

Some folks want us to remember their birthday, but don't want us to remember which one.

• • • • •

A smart wife sees through her husband. A wise one sees him through.

• • • • •

Show how strong you are by not noticing how weak the other fellow is.

• • • • •

We can see farther than we can touch, but that doesn't mean we should stop reaching.