



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

Galatians 6:14

SEPTEMBER 2012

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

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Do You Wonder?

Author unknown

Do you wonder why the blessing
That you prayed for is delayed,
While others seem to get theirs
Before request is made?
It's not for you to understand,
But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Do you wonder why your loved one
Was taken away for aye,
While other folk were left here
Who seem only in the way?
It's not for you to understand,
But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Do you wonder why you suffer pain
While others are so healthy;
Or why you have to skimp and save
While other folks are wealthy?
It's not for you to understand,
But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Just lean upon the Savior,
Just rest at His dear feet;
His strength will prove sufficient
For the testing that you meet.
It's not for you to understand,
But leave it all in Jesus' hand.



Back to School

It's September and back-to-school! Perhaps you and your children are glad when school *stops* at the beginning of summer and also glad when school *starts* at the end of summer. If so, that is fortunate, since greater learning occurs when school is enjoyed. Willie Wagler (1914-1983) really enjoyed school. Many years later, Willie said he cried as he walked to school on what he knew would be the last day of the eighth grade for him.

Two extremes about school work

One extreme proposes that if something isn't fun, it's a waste of time. The other extreme assumes that if something is pleasant, "it's not good for you."

Having fun as our top priority takes us into the wasteland of hedonism. The devil baits his hooks with pleasure. Sin promises to be fun, especially if it's something forbidden. God has made us to work and no one grows up well who does not experience toil. All worthwhile work has its tiresome aspects. Beware of choosing anything that promises only pleasant experiences. "Study

to shew thyself approved unto God" includes working at times when quitting and doing something easier and more pleasant beckons.

A second approach to learning is no better. This extreme says that if an activity brings pleasure, it's bad. But it is not necessary to make something unpleasant as a way of building character. Pity the teacher (and the student) who thinks that unless students are toiling in near desperation, they won't make progress. Praise God for the teacher who assigns work that is fulfilling and who rewards good effort without favoritism. Success naturally has its own rewards. Excellent teaching fosters motivation in every student—not just the top achievers.

Forefathers and Four R's

In earlier times in America, our forefathers typically referred to essential academic skills as: "The Three R's: readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic."

Reading is a wonderful privilege and skill. Using phonics, the beginning reader is given a set of tools that will serve him/her well

throughout life. The eager reader has a wellspring of knowledge at his fingertips. Reading is the gateway to most book learning.

Writing provides tools of self-expression that are very useful. Writing has the added benefit of allowing more time to sort out our thoughts before speaking them, thus increasing accuracy. With the many keyboards, penmanship is devalued. Printing often replaces cursive writing. Maybe this is not important, but I lament penmanship's passing.

Arithmetic is needed to manage our finances. Calculators are so convenient that mental arithmetic tends to be neglected. Mental arithmetic is a great skill and students still benefit greatly by memorizing the facts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Square root, area, volume, and other mathematical concepts simpler than calculus and trigonometry are valuable for practically everyone.

Today's self-indulgent culture has abandoned many biblical values, so that now responsible parents add a fourth "R": *Religion*. Many early Americans embraced the Christian faith. In fact, when I attended public grade school in the 40's, the school day started with Bible reading and prayer. Religion fits with a focused life that has God as Creator, Jesus as Savior, and the Holy Spirit as Comforter, Teacher, and Guide.

In balanced Christian education, learning about the physical world focuses on learning for this life, but only as it prepares for the life to come.

The School of Life

We are all enrolled in the school of life. Like children trying to lift something too heavy, God tells us all to do what we can, and He, the merciful parent, takes "the heavier end of the log." If we do what we can, He does not make us feel that our inability is a disgrace. "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14).

God gives man the ability to learn and to work, and He does not require us to work alone. He promises, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper,..." (from Hebrews 13:5, 6). Working with God is the way life is meant to be lived!

In life's great school, God rewards effort. He honors those who honor Him. He teaches us through times of testing. We learn from both success and failure. It's not surprising that life's re-tests resemble the ones we flunked.

When God sent his Son to earth, men observed a teacher in action unlike any other, before or since (See John 7:14, 15). Let's be reminded that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

About a century ago, my great grandfather, Daniel E. Mast, wrote

a prayer to be used at the close of Sunday School. Part of it (translated from German), implores God: “Stand by us as we meditate on what we have learned...May your doctrine ‘drop as the rain, and distil as the dew; as small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass’ [from Deut. 32:2]. May we daily increase in the knowledge of our Savior...O

God, when we consider how many hours we have already spent under instruction, we find reason to lament and to weep over ourselves. How much farther could we be in your knowledge than we are...!” Evidently Great Grandpa Mast was attending the great school of life with God’s Son as his Teacher.

—PLM 

Little Teddy Stoddard

Elizabeth Silance Ballard

[This heartwarming, but fictitious story addresses good teaching attitudes and methods. Good nurture includes correction, but when balanced with sincere encouragement, it gives tremendous purpose and meaning to life. -PLM]

This is a story of many years ago about an elementary teacher. Her name was Mrs. Thompson. Like most teachers she looked at her fifth grade students and said she loved them all the same.

But that was almost impossible, because there in the front row, slumped in his seat was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard. Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed he did not play well with the other children,

that his clothes were messy, that he constantly needed a bath, and that he could be downright unpleasant. It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson actually took delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X’s, and then putting a big “F” at the top.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child’s past records and she put Teddy’s off until last. When she reviewed the file, however,

she was in for a surprise. Teddy's first grade teacher had written, "Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners...he is a joy to be around."

His second grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student, well-liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle."

His third grade teacher wrote, "His mother's death had been hard on Teddy. He tried to do his best, but his father doesn't show much interest and his home life will soon affect him if some steps are not taken."

His fourth grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends and he sometimes sleeps in class."

By now Mrs. Thompson understood the problem and felt ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents and they were wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy's. His present to her was clumsily wrapped in heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag.

Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents. Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing,

and a bottle that was quarter full of perfume. She stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some perfume on her wrist.

Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to."

After the children left she cried for at least an hour.

On that very day she quit just teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic; instead she began teaching children.

Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy. As she worked with him his mind seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had moved almost to the head of his class.

A year later she found a note under her door from Teddy, telling her she was the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Four years after that, she got another letter saying that while things had been a little rough at times, he stayed in school, had stuck

with it, and would soon graduate with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best teacher he had ever had in his whole life.

Four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still the best and favorite teacher he'd ever had. But now his name was a little longer; the letter was signed: Theodore F. Stoddard, M.D.

The story does not end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy was going to get married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years before, and he was wondering if Mrs. Thompson

might agree to sit in the place usually reserved for the mother of the groom.

Of course, Mrs. Thompson did that. And guess what? She wore the bracelet with several missing rhinestones. And she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together.

When they met, Teddy whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you for believing in me, and thank you for showing me I could make a difference."

Mrs. Thomspson, with tears in her eyes said, "Teddy, you have it all wrong. You were the one who taught me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you."



ANNOUNCEMENT

Anabaptist Identity Conference is to be held at Ephrata Business Center on October 26-28, 2012.

A full program will be forthcoming.

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Meeting the Emotional Needs of a Family

Howard Horst, Myerstown, PA

Sally stuffs her hands into her sweater pockets as she kicks a stone ahead of her on the way to the mail box..."Why?" she says to herself, "Why can't Dad show an interest in my life? I need someone to talk to? This youth social life is a nightmare...He does so much stuff with the boys, but me...when I want to talk, it seems like his lights don't come on."

Emotion is a by-product of of life. Things happen that invite anger. Things happen that make us glad. Things happen that make us sad. We sing with emotion. We choose songs to match our emotion of the moment. Sometimes we wipe tears and sometimes tap our toes to the rhythm. We are by nature emotional people that need a vent for what is happening inside of us.

As parents we are busy people; we tend to focus on certain aspects of family life. As fathers we may tend to believe Mom can be there for Sally. We will take Johnny along with us to the hardware store and believe that we are doing our job. Mothers can be inclined to leave the exasperation of relating to a son that

would seemingly rather grunt and mumble than speak plain English, to a dad who seems to understand that language better than she does.

As parents, we are missing a very basic building block in the foundation of our children's lives if we do not encourage cross gender emotional interchange. Girls need a dad that is there for them, and boys need a mom that can weave dialogue into their life in spite of all their seeming preference to be upside down in a jungle gym as opposed to talking about real life stuff.

In early parenting we start out with little people's problems, but eventually they turn into big people's problems. We are setting the stage for emotional bonding when we have time to commiserate with our two-year-old over a doll that fell into a mud puddle and out of her good graces. Some day it may be a young man that was tightly wrapped round her heart and the next moment slipped out of her grasp. A home where it is safe to share hurts, fears, and insecurities, joys, dreams, and goals of life is not something that just happened without effort. There

are steps we can take to invite sharing and there are things we can do that will prevent sharing.

While our family's feet are under our table, we are on a mission to give them tools they need to process life and to rightly utilize the resources around them to aid in that processing. Our ultimate goal as parents is to mentor our children into responsible adults who are able to tackle the ups and downs of life and to function independently of our coaching, yet totally depend on God's grace and the resources around them.

There are so many things parents like to do when it comes to aiding our children emotionally. We like to focus on finding the right church where the ministers are kind. We seek to find the right school and the right social environment where they will be accepted. We do not like the job of drawing them out from under the porch after a wound from a friend and helping them sort it all out, but that is an integral part of parenting.

We need to use their experiences in life to teach them how to process relational hiccups, how to sort through what they could have done differently to prevent certain actions or reactions, and how to calm a turbulent turn of events. From the moment of great insult from a "snap" from Fido because his tail was pulled too hard, to their prize car being

demolished by one careless action, our families are looking to us to help them sort through emotion.

Dysfunctional emotional patterns focus on "do not trust, do not tell and do not feel." Healthy emotional patterns merge into true feelings in the happenings of life until it can be possible to trust again and to talk about it with others comfortably and discreetly.

We will hardly ever get to the point we will need to sit on our hands to keep from clapping because we wrecked our car, but hopefully we can get to the point that as we reflect on even our difficult experiences, we find things to be thankful for. (1 Thess. 5:18). Here it does not say *for* all things, but *in* all things.

Some of us naturally are prone to see the glass half full and some of us half empty, even though the water level is the same either way. Our temperament plays a huge role in our perspectives of the developments of life. As parents, we need to work with each child's natural coping skills to attempt to bring balance to the way they process life.

We have methods we use to process life that lead to poor belief systems if not guided right. The dog that is shot by a gun, believes all guns will hurt him and will hide out in the wood shed when a gun is in hand. What he "perceives" as actual and controls him, is a faulty "belief system." The

truth is one gun hurt him, but not all guns will; it was just an accident.

We cannot explain to Fido the emotional bondage he is in because of his “beliefs” about all guns, but God has gifted families with the privilege of dialogue and the ability to bring balance to the perceptions that are a result of the hurts of life. Wrong belief systems hold us captive, and tie us up in knots emotionally. We must balance our family’s belief systems with truth.

The child that believes he is “dumb” needs a parent who helps him process such thoughts factually. A mediocre success or even a failure in one area, does not spell total failure. Or the child who believes it will not help to talk to Sammy about how he offended Sammy with what he said yesterday, is setting himself up for emotional bondage. One failed attempt to communicate our feelings to someone does not mean the next one might not go better. Past happenings do not guarantee future repeats. This concept may keep families from trying again to restore relationships. It keeps husbands and wives from trying again to communicate on a difficult subject.

What are some foundational principles for healthy emotional well being?

1. It is not only acceptable but also necessary to express emotion in sanctified ways.

Spirituality is not the absence of feelings, or denying feelings. Teaching our families they are tough if they don’t cry or talk about difficult things is not in harmony with the way God works with us. The book of Psalms and the book of Job are prized books for hurting people to turn to. It is by divine providence that God allowed us to get a glimpse at how He welcomes His children to pour out their emotions while facing hard things. David told God his bones are roaring and that his bed is wet with tears. We do our families a favor when we give them time to feel and “own” their difficult experiences in life. Tears are a language God understands and we can help them find expression in sanctified ways.

2. There is a time to stop crying and face life.

Joshua was in dismay at the defeat of Ai. God understood and heard his anguish, but directed him to move on from that experience so he could experience victory. Joshua 7:10,

We can err in not allowing enough expression of emotion, but we can also err in not bringing emotional expression into boundaries. Different children will need different levels of guidance. Some will tend to brush off and avoid facing reality and miss out on the “healing” of honesty. Others will dwell indefinitely in the honesty of the moment and miss out on getting on with life.

3. Saying how we feel is a window into our hearts, not a sin.

We are all on a quest to be understood as we face experiences of life. Our children are no exceptions. When they taste food that is pleasant, they show their glee, and when they taste food that is unpleasant, they wrinkle up their nose. When we see dress material we like, we stroke it and smile fondly, when we see some that almost makes our eyes go cross-eyed, we either laugh at it or make sure our disdain is understood in some way. It is all emotional expression.

Sometimes in our quest for orderliness and streamlined home life we forget that our children in their negative dialogue are really giving us a valuable window into their hearts to mentor their social and emotional development.

I am saddened to hear stories of children physically abused simply because they stated how they felt on a given subject rather than using how they felt to develop relationship and balance their perspective. I do not think a child needs discipline the first or second time they let us know the red beets “taste yucky.” We can use that emotional expression to tell them about foods we did not like but have learned to like. We discipline if they refuse to eat at least a minimal amount even though we know they do not like it. We need to be careful

that we do not subtly, in our desire for order and efficiency, teach our children it is wrong to share their feelings.

Some day they may be married to a husband or wife who cannot understand why they do not communicate and open up and say how they feel. The truth may be that all their childhood life they were taught that if the way they feel is not positive or according to the house rules, it will bring pain to say how they feel. So they will “keep it safe” and not say anything.

There does come a time we learn not to trumpet our negative emotions, because everyone knows how we “feel,” and reaffirming the facts brings no additional value to family dialogue or our emotional journey. Our children need to learn it is acceptable if we say our likes and dislikes, but it is not acceptable to let our likes and dislikes monopolize our life or the lives of others.

4. Emotional stability is best understood in the context of belonging, worthiness, competence, and boundaries.

Every family member needs belonging (knowing they are loved for who they are, not just for how they perform), worthiness (knowing there are things they are contributing to life that are valuable), competence (they can achieve things that appear bigger than themselves), and boundaries

(there are things that have a place, but need to be done with limits in duration or depth of expression).

We could think of these four entities as a four-legged stool. We take any one leg off the stool and we have the likely potential to “topple” when we step on the stool.

An angry or bitter child could possibly have been raised in a home where the leg of “belonging” was loose. An extreme shame/guilt complex that runs in overdrive may indicate the leg of worthiness was missing, and that they never learned their value to others and God. Their parents may have been better critics than cheer leaders. A fearful child may have had the leg of competence shakily attached. They had parents that did not raise the bar and encourage them to try great things. Instead, they were led to believe they cannot jump it. A child that finds himself constantly outside the realm of acceptable behavior, may not have had enough boundaries defined in his childhood, or we could question how much those boundaries were staked with compassion and relationship.

5. Our families need to see a mom and dad that work together in finding balance in emotional expressions.

One of the most basic needs in helping our children emotionally is that father and mother work

together with respect to each other’s values and temperament rather than opposing each other.

There may be times we feel that our spouse is allowing too much or not doing enough. We need to communicate together and work out an acceptable platform and a similar goal. If one parent lets Johnny whine his nap time disappointment the whole way from the sandbox to the bedroom, and the other disciplines at the first expression of disappointment, we will raise an insecure child that doesn’t know what to do with their emotions.

I think one of the reasons God made opposites attract is that opposites fill in the missing attributes in home life. One may set too many boundaries, the other may set too few. One may tend to be overly protective, the other tend to press development and advancement into their lap too early. As they work at their differences they can strike a balance that makes for good emotional stability in the next generation. But when they refuse to merge their values, they create a time bomb in the emotional fabric of their family.

6. Passing on emotional stability cannot be done without personal example.

Deuteronomy 6 advises us,

We are being watched as parents. And the things we model—by design or by accident—powerfully

communicate our convictions about right and wrong and about acceptable and unacceptable behavior in regard to emotional stability.

If Dad can express anger and frustration at the cows, but Johnny cannot beat up the dog even when its being disgusting, do not underestimate the power of association our children are capable of making when we discipline them for not being nice to Fido, and the

resulting emotion of anger toward us for our expectations of them versus our example. If we wish for our sons and daughters to accept the idea that there are absolute standards of right and wrong in emotional expression, we must let them see that we believe it ourselves in how we handle our emotions.

[From *The Pilgrim Witness*,
with permission.]



ANNOUNCEMENT

Woodlawn Church is having a special recognition service for Elmer and Norma Miller, our retired bishop and his wife, on Sunday, September 16, 2012.

Attention...All former members/attendees (and ministers involved with Elmer in church work) of Woodlawn Church, Goshen, Indiana. You are invited to attend. A meal will be served after the morning service. An open house is planned in the afternoon from 2:00 – 5:00 p. m. at the church.

Could you please respond if you are planning to attend the forenoon service and dinner?

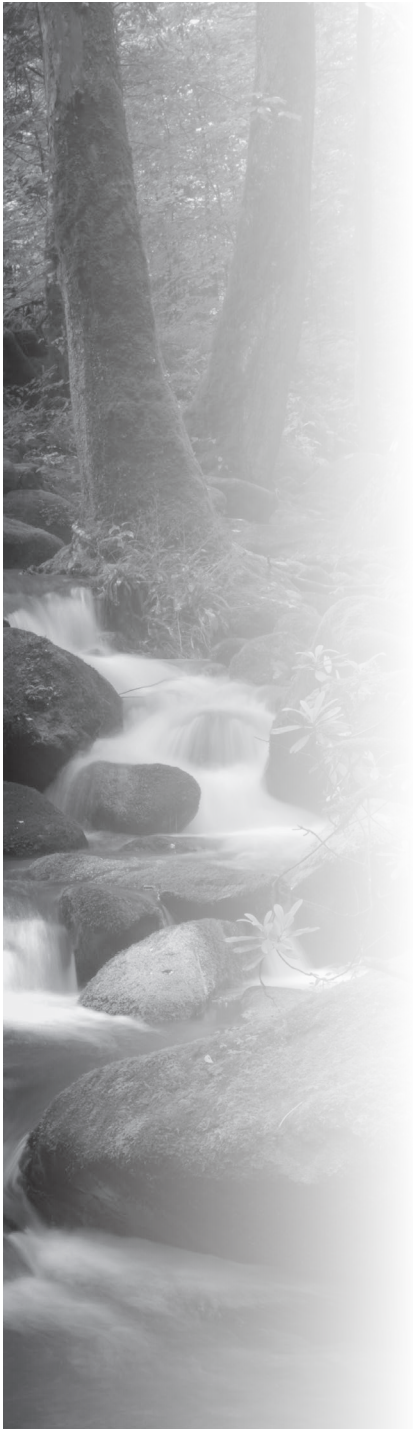
Thank you.

David and Mary Ellen Beachy (574-642-3445)

David's cell # is 574-202-0883.

Mary Ellen's cell # is 574-536-7915.





Self-Examination

(1 Corinthians 11:28)

Ronald Hostetter, Smithsburg, MD

A true disciple of the Lord
I count myself to be.
But lest I spurn His blood out-poured,
The bread He broke for me,
And waste away in sickly sleep
To die eternally:

I bare my soul before the Light
Of life, the living Word,
The hammer blows of truth and right,
The Spirit's searching sword,
And bow my ear to brothers true,
Whose words are Spirit-stirred.

That I may quench the latent lust,
Discard the seed of sin,
Uproot the cares that strangle trust,
Dismiss the glittering tin.
And fell the gaudy towers of pride
That mock Christ's throne within;

That meekly I may seek redress
For words that sting and maim,
Reverse the blight of bitterness,
The plague of passing blame,
And prove by kindly neighboring
The truth of what I claim.

With life and peace renewed, I stand
To take the proffered bread
And drink the cup at Christ's command,
But humbly bow my head
And pledge anew to serve Him well,
To learn and to be led.

[From *Brotherhood Builder*, April, 2012.
Used by permission.]



marriages

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

King-Smoker

Bro. Lavern M., son of Eli B., Jr., and Mary Jane King, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Marlene J., daughter of John and Naomi Smoker, Belleville, PA, at Valley View A.M. Church, on June 30, 2012, by Eli B. King, Jr.

Knepp-Graber

Bro. Randall, son of Henry and Laura Knepp, Montgomery, IN, and Sis. Emily, daughter of Loren and Barbara Ann Graber, Montgomery, IN, at First Mennonite for Mt. Olive Mennonite, Montgomery, IN, on June 23, 2012, by Homer Zook.

Lengacher-Miller

Bro. Sheldon, son of Floyd and Marietta Lengacher, Lexington, IN, and Sis. Alisa, daughter of Ruben and Kathryn Miller, Fredonia, KY, at Northside Baptist Church for Fredonia Mennonite Church on June 22, 2012, by Floyd Lengacher.

Mast-Ramos

Bro. M. Caleb, son of Thomas and Linda Mast, Nappanee, IN, and Sis. Sandra Patricia, daughter of Alonso and Pauline Ramos, Texistepeque Santa Ana, El Salvador, in El Salvador in May 5, 2012, by Thomas Mast.

Yutzty-Hochstetler

Bro. Alvin, Jr, son of Alvin and Naomi Yutzty, Huntsville, AR, and Sis. Rhoda, daughter of Perry and Mary Hochstetler, Wesley, AR, at First Assembly of God for Lighthouse of Faith on May 26, 2012, by Dan Byler.

cradle roll

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

Byler, Dan and Julia (Erb), Poole, ON, fifth child, second dau., Sophia Rose, Feb. 13, 2012.

Esh, John and Linda (Stoltzfus), Woodstown, NJ, sixth child, second son, Kyler Dean, June 14, 2012.

Gerber, Bradley and Margaret (Gerber), Brunner, ON, second child and dau., Alayna Brooke, Feb. 20, 2012.

Glick, Timothy and Sonya (Castaneda), Cleburne, TX, fourth child, second son, Timothy Titus, April 11, 2012.

Herschberger, Darrell and Maria (Yoder), Lovington, IL, third child and dau., Jaclyn Kate, July 6, 2012.

Hershberger, Loren and Ruthie (Yoder), Manassas, VA, second child, first son, Wyatt Luce, July 3, 2012.

Hostetler, Marvin and Karen (Miller), McVeytown, PA, third child and son, Austin Benjamin, July 3, 2012.

Martin, Lloyd and Priscilla (Yoder), Covington, TX, first child and dau., Angela Faith, April 10, 2012.

Miller, Devon and Mary Sue (Garber), Brookfield, MO, third child, second son, Jeffrey Devon, June 27, 2012.

Miller, Jason L. and Anna (Troyer), Antrim, OH, fourth child, second son, Grant Enos, July 3, 2012.

Miller, Tim and Martha (Stoll), Pulaskee, TN, second child and dau., Gracie Joy, May 12, 2012.

Schmucker, Abner and Angela (Nisly), Partridge, KS, seventh child, sixth son, Lane Christopher, July 15, 2012.

Stutzman, Danny and Monica (Schrock), Dade City, FL, seventh child, second son, Daniel Alexander, June 24, 2012.

Ulrich, Leland and Rachel (Martin), Grandview, TX, eighth child, second son, Leland Jay, May 21, 2012.

Wagler, Gerald and Esther (Stoltzfus), Washington, IN, second child, first dau., Rachel Leandra, April 16, 2012.

Yoder, Jonathan and Tina (Giesbrecht), Cross Hill, SC, first child and dau., Sierra Dawn, June 28, 2012.

Yoder, Titus and Hannah (Graybill), Lott, TX, fourth child, third dau., Eliana Joy, July 17, 2012.

Zimmerman, Javan and Matina (Overholt), Lyndon, KS, sixth child, fifth son, Patrick Riley, April, 29, 2012.

ordinations

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

Bro. J. Ellis Beachy, 33, Scotland Halfmoon, Belize, was called by voice of the church and ordained as minister for Isabella Harmony Fellowship, on June 10, 2012. Preordination messages were given by Tim Miller, San Antonio, Belize. The charge was given by Virgil Kanagy, assisted by Hughdelle Ysaguirre and Laverne Yoder.

Bro. Roman Miller, 48, Spencerville, IN, was chosen by voice of the church and ordained as minister at Fellowship Haven, Woodburn, IN, on June 24, 2012. Preordination messages were given by Ray Stutzman, Plain City, OH. The charge was given by Eugene Eicher, assisted by Thomas Mast and Melvin Roes.

Bro. Jonathan Yoder, 37, was ordained as bishop at Pilgrim Fellowship, Sturgis, MI, on July 1, 2012. Preordination messages were by Perry Troyer, Plain City, OH, The charge was given by John Miller, assisted by Perry Troyer and Homer Zook.

Shetler, Uriah M., 82. died at his home on May 19, 2012, after a lengthy illness of Parkinson's Disease and a five-year battle with cancer. He was born June 27, 1929 at Apple Creek, Ohio, son of the late Mose L. and Mary (Miller) Shetler. When Uriah was ten, his mother died. His father's second wife was Barbara Miller.


He was a member and bishop of Farmville Christian Fellowship, Farmville, VA.

On Nov. 22, 191951, he was married to Rachel Stoltzfus in Oakland, Maryland. From there they moved to Catlett, VA. In 1956, he was ordained a minister in the Beachy Amish Fellowship Church there. In 1958, they moved to Holmes County, OH.

Uriah was widely known as a traveling evangelist in the late 1950's and 1960's. Through his preaching, many became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. His prayers were powerful, his care for individual needs was deep, and his words were used by the Holy Spirit to bless many souls. He was ordained bishop in 1963. He assisted and helped establish churches in Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Paraguay, South America. In 1971, the Shetler family moved to Paraguay. Uriah became fluent in Spanish and

ministered to natives there. In 1981, the family returned to the United States, and settled in Farmville, VA, where he served the church until his retirement due to illness in 1991.

Surviving are his wife, Rachel; children: Martha (Lloyd) Slabaugh, Nap-panee, IN; John Shetler, Hartville, OH; Anna (Albert) Miller, Farmville; Priscilla (Mark) Eichorn, Paraguay; Stephen (LaVerda) Shetler, Perkins, OK; Daniel (Phyllis) Shetler, McAlisterville, PA; Mary (Alex) Espinoza, Honduras; Miriam (John) Miller, Pamplin, VA; Dorcas Shetler, Farmville; Eunice Joy (Ken) Mast, Dundee, OH; Bernice Shetler, Farmville; Julia (Jeff) Hertzler, Axton, VA; 50 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren; five brothers: Joni, Lewis, Levi, Eli, and Norman; and five sisters: Elizabeth, Martha, Ada, Mary, and Ella. He was preceded in death by a son, James, and three grandchildren: Adrian, Rosella, and Darla Jewel, and one great grand child, Fabian.

The funeral was held on May 22, with Bennie Byler, Corey Yoder, Eli Troyer, Adin Troyer, Stephen Shetler, and John Mast participating in the service. Interment was in the Farmville Christian Fellowship cemetery. 

Your neighbor may seem to be a better man when you judge him as gently as you judge yourself.

Yesterday was July 4. If my math is right, this is 236 years after the birth of our country. It is suitable for Christians to reaffirm their gratitude to God and our government for the many freedoms we enjoy.

A full-page ad in *The Hutchinson News* offers an unusual perspective on this national holiday. Large letters in the middle of the page say, IN GOD WE TRUST. Hobby Lobby, owned by Christian businessman David Green has paid for the ad. A toll-free phone number connects the caller to a strong voice appeal for the caller to become a Christian.

The ad includes quotes from five of the first six presidents who in some manner acknowledged God. One gets the sentiment that they strongly felt that the blessing and future of the country could be realized only by God's blessing. Patrick Henry refers to the "God of nature." Benjamin Franklin says "without God's help this political building will succeed no better than the tower of Babel."

Any mention of Christ and Christianity is conspicuously missing from statements quoted by presidents and early statesmen. But John Jay, first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and Joseph Story (also a Supreme Court justice) both mention

Christianity as part of the national identity.

It would be a pleasant thought to assume that this country was founded as a Christian nation. But the two-kingdom concept seems to rule out that possibility. It is apparent that they were very careful to provide for total religious freedom. Scholars see our founding fathers as persons who believed in God, but apparently were not Christians. Many of them were Deists. The first slaves were brought to this country from Africa in 1619. By 1776, slavery was a long-standing feature of the economy. Some of the founding fathers were wealthy slave owners. This unchristian practice and the racial discrimination that followed is a serious blot on our nation's history.

The way that many white settlers treated the native Americans is another story that is shameful rather than Christian.

To pray for our leaders and to thank the Lord for His grace and mercy is only right. But there are good reasons why national pride would be clearly misguided.

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Another item in the full-page ad is student guidelines for Harvard (1636) and Yale (1787). Both of these institutions, founded as Christian

learning centers, are presently seen as totally irreligious and humanistic. Harvard students were “plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3). Christ is acknowledged as the only foundation of sound knowledge and learning...Every one shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day and he shall be ready to give an account of his proficiency thereto.”

Yale student guidelines included: “All scholars are required to live a religious and blameless life according to the rules of God’s Word, diligently reading the Holy Scriptures, that fountain of Divine light and truth and constantly attending to all duties of religion.”

It is sobering to see how far an institution can stray from the ideals of its founders.

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A local sister got a surprise thank-you note from someone she scarcely knew. The sender included a picture of her husband and their ten children aged 2 months to 19 years. They appear to be a happy, healthy family.

Sixteen years ago when the oldest children were small, their mother felt very stressed and overwhelmed with the demands of responsible motherhood. The recipient had written an article for *Keepers at*

Home. A young mother contacted the writer and received a letter in return that provided much needed encouragement.

The young mother had carried the letter in her purse for ten years or so. After it was tattered with wear and tear, she got the urge to express her profound gratitude to its author. It was a day brightener for the recipient. The attitude of gratitude speaks well for the spiritual health of the sender.

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The Budget editor reports that a daily devotional booklet entitled: *Taegliches Manna* (Daily Manna) is available from Henry Miller, 707 Gerber Rd., Mio, Michigan, 48647. The meditations are written by men of Amish and Old Order Mennonite churches and reviewed by two bishops for soundness.

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A certain girl, whose family I know, had solid Christian upbringing. After she was out of high school, she got a job. At a certain point, a special friendship developed with plans for marriage. Suddenly, she felt poorly prepared to assume the duties incumbent on a “keeper at home.” To her credit, she spent several months at home with her mother in a crash course of sorts to learn the domestic skills of home making. I have no reason to believe she is not doing well.

I am acquainted with several

families with teenage daughters who seem to be doing well with food preparation and sewing skills. Both families are home schooled.

Service and job opportunities become legitimate options for our young sisters. But such circumstances should not diminish the importance of learning basic homemaking skills.



Eastern Mennonite Testimony (7-12), in a guest editorial, draws from an article written 99 years ago by Daniel Kauffman. The article mentions objections and brief answers that are sometimes brought up to practical non-conformity. For the sake of brevity, I have selected only two:

• *When the heart is right, all is right.* The implication is that dress says nothing about Christian experience. The truth is that while a bad heart may hide under godly dress, a godly heart will reject ungodly dress.

• *It is not profitable to spend so much time on little things.* It is true that dress is only one small part of Christian discipleship. It is also true that disobedience to the will of God is never a little thing. But if dress is such a little thing, why does it receive so much attention in the world? Why do people find the practice of non-conformity so difficult?



Local columnist Dan Deming recently wrote a column entitled,

“Death of Common Sense Regrettable.” He notes that the local school board had agreed to spend an additional \$14,000 to upgrade the cell phones of the highest paid school administrators who were already drawing annual salaries of from \$75,000 to more than \$100,000. This expense of taxpayer money does not benefit education at the basic classroom level. Deming laments that not a single board member voted against this motion.

Deming’s column is mostly devoted to an article written by Darrell Albright. Parts of that article follow: “Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who had been with us for many years. No one knows how old he was since his birth records were lost long ago in bureaucratic red tape. Valuable lessons that he taught included, ‘Life is not always fair;’ and ‘Maybe it was my fault.’

“Common Sense lived by simple sound financial policies, such as, ‘Don’t spend more than you can earn.’ He believed that adults, not children, should be in charge. His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned, but overbearing regulations were put in place.

“When a teacher was fired for reprimanding an unruly student, his health declined even more. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked and sued teachers for doing

the job they had failed to do. Another sign of terminal illness was when teachers were forbidden to inform parents when a student becomes pregnant and wants an abortion.

“Common Sense lost the will to live when a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot and when she spilled some on her lap, she was awarded a large settlement.

“Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, and his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son, Reason. He is survived by five step brothers:

I Know My Rights, I Want it Now, It's Someone Else's Fault, You Owe Me, and I Am a Victim. Not many attended his funeral, because so few realized that he was gone. How sad.”


The above writing is admittedly satire, but it reminds us that common sense can be replaced by nonsense that seems to be more and more common. As followers of the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, we are reminded that to think and act responsibly is always right, but not always popular.

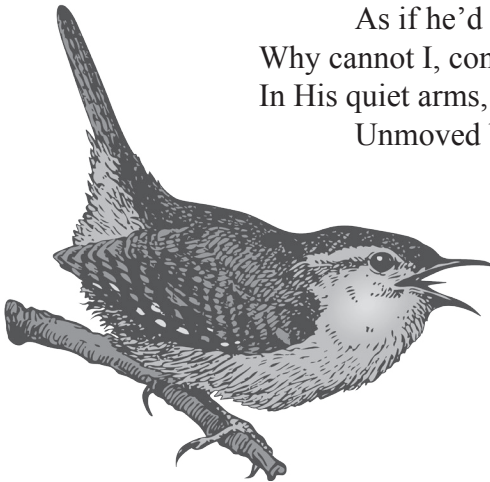
-DLM 

In His Arms

Author unknown

If a wren can cling to a spray and swing,
In a mad May wind and sing and sing
As if he'd burst for joy.

Why cannot I, contented lie
In His quiet arms, beneath His sky,
Unmoved by earth's annoy? 



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: 440-480-1489) for \$50, postpaid.

Being the Good Shepherd's Shepherd

Bill Mullet, Sugarcreek, OH

There is a balm in Gilead. There is a physician here. God brings healing. He wants to use us as shepherds to do so. My assignment is to try to explain the shepherd's role in Jewish culture. It is a vast subject, much more than I am able to cover.

First, let me set the stage. This shepherd's culture was largely formed in the Judean desert. Many of the noted Jewish leaders were shepherds. While they took their flocks ambling in the hills and valleys, shepherds were cut off from the distractions of society. This provided them time for inner reflection. The Torah tells us that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Rachel all herded sheep and goats. The surrounding culture scorned this

occupation. Shepherding was not a glamorous thing.

Brothers and sisters, it is still not a glamorous thing. It is a *function*, not a *position*. The prophet needs to pastor. Shepherding is pastoring. The pastor needs to prophesy. The evangelist needs to shepherd and teach. It is a function. In other words, a shepherd is a leader. We may be bishops, elders, and deacons, and still not be shepherding. We may have people in the congregation who are not deacons and elders and bishops, who do shepherd.

Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd. Peter refers to Him as the Chief Shepherd. Certainly, He is the greatest shepherd of all time. When it comes to example, He is the greatest example, but He is much more than a great example.

David is probably my favorite shepherd. If want to see a shepherd's

heart, read through the Psalms. He understood the language and culture of shepherding. When Nathan came to him with the story of the lamb, it broke his heart and he repented. In the Psalms, he expresses the deepest pain and repentance and the highest joy and a relationship he experienced. I was not assigned a text so I shall read Psalm 23 now.

The sun is rising and casts a shadow on the shepherd. Staff in hand. A skin of water, a shepherd's bag on his shoulder. He moves slowly across the desert. A large flock of sheep follows him closely. He hums a familiar tune that puts the sheep at ease. An expression of peace, confidence, and joy is on his face. The sheep seem to know and sense the same and gladly follow him.

The Good Shepherd's shepherd *leads*. He goes before his sheep (John 10:4). The sheep follow him for *who* he is. Sheep follow their shepherd because they trust him. They know his voice. He's been with them. He's proved himself worthy of their trust. If his sheep do not follow him, he's just taking a walk through the desert. He has the ability to influence them, because they trust him.

They trust him because of *what* he is, his character. His carefulness and competence commend him. His workmanship is not something he needs to be ashamed of.

They trust him because of *how* he is: the way he treats them, his humility, he doesn't know it all. But he knows the One who knows it all. Shepherds must be men of integrity. The shepherd knows the dangers. The wadis, the ravines, the terrain are all known by him. The Judean desert has many hazards. With the bright sunlight, he needs good vision to avoid stumbling into a chasm. He must find green pastures and still, cool waters. Because he cannot know everything they might encounter, he must be alert and prepared. Bad weather may come and there are thieves and wolves.

He must have a vision for the future. Someone said, "If you don't have a vision, you can't lead people forward. You can only lead people against something." If the shepherd just sits cowering in the corner, the sheep will die.

He cannot build a fence high enough to secure and protect them. He has to be the shepherd. In fact, in the culture we're discussing, they don't build fences. These people are not ranchers; they're shepherds. Only at night will they take the sheep into the fold. When the shepherd goes to rest, he lies down in the opening of the sheepfold and becomes the door.

As the sheep go out onto the desert in the morning, it appears to have no life. But on closer observation, it

has a green hue. The dew has fallen during the night and small sprouts have sprung up. The sheep fan out and start to graze and the shepherd looks out upon the next slopes. After a time, he gently leads them further to an oasis.

The shepherd *feeds*. The Judean pasture is not typically a lush, green pasture that King James' translators may have been thinking of. This is the culture of the desert. This is not a place where sheep are left on their own. If left alone, they will die. It's wilderness. The grass grows at night. It rains only three to ten inches a year, so they rely on the dew God created. When dew falls on rocks, it may run off and make enough moisture to bring up little sprigs of grass.

We aren't used to the desert. The shepherd knows where to find nourishment. Pasture uses the same root word in Hebrew as the Word of God. We are to take the sheep to pasture, to the Word of God. They lie down because they get enough. We too live in a desert and need to find green pasture. If we leave the sheep alone, they will not thrive. They will eat of the wrong thing if they aren't nourished in green pastures. Pastors, preach nourishing sermons. A church is not to be a concentration of spiritually starved saints. They are to be fed from the Bible. Sheep also need to drink water at least once a day.

Shepherds *communicate*. The sheep know his voice. They will not follow a stranger but will flee from him. "I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). The shepherd speaks to his sheep. If someone puts on the shepherd's garb and calls them, the sheep will not follow. They trust and follow only the familiar voice. There are many voices out there today. Brothers, if we don't speak to our sheep, they may listen to other voices. As they recognize other voices, they may follow them. We must communicate with the sheep. It is important what the shepherd says. 1 Peter 4:11 says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." Let us be sure we speak for God.

Sheep are notorious for wandering off. The shepherd is to call his sheep in a straight line. He does not call them around something. If there are hazards in the path, he will walk only where the sheep can safely follow him. He names his sheep and calls them by name. Brothers, if our sheep don't know our voice, don't be surprised if they don't follow.

The shepherd *protects*. He uses the rod and staff to check for any hazards. If he is blinded by bright light, he uses it to feel if there's any danger he can't see. He uses the staff in defense against enemies, human and animal. The rod (or staff) was not meant for punishment or discipline, but to

comfort and protect the flock. The rod in Israel does not have a crook at the top, but a knob. The crook and flail in Egypt were emblems of an Egyptian god and were used to discipline, punish and rule. Moses was educated in Egypt and probably carried such a rod. One day when he came out to his brethren, he used his Egyptian rod to kill an Egyptian. Then he fled and for 40 years, he tended his father-in-law's sheep in "Mt. Horeb University."

There Moses encountered the burning bush. Every shepherd needs to encounter his "burning bush." Without God, I cannot do anything. I must totally depend on Him. There we must throw down the Egyptian rod and pick up the Hebrew rod which becomes the rod of God, not our rod. Moses picked up the rod and obediently followed the call of God. When they came back to Mt. Horeb, they needed water. God told Moses to strike the rock with the rod and water would come out.

Later at Kadesh, the people chided against Moses and Aaron. When God told Moses to go out and speak to the rock, Moses' earlier use of the rod came back to him in anger, and he struck the rock, although he also spoke to it. "Hear now, you rebels, do I have to get water for you?" The water came out, but Moses was not

allowed to enter the promised land because he didn't trust God. He was angry with God's people. That's like being angry with God. He had reverted to the Egyptian way.

The shepherd *smells like sheep*. If you can't stand the "smell of sheep," you shouldn't be a deacon, an elder, or a bishop. You can't be a shepherd and not smell like sheep. We must have relationship with the sheep. "I know them; they know me; I call them by name; I lay down my life for them." The shepherds of Israel established such an intimate relationship with their sheep, that often when a shepherd dies, the entire flock perishes. That's why they began to "team shepherd."

Brothers, we must know and spend time with the flock. That may mean it is just as important to go to the Memorial Day picnic with them as to preach to them on Easter Sunday.

Let's not be embarrassed about our sheep. Let's identify with their embarrassing actions. Let's embrace them where we find them. Let's not isolate ourselves from them and drive them further away. Ultimately, the goal of the shepherd is to serve the sheep. The servant shepherd is like Jesus, the Good Shepherd. My final encouragement comes from 1 Peter 5:1-4.



How Blest Are They

(Psalm 1)


Author Unknown

How blest are they, who fearing God,
From sin restrain their feet,
Who will not with the wicked stand,
And shun the scorner's seat.

How blest are they who make God's law
Their treasure and delight
And meditate upon the Word
With gladness, day and night.

Their lives are nourished like a tree
Set by the river's side;
Its leaf is green; its fruit is sure;
So all their works abide.

The wicked, like the driven chaff,
Are blown across the land;
They shall not gather with the just,
Nor in the judgment stand.

The Lord will guard the righteous well;
Their way to God is known,
The way of sinners, far from God,
Shall surely be oerthrown. 

A New Frontier in Missions

There is a gigantic frontier of missions awaiting us as conservative Anabaptist people among Muslims. The message and timing is urgent! The story of David taking courage and facing the giant Goliath in the name of the Lord gives us a spring board to move forward in spite of strong opposition. We have an advantage with our cultural values to reach them now. Read the following article to discover useful tools in ministering to these people.

They may even be our neighbors. -FS

The Anabaptist Advantage

TDW

In 2007 I was studying Arabic with a former Muslim who had just returned from study at a Christian seminary abroad. We met for several hours per day and often shared personal stories of our lives in our sessions. When Ahmad discovered my affiliation with the Anabaptist people and I showed him photos of my family, he became excited. "When you live in the Middle East," he instructed me, "you need to hang a large picture of your family on the wall." He offered this suggestion realizing the impact a photo of my family would have on Muslims whose perception of Christianity and the West is shaped

largely by modern media.

A Syrian friend I met in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates best illustrates the view that many Muslims have of the West. I met him first under the palm trees of an outdoor cafe' in the town where I was studying. Almost immediately he was curious about my faith so I explained to him how following Christ affects my life. I explained that living morally clean and following the teachings of Jesus in a practical manner is of utmost importance to me. The tone in his voice revealed his surprise as he asked, "Are there more people like you in America?" This was the first time he realized that there are Americans who aim to live godly lives.

Sadly, many Muslims are familiar

with Christianity only as portrayed through Western media. They see Hollywood actors and actresses with crosses around their necks and watch the violent news from “Christian America” and form an impression of what Christianity must be like. Even their own religious teachers inform them of the immorality and violence of Christians.

They recall the savageness of cross-bearing warriors who invaded Muslim lands during the Middle Ages. The crusaders captured Muslim-ruled Jerusalem in 1099 and massacred its inhabitants. A witness from the crusader camp described the bloodshed as follows: “Some of our men cut off the heads of their enemies...shot them with arrows, so that they fell from the towers...[and] tortured them longer by casting them into flames...at nightfall the crusaders’ hands were still bloody when they folded them in prayer and knelt at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, sobbing for excess of joy.” (Shelly, 189)

It was a tragic time when Christians took up the sword in the name of Jesus, an era that Muslims have never forgotten and continue to associate with the cross.

More recently European colonialism has sullied the name of Christ in the East. Beginning

gradually through trade in Muslim countries, “Christian” European powers took control of and eventually subjugated entire Muslim populations for long periods of time. The French invaded Algeria in 1830 where they seized 100 million francs and transferred about half of that to France (Ansary 244). A French commission sent to give recommendations for the annexed territory described the terrible treatment of the local population as follows: “We have sent to their deaths on simple suspicion and without trial people whose guilt was always doubtful and then despoiled their heirs. We massacred people carrying [our] safe conducts, slaughtered on suspicion entire populations subsequently found to be innocent...” (Ruedy 80).

Such measures of control and suppression spread across the Muslim world by other European powers. Egypt was first invaded by the French and later brought under British authority for several decades. Gradually, local Muslim populations formed resistance movements. But it was not until the mid-1900s that the last Muslim nations shook themselves free from foreign rule. Then in 2001 the self-professing “born again” President George W. Bush called for another round of

violence against the Muslims when he said, “This crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a while” (Ford). For many Muslims, this was just further proof that the power-hungry Christian West continued its crusading zeal.

But as Anabaptist people we “march to a different drumbeat.” Our commitment is not to an earthly kingdom bearing guns and ammunition, but rather to Jesus and his kingdom of peace. This lifestyle of following Jesus has shaped us in a variety of ways that speak loudly to the Muslim heart and mind.

For example, when Muslims flip through my small album of family pictures and see Grandma, Grandpa, and seven children plus the grandchildren and all of them dressed modestly, they are stunned. “It’s like a Muslim family,” they proclaim as they observe an American lifestyle unknown to them before. A family visit can leave an even deeper impression. After taking a Palestinian to visit my family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, he spent nearly 45 minutes describing the experience to his family. Among other things, he highlighted the length of my father’s beard, the way my sisters dress, and the absence of television in the home. This same young man was nearly moved to

tears several months later when a Mennonite church shared hundreds of dollars with him in a time of desperate need. “You people are the real Christians that the Quran talks about,” he said as we discussed the possibility of him going with me to church to thank the “priest.”

Furthermore, our commitment to Jesus means that our young men are not in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Libya manning guns, fighter jets or warships. This commitment to the teachings of Jesus presently and historically is an enormous asset in reaching out to Muslims with the Good News. And it is especially so at present when Muslims are mistrusted and portrayed as terrorists and enemies of the world.

The portrayal of Muslims as dangerous and frightening is not new to our age. During the time of the Reformation the Muslim Turks were viewed in a similar way. Catholic and Protestant leaders were terrified that an invasion by the Turks was imminent and active preparation was absolutely necessary. Robert Friedman describes the general feeling of that time saying,

“Today one can scarcely realize the fear and horror which Europe of the sixteenth century felt at the sound of the word ‘Turk.’ It made everybody shiver and tremble. From

the beginning of the century the Turks had advanced in ever renewed waves...killing, pillaging, burning wherever they came” (73).

The Hutterites of Moravia suffered heavily during this time (1593-1606). Property was seized, women and children taken captive and their communities were virtually destroyed. One Hutterite brother, Salomon Boger, spent the next several years trudging through Ottoman territory to free Hutterite women and children who had been sold into slavery. He died before finding his wife and daughter who had been taken captive by the Turks (Friedman, 73-86). Despite such tragic encounters with the Turks, Anabaptists refused to engage in combat against them.

Hans Denck, for example, wrote that all men should be allowed to “move and dwell in peace—be he Turk or heathen” (Klassen 292). Michael Sattler, who penned the famed Schleithem Confession of Faith, said at his trial: “If the Turks should come, we ought not to resist them...I would rather take the field against so-called Christians who persecute, capture, and kill pious Christians than against the Turks... The Turk is a Turk, knows nothing of the Christian faith, and is a Turk after the flesh. But you, who would

be Christians and who make your boast of Christ persecute the pious witnesses of Christ and are Turks after the spirit” (Klassen 270).

Michael Sattler died for his commitment to Christ rather than agreeing to fight the terrorists. What are we doing? Are we like fellow Americans who cheer on our government as they drop bombs on people for whom Christ died? Or are we holding to the Gospel of love that extends to Muslims of any culture or ethnicity?

Some studies indicate that the primary factor in bringing Muslims to Christ has been the lives of Christians (Woodberry, *et. al.*). The Gospel lived out among Muslims has a deep impact on their perception of what Christianity is about and opens their hearts to the truth. Through traveling, studying, and living among Muslims for the past several years, I have become increasingly convinced that conservative Anabaptists have a distinct advantage in bringing the Gospel to Muslim people. No doubt there are weaknesses in our tradition that hinder us. However, our long tradition of practical obedience to the teachings of Jesus gives us an advantage in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ over and over again.

The founder of an evangelical mission organization in a Muslim

nation summed up this argument succinctly, “God is raising up men within the Mennonite constituencies to take the Gospel to the yet unreached people of the world. You are the ones that have practice behind your faith that God can greatly use to win the world.” (personal e-mail) We have a special gift to offer in this field of ministry. We must not bury it or cast it away, but rather, we must take advantage of our advantage and use it for building the Kingdom of God among Muslims.

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helpers at home

Living Simply in our Homes

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

Our homes are important to us. They define who we are, and often speak of our character. Have you ever had a friend enter your home for the first time and exclaim? “It looks just like you!” We

understand our friends better after we visit their homes. It is a corner of our lives where we “take off our shoes and remove our masks,” where we can be truly ourselves.

I love my home. However, I have

discovered turning a house into a home does not depend on the kind of house we live in. Mel and I have lived in nine different houses since we are married, along with several different places we lived for only a few months each. We have lived in two countries and four different states, and we have felt at home in each place. There have been adjustments to make, and yet I learned to see the beauty in each situation. We have lived in rental properties, mission properties and houses we owned. The blessing is that we can take *home* with us. A woman needs the comfort and security of a home probably more than does a man. I find that even when we travel, I must make our room feel comfortable before I can go to sleep. I wonder if that is why Jesus assures us that He is preparing a *home* for us in Heaven. He knows our need for Home.

It is important that our homes be a refuge for our families and a welcoming place for those who enter our doors. You may ask the question, “How do we turn our house into a home?” I believe many children today are growing up in a *house* without the blessing of being nurtured and cared for in a *home*. A home often includes loving parents. Where there is only one parent in the home, that parent can also provide

a caring atmosphere for a family. A home does not require a fancy house, elaborate furnishings, expensive toys and electronics. It does require time, love, respect and kindness.

My subject this month focuses on simplicity in our homes—a plain and simple way of life. One writer refers to it as “Living with less in a world of more.” In this time and place, we live with plenty. We have easy access through credit cards to what we want. Many people live beyond their means because of it. I realize that living simply will not be the same for everyone of us. We are personally responsible to God for the things we possess. I believe some questions to ask ourselves are,

- Does my lifestyle bring glory to God?
- Do the things I own control me or am I master over them?
- Could I do with less so I could share more with others?
- Do my possessions rob me of spending time with God or my family?
- Am I content or do I always want more?

Living simply means looking at life from God’s perspective. It means changing our thought patterns, our attitudes. It includes finding joy in the simple things of life. It is taking one day at a time and taking time “to

smell the roses.”


Here’s a question to stir our thinking: Where do I begin? I begin with myself. I spend time with God searching my heart and God’s heart to see what He wants me to do. I find strength through His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit to do what is required of me. This is the basis for a life of simplicity; otherwise, we have only fruitlessness. When our hearts are at rest, we will be at rest.

Now for some more practical ideas: Our homes should be places of order. Remember the adage, “A place for everything and everything in its place.” If you can’t find a place for something, maybe you don’t need it. A cluttered home makes for a cluttered mind. I know I have said this before, but I think it is worth saying again: Start the day with a clean and orderly house. I know it might not stay that way with children present. Children do need to enjoy themselves in our homes. We cannot have a perfect house, but we can do our best to have a clean, uncluttered place for our family. I believe children are more relaxed in an orderly home.

Grab three garbage bags, go

through your house and throw the trash in one bag. Thrift store or yard sale items go in another. The things you want to keep but plan to store for now go into a third bag. You may be surprised at the clothes hanging in your closets or in your drawers that no one wears. Relief organizations are glad for *good* used clothes. Teach your children to pick up after themselves. Dirty clothes belong in the clothes hamper (or wash basket), dishes in the sink, and coats and hats on hangers or hooks.

School papers can be put in assigned baskets. Use a loose leaf notebook for each child to keep the favorite school papers and drawings. I have quite a few notebooks with plastic sheet protectors. I store recipes in one, clippings of interest, craft ideas, addresses, and so on, in others. Organization takes time but it is worth the effort. Sort through your kitchen cabinets and throw away old utensils, mismatched lids, and items you never use, then reorganize. I did this recently and was surprised at the extra space that became available.

More on simplicity next month.
Until then, enjoy the challenge. 

Some people go broke on too many bargains.

A Cycle and Twenty-Nine Loaves of Bread

Adapted from Into Their Hands at Any Cost

Harvey Yoder

In a land where people know hunger, a gift of bread and honey is greatly appreciated. In a land where Bibles are scarce, shared and hand-copied, a gift of God's Word is highly treasured.

Seventeen-year-old Ilie felt a twinge of nervousness as his motorcycle neared the border. Would he be allowed to cross? How many questions would they ask? What if they took all his cargo? What if they put him in prison? He did what all of us should do when we are troubled; he breathed a prayer for help to his Father above.

The border patrol asked why he was visiting the Soviet Union. "I am going to visit my uncle in Cernauti," Ilie stated.

"How long will you be gone and what is in your cycle?"

"Three days, and I have bread and honey in my cycle." The officer motioned for him to open his side car. It was as the boy had said. Loaves of bread and jars of honey were neatly packed inside. Ilie gave the man a loaf of bread and a small jar of honey.

"My mother makes good bread," he added.

The officer frowned, but did not refuse the wonderful food. "Why are you not in school?" the patrol guard questioned. A gust of wind blew bits of cold snow into their faces. The guard quickly stamped his visa and Ilie rejoiced. He was excited to be on his way. God had gotten him safely across the border!

Ilie had been in the Soviet Union before. But this was his first trip of taking bread across, especially bread with a capital "B"! He felt privileged to help take Bibles across to people who longed to have them. He felt honored to be trusted to work for the King of the Universe.

His mother had carefully helped him pack his sidecar. She had pointed out to him which loaves were to be given away, and which one was for

him to eat on the road. She looked at him with eyes full of love and concern. “My mother heart does not want you to make this trip. But God tells me it is okay. I must trust Him and not be afraid.”

Finally, cold and weary, he pulled up to his uncle’s apartment. Ilie’s Aunt Elena welcomed him warmly. When she saw the bread and honey in his arms, she gratefully said, “Oh God, thank you for all this bread, and honey, too!”

His aunt held the door open as Ilie carried in the loads of wonderful food. When all was safely in the apartment, he asked for a sharp knife.

Carefully he cut into the middle of a loaf, he turned the bread so the cut went all around the loaf, but not through the center. Then he broke the loaf in half. Elena was surprised to see a package inside. He unwrapped it and handed it to her.

“Novea Zavet!” (New Testament) she breathed in awe as she turned the pages. This was baked inside the bread? She looked questioningly at the other loaves on the table. He nodded and picked up another loaf. Again he cut into it and pulled out a package.

He reached for a a third loaf. His aunt wanted to help and held up a loaf. “Not that one!” Ilie shook his head, “Some are just plain bread; not all of the loaves contain the Bread of Life!”

Twenty-four loaves of bread were carefully cut apart. Twenty-four Testaments were neatly stacked on the table that was littered with bread crumbs. Aunt Elena said, “I must hide these precious Testaments.”

“Wait a bit,” Ilie smiled; “there are more.”

“I thought you said those last three loaves don’t have any,” Aunt Elena continued. She watched Ilie lift a jar of honey.

“I need a pan to set some honey in,” Ilie stated, “there is something sweeter than honey inside.” She shook her head in amazement as Ilie pulled a small jar of honey out of a larger of honey. She set the sticky jar in the pan. The honey was cold and barely flowed. Inside the small sticky jars the testaments were safe and sound. The jars would clean nicely when warmed up. Ilie set five jars of honey on the table. He left two jars on the floor.

Aunt Elena gratefully packed the precious Bread of Life, the words that are sweeter than honey and more precious than gold, in a box and disappeared in her bedroom. She could hardly wait to share the good news with her husband that night!

What an amazing thing! God could use a cycle, a willing young man, and ordinary bread and honey to carry His Word to hungry people!

[Adapted and used by permission.]



Forgiveness

Lynita Kauffman, Reedsville, PA

[Youth Editor's note: This article was submitted by a student at Calvary Bible School. This student's words were not primarily written as advice to others. These truths come from her heart—truths that are changing her life. Used with permission.]

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” Forgiveness is a must in the life of a Christian. Christ’s forgiveness will only be extended to us if we willingly forgive the people that have hurt us. Forgiveness does not always come easily, but with God’s help we can overcome hard feelings and joyfully forgive because Christ has forgiven us.

When our sins are forgiven, we are free. Since we have received Christ’s forgiveness, we can show forgiveness to others. If we selfishly hoard Christ’s forgiveness, but do not forgive others, we no longer have the forgiveness of Christ in our lives. (Mathew 6:14,15)

“Relationships in a fallen world just do not happen without people doing things against one another—things that hurt, things that make life difficult, things that ‘cause a stumble.’

Everyone will have opportunity to forgive. *Apoluò*, the Greek word for ‘forgive,’ means to release, to let go, to set at liberty. When we forgive, we need to release the person and the offense.”

To forgive means refusing to hold anyone hostage for anything they have committed. Of course, what it really ends up feeling like is that the forgiver isn’t held hostage by the need to remember and protect self and reimburse. There is no debt. No credit account number. Complete vulnerability which could lead to complete openness to the hurts of others. Thus, we no longer hold the person as if he owed something to us.

If there is someone we are unwilling to forgive, they become a hook to us that binds us. We are ruled by them.

Forgiveness is sometimes mistaken as forgetting. Forgiveness is *not*

necessarily forgetting. Neither does it mean that we approve of what has been done if it was a sin. Some offenses against us hurt us so deeply that we cannot possibly forget them. We have forgiven, not forgotten, but the offense does not have power over our lives because we have released it. “Forgiveness is treating people who have offended us as if the offense never happened, despite the fact that we remember it. It means that we choose to deny those negative feelings associated with what happened to us, believing that God will replace them with love for the [offending] individuals.”

In the account in Matthew 18:21-35, Peter asked Jesus how to handle offenses and forgiveness. Jesus’ response about the unmerciful servant has a powerful message for us. Do I take all the forgiveness I can get, yet not forgive someone who has wronged me? Forgiveness can only happen when we realize the great debt that we have been forgiven. If we refuse to forgive, we are being ungrateful for the forgiveness God has extended to us. We are acting like the ungrateful servant. “By maximizing what others have done against us, we minimize what God has done for us.”

We must choose to forgive. There are certain situations, where depending on who the offense is coming from, we choose not to

become offended or hurt. Another person with whom we don’t get along might say the same thing and we become deeply hurt. Why? We choose whether or not to become offended. We also choose to forgive.

Sometimes we base our forgiveness on feelings. We say we forgive and then expect all bad feelings to leave and good feeling to replace them. Perhaps forgiveness is kind of like love. Love is action and not primarily feelings. We decide to forgive and then go about showing this forgiveness in the way that we treat the offender. We may not have all good feelings about the person we forgave. Forgiveness can be a longer process. As we forgive over and over, our feelings for this person will hopefully change as we are willing to look for the good in this person.

In life, at times, it feels like we segregate the different areas of our lives instead of looking at our life as one. We may look at our duties as forgiveness, love for others, the desire to help others, church life, home life, relationships with others, and so on, all as separate categories.

Along with that, we tend to place people on different levels. We can love and forgive this person, because of where he is perceived to be on the social ladder, but the next person we really have a problem with. If we would look at everyone with equal


value and would be willing to help them for Christ's sake, it would be really hard not to forgive. How can we hate/hold grudges, if we really are concerned about that person and his life? Sometimes it seems that if we would remember what we are doing here and would seriously take the call to be Jesus' hands and feet to a hurting world, we would be more willing to forgive.

Being hurt by others can bring deep emotional pain. We need healing for this kind of wound much like we do for a physical wound. Jesus gave as His mission statement Isaiah 61:1-3. Jesus came to minister to the broken-hearted. With His help, we can experience emotional healing. Healing takes time. Healing cannot take place if we are still holding grudges against the offender.

We need to uncover our wounds and allow God to pour His healing oil into them. Forgiveness is God's soothing ointment. When we have a physical wound and are not willing to uncover it so we can properly clean and treat it, it will become infected, sore, and smelly. Our emotional wounds can get infected, sore, and smelly if we do not take proper care in allowing healing to take place.

Bitterness results if we let these wounds fester.

Physical wounds eventually scab over again. When healed, some wounds leave scars. We don't have pain, but the scar reminds us of what we went through. When we have an emotional hurt, we can keep picking the scab by talking about it to others and not forgiving the offender. We may pick scabs in order to get sympathy from others. But when we are truly healed and only have a scar, we can talk about our hurt but the pain will not be there. We can use it to give God the glory for healing us.

Forgiveness is not something that comes readily or easily for us. We need to practice it over and over. We need to ask God to give us love for our brothers. Having a burden for all people can also help in forgiveness. Be ready to forgive at all times. *"For thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon thee"* (Psalm 86:5). God is always ready and willing to forgive us. May we never forget that we are called to be Jesus' hands to others. We need to be willing to openly extend forgiveness to others and take the risk of being hurt again for Christ's sake. 

A new idea may be good, but in a closed mind it soon suffocates.

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Having a fancy car does not make you a person of means; it might indicate that you dealt with an unrealistic loan officer.

• • • • •

It's really a hard job to look busy when you're not.

• • • • •

The best sense of humor belongs to him who can laugh at himself.

• • • • •

Kindness is never wasted. If it isn't appreciated by the recipient, at least it benefits the bestower.

• • • • •

A genuine chuckle is worth a hundred groans in any market.

• • • • •

Where law ends, tyranny begins.

• • • • •

Life is like a bank; you only take out what you've put in.

• • • • •

Liquor drowns no sorrows; it only irrigates them.

• • • • •

In the woodshed behind yesteryear's homes, some juvenile delinquency was settled out of court.