



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

Galatians 6:14

APRIL 2013

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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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To Those Who Mourn in Zion

Name withheld

Have you ever sat in ashes
Mourning for what might have been?
Eyes downcast and spirit heavy,
Burdened by effects of sin.

Asking, "Why, O God, this trouble?
Is there something I can do?
Must my way be lost in storm clouds?"
Questions many. Answers few.

Little minds and short-range vision
Need to bow to higher power;
Hope deferred and broken pieces
Given up. The work's not ours.

Yet, make mention; keep not silent,
Watchmen cannot hold their peace.
Bind up wounds and open prisons,
Interceding love won't cease.

Souls are planted for God's glory,
We must gather out the stones.
Dig about them, work the road.
Find effectual praying tones.

Have you heard of Jesus' healing,
How He offers an exchange?
He stands watching for the timing,
Do not think it very strange.

Beauty, Beauty for the ashes,
For the sowing and the weeping,
For the toilsome watch you're keeping,
Some glad day there comes a reaping.

Comfort for God's mourning children,
Heavy spirits turn to praise.
Oil of joy—divine anointing,
For His glory—all our days!



What A Preacher Prays For

A country parson once said he prays: “Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, and nudge me when I’ve said enough!” That’s good, but more detail would be helpful.

E. E. Shelhamer, an evangelist of yesteryear, said that he asks God for grace to live with *integrity, humility, charity, chastity, and brevity*. That is helpful. While I don’t know what Shelhamer said further about it, I resonate with those five words. Let us consider why these words ending in “ity” are not “itty-bitty,” but have great potential to validate a preacher’s contribution.

Integrity

Integrity is upright and sincere. Integrity chooses its positions regardless of whether or not it brings popularity. True moral courage is shown when a person does not make excuses. Integrity draws strength from God for the tasks of ministry. Urgent pastoral concern was expressed when Paul said, “We

pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:20). It is when we recognize that our work has been assigned by God, that we receive strength to labor for His glory. “Practice what you preach” was on Paul’s mind when he pointed out that the husbandman (farmer) must first be partaker of the fruits. (2 Tim. 2:6) By virtue of his calling, the minister must have some “elbow room” to work, but he must not use that provision selfishly. While some situations call for confidentiality and limiting comment, none of them may replace honesty, much less excuse dishonesty.

Humility

Humility does things that count, without stopping to count them. It does not decide on a plan of action by whether or not it brings prestige, but whether it is right. A true kingdom worker must realize that he can do nothing of value himself. He must not “settle a score” (take revenge). God will do that.

When a preacher's stories make him look heroic and others inferior, he communicates a superior attitude. False humility seems to say, "It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am." Those who are truly humble labor while rarely referring to their unworthiness. Humility is the courage to face oneself. It is natural for us to try to take care of ourselves. We like to stand tall in the eyes of men, but no man stands so erect before men as he who bows low before God.

Charity

Charity blesses twice—when it is given and when it is received. True charity goes beyond the call of duty without expecting favors in return. Charity is willing to serve with or without monetary reward.

Jesus told stories commending the merciful person who is eager to help those in need. The compassion of Jesus is shown when He commends the Good Samaritan as the true neighbor that helped the traveler who fell among thieves. Because Jesus healed all who came to Him, we know that He cares about anything that besets us. The woman who anointed the feet of Jesus with a costly perfume (Luke 7:36-47) felt deeply indebted to Him. Similarly, we experience a

grateful eagerness to help others when we think on God's mercy to us.

Chastity

Chastity springs from being satisfied with God's provisions for moral uprightness. It seeks no exception. Satan brings sly pressure upon God's servants to compromise God's standards of holiness. The new birth does not remove God-given passions; it sanctifies them. Christian men have "red blood" but also "real backbone." When temptations arise, they use God's resources to stay on the right path. The far-reaching results of moral failure give ample motivation to be on guard "lest that when [we] have preached to others, [we] should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). It is instructive that one common feature of false, cultic leadership is claiming exception in matters of sexual conduct.

Brevity

Brevity is saying things clearly and succinctly. This can be balanced with the concern Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:11, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Such fervor is best balanced by giving the listener due respect to draw his own conclusions.

It invites a favorable response, but it does not disgrace the work of the Gospel by wheedling or begging supposing that people cannot make sound judgments by themselves. Annoyingly talkative men fail to see when it's time to stop. While some repetition provides emphasis and gives listeners time to process thoughts, notice Jesus' skill in brevity. His words are so packed with meaning that we may draw divine truth from them throughout life—and not exhaust them. Men who went to arrest Jesus but returned without Him, explained it

this way, “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46). The Apostle John commented on the perfect Jesus by saying that if all the books about Jesus that could be written were actually written, the world itself could not contain the books. (See John 21:25)

We note the perfection of Jesus Christ, the Captain of our Salvation. Furthermore, we take courage from witnesses like E. E. Shelhamer who left us a legacy of sincere faith and worthy example. Let us do the same for those who follow us.

—PLM 

reader response

Re: “That’s Just Your Interpretation” (Feb., 2013, page 5)

I wish to express my appreciation for Bro. Aaron Lapp’s article concerning interpretation of Scripture. For the most part, we plain, conservative churches would see a fairly large gap between the experience of mainstream Protestant churches and our own. We see the scriptural decay in those churches as extreme

and a remote possibility. I wonder if, in reality, we are not closer (to that decay) than we think. In the last 20 years the gap in doctrinal, theological, and psychological differences has narrowed considerably. The fact that a large number of our people would appreciate “The Shack” and similar works is evidence that our theological world view has undergone a major shift in recent years. When our thinking patterns change inevitably

our lifestyle will follow. May God give us the wisdom and courage to raise up a biblical standard whereby our children and all coming behind us may find us faithful,

Dean Miller, Kenya

Re: “Hardship in Marriage” (Feb., 2013, page 34)

Dear Editor,

This article was incredibly sad. God bless the dear sister for sharing it. I wondered as I read it how many women are trapped in abusive relationships, suffering in secret silence. I encourage the writer of this article that it is possible to have joy and fulfillment in every circumstance in life. There are many things we have to accept: permanent illness, permanent disability, financial ruin, bereavement,...the list could go on. Some things we bring on ourselves by our foolish choices; other things befall us through no fault of our own. We must accept what we cannot change. Acceptance is an ongoing process. These are the steps:

Acknowledge God as sovereign. He decides what is fair. He orders the details of our lives so that everything will work out for good if we love Him.

Take one day a time. Do not borrow trouble from tomorrow.

Reach out to others. Let’s get our minds off of our little selves.

In Everything Give Thanks

Beyond this, the imperative is that we diligently instruct and mold our children’s ideals for a pure and godly marriage long before they are faced with these choices.

Gary Miller, Pantego, NC

(Living with Parkinson’s Disease and Rejoicing in the Lord)

Ph: 252-943-4262

• • • • •

Re: “Husbands—Take Heed to Your Spirit” (Feb. 2013, page 2)

This is excellent for husbands. I found this editorial convicting and saw areas in my own life that I need to change.

I have been burdened by what I have observed over the past number of years in my working with young people. We all know that marriage and the home are the first institutions God created. We all know that these two institutions are the key building blocks of any society. But somehow, we (especially men), have difficulty weeding out all those “roots of bitterness,” the seemingly small things that trouble us. Are many of

us living in defeat, bound by sin, and maybe not even realizing it? Call sin what it is! In Christ's upside down kingdom, the way up is down.

My burden is for the youth that come from these troubled homes. These "trouble spots" are not just a Beachy problem--they are found in many different church fellowships. Granted, there are times that the conflict between youth and parents (or church) is self-inflicted by the youth. There also times that the conflicts are perceived but not real. However, when there is obvious sin and nothing is done about it, or when there is an unbelieving parent (or parents), this causes great struggles for the children. Those children grow up... and those struggles, unless they have been worked through and resolved, follow them through adulthood.

Lest this picture is too dark, let

me hasten to say that, if you find yourself in such a situation, God's power can help you overcome! You are not doomed to stay in the rut! I personally know of a number of youth that have overcome difficult situations, by the grace of God. I gained a deeper appreciation and respect for them for what they overcame. Allow me to share one example: when asked what was the secret in working through a difficulty, one person said it was a sibling that would acknowledge the problem (in this case, in Dad), but would come back with this question: "What are you going to do about it?"

Thank you for laying the axe to the root of the tree. "Rise up, O Men of God!"

*Galen Stutzman,
Free Union, VA*



*By living for ourselves,
we die;
by dying to ourselves,
we live.*

Hell

Eli M. Yoder, Millersburg, OH

Is “hell” a bad word? The way it is used by many, it is. Somebody said that word should be used with tears in your eyes. I can’t remember when I last heard a sermon on hell. If I am right, hell is used in the Old Testament 27 times and in the New Testament 20 times.

I remember hearing preachers say we should think often on these four last things: “Nothing is more sure than death; nothing is more frightening than judgment; nothing is more unbearable than hell; and nothing is more enjoyable than heaven.”

My wife is in a nursing home in Walnut Creek. I go there every day and eat dinner with her, if health and weather permit. Our Bible teacher was baptized in the Lutheran church as a baby and joined the Mennonites. The other week he told us he preached on hell that Sunday. He was reminded by three different people that they didn’t appreciate his message. Many people today do not want to hear truth. Harold Dean Miller asked an audience once what is America’s

greatest need. An elderly man said, “the fear of God.” Harold said it wasn’t the answer he wanted, but it was the right answer. The fear of God should be before our eyes.

We used to sing a German song that said, “There are two ways in our time; the one is narrow, the other is wide....” Sad to say, the vast majority are on the broad way. It comes too close to home. Those on the broad way, Mark says are going where “their worm dies not and the fire is not quenched” forever.

I’m reading a book, *Refined by Fire*. A lieutenant was in his office in Washington, D. C., and was in the path of the plane that hit the Pentagon on 9/11/01. The plane knocked him down and he was engulfed by flames and couldn’t get away. He suffered terribly and wanted to die, but his wife wouldn’t let him. He revived and has great passion for people and doesn’t want anybody to go to hell, and as Jude says, he tries to pull them “out of the fire.”

In 1943 and 1944, at Terry, Montana, we had a lovely

Mennonite minister come from Billings, Montana, where he stayed with his daughter. He'd come to Civilian Public Service camp and preach to us. One evening, he chose Psalm 42, "As the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for thee, O God." He pictured the deer running all day from hunters and getting very thirsty for water. So the Psalmist had a passion for God. I could use more of a passion for God and people; I was so blessed with his message that evening. Perhaps I'm like the old preacher who said; "I get blessed so easy."

We do well to picture Christ as a healthy man hanging on the cross with nails in His hands and feet, writhing in pain for six hours. If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

Nobody worked on December 25, except in hospitals and nursing homes. Now, when Good Friday comes, people go to work and think nothing of it; but on Easter, many go to church. We must remember Good Friday comes before Easter. A minister, on Easter Sunday, said to his audience, "I wish you all a merry Christmas. I don't expect to see you till next Easter."

"Behold, how good and how

pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity." I would like to be in a church where we have *unity* and *uniformity*. Somebody said he doesn't think we can run everybody through a machine where everybody comes out looking the same.

In our community a single girl, who was pregnant, left the community and had a son and kept him away in his growing up years. When his aunt died, he came back for the funeral for the first time, where the service was held in a barn. He said to me, "These people seem so close to God."

My heritage cries after me as a lion in the forest. We have too much Scripture against outward adorning to throw it out the back door.

In the April, 2012, issue of *Calvary Messenger*, on page 18, there is an item that refers to a Christian woman who was spared when a man had evil designs in his mind. I believe we do well to read it. Wicked men have seen angels around a woman wearing a veiling. The Bible says what we do in word or deed, we are to do all for the glory of God. Read 1 Peter 1:8-16. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature."

I'm inclined to believe that

exposing the neck is outward adorning, especially for plain people who were taught nonconformity. One thing we can do about this is closing the top button, which was a dress standard at one time.

We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that we should shew forth the praises of Him who has called us

out of darkness into his marvelous light. Someone said, people should continually be asking us about the source of our joy and delight.

To God be the glory!

[This is written by a 94-year-old brother who memorized the Apostle's Creed last summer and now likes to recite it to those he meets. Truly, the righteous can bear fruit in old age.]



ISRAEL REPORT

Donnavon Graber, Jerusalem

Feb. 10 – At our Sunday evening service we were joined by Elizabeth Sullivan and Danielle Kraybill who are volunteering at the Ebenezer Home for seniors in Haifa. CAM donates health care products to this cheerful home for elderly believers.

Both the security services and the locals here have a bit of difficulty knowing how to understand us. On a recent trip, the security officers couldn't seem to reconcile the fact that we have both Jewish and Arab friends that come into our home. Not only that, both my English and my Hebrew were judged as not having an American accent, making

my story and origin more suspect. But the intimidation, detention, and strip search were really a small thing compared to all the fear and hurt that is in the lives of the multitudes of those who need the Messiah.


The country is abuzz over President Obama's pending visit to Israel. Supposedly the world's most powerful man, he is in fact a mere pawn in God's hands. He and Netanyahu will pose for majestic news clips and pictures as they discuss the fate of men and nations.

Meanwhile, in obscure places and among unrecognized peoples across the Middle East, we find out that the Kingdom of Heaven is being


made known among persecuted men. One witness encountered a man deaf and dumb. How could he speak the Good News to such deaf ears? He earnestly prayed and immediately the man was healed. When he heard the Good News that first time, he responded and his heart was transformed into the Kingdom of Glory!

Then there is Y who did his best to kill an “infidel” believer in Jesus. After breaking his limbs and his neck, he left him for dead. Every day, for many years in suffering love, the “infidel,” now a cripple, prayed for his attacker. Y entered the

Kingdom after seeing a miraculous healing through the name of Jesus and hearing for the first time of His love. Twenty-three years after leaving the cripple for dead, they met and embraced, and they wept. The Kingdom came down and God’s will was done because a man had suffered in love—like Jesus!

So, you may not see the most dramatic events at meetings of world leaders, at conferences on peace and human rights, or at the counting of votes. No! But heaven comes down when another soul worth more than the entire world is saved and enters the Kingdom. 

ANNOUNCEMENT

Calvary Bible School is planning for the fourth annual Young Men’s Discipleship Training Course to be held Sept. 9-19, 2013, near Everett, PA. This course provides an environment for young men to evaluate their walk with God, experience spiritual growth, and develop leadership skills by serving each other and the local community. Elementary training in wilderness survival and first aid will also be included. Men 18 years old and older are invited to apply. Applications are welcome through August 15. All applications received before July 1 will be reviewed by the first week of July. To receive a brochure and application, contact Ernest Eby (814-789-3209) ernesteby@gmail.com 

Ownership

David Stutzman, Punta Gorda, Belize

While helping Nathan Stutzmans move to El Mango to assist Linford Swartzentrubers in the work there, I came across this statement in Melchor, the border town: “This store and contents are the Lord’s; we are only taking care of it for a while.” How true this is and how wily the devil is in keeping us from realizing this truth!

In the past month, four church members have forfeited their kingdom membership by becoming involved in legal action regarding the possessions of family members in a broken marriage. And within a week, here in Blue Creek, our attitudes were again tested as thieves broke into Anthony Yoder’s house and the mission shop during a Sunday morning church service.

Who owns the things we buy with the money we assume is ours? Are

the thieves stealing from us or from the Lord? Can we trust the Lord to care for His own possessions or does He need our assistance? How much should we depend on the powers that are ordained of God to care for God’s possessions? These questions come to the forefront and test our faith.

Hebrews 10:34 keeps coming to my mind: “For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and more enduring substance.” It is only by faith that our eyes can be opened to true ownership. Our Father says, “Every beast of the field is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.” We need to focus on laying up treasures in heaven where thieves cannot reach.

[From *Caribbean Light and Truth*, August, 2012. Used by permission.]



***People with a heart for God
have a heart for people.***

marriages

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

Ahmed-Martin

Bro. Jason Ahmed, Cottage Grove, TN, and Sis. Luann, daughter of Robert and Rachel Martin, Cottage Grove, TN, at Calvary Christian Fellowship, on Dec. 14, 2012, by Dannie Diener.

Bontrager-Schrock

Bro. Aaron Willis, son of Esther and the late Willis Bontrager, Sullivan, IL, and Barbara Sue, daughter of Roger and Gertie Ann Schrock, Arthur, IL, at New Life Tabernacle for Pleasant View, Arcola, IL, on Feb. 2, 2013, by Duane Kuhns.

Yoder-Martin

Bro. Dennis, son of Norman and Dorothy Yoder, Paris, TN, and Sis. Dorothy Rose, daughter of Robert and Rachel Martin, Cottage Grove, TN, at McKenzie Church of Christ for Calvary Christian Fellowship on Feb. 1, 2013, by Elwood Yoder.



cradle roll

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

Bates, Nelson and Wilma (Landis) Advance, MO, seventh child, fifth son, Lamar David, Feb. 8, 2013.

Beachy, Glen and Heather (Gingerich), New Berlin, PA, second child, first dau., Brooke Willow, Feb. 6, 2013.

Beachy, Sheldon and Jamie (Wittmer), Huntland, TN, third child and dau., Jalayna Charity, Feb. 9, 2013.

Burkholder, Tony and Joyce (Miller), Goshen, IN, first child and dau., Jacquelyn Rae, Feb. 18, 2013.

Eicher, Dewayne and Laura (Miller), Spencerville, IN, fifth child, third dau., Olivia Cheyenne, Jan. 7, 2013.

Eichorn, Howard and Sharon (Beachy), Harlan, IN, third child, first son, Clarence Howard, Jan. 21, 2013.

King, Ivan and Verna (Hostetler), Lyndon, KS, fourth child, third dau., Judith Rose, Dec. 27, 2012.

Mast, Jason and Jessica (Miller), Mountain View, AR, third child, second dau., Jalyse Marcail, Feb. 25, 2013.

ordinations

Miller, Loren and Mandy (Miller), Eden Valley, MN, fourth child, third dau., Heidi Lynn, Jan. 31, 2013.

Stoll, Jeff and Hannah (Graber) Montgomery, IN, third child, second son, Wyatt Benjamin, Jan. 14, 2013.

Stoltzfus, Luke and Ruth Ann (Stoltzfus), Waterville, NY, thirteenth child, seventh son, Lonny Dwayne, Dec. 6, 2012.

Stoltzfus, Sam and Sadie (Zook), Leola, PA, seventh child, fourth dau., Alisa Grace, Feb. 5, 2013.

Stoltzfus, Steve and Sherilyn (Ropp), East Earl, PA, second child and son, Tyler Blake, Feb. 3, 2013.

Weaver, Dylan and Renae (Mast), Blackville, SC, first child and son, Brayden Lane, Feb. 21, 2013.

Yoder, Kyle and Kendra (Eash), Russellville, KY, second child, first dau., Morgan Brielle, Feb. 15, 2013.

Yoder, Mervin and Jenell Rose (Beachy), Salisbury, PA, sixth child, third son, Malakai Davis, Feb. 6, 2013.

Yoder, Shadd and Karin (Gingerich), Bloomfield, MO, second child and son, Colson Shadd, Feb. 6, 2013.

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

Bro. Paul Weaver, 60, of Wellston, OH, was ordained as bishop at Still Waters Mennonite Church of Jackson, Ohio, on Feb. 24, 2013. Preordination messages were given by Perry Troyer, Plain City, OH. The charge was given by Leon Troyer, assisted by Perry Troyer and Duane Troyer.

Bro. Terry Yoder, 35, of Grantsville, PA, was called by voice of the church and ordained as deacon at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Salisbury, PA, on Dec. 2, 2012. Menno Yoder gave the preordination message. The charge was given by Jerry Yoder.

obituaries

Hochstetler, Freeman, 75, of Concord, AR, died at his home surrounded by his family Dec. 23, 2012. He was born August 23, 1937, at Ligonier, IN, son of the late Manelus ("Neal") and Fannie (Miller) Hochstetler.

He was a faithful member of the Shady Lawn Mennonite Church, where he served as minister from 1973, until he retired in 2008.


On Dec. 18, 1958, he was married to Wilma Fry, giving them 54 years

together. Freeman and Wilma had a heart for missions, serving a number of years in Haiti with Blue Ridge Missions. Since his retirement, they served for shorter terms, especially with rebuilding after the earthquake in 2010.

Survivors include his loving wife, Wilma, three sons: Allen of Hutchinson, KS; Andrew of Salisbury, NC; and Tony, of Philadelphia, PA; two daughters: Nelaine Lapp, Lewisburg, PA; and Nolita

Stoltzfus, Concord, AR; three brothers: Glenn, Mervin, and Jay; one sister, Betty Schrock; 26 grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren

He was preceded in death by a brother, Laverne Hochstetler, and two sisters, Irene Schrock and Carolyn Yoder.

The funeral was held on Dec. 27, at the Concord High School gymnasium for the Shady Lawn church. Burial was in the Pine Grove Cemetery. 

observations

Egypt has undergone serious trauma in a transfer of leadership from a dictator to President Mohamed Morsi. He promised that Christians would not face persecution under his Islamic-based rule.

Mada Mohamed Ali grew up in a Christian home in Egypt and married a Muslim 23 years ago. After his death, she and her family identified themselves as Christians on state-issued identity cards. An Egyptian court has sentenced her and her seven children to 15 years in prison for converting to Christianity.



Global warming has been a prominent news item for quite some

time. Last year was the hottest on record in the United States. Arctic ice melted to a record low. But Central Asia was cooler than usual. The Antarctic ice cover was thicker than usual. A scientist associated with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NASA) believes that average global temperatures were about average. (These first two items from *World*, 2-9-13)



Patrick Reynolds is a grandson of the founder of R.J.Reynolds Tobacco Company. He was recently in Elkhart County, Indiana, speaking to high school students about the dangers of smoking cigarettes. His father died from this addictive habit. Patrick

told the high school students that this poisonous weed is very addictive and the best way to avoid addiction is never to take that first smoke.

• • • • •

Mennonites from Chihuahua, Mexico, have sent a delegation to Russia to explore settlement possibilities. They have large families and it seems their need for more land is chronic. They want to make another trip in February at which time they want to meet with government officials to see if their religious freedom would be assured.

Some people are excited about the possibility of returning to the country from which their forebears came more than 100 years ago. Others have serious misgivings considering the heartless persecution inflicted on non-conformists to an atheistic government.

(The above two items are gleaned from “Mexico Mennonite Update,” 2-13, by Steve Yoder.)

• • • • •

“The problem with America today is not that we have so many atheists. It’s that we have so many ‘Christians’ who function as atheists, because they don’t care that the Bible alone tells the whole truth about God, human nature, and the world around us.” says Jeff Myers.

I assume that most of our readers would agree with the above quote. Would it make any difference to know that Jeff Myers is not an Anabaptist? Our commitment is to the Lord who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The Word that is forever settled in heaven can provide stability in the presence of many “winds of doctrine.”

“To prove all things and hold fast to that which is good” has at least two obvious implications: The first is that extra-biblical material should be tested by the truth of the Word. The second is that “all things” suggests a willingness to evaluate and learn from unexpected sources. To be primarily interested in learning another new thing is not a worthy ideal. But an openness to have truth explained in new and interesting ways can be edifying. Anabaptists do not have a monopoly on truth; we do not have a private line to God. To me this means that we can have a guarded openness to learning from others whose understanding and practice does not include some things that seem clear to us. Biblical distinctives should be preserved with godly jealousy. Failure to prove all things can compromise Christian stability.

The Bible is clear that the broad

and well-traveled road does not lead where we all want to go. This should give us fresh courage to be very selective in what we accept from the larger church community.



Dr. Jeff Myers is president of Summit Ministries. They work primarily with young adults, age 16-21. They say at Summit, “We’re pro-life, pro-family, and pro-personal responsibility.” The topics addressed in their mailings reflect an impressive commitment to traditional values and practical applications. It is an effort to help young people stand firm in a social climate that is morally unstable and often intellectually misguided.

A recent study of 1,500 of their graduates shows that the exposure to the teaching on such basics as: *Moral truth is absolute, The Bible is accurate, Satan is real, Jesus lived a sinless life, and God is an all-powerful, all-knowing Creator* shows that such teaching is making a lasting difference in the lives of these young people.



Ezra Kanagy (1922-1999) was an Amish minister. *Brotherhood Messenger*, Vol. IV, 2012, reprints something from *Herold der Wahrheit* (5-1979), that follows: Bro. Kanagy

reported on his prayer for clarity from the Bible on whether or not creation happened in six, 24-hour days or over a long period of time. He said he searched and prayed for enlightenment for nearly 20 years. His prayer was answered unexpectedly and clearly when he came across Psalm 33:8 and 9: “Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For he spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.” Other translations and other references including the Genesis account should remove any doubt that the Creator who can create anything from nothing was well able to complete the creation in six, 24-hour days.



After our son Ronald shared his perspective on a recent experience about the ascending prominence of para-church organizations, I asked him to make his thoughts available to this column. Here, in his own words, is his response:

This past week I was privileged to attend Ministers’ Week at Sharon Mennonite Bible Institute. The time was filled with beneficial teaching and rich fellowship. There were about 75-80 ordained brothers registered for the event and numerous others

who live close enough to attend part of the time. Many came with their wives. Among those in attendance were people from a variety of Anabaptist churches, like: Keystone, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Beachy Amish, unaffiliated, Biblical Mennonite Alliance, Church of the Brethren and others. We, the Beachy Amish, constituted about 20% of those registered. It was an interesting experience in which we found much common ground, in spite of the fact that some of us traced our recent roots through the Amish branch of the Anabaptist tree and others have arrived where they are via the Mennonite branch of the same tree. I inquired of a faculty member where most of the SMBI students come from. His best guess was that the highest number of students at SMBI come from unaffiliated Mennonite groups and Beachy Amish, with a goodly number of Kleine Gemeinde. (Little Church)

During the supper-table discussion one evening, one of the teachers asked a co-teacher a question something like this: "What do you take away from an event like this?" The other brother replied that what he takes away from this is *that para-church organizations are the wave of the future*. As I thought about that

conversation and the week we had experienced, I began to ruminate. But before I continue my comments, let me define several terms.

Para-church: Leadership, direction and accountability coming from a variety of constituencies and affiliations.

Constituent initiatives: Organizational leadership, direction and accountability resting with a particular constituency.

My upbringing was enriched by interaction with those outside our church fellowship. I was taught to value the heritage embraced by my home church, but also learned that we don't have a monopoly on truth, and that we can learn things that are potentially corrective, enlightening, and strengthening if we have the courage to listen to and learn from people with a perspective different from our own. This awareness lends itself to an openness to para-church organizations. I offer these further musings:

- Para-church organizations that are intentional about building up those they are designed to serve can be a tremendous blessing to many different recipients.

- Para-church organizations need to find meaningful ways to be accountable to those they represent and serve.

•Para-church organizations often fill a niche for unaffiliated churches.

•Some of us might find these organizations attractive because they offer something that is not available within our constituency. Still others could find these organizations attractive because of a reduced sense of accountability due to minimized or missing organizational ties to churches or groups of churches that provide meaningful input and direction.

•Increased communication, ease of travel, and economic resources have consorted to expand our awareness of and ability to be involved in para-church organizations.

•Some of our constituency-based organizations are experiencing thin financial margins and staffing shortages. Finances and personnel

are two major factors that sustain these endeavors. Their availability or lack thereof often set the tempo for expansion and growth.

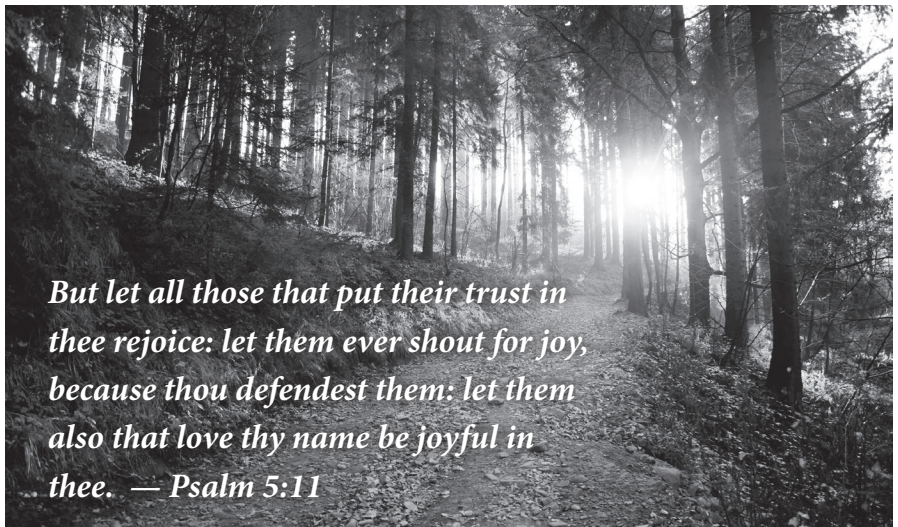
•Is it reasonable to think that support of para-church organizations may siphon support and volunteers away from constituent initiatives?

•Is it too idealistic to expect that one result of healthy involvement in healthy para-church organizations is promoting the health of local congregations? Hence, where the effect of para-church organizations is fragmentation and other unhealthy outworkings, should we not be concerned?

•We indicate support by what we say, and how we invest our time and our finances.

Ronald Miller, Oswego, KS

—DLM 



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. — Psalm 5:11

Ministers' Meeting Messages – 2012

This is a condensation of the final message preached 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.

5. **Shepherding With Joy**

Ivan Beachy, Free Union, VA

Sometimes we are asked to go and preach when we wonder how we can go. But when we study and go and begin preaching the Word, God's Holy Spirit comes upon us; we spend time with God in prayer, and what happens? It happens every time—a cleansing and renewal of one's own heart.

I usually feel that I go home revived. I might not know what happened to the congregation, but I know I was revived. When God's Word falls upon us, it does its cleansing. Sometimes when you listen to the struggles of another, it strikes home. I sometimes say, "That's a need I have in my heart. How can I help that person? I see myself in what they said." We're all made of the same stuff, walk the same path, and can find the same answers. His truth heals and cleanses.

When we hear another's heart longings, it has a way of encouraging us in the same. In Psalm 126:5 and 6, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again, with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Why is the man carrying the bag of seed weeping? Perhaps it is because of the possibility that some of this seed is not going to grow. Maybe it won't sprout, maybe there's a famine—all kinds of things can happen with seed. But he still goes forth and spreads that seed.

He that sows in tears shall reap in joy. There is joy in a harvest. Psalm 30:5 says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." There's something about the light of a new day that brings hope. It brings opportunity. It brings delight after a long night of restlessness, or sleeplessness because

of a burden on your heart. Maybe it's problem or a message you're struggling with in preparation. I find that as I get older, I struggle more getting a message together. Sometimes it takes me all night, but there's something about the morning that brings hope.

Let us consider the privilege, the work, and the blessing of shepherding. Here are some nuggets from 2 Timothy 1:6-10: God has placed a gift within you. It is like a campfire—stir it up, allow it to rekindle into bright flame. When you were first ordained, how was it? Overwhelming, obviously. After that you thought seriously, “What is the call of God on my life? What should be my goals?” Now I ask you, where are you in relation to that? It is true that we get tired *in* the work, but I hope we don't get tired *of* the work. There's a huge difference. The results of the work are not always seen quickly, but they will come. God's provision for effective ministry is not fear, but power, love and a sound mind.

Paul exulted in being entrusted with the Good News that changes men's hearts. Even after Paul had severely persecuted those of The Way, God counted him faithful to be one of His laborers. When I was ordained

bishop, something filtered back to me. One of my friends from long ago, said, “He, a bishop?” There was a reason for that. I have a record that I'm not proud of. But in spite of that record, God has touched my heart through His grace and He's changed me. Now today, I stand as one of His undershepherds, called to take the mantle of Christ and minister to the flock. It's amazing!

When He calls you to that, He gives you the robe of righteousness that you need. It's not our righteousness, it's His! He pours in His grace and gives us the tools. The tools are simple: the Word of God, His Spirit, His grace, His goodness, and His enablement—with this promise, “I'll go with you.” When we walk in His path, we walk with Him. Peter says we walk in His steps. Isn't that amazing?

I'm intrigued by the honor guard at the tomb of the unknown soldier in Washington, D. C. I've had the privilege of going there numerous times. I could spend hours there just observing what goes on. I did a little research on that. The honor guard at the Arlington Cemetery has been actively guarding that tomb continuously since July 2, 1937. They take pride in the fact that for every second since then, there has been a

guard on duty. It's rain or shine, heat or cold. It takes rigorous training to become an honor guard. More than 80% of the soldiers that apply are rejected. Since 1950, when they began to give the badge of honor for those who have actually served at the tomb of the unknown soldier, only 500 badges have been given out. It is the second highest honor that the U. S. military gives.

I wouldn't qualify to guard that tomb on a number of counts: You have to have a height of from 5-11 to 6-4. Your waist has to be 30 inches. You must be able to perform flawlessly seven different marches. They're on duty for 24 hours—off 24 hours. There is a contingent of men that are on duty in that 24-hour period. When they "walk the mat," as they call it, it's an honor. A guard spends between six and eight hours getting his uniform prepared before he steps out to walk the mat. By the way, how many hours do you spend getting your message ready? Is it worth six hours? Eight hours? Absolutely! It's worth preparing eight hours to prepare a tasty message for the people of God—sheep that are hungry for truth and direction. It's worth it. Invest the time it takes. It's an honor.

I shall read to you the sentinel's

creed for the tomb: *"My dedication to this sacred duty is total and wholehearted. In the responsibility bestowed on me, never will I falter. And with dignity and perseverance, my standard will remain perfection. Through the years of diligence and praise, and the discomfort of the elements, I will walk my tour in humble reverence to the best of my ability. It is he who commands the respect I protect. His bravery that made us so proud. Surrounded by well-meaning crowds by day, alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance."* Some of the early words sound like a ordination charge. What an honor, in spite of our record!

Consider the work. Paul notes that if a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. It's a lot of work, brethren, but it's a *good* work. In 1 Corinthians 9:15-17, Paul says, in essence, If I do the work of ministry willingly, there is a reward. But if I don't do it willingly, it's still my responsibility. Then it becomes what? An obligation? An obligation can feel very heavy. "I just want to get this behind me." When it is done that way, you leave with weariness. But when you are willing to enter the pulpit with a fire

burning in your heart that God has placed there, somehow when you're done, you're not nearly as tired as you were before. God has His ways of compensating us. He has ways of overruling our inabilities. It's called the grace of enablement. If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward.

I've never been a real farmer. I'm more of a McDonald farmer. I've enjoyed sheep and cattle. I've also had pigs, but I can't say I've enjoyed them. I enjoy watching and listening when cattle or sheep come to the trough to feed. When we lived in Belize in dry season, and when we realized that the cattle were not thriving, then I said to the boys after school, "Boys, we're going over to Scotland Halfmoon to cut grass with our machetes." After filling the pickup truck very full with grass, we brought the load home and brought it to the cows. They came running. What a delight to our ears! We knew they were being satisfied. For every pastor it is a delight when the flock is sitting there, just drinking it in. What if they don't get it, why not? When that happens to me, my heart was not prepared. I hadn't done my work—I hadn't cut the grass. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

In 2 Timothy 4:5, Paul wrote, "Do the work of an evangelist, make full

proof of thy ministry." An evangelist is a person who has good news burning in his heart that people need to know. There are those times when you need to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. But do the work of an evangelist.

Consider the rewards. Some of these thoughts come from Howard Bean in his book, *A Good Minister*. One of the rewards is the smile of God's approval. The joy of the Lord is preceded by a faithful discharge of responsibility.

There is also the joy of helping others. When helping a struggling person and you see the "light come on," that is rewarding. The work of ministry can be very time-consuming and taxing. Perhaps many in the congregation do not realize how much time and effort goes into your work, but you also have the joy of seeing life change.


The abundance of grace is another reward. In 2 Corinthians 9:8-12, we see abundance. When God pours His grace into our hearts we're able to serve out of that grace. In chapter 12, after Paul besought the Lord to take away his thorn in the flesh, God said, "Paul, my grace is sufficient for you." Is God's grace sufficient for you? Did you on the night of your ordination, get one huge bundle of grace? Did

you hear Him say, “Look, Brother, here it is. Make it last.” No. Somehow it comes one day at a time, doesn’t it? It comes right when we need it. Do you remember the manna of the Old Testament? It was not there to be stored up, but was there when it was needed.

Another reward of ministry is the development of the character of Christ within the heart. We say we want to be more like Christ every day, taking in more and more of Him. How will that happen? He takes us through valleys, in which we don’t know what to do and we turn to God. We look at the Scripture.

Joy is one reward of ministry. Psalm 16:11 says, “In thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.” Alvin Stoltzfus said in a devotional recently, “It is in the presence of God that we find joy.” So when we get away from the presence of God we find heaviness. In John 15:10 and 11, it speaks of joy in obedience. It’s true of children. Children that are obedient

are free and happy and they enjoy life. When they are not obedient, guilt comes upon their hearts. Is that not true of the child of God, as well?

There is also joy in tribulation. Why? Because it brings us full circle back to God. Nehemiah said, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” Then the Levites said to the people, “Put away the heaviness. Let’s break out in singing. Let us give each other gifts.” When the joy of the Lord broke out, a wonderful revival resulted! My wife has a way of singing the day away, in spite of her handicap. She recently told me that not only does the Scripture say that *in* everything we are to give thanks, but also *for* everything we may give thanks. (See Ephesians 5:20) She reminded me that has been one of the secrets of her overcoming the discouragement of the handicap she has lived with for 17 years and will live with for the rest of her life, as far as we know. Being thankful *in* everything prepares us to be thankful *for* everything. 

***Many a man has been brought to
faith in God through trouble.***

God is in the Generation of the Righteous

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Some of you know my second wife, Esther (Miller) Stauffer. She has four daughters and two sons, all married, all in Beachy churches. There are four grandsons by whom the Stauffer name could be perpetuated among God's people in the Beachy churches until our Lord returns.

Esther's forebear was actually a Bear. The larger Miller family has documentation concerning Chief White Bear, who was Esther's great, great, great, great grandfather. Volume II of Leroy Beachy's books, *Unser Leit* (Our People) fills in some exciting details for the Millers and Stauffers.

According to Beachy's book, Volume II, pp. 129, 130, White Bear was a Winnebago Indian in Wayne County, Ohio. In a conflict with the Blackfoot tribe, White Bear became lost in a severe snow storm during the night. He happened upon a cabin

of white settlers named Stover. He stayed there for a number of days, while the storm raged on and on. The Stovers appreciated his manners and helpfulness.

White Bear reciprocated with respect and love for the Stover's daughter. Indians had no surname, so upon marriage with daughter, Elizabeth, he assumed the Stover name. Born to White Bear and Elizabeth was Meriah, who grew up to marry Peter Housower, who had been born to an Amish family. Meriah was 20 years younger than Peter. She was half-Indian; their daughter, Anna, was quarter-Indian blood. She eventually married Cyrus Berlincourt. Berlincourt's five siblings died while Cyrus was still a boy at home in Switzerland, having been born high in the Swiss Alps in 1831. His folks were in the state church. After his father died in 1837, Mom Berlincourt married

Joseph Wicki. They journeyed on to America in 1843, when Cyrus was only 12 years old. He united with the Amish church in Wayne County, Ohio, and married Anna, daughter of Amishman Peter Housower.

Author Leroy Beachy credits his information to Ben Wickey of Bronson, Michigan, who hired a credible, professional Swiss researcher for his information.

Information previously on hand by the Miller family has it that Jonathan Hershberger married Catherine, the daughter of Cyrus and Anna Berlincourt. The Hershberger's daughter, Mattie, married Ananias Miller, whose son, Ammon, married Gertie, whose daughter, Esther Miller, married Roger Stauffer, the late husband of widowed Esther Miller, who married widower, Yours Truly!

One mystery of the Chief White Bear lineage centers on when the passage to Amish descent occurred. It is assumed to have happened when the marriage to Hershberger took place, because both Miller men here named were Amish later in life. Personal surprise came with the interesting discovery that Peter Housower was Amish and that his son-in-law, Cyrus Berlincourt joined the Amish in America.

It should be acknowledged that

many others from the Hershberger and Miller family lines among us could also be direct descendants of the Chief White Bear, Housower, Berlincourt lineage. Interest in history can lead to some fabulous discoveries!

Roger and Esther (Miller) Stauffer's family are the only known Stauffers known to be in the Beachy church. Her parents and siblings remained Mennonite—a move made by Esther's parents early in their married life. Her sister, Susan, married Roger's late brother, Charles, who also had sons and grandsons with the Stauffer name. This set of double cousins grew up side by side in Michigan, and where both Stauffer brothers died.

Esther's father, Ammon, had a striking profile that bore resemblance to American Indian features. His brother, Ervin, has a similar rugged appearance.

These Michigan men, the Stauffers, who descended from the Miller line push hunting to great lengths. The local woods, swamps, and lakes provide frequent hunting for wild duck, geese, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, and deer, plus they put in "quality time" trapping for muskrat, beaver, otter, raccoon, and fox. Is it the Indian blood that puts Indian interests into life?

I find these discoveries soul

warming as I reflect on this interesting heritage. Here are a few of my reflections:

- Some say, “I have no heritage.” Chief White Bear could’ve said that about having had no Anabaptist heritage. He made one; you can, too.

- Lucile Berlincourt could’ve said, “I am now a widow. My life is all but over.” But she remarried, moved with her second husband to America, raised five sons (two by Wicki) who figured prominently in various lineages for generations to come.

- The membership transfer to another church should be made with earnest prayer, Holy Spirit leading, Bible direction, and a view toward implications for future generations.

- While family lines often follow the men, family lines are also established and perpetuated by grandmothers, mothers, and daughters and with equal significance. The one in this study has five of the six steps from Chief White Bear following through the daughters.

- Reading history is an exciting pursuit. We can read in our spare time what took years of research and writing for an author, to bring it to us in the form of attractive books. Leroy Beachy spent 23 years researching and writing his remarkable, two-volume history set.

- Every congregation should have a written history or one in the process of being written. It could be co-authored by several. We assume we will always remember, We do not. Cannot.

- It is already 10 years since our official, hard-bound copy of the Weavertown Church History was completed. So much has happened since its completion that hasn’t been written, except piecemeal by various persons.

- Writing history is very time-consuming. For example, try writing a diary every day for a year! More appreciation should be expressed to people who give themselves to this exacting discipline.

- Too often, unwritten and documented history of families and churches is sought when those who were a part of it are gone. Piecemeal snippets were part of living room stories a generation or two ago, of which certain details now would be most valuable. Writers are very limited in guessing about details. Details usually elevate human interest in a story.

The Bottom Line is that in God’s larger puzzle of life, even the seemingly obscure pieces, whether about individuals, events, or geographic locations, are not without significance and purpose.



The two stories included in this column are an encouragement to be faithful in sowing the precious seed of the Gospel. We are reminded of what Isaiah said about God's sovereignty and omniscience by the statement that His thoughts (purposes and intentions) and ways (directions) are higher than ours. Therefore, God has revealed Himself to men by His Word and said, "...it shall not return to him void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:8-11). —FS

Bottle Evangelism

Henry G. Bosch

I once heard of a man who was prevented by circumstances from carrying the evangelistic work he so much desired to do for Jesus. Refusing to be frustrated by the hedge of hindrances which the devil erected around him, he prayed for some new avenue of witness. Pausing by a stream of water on his way home, the Lord put into his mind the idea of bottle evangelism. Gathering discarded flasks and glass containers, he inserted tracts and other spiritual literature. He thought of Ecclesiastes 11:1, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt see it after many days."

He sealed them and set them adrift down the rivers and streams in his neighborhood. For 23 years he carried on this unique ministry.

Of the 27,800 bottles he cast upon the waters, he received responses from 5,640 persons who had found the messages and read them. The letters came from 38 states and nine countries. One, which came from Salonika, Greece, took over thirteen years to reach its destination. He preferred to use whiskey bottles gathered from the city dump and from back alleys because these were used for the wrong purpose the first time.

He received many wonderful responses, but one especially amazed him, for it came from a farming community where there had been a great flood the previous winter. One of the bottles floated up on the land where several people were converted by the message it contained, and eventually established a church there!

The last I heard, about eight years

ago, this brother was still working in a textile mill but using all his spare time to carry on his bottle evangelism. Out of his own wages he paid the cost of the Gospel tracts and the stamps for the correspondence which resulted. How the Lord must rejoice in the faithfulness of this man who literally casts the seed of the Word of God upon the waters. This true story proves that if one is in earnest about serving Jesus, he can find a way.

[From *Our Daily Bread*. Used by permission.]

The Passenger Got the Tip

Author unknown

“Someone left a Gospel of John on your back seat,” I said, calling attention to the little paperback which had a pamphlet tucked inside it.

“I put it there,” answered the taxi driver.

“I want you to know how much I appreciate finding it.” I told him, “I am a Christian and it means something to me.”

“I am a Christian, too,” the driver commented. “I’ve been driving taxi cab in New York City for 20 years. This is how I witness.” The driver proceeded to tell me how the Gospel of John, which bore the

emblem of American Bible Society and an accompanying tract telling how to find Christ as Savior, often evoked conversation. “Some of my passengers,” he said, “you can tell are having problems. They ask me to pray for them.”

But he also mentioned how not every rider reacts favorably. One time a lawyer, whose name was in the headlines for defending a group of demonstrators, boarded his cab. When the famous attorney saw the Gospel of John and a tract, he demanded with disgust, “What’s this? Who put this here?”

“The Holy Spirit gave me boldness to reply, ‘I put it there,’” the driver recalled.

“Well, I’ll have nothing to do with it,” the passenger shot back. “I’ve always managed for myself and I always will.”

“There is a time coming, no matter how famous a lawyer you are, when you won’t be able to take care of yourself,” I told him. “That is when you stand before the judgment bar of God without Jesus as your Savior.”

“Oh, don’t give me any of that,” the attorney retorted.

“When this disgusted passenger got out, he counted his fare carefully. He didn’t give me even a dime tip. But I gave him something. I gave

him the Word of God. It is not my job to make Christians of them. It's my assignment to witness to them and to sow the seed," he observed.

The taxi driver said over the years he has given out 25,000 copies of the Gospel of John and more than 40,000 tracts. I started to get out as soon as we reached my destination. The driver stopped me and asked, "Do you have time for us to pray

together?" He clasped my hand and on Wall Street, he involved me in a powerful moment of intercession. After I left the taxi, I thought of how Jesus commanded us to be witnesses in Jerusalem. Here was this taxi driver in what I consider one of the most difficult locations to have an impact for Christ and he was witnessing effectively.

{From *The Fishwrapper*}



helpers at home

Choose Kindness

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

Be ye kind" (Ephesians 4:32) is a Bible verse many of us memorized in Bible School or Sunday School in our early years. I remember reminding our children of this verse when they got into their childhood disagreements. However, "Be ye kind" in its original context is not written to children, but to grownups. I believe Scripture has a trickle-down effect. As we practice kindness ourselves, our children will copy our attitudes and actions.

Kindness is a choice. Will I choose to sow seeds of kindness or will

I sow seeds of pain and suffering in another person's life? God's command is clear. He expects us to make a conscious choice to be kind, regardless of our emotions or circumstances at the time. We have all experienced those times when we were tired, frustrated, or just did not feel like being kind, yet that is the very moment God is speaking in a quiet whisper to our heart, "be ye kind." Kindness is embodied in Christian character—in respect, honesty, compassion, mercy and love.

As women, we have many opportunities to express kindness. Take a peek inside your home. Who are the people who need your touch of kindness the most? There are people in our churches, in our community, and even on the street who are hurting or lonely. Our children learn more by example than by word. Will our children be able to say of us when they grow older, “In her tongue was the law of kindness” (Proverbs 31:26)?

Kindness in my home

Our response to our husbands when they forget to leave their dirty shoes on the porch or some other habit that we don’t appreciate will leave an impression on our children. Listen to your child’s voice in his play. Who does he imitate? Even babies respond to a kind tone; they like to hear a mother’s soft lullaby or her gentle, calming words. What about the morning stress of getting the children out the door? The clock continues to tick; the bus or ride will soon arrive, what do we do? Will our children remember Mom’s kind words as they sit in the classroom or do harsh words ring in their ears? Perhaps we need to look at our schedule—can we make some changes to allow for a more relaxed morning?

Teaching kindness begins at a young age by not allowing the toddler to grab a toy from a sibling or school-age children playing games without fighting and quarreling. Even teenage rivalry needs to be monitored by the parents. Do not allow name calling or sarcastic, hurtful words—supposedly spoken in fun.

Parents must **always** discipline in love. Many adults including some in our Mennonite circles carry deep emotional scars from harsh discipline, mocking, and abuse suffered in their childhood from the very people who should have kept them safe—their own parents. I feel so sad when I hear these stories. Every child deserves a happy childhood, especially a child coming from a professing Christian home. Mothers, guard your words carefully, lest they bruise a tender heart.

Showing kindness in school, church, and the community

Children can be cruel. I know that sounds very unkind, but I have seen and heard it happen. Do parents have a responsibility for such actions? Many times, yes! I realize children face peer pressure and will do things to gain approval of their peers at the moment, disregarding

the heart of the parents. That child with a tender conscience will regret what happened. Mothers, your child hears what you say, sometimes even the words you don't speak. Your attitude about his teacher, pastor, the policeman, the government, including our president. It speaks volumes. Do you want to teach your child respect for authority? Then you must show respect even to the person in authority with whom you disagree. Do not take your child's side against the teacher. Never speak disparagingly of other families in school or church.

Encourage your child to be a friend to the child whom we think is "different." God may call him special. It could be a child with a handicap or different skin color or nationality, from a poorer family than yours, a different background, he may not be as good an athlete, or whatever else and thus be looked at as different. You have a responsibility to see that no child feels left out in your school or church just because they appear different. Encourage your child

to be a friend to everyone; watch for opportunities to encourage friendship and kindness, imagine if this were your child that was seen as different, how would you feel?

Mothers also have a responsibility to teach their child kindness to the elderly, those who are sick and the lonely. Take your child along to visit; ask the elderly to tell stories of their past; give little tokens of love to them. How do you respond to the homeless person standing on the street with a sign asking for work or food? This is a wonderful opportunity to teach compassion. Talk about what may have happened in the person's life; stop and give food or money. Recently, I heard of keeping blessing bags in your car for this purpose. The children could help you put small items of non-perishable food or a comb, soap, toothbrush, New Testament, etc., in a Ziploc bag, then let them hand out a bag next time you see a needy person. See each person as someone who is created and loved by God.

Kindness grows as we sow the seeds.



***Noticing God at work puts
a song in the heart.***

Birds Praise The Lord

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Many people love to watch the birds. There are so many different kinds and colors of interesting birds. I love to wake up on a spring morning with the air full of bird song. I believe birds praise the Lord by doing just what He created them to do.

Birds brighten the days in all countries for the people whose eyes are open to see them.

Toucans are an amazing, brightly-marked tropical bird with a big, colorful beak. They like to eat fruit and use their bill to tear off pieces of large fruits. They roost in the hollows of trees and like to bathe high in the treetops by contact with wet leaves. Bromeliad plants in the treetops hold rain like fairy cups for these birds to drink from. I have been privileged to enjoy admiring a number of colorful birds in Central America.

Pileated woodpeckers are big and fun to watch. One day I saw one

on our driveway. Our cat saw it, too, and crouched down low and stealthily crept up our lane hoping for a fine large meal. The bird was bright and alert and flew away long before the cat got close enough to pounce.

In a dead tree close to our mailbox a pileated woodpecker pair had a nest one summer. Oh, they were amazing to watch. As the birdies grew they would stick their beaks out of the hole and the parents were kept busy busy feeding their hungry brood. It was a sweet gift to have them so nearby to watch. Those woodpeckers are so big and powerful that wood chips fly from rotten old trees as they hungrily peck for their lunch of creeping, crawling insects.

When I was a child growing up on a farm, wood ducks had a nest in the maple tree in our front yard. It was amazing to see little brown ducklings way up in a large tree.

Ducks like water and there was no pond nearby. Before the wood ducklings were very old, they leaped out of the tree and went on their merry way with mother and father duck on our farm pond way down close to the woods, at least if they did not meet some hungry predators on their way there.


I always remember how our day was brightened when we saw a quail with her cute little covey of birdies as we were picking tomatoes on a warm summer day in Maryland many years ago. Likely, we frightened them out of their nest. They scurried away to safety in their brown, striped coats on swift, small feet.

One Sunday after church the children found a nest of killdeer in the gravel. They had just hatched and when the children came near, they ran away, never to return to their hard nest on the stones. The mother bird flopped nearby, to protect her little brood and draw

attention to herself. Her wing was not broken, although she acted like it was.

An interesting summer project is to see how many bird nests you can locate. We have had a cardinal nest in our raspberry patch, a robin nest in the grape arbor and among the blackberry vines. A petite song sparrow had a cute, tidy nest in a shrub near the house. I have yet to locate a hummingbird nest here in Ohio, but I was delighted when friends showed me a hummer's nest on a low-hanging branch in their yard in Belize.

“This world is so full of wonderful things, I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings!” That line from a nursery rhyme reminds me to keep my eyes open. Admiring the wonders of creation is a wonderful way to praise the Creator of it all.

Go about your day singing His praises. Birds praise the Lord, do you? 

Losing your temper doesn't get rid of it.

Feeding on the Bread of Life

In 1996, a group of people climbed to the top of Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world. Towering about five and a half miles above sea level, the pinnacle of Mount Everest is nearly as high as the cruising altitude of many aircraft.

In preparation for the strenuous hike, the group of hikers needed to perform regular exercises so that their bodies would be able to handle the rigors of mountain climbing and severe weather. They needed to learn about avalanches and blizzards. Each member of a climbing party needed to become familiar with wearing oxygen masks to help them breathe in the high altitude. They could not hope to be rescued if they got into difficulty. Low atmospheric pressure and extreme cold make successful rescue missions rare. In 1996, no helicopters could fly near the top of Mount Everest because of the thin air. The entire trip to the pinnacle needed to be planned in great detail. Any miscalculations could spell death for the climbers.

Andy Harris was one of the guides in this group. After many days of climbing, he and his fellows arrived at Camp 4, the highest camp on the side of mountain. The following day they would hike to the summit and return to camp before evening. Everyone knew they must not stay at the summit past the designated deadline. If they did, they might not have enough oxygen to make it back down the mountain.

And so it was that on the following day in May, Andy and his partners stood atop the highest mountain in the world. But Andy stayed at the summit past the deadline. After one last look around, he began his descent to the camp where the other party members were already headed. Part way down the slope, his supply of oxygen ran low. But before too long, he came to a store of oxygen canisters that had been stockpiled for the trip down the mountain. Tragically, however, the lack of oxygen had already begun to affect his brain. Andy was not able to think clearly. He called to his

comrades on his radio and told them he had come to a cache of canisters, but found them all empty. One of his comrades pleaded with him to use them, but Andy insisted the canisters were empty. The lack of oxygen flowing to Andy's brain impaired his judgment and eventually cost him his life. Andy Harris died near the top of Mount Everest.

Ravi Zacharias has observed that the very thing Andy held in his hand was the thing missing in his brain. And because his brain did not have sufficient oxygen, he was unable to comprehend the life-saving substance that he held in his hand. What a tragedy!

What is the meaning of this parable?

Oxygen is to our body what the Bread of Life is to our soul. Without the Bread of Life, our souls starve. People who are starving eventually get to the place that they are not hungry anymore. So it is with our souls. If we starve our souls, we eventually disdain what our soul needs the most. Have you ever neglected feeding on the Bread of life for so long that you lost an appetite for it?

Perhaps you've met people who had neglected eating the Bread of Life for so long that their souls were almost

completely shriveled. The lack of spiritual nourishment had so affected their soul that they were not even aware of their condition. Perhaps you have met people who appeared to have died spiritually. Because the Bread of Life was so absent in their soul, they did not recognize their spiritual impoverishment. This is an even greater tragedy!

In John 6, we read about some Jews in Jesus' day who were in the same shape spiritually that Andy Harris was physically. These men had starved their souls for quite a few years. When the Bread of Life stood in their midst and told them that they needed to eat His flesh in order to experience eternal life, they got very disturbed. They said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" The day would come when the Jews would condemn to crucifixion the very person who could have saved them from spiritual death.

Jesus' disciples commented that this saying of Jesus was a "hard saying." They were right. It is a hard saying. How *does* a person feed on Jesus? How do we fill our souls with the Bread of Life?

Jesus says that His words are spirit and they are life. We take in the Bread of Life as we communicate with God and receive nourishment from the

Word of Life.

Sometimes our Bible reading is like taking medicine. We read it because we know we need it and that it is good for us. It can be difficult to receive the Bread of Life while reading through the book of Leviticus. At 5:30 or 6 o'clock in the morning, it is sometimes hard to see the necessity of getting our soul filled with the Bread of Life. On other occasions, reading the Bible might resemble eating cold cereal. It is dry, but nourishing. Sometimes reading the Scriptures is like sitting down to a delicious meal. Regardless of how it feels to us, feeding on the Bread of Life is very, very important.

Here are some things Christians have done to help them get more benefit from Bible reading. You can try these too.

- Picture yourself as a branch that is connected to the vine. Then picture a wilted branch on the vine. Realize that this last picture will describe you if you don't receive nutrients from the vine.

- Reread a verse multiple times emphasizing a different word in the verse each time you read it and notice the significance of that word.

- Personalize an instruction or promise by putting your name in the verse.

- Write down your thoughts and inspirations and read them occasionally.

- Make a simple chart or drawing of the passage you are reading.

- Underline verses (or copy some verses to a post-it note) that you can take along with you to work.

King David had interesting ways of keeping his spiritual supply tank full. While David was lying in his bed, he would think about how good God was to him. (Psalm 63:6) David used God's Word to guide him in making right decisions. When people mocked him, he would think about God's Word. He made God's Word his delight. (Psalm 119:23,24) David pictured himself as a sheep being led to a pasture where there was nutrient-rich grass for him to feed on. (Psalm 23:5)

Maybe you rarely get to see people who delight themselves in the written word of God. If so, I hope you sometime have the opportunity to see people who actually delight themselves in reading the Bible.

A number of years ago, I lived with a group of men who were spiritually starved. If you had stopped by our facility for a visit first thing in the morning, you would have found a group of men sitting around a table discussing the truths they had

received while meditating on the Scriptures earlier that morning. If you had toured the wood shop during the day, you might have seen some photocopies of a Bible passage lying around that were being used for Bible memorization. If you stayed around for the evening, it would have been common to see fellows propped up on a porch swing or sitting in a gazebo reading their Bibles.

These men's spiritual oxygen canisters had been depleted for quite some time and they were getting them recharged. They were soaking up the Word of Life. For too many years they had let their spiritual tanks run dry and it had brought ruin to their lives. Many of them had nearly died spiritually. Now they were determined to make sure that this didn't happen again.

Fasting is one way to renew our focus and sharpen our desire for spiritual food. Someone has said it like this, "Fasting is denying ourselves of something we want in order to become aware of something we want even more."

Keeping our souls full of the Word of Life is what will keep us from wilting and dying. It is the only food that will satisfy the deep hungers of our soul. Education may bring knowledge. Being successful at work may make us feel worthwhile. Involving ourselves in the church may bring us significance. Good health may make us feel better. Money may help us acquire a few nice things. But if we try to fill our soul hunger by searching for knowledge, worth, significance, good health, or nice things, these things will choke out the Word and cause us to forget our *real* needs.

Let us not be like Andy Harris and many others who died because they did not use the very thing that they held in their hands. Instead, let us make *good* use of the Book that we frequently hold in our hands. Let us often fill our souls with the Bread of Life. If we feed on the Bread of Life, Jesus promises us that we will never die.

—EE 

Next Month's
QUESTION

What are some practical ways youth can help each other stay filled with the Bread of Life and assist those who may be losing their spiritual hunger?

(USPS 767-160)
Calvary Messenger
2673 Township Rd. 421
Sugar creek, OH 44681

Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

Reading the Bible without meditation is like gulping food without chewing.

• • • • •

Great triumphs are born out of great troubles.

• • • • •

A faith worth having is a faith worth sharing.

• • • • •

The greatest comfort is to know that God is in control.

• • • • •

The Old Testament altar points to the New Testament cross.

• • • • •

If we fear and love God, we will obey Him.

• • • • •

True Christian love helps even those who can't return the favor.

• • • • •

The inconsistent Christian helps the devil more than the open sinner does.

• • • • •

The future doesn't start tomorrow, it starts today.

• • • • •

No one is hopeless whose hope is in God.