



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

Galatians 6:14

JUNE 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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Jesus Loves Me

Senior's Version

Author unknown

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow.
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

Refrain:

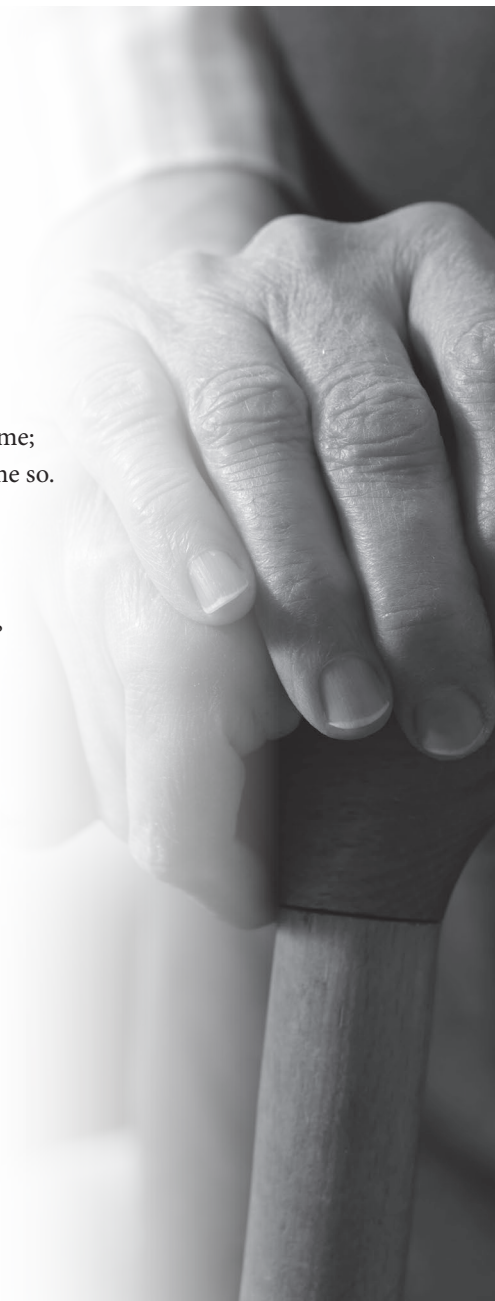
Yes, Jesus loves me; yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes, Jesus loves me; The Bible tells me so.

Though my steps are, oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go.
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song.
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.



The Obsession for Control

Counselors tell us that those who abuse others are typically preoccupied with control over others. That urge so takes over their life that they may violate helpless children. Abusers will also disrespectfully approach adults, trying to manipulate them to do whatever they ask of them.

True Christians walk a different path.

Granted, parents need to tell a young child what's good for him. Children without helpful parental guidance, if left to themselves, would protect their selfish interests to their eventual ruin. Where proper child training is neglected, great insecurity results.

Two extremes are common: too much control and too little control. While aspects of fallen human nature come most naturally to a child, a child, especially one who is secure in his parents' love, is also capable of choosing good, unselfish options. The parent, however, who sees only the negative aspects of his child's life and does not capitalize on encouraging things about the child's choices, does the child a grave disservice.

My concern here is finding the golden mean of life-affirming control,

that fits the age needs of the persons involved, while avoiding those dark pits of destructive control.

We might ask: When is it inappropriate to expect someone to comply with our wishes? Under what circumstances do those with more power or authority reach too far into personal areas that rightly belong only to the individual? By citing violations, these concerns becomes clearer.

These forms of coercion seem obvious:

- Foreclosing a mortgage
- Owning a slave or withholding fair wages
- Incest, molestation, and rape
- Murder, even in self-defense

But what about:

- Slapping a child of any age hard across the mouth?
- Telling a child he may not cry after pain is administered by physical correction?
- Having a parent apply the "rod of correction" to a grown child?
- Asking a spouse to refrain from expressing how she feels?
- Informing a church member that any questions are sheer rebellion?
- Being vocally combative or loudly argumentative?

I hope a thoughtful examination of any of the above situations indicates when control over others falls outside of Christ-honoring persuasiveness. So what forms does life-affirming control take?

When we are *given* direction

The Apostles apparently understood Jesus' teaching to forbid forcing their will upon anyone—whether friend or foe. The child of God sometimes faces unreasonable persons. In such cases, he may need to turn for assistance to those who do not bear the sword in vain (Romans 13:1-5).

Both Paul and Peter remind us to suffer as Jesus did (See Romans 12:19-21 and 1 Peter 2:21-23). We must never allow an enemy make us stoop to hatred for him. When we are mistreated and our rights are trampled, we must seek to maintain a clear conscience. We are not, however, required always to remain passive. God has given us honorable options: first of all, prayer to God; second, respectful entreaty to men. But then, we also realize that not all situations will be resolved as we think they should be. Peter's counsel applies here: "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19). Realizing the Apostles' fate, we cannot expect that we will always be

spared severe injustice. Most of them died as martyrs, and so may we.

While Paul did not make sure he always got justice, once when he faced scourging, he raised a question about the fairness of what he was about to suffer. In Acts 22:25, he asked, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" These were not the idle words of a coward. His courage was shown earlier in a situation when he had been warned not to go to Jerusalem because of the possibility of persecution. In that case Paul had countered with, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

When we are *giving* direction

When the "shoe" of authority is on my "foot," *what then?* We must seek the wisdom of God. Martin Luther King maintained that, for the child of God, the end does not justify the means, but that the end is *pre-existent* in the means. Let's state that principle another way: If we resort to maximum force, we can expect maximal negative reaction and minimal positive result.

We must always show proper respect to others, regardless of their race, creed, age or gender. We cannot expect positive outcomes from the use of sheer physical force devoid of conformity to Scripture or sanctified

common sense. We must ask God to give us a Christlike, respectful regard for the persons whom we ask for cooperation. Asking someone to follow our direction places us in a responsible position.

Forcing someone to comply to

our wishes without offering them sincere consideration, puts us in the position of a selfish tyrant—not a self-sacrificing servant of Jesus Christ. *That, as I understand it, points to the golden mean of exercising control over others.* —PLM

the bottom line

The Touch of Tech

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The September, 2012, issue of *The Sword and Trumpet* has a good article entitled, “Evaluating the Use of Technology.” It was written by Luke Bennetch, a minister in the Pilgrim Mennonite Conference. The eleven pages are not difficult reading, except for its sermonic length. In these solemn days, it seems that the sons of the Anabaptists want it quick, easy and short.

Last year at Christmas, five of our seven children were home with us in Pennsylvania. There we were, seeing our daughter in Kenya on that “skype thing” and hearing Cynthia in Kenya talking to Audrey in Mississippi, as clear as though they were on a local telephone call to us in our house. And we could talk with either of them, while they were hearing us from anywhere in our room.

The tone of Bennetch’s article is clearly pro-tech in its good use of modern technology and a brotherly way to *protect* the wise and teachable. Here is a condensed version of his worthy article. He acknowledges technology for its usefulness in business, in communication, in research, and in socializing.

One young man who returned from church services was more than a little pleased with his experience. The preacher made a wonderful case for 1 Thessalonians 5:21, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” He would no longer need to feel guilty about his many tech toys. He has already proven them and most of them work good. So that week he went out and bought more of the latest, whether gigs, apps, or bytes.

Many moons later, he left the

same church quite discouraged, because in the men's Sunday School class they discussed the verse, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." The teacher especially pointed out many dangers about how evil can infiltrate our lives by modern technology. The young man knew "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" by heart. He had not known the Bible could agree with him in bringing him such comfort. But now he was made aware of the very next verse, which says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." It seemed that God was pointing to a sensitive area in his life. He had been pleased with how the Bible had agreed with his forays into a "pro-tech" lifestyle.

These two verses do go together, as the one follows the other to balance out its proper use. The proving part assumes evil will be cast aside, but just to be sure, even the appearance of evil is enough to wisely choose to stay on the safe side.

Back to the article by Bro. Bennetch, concerned parents and informed persons could read it with profit. Here are some of Bennetch's concerns and ideas:

Young people's texting should not be allowed to take place during important family togetherness times.

Cell phones should be left at home or in the car—never taken into God's house.

The desire for speed and immediacy in communication can be intoxicating, complete with withdrawal problems.

The benefits and detriments of modern technology are numerous, hence the need for discernment.

These electronics make a new peer group, especially among young people wishing to be included in the electronic social group, and wanting to have the latest equipment.

It enhances the carnal bent about being first to know, and the human urge to be the first to tell.

Technology has a way of saving time, of course, but you know what else? It also has more gadgets that can take up more time than they save!

Social skills are exercised less. Writing and story telling are on the wane. Playing group games is thought to be too slow and boring.

Wikipedia is a dangerous source for information because it can be amended and even changed by unscrupulous persons. Assuming all information from the computer is true and reliable can be very deceptive and misleading.

Bennetch suggests taking an occasional technology fast. A tremendous idea! Intentionally, courageously and beneficially cutting it out of your life for a you-choose-how-long time period. Make it a time to evaluate what it might be doing in your life. Is it your servant or are you

a slave to it? Pursue communication with God in the same measure of zeal. In that time, spend more hours with your family in some way, even as young people.

He questions the need for 12 to 14-year-olds having cell phones or cameras. Frivolous conversations and pictures do not contribute to needed discipline and character development. It puts needless pressure on other adolescents. It promotes silliness. It can seem an entitlement of childhood.

Another danger is “distant closeness,” as Bennetch puts it. He warns that it allows conversation any time, day or night. He notes the late night hazard, especially when “good judgment and reserve may be waning.” Frequent “familiarity can bring looseness and permissiveness between genders,” he says.

Before the telephone, people “paid” a visit with others. After the telephone, we pay for the phone. Now with cell phones, we pay for free minutes (Explain that!) But with electronics, we pay to be connected to save time. (Are we sure about that?)

The writer frequently calls into question the increasing amount of time devoted to these technological tools—or are they toys? He could have questioned the amount of money spent on having “the latest, mostest, and bestest of gadgetry.”

Stewardship of time and money bring on a modern sufficiency squeeze. Our choices seem to be in countless multiples enough, without adding the latest tech toys.

“God help us to be ready for the return of Christ and not drunk with the wine of technology.” Luke Bennetch says, as we conclude his comments.

Here is my paraphrase of Romans 14:16-23:

- “Let not your good excursions into tech-time be evil spoken of.” (v. 16)

- “For the kingdom of God is not in more gigs and megabytes and apps, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (v. 17)

- “For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and not having the latest I-phone or I-pad for the approval of men.” (v. 18)

- “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and not take away from our Christian fellowship by spending time on the Internet, Facebook, Youtube, and Google incessantly.” (v. 19)

- “For high-tech toys do not of themselves destroy the work of God. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for that man who participates in such with offense.” (v. 20)

- “It is neither to buy the latest gadgets, nor for sheer curiosity to surf the Internet, nor any such thing in which you or your brother

stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” (v. 21)

• “Hast thou Internet connection? Have it not to thyself alone, but allow sufficient blockers and accountability before God and man. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the high-tech things which he alloweth.” (v. 22)

• “And he that doubteth is damned if he unethically participates with his computer in the forbidden, because he exercises not himself therein in faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (v. 23)

The Bottom Line is that computer technology fits in with the perilous times of the last days. In the midst of a long list of descriptive wickedness and anti-God activity, Paul includes, “inventors of evil things.” (Romans 1:30). Conscientious respect for brotherhood guidelines can be a helpful safeguard against the encroachment of evil. Some of us could consider going beyond congregational guidelines as a needed personal discipline for God’s sake, for our brother’s sake, and for our own good.



Working Mothers?

Name withheld

Dear Young Mother, So you and your husband have decided you need to get a part-time job to pay off some of your debts? Well, this letter is to encourage you NOT to get a job outside your home.

There are many things you should take into consideration before making this decision. The first thing to consider is financial. Will it really help out financially? Many times, there is very little financial gain. Baby sitters, extra clothes, gas, added vehicle expense, and eating out more often take up most of the extra money. God can easily allow medical or other bills to come along.

But, of greater importance is the

effect it can have on your children. Especially young children need their mother at home. They need you to share those special times and also to hold them when they get hurt. You may think you can make it up with “quality time,” but those moments can happen at any time.

There was a family that decided the mother needs to get a job. Her youngest daughter often sat and cried for a while when her mom left for work in the evening. With time, the mother started working more hours, including Saturdays when the father was home to be with the children. Today those children are scattered theologically and many of them have thrown aside their

conservative Anabaptist heritage. So, please consider the strain this will put on your children.


Please consider also the strain this could put on your marriage. When the husband's position as the breadwinner is threatened, many things can happen. He may, without realizing what the motive is, start doing things to get your attention. This can even be through medical conditions that require more money.

There is also the moral issue to consider. The workplace offers many temptations that you wouldn't face at home. Also, when your husband doesn't feel that he has your complete devotion, he may look elsewhere for attention. You may say, "But that won't happen to us." It can happen without realizing what is happening until it's too late. This husband and wife suffered the pain of infidelity on both sides, some of it directly attributable to the wife's job.

May I suggest that you lovingly support your husband and try to live on less. That new car may have to wait. Good stewardship, contentment with what you have, and simple

nourishing meals will go a long way. A garden and canning can help a lot on grocery bills. Bring your financial burdens to God. He can provide above and beyond what you expect. Good, sound financial management will go farther than that extra money. I'm glad that my wife and I decided before we had children that she will not not get a job, and certainly not after we have children. Although money gets tight sometimes with a large family, we wouldn't have it any other way.

Spend time in prayer for your husband and children. This is a much more rewarding occupation than you will find out there. It will change your outlook on life, and may affect your children's and grandchildren's eternal destiny. If I can spare one family the pain that this family endured, and the bitter harvest of wrong choices, it will be worth it. You see, **I am a son in that family.**

"I will therefore that the younger women marry, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (1 Timothy 5:14). 

The dove of peace still often finds our world covered with the waters of hate and jealousy.

ISRAEL REPORT

Donnavon Graber, Jerusalem

April 13 – Sitting behind a Messianic believer in Jesus in church who is carrying an M16 military assault rifle in church is a bit disconcerting. Does he really need that thing at all, let alone in church? But this was the case on Saturday, even though the message preached was scripturally sound and the Sermon on the Mount was quoted—although the parts that deal with loving our enemies weren't mentioned. My wife was really curious how it feels to carry a gun for shooting people, though she didn't ask the soldier about it. In the end, it moved our hearts to intercede for him, a precious soul, along with the souls perceived as his enemies.

Memorial Day begins tonight in remembrance of the fallen soldiers of Israel and is followed immediately by Independence Day, so displays of patriotic pride are in vogue. Turning the other cheek in redemptive love is not in style here or anywhere, to put it lightly.

Givat Hannaniah is the hill our family lives on in Jerusalem. According to one legend, on this hill was the house of Caiaphas where the religious leaders took counsel against Jesus, although the most traditional


place is at the foot of Mount Zion across the valley. In the 1990's, a burial site was found at the bottom of the hill along with the evidence that a number of archeologists think means this was the burial site of Caiaphas, the high Priest from the Gospel accounts.

Chabad-Lubavicher Jews have moved into a building about 50 yards from us just down the street. We meet these folks on the street and see their large "Messiah" flags and signs. They believe that their rabbi, M.M. Schneersohn, is the Messiah and will return some day. He was the seventh rabbi in a particular dynasty of rabbis, and around half of his 200,000-strong group thinks he is the Messiah and very actively promote this belief. Pictures proclaiming the Rebbe as the Messiah are prolific all across Israel. The only problem is that Lubavicher Rebbe (Schneersohn) died in 1994 and so far hasn't come back to life. Generally speaking, Jews do not proselytize, but this group is an exception. They are very active in passing out literature and speaking to people on the street. They are generally exuberant in manner, including the use of very hard rock

music to liven things up. One of the things that still plays with my mind a bit is the sight of these almost Amish-looking men with their black hats dancing exuberantly to heavy metal, rock music coming from big loudspeakers mounted on one of their “happy-clappy” vans that run around the city to cheer people up.

Many things the Lubavichers say sound good, but on closer examination it is a dangerous mixture of truth and error. One day I encountered one of these people who needed help locating his sons, who were in the care of social services. My friend said that he had “lost himself” and was totally out of his own control for some period, living almost like an animal on the beaches of Tel Aviv. His wife got a divorce and his children

went to the social services. He said he didn’t know how to be a father and wants to try again. As I helped him get connected with a social worker so that he could locate his sons, he explained to me that all roads lead to God—Mohammed for the Muslims, Jesus for the Christians, and direct access for the Jews. But, the sense I received from him was that his source of “light” was in fact darkness from the kingdom of darkness.

From the M16-toting off-duty soldiers in church to Lubavicher neighbors, we are continually reminded that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth in service of a glorious Heavenly Kingdom that enters into this earth and redeems man from his fallenness. This indeed is a bitter-sweet joy! 

Two Kingdoms: The Church and the State

Crystal Strubhar, Perkins, OK

I grew up hearing a lot about the two kingdoms. I heard that this is one of the foundational doctrines of Anabaptism and that our understanding of this particular issue is a big thing that sets us apart from other evangelicals. I have heard a lot about the two kingdoms and in some ways I have found the concept

compelling, but it still always felt a bit elusive to me—like I could almost grasp the life-changing-ness of it, but not quite. I don’t know that I understand it all even yet, but I did get excited about one aspect that became clearer to me through class and through reading early Anabaptist writers.

The thing that has really come alive to me through class is the difference of the natures of the two kingdoms. The kingdom of the world and government is held to base-line equity. The government is established by God to restrain evil and to keep the society in order according to basic righteousness—eye for eye, tooth for tooth. It cannot regulate generosity or other higher standards of righteousness and make society Christian. It should not even try to do these things. Christianity cannot be forced. Christianity is based on free choice; as such, to force Christian values on non-Christians is actually un-Christian. Not only is forcing the higher standard of ethics on the world fundamentally un-Christian, it is also impossible. Perhaps a form of Christian values could actually be produced, but it would be without the spirit, the heart of love for God and would actually be a type of righteousness that is repulsive to God. Marpeck states his position clearly; “they [those in authority who have become Christians] may not use the aforementioned carnal force, sovereignty or ruling in the kingdom of Christ. It cannot be upheld by any Scripture. To allow the external authority to rule in the kingdom of Christ brings the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, who alone is Lord and Ruler”^{*} God only has the right to rule in His Kingdom—for humans

to try to use force to bring about His Kingdom undermines His authority.

True Christian ethics (what it looks like to be part of God’s Kingdom) are impossible apart from the Holy Spirit’s life in us. Even as Christians we do not live perfectly according to the laws of the Kingdom of God because we are not perfectly redeemed and do not hear the Spirit perfectly, so how could we expect non-Christians who do not have the Spirit of God to live according to Christian morals? Force simply is not part of the Kingdom of God. Force has, however, been given to the government to use to keep order.

The fact that we are not called to coerce people to live “Christian-ly” does not mean that we should do nothing about all the people that are outside of Christ’s Kingdom. No, rather we should be inviting them to come into the new way. Only in the Kingdom of God, living in relationship with the Father through Jesus with the Spirit in their hearts will people find life and purpose they have been longing for. We should live in a way that invites them to come in and shows the beauty of being under God’s rule. God’s Kingdom is different from the kingdom of the world—only in God’s Kingdom is there life of the soul.

Because all people have free choice, a Christian in government cannot excuse doing things that were not

according to the Kingdom of Light by saying that they were forced to do so. The early Anabaptists were clear on this—one must always obey God rather than men. For this reason they felt, and I agree with them, that it is very difficult (if not impossible) for Christians to be in government.

Menno Simons gave a clear call for us who are part of the Kingdom of God when he contrasted the two kingdoms. He said, “The Prince of Peace is Christ Jesus; his kingdom is the kingdom of peace, which is his church; his messengers are the messengers of peace; his Word is the word of peace; his body is the body of peace; his children are the seed of peace and his inheritance and reward are the inheritance and reward of peace. In short, with this King, and his kingdom and reign, it is nothing but peace. Everything that is seen, heard, and done is in peace.”

** I thought this description was beautiful. But how often we live in fear, worry, and division! Whenever we live such things we are not living under the rule of Christ, the Prince of Peace. As Anabaptists, we need as much as anybody (or maybe more because of our drive to be right) to remember that we are a part of the Kingdom of Peace and to come under our Prince’s rule.

Peace does not mean easy or smooth. In fact, as light in the darkness we will be offensive to the

world. Menno goes on to say that with our spiritual weapons we want to “storm the kingdom of the devil.” With these weapons, he says, “may we raise the father against the son, and the son against the father, and may we cast down imagination and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.” *** Everything that is contrary to the rule of God we should seek to bring under His rule by the spiritual weapons He has given. These weapons do not include the use of force in any way. As Christians, we certainly should not be fighting among ourselves, and even in the midst of conflict with the world, we can have the peace of being secure under God’s rule. That deep peace should set us apart as distinct from all who belong to the kingdom of the world.

The two Kingdoms are very different as the early Anabaptists saw them. They seek different purposes, by different means. They are ruled by different Rulers. The Kingdom of God is always the Kingdom of Light and Peace, established by men freely choosing to come under God’s rule.

*[The quotes *, **, ***, were taken from Klassen, Anabaptism in Outline, 1981, Herald Press, 1981. They are taken from pages 251, 280, and 280, respectively. This essay was assigned for class work at Faith Builders Educational Programs and also submitted for publication by Instructor Stephen Russell.]*



Thankful

*Jennifer Anderson,
Newcomerstown, OH*

For little girls dressed like ladies
Not what they see on screen,

Hearing music of Love
Not on love based on lust,

See children helping the younger
And the older being valued,

The Word taught pure and unashamed
Not book reviews or inspirational,

Conversation and visiting
Without electronics butting in,


Reverence in worship
Not entertainment,

The ability to play with children
And not isolated to gadgets,

People who share the same beliefs
So we do not stand alone.

It gives us thanksgiving
For what we've been blessed with,

It prompts us to strive
To keep what remains,

We don't really know
What we have till it's gone. 

Thankful

marriages

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

Knepp-Yoder

Bro. Jason, son of Ernest and Delilah Knepp, Whiteville, TN, and Sis. Janelle, daughter of Irvin and Beulah Yoder, Montezuma, GA, at Montezuma Mennonite Church on March 16, 2013, by Donny Swartzentruber.

Swarey-Toth

Bro. Samuel, Jr., son of Samuel and Ruth Ann Swarey, Whiteville, TN, and Sis. Dana, daughter of Losif and Viorica Toth, Romania, at House of Faith Ministries for Whiteville Mennonite church on April 6, 2013, by Kevin Yoder.

Troyer-Yoder

Bro. David Jon, son of David and Martha Troyer, Mifflinburg, PA, and Sis. Marita, daughter of Freeman and Betty Yoder, Harrison, AR, at First Presbyterian for Cornerstone Mennonite on March 16, 2013, by Daniel Miller.

Wagler-Horst

Bro. Jordan Kyle, son of Willard, Jr. and Annette Wagler, Odon, IN, and Sis. Jessica Marie, daughter of Martin and Rosanna Horst, Muddy Pond, TN, at First United Methodist Church for Pilgrim Christian Fellowship on March 2, 2013, by Martin Horst.

cradle roll

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

Barkman, Clement and Michelle (Troyer), McConnelsville, OH, eighth child, fifth son, Bruce Elliot, March 28, 2013.

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

Beiler, Mervin and Marie (King), Strasburg, PA, second child, first dau., Makayla Grace, April 11, 2013.

Bowser, Jason and Valerie (Meyers), Harrison, AR, second child and dau., Beverly Danae, March 4, 2013.

Byler, Linford and Amber (Martin), Whiteville, TN, third child, second dau., Allison Belle, March 8, 2013.

Eicher, Thomas Jay and Taruli Idahanna (Sirait), Grabill, IN, first child and son, Thomas Lavon Raphael, July 14, 2012.

Hochstetler, Dennis and Andrea (Yoder), Ligonier, IN, first child and dau., Addeilyn Kate, March 18, 2013.

Kauffman, Daryl and Marlene (Yoder), Belleville, PA, first child and son, Jaden Matthew, March 22, 2013.

Kuepfer, Joseph and Marilyn (Miller), Hutchinson, KS, first child and dau., Zora Desiree, April 3, 2013.

Kuepfer, Ron and Janelle (Erb), Shakespeare, ON, second child, first son, Scott Riley, Jan. 13, 2013.

Kurtz, Michael and Elizabeth (Brubaker), Woodville, NY, fifth child, second dau., Marilou Rose, March 23, 2013.

Overholt, Jamison and Jessica (Yoder), Whiteville, TN, first child and dau., Brooklyn Rose, April 22, 2013.

Overholt, Lawrence and Bethanne (Blank), Lyndon, KS, eighth child, sixth dau., Alanna Mary, April 7, 2013.

Schmidt, Walter and Miriam (Jantzi), New Hamburg, ON, second child, first dau., Alayna Janae, Feb. 17, 2013.

Schrock, Lyndon and Gina (Mast), Montezuma, GA, first child and son, Colton Blake, March 15, 2013.

Stoltzfus, Johnny and Gloria (Yutzy), Lancaster, PA, second child, first son, Tyler Joel, March 27, 2013.

Stoltzfus, Nathan and Martha (Byers), Mifflinburg, PA, sixth child, fifth son, Derek Matthew, March 12, 2013.

Swartzentruber, Wendall and Mary (Beachy), Montezuma, GA, third child and dau., Alexandra Kate, Jan. 27, 2013.

Troyer, John, Jr., and Lois (Whitt), Russellville, OH, first child and son, Johann Elliott, April 27, 2013.

Wagler, Aaron and Teresa (Yutzy), Hartville, OH, first child and son, Seth Michael, March 22, 2013.

Yoder, David and Audrey (Overholt), Marshallville, GA, first child and dau., Angelika Dawn, Jan. 21, 2013.

Yoder, Jeremy and Lois (Beachy), McVeytown, PA, fourth child, (one daughter deceased), first dau., Natalie Rae, March 2, 2013.

Yoder, Mervin and Ada (Mast), Lexington, IN, sixth child, third son, Dakota Jacob, April 12, 2013.

Yoder, Roman and Brenda (Miller), Belvidere, TN, fifth child, fourth dau., (one daughter deceased), April Grace, March 26, 2013.



ordination

May the grace of God be upon our brother as he ministers faithfully. Let us pray for him.

Bro. Marcus Burkholder, 35, was commissioned as minister for Amish Mennonite Aid for Kenya at Light-house Mennonite Church, Vanleer, TN, on Feb. 10, 2013. The charge was given by LaVern Eash, assisted by Kevin Yoder and Jonathan Overholt.

obituaries

Stoll, Ernest, 61, of Odon, IN, died Feb. 18, 2013. He was born Sept. 12, 1951, son of the late Enos and Dorothy (Stoll) Stoll.

He was a member of Mt. Olive Mennonite Church, Montgomery, IN. Ern had many friends, including people he called to chat with, locals who stopped by to talk, and others who drove some distance to see him. Ern's zeal for the Lord took him to jails and prisons. His pocket calendars and Gospel tracts were always handy to give to those he met each day.

He is survived by six brothers: Clyde and Mary Stoll, Owen and Marie Stoll, Leonard and Lana Stoll, and Dwight Stoll, all of Odon; Richard and Ruth Ann Stoll, Indianapolis, Darrel and Naomi

Stoll, Greensburg, KY; six sisters: Diann and Gary Wagler and Sharon Stoll, Odon; Rosann and Omar Miller, Leon, IA; Linda and Darrel Wagler, Elnora, IN; Sandy and Jason Bainbridge and Ruth Stoll, Sarasota, FL; and 33 nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held at the Simon J. Graber Community Building for Mt. Olive Church on Feb. 21, with Dave Wittmer, Floyd Lengacher, Steve Schrock, and Loren Graber serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Troyer, Elva M., 82, of Sugarcreek, OH, died at Walnut Hills Nursing Home March 14, 2013. She was born Nov. 14, 1930, daughter of the late Levi and Tena (Troyer) Yoder.

She loved the Lord and was a faithful member of Maranatha Fellowship Church, Sugarcreek. She was a friend to many and a dedicated homemaker all her life.

On Nov. 15, 1951, she was married to Mose A. Troyer, who survives. They were happily married for 61 years. Other survivors include three sons and two daughters: Glenn (Esther) Troyer, James (Ruth) Troyer, Tena (Marion) Mullet, all of Sugarcreek; Dora (Henry) Beachy, Dundee; and Dean (Susan) Troyer, Millersburg; 18 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren; one sister, Katie Yoder, Millersburg.

She was preceded in death by three brothers: Eli Yoder, Andy Yoder, and Roman Yoder and four sisters: Freda Miller, Susan Shetler, Betty Miller, and Sara Miller.

The funeral was held on March 17, at Maranatha Fellowship with Paul Leroy Miller officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Yoder, Fannie A., 71, of Sugarcreek, OH, died April 5, 2013 at Community Hospice House of New Philadelphia following a brief illness. She was born July 6, 1941, daughter of the late Alfred and Sarah (Miller) Stutzman.

She was a faithful member of Maranatha Fellowship Church, Sugarcreek. She worked at Dutch Valley Bakery for 26 years and put in her last day at work there on Jan. 7, 2013.

On Sept. 20, 1962, she was married to Atlee Yoder, who died in Oct., 1983. Surviving are two sons: Merle (Wanda) Yoder and Marvin (Brenda) Yoder, both of Sugarcreek; and son-in-law, Marty Troyer, Sugarcreek; six grandchildren; two brothers: John Henry (Mattie) Stutzman, Millersburg, Dan (Martha) Stutzman, Berlin; and three sisters: Anna (John) Hochstetler and Katie (Mose) Miller, both of Millersburg, and Ella (Marvin) Shoup, Dundee.

She was preceded in death by two daughters: Wanda Yoder and Debbie Troyer, and a granddaughter, Amara Yoder.

The funeral was held on April 8 at Maranatha Fellowship Church with Paul Leroy Miller officiating. Burial was in Yoder Cemetery, Clark Township, Holmes County.

Yoder, Rudy C., 85, of Goshen, IN, died April, 2013. He was born Nov. 26, 1927, son of the late Christ D. and Mary (Troyer) Yoder in Wayne County, OH.

He was a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen.

On Nov, 23, 1948, he was married to Martha "Mattie" Yoder. She died Jan. 25, 2006. Surviving are sons: Sam (Emma) Yoder, John Yoder, and Enos (Carolyn) Yoder, all of Goshen; Ray (Mary) Yoder, Middlebury, IN; Ben (Ada) Yoder, Orville, OH; and Rudy, Jr. (Mary) Yoder, Lakeview, MI; 28 grandchildren, 51 great grandchildren, one great great grandchild and one sister, Elizabeth (Dan) Yoder, Goshen.

Preceding him in death were three sisters, Susie, Mattie, and Amanda Yoder; four brothers, Benjamin, Dan, Pete, and Jonathan Yoder, two half brothers, Andrew and Levi Yoder, two grand children, and a daughter-in-law, Delila Yoder.

The funeral was held at Fair Haven church, with Wilbur Yoder, Dan B. Miller and Raymond Stutzman serving. Interment in the Thomas Cemetery, Goshen.



Here are two facts I gleaned from the telephone news line, called, "Tell Me." Forty-eight percent of American couples live together before marriage. An increasing number are having children out of wedlock.

The second item was of personal interest to me because a prominent crop of head hair is a distant memory. A recent medical report says that bald men are more likely to have heart problems. But one doctor offered this advice: Men should be more concerned about their waistline than their hairline.

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Florallo Henry LaGuard (1882-1947) was mayor of New York City from 1934-1945. He was admired by men of all political parties. He had a heart for poor people and was outspoken toward "rice bums" who would exploit the poor. Light of the World Moment of Inspiration (phone: 800-939-5689) tells the following story: A woman was brought to court for having stolen a loaf of bread. She explained that her family was starving. The mayor told her that he was sorry but stealing is against the law and he would have to fine her. He fined her \$10, but promptly provided a ten-dollar bill

for her. He then put this bill into his hat and announced that as the hat is passed everyone present should give her fifty cents as their fine for living in a city where people are forced to steal in order to survive. The collection amounted to \$47.50, which was given to the lady to buy groceries.

LaGuardia Airport is named on honor of this respected public servant.

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An African American columnist, Leonard Pitts, is very conscious of heartless cruelty of some southern whites against blacks that became especially violent during the 1960's. This was about 100 years after the slaves were freed. But freedom was very limited. In 1946, when I was in CPS at Gulfport, Mississippi, I saw restroom doors labeled "Black Women" next to others labeled "White Ladies." Laws supported strict segregation to keep the so-called "inferior race" in their place. Physical violence became common when the blacks resisted the injustices of the 60's.

In 1965, Martin Luther King explained the philosophy of non-violent resistance: "We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws because non-cooperation is

as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. So do to us what you will, and we will still love you.” He said that defiant love would survive jails, bombs, beatings, threats and lies. “But be assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And one day, we will win our freedom, not only for ourselves. We will so appeal to your heart and your conscience that we will win you in the process.”

From my perspective I am not sure that this was true Christian nonresistance. But there is not a question that King was very courageous. He also understood that Jesus’ teaching should be taken seriously, even when it is difficult.

It is more important for us to have a Christlike spirit toward all people and races than it is for us to criticize how blacks responded to a very unjust situation.

Elwin Wilson was a young white man who made a virtual career out of hatefulness which sometimes included acts of violence. In 1961, he was among a group of men who attacked a busload of freedom riders. Eventually his conscience convicted him of the seriousness of his attitude and his actions. He found out that John Lewis, one of the freedom riders, had become a congressman from Georgia. In 2009, Wilson made a trip to Washington to ask forgiveness and to seek reconciliation

with John Lewis. The two men wept. Elwin Wilson died recently. He was 76. (Source: *The Hutchinson News*)

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Omar Miller is a member of Fairview Conservative Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa. Budget scribe Mary Ellen Gingerich reports that he is 105 and still drives his car short distances. Unusual to be sure! Psalm 90:10 suggests that a life span of 70 or 80 years is normal. But a hundred years can hardly be compared to eternity. The latter part of the verse says, “It is soon cut off...” (German: “Es fahret schnell dahin.”) It is soon past. While long life is a God-given gift, the important thing is to be ready always to meet the One who is not willing that any should perish.

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It is well-known that honoring 1 Corinthians 11:1-6 teaching on the woman’s covering can move from solid support to grudging compliance to gradual downsizing. If this sequence continues its wearing becomes optional and then the practice is dropped in favor of a more contemporary appearance. It seems to me that such a scenario does *not* happen when sisters see wearing this as a *privilege* rather than an *obligation*. To the question of one who wants to know why, a short but scriptural answer is: “Because of the angels.” A serious question would deserve a more detailed answer.

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I recently re-read the book entitled, *In God We Don't Trust*, by David Bercot. The author is a conservative Anabaptist and is also a trained attorney. The book's sub-title is: "A Look at the Founding of America in the Light of Jesus' Teachings."

The author has done careful research and offers many quotes of founding fathers and also copies of pertinent government documents. The book highlights the following items that are not only unchristian, but also unethical—simply wrong:

- Their mistreatment of the Indians.
- Their violent and uncivilized response to taxation. The author does not consider England's regulations to have been excessive or inappropriate.
- The founding fathers included several who owned slaves. The matter of slavery and racial oppression is a major blot on American history.
- Generally speaking, the ministers and churches of that time actively supported these injustices. Whatever furthered their cause, was permissible and necessary. The end justified the means, even if it involved bloodshed of innocents. Author Bercot points that both Canada and Australia acquired independence by peaceable means. William Penn showed that a peaceable relationship with native Americans was possible. England abolished slavery without violence. To me the book is a

powerful reminder that Christian non-conformity involves getting our direction from the one whose "Kingdom is not of this world," and whose "servants don't fight" (John 18:36). Our Lord also instructs us to willingly pay taxes. The book is published by Scroll Publishing Co., P. O. Box 122, Amberson, PA 17210. (Phone: 717-349-7033)

Bercot's research includes diary records of George Washington that do not support the idea that the first president put a high priority on regular church attendance. I consider this more credible than something I had earlier quoted from another source that suggested otherwise.

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Pete Leonard is the founder/owner of the Second Chance Coffee company, of Wheaton, Illinois. Second Chance refers to employees who, because of criminal history, find it very hard to find employment. Mr. Leonard would like to do what he can to give such persons another chance. At this point, he feels that "such employees are easily the most dedicated, the most enthusiastic, the most dependable set of employees that I have come across."

Leonard uses coffee beans from Brazil and is dedicated to making the best possible coffee. So far it seems that their coffee, though rather expensive, is being well received.

Proper roasting is essential to

a good finished product. Manual operation requires frequent temperature change and careful control. Leonard's company has invented a machine that roasts good coffee automatically. He has a vision of manufacturing this machine and building micro-roasting plants throughout the United States. He anticipates becoming the largest post-prison population employer in the world. (*Christianity Today*, April 13, 2013)

It seems only fair to mention that

closer to us is Strong Tower coffee, which is available to help support Strong Tower Children's Home in El Salvador, where Misael Aguilar from Center Church is the director. It seems to me a fairly new development that coffee consumption can support a worthy cause. Moderate use is no longer considered a health risk, as was the case in earlier times. My own limited use to ward off unwelcome drowsiness does not do much to support the cause of coffee for profit.

—DLM 

MINISTERS MEETING MESSAGES

Here is the first message given at our annual ministers meetings hosted by the Holmes County churches on April 2-4, 2013, and held at Fairlawn Mennonite Church, Apple Creek, OH. Nine CD's include seven sermons and two women's sessions, available from Victory Music Services, P.O.

Box, 1498, North Highlands, CA, 95660, for \$50, postpaid.

Telephone: 443-480-1489.

1. Beholding God's Glory

Merle Beachy, Free Union, VA

I am keenly aware that in American society today, a rapidly spreading moral decay is destroying this nation. This will not be changed by politics, or the powerful people in our nation, but by men and women like us here this evening. This transformation needs to happen at the grass roots

level in our local churches, within our local churches, if it is to happen at all. We are being called upon to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. If those transforming truths are not being accepted, then we must call our people to repentance. The only hope for this nation is that these truths are brought back.

Two great threats to our spiritual well-being are Our Gifts and Our

Experience. When we see God's work going forward, we tend to forget that it is not our gifts nor our experience that brings people to repentance. We must look at God's glory!

In Isaiah 9:6 we have some descriptive names given to Jesus: When your heart is full of joy, you'll call Him Wonderful. When you've almost lost your way, you'll call Him Counselor. In the midst of confusion, you'll call Him Prince of Peace. When you're all alone, you'll call Him Emmanuel, God with us. The Son of God is here and is fulfilling this prophecy. He is all of these and much more.

God is the author of only one book. We must follow and treasure that book.

Our family returned to U.S. soil in 2011. Then I took a job to put food on the table and I'm having a tough time finding enough time to spend in that book. Sixty-six books are there for our reading. They are absolutely consistent with one another. They provide evidence in themselves of the authenticity of the word of God.

The first ruler to use crucifixion was King Darius. Many years before that, Zechariah said "they shall look on him whom they have pierced," he was writing years before crucifixion was used as capital punishment. Isaiah also mentions that torture.

We do ourselves and our people a favor to get into that book. It is

without error and contradiction. It remains its own best commentary. It needs no yearbook to keep abreast of the times. It addresses the relevant issues of our day. It will remain when heaven and earth have passed away. It holds the key to the success of the individual, the Christian home, and the biblical church. It holds the key to a prospering society, to the prosperity of a nation. It holds the key to beholding the glory of God.

The Detroit Museum used to have two quotes by Henry Ford, "How can a people be considered educated and not know the Bible?" and "You can wear just one pair of trousers at a time. The rest, you can only look at." In a day when we are unbelievably enamored with things, that says something about simplicity. The time has come that America needs missionaries to call us back to the Word of God. People are being led astray by those who are called shepherds. God's solution for that is for us to get into the word of God, beholding the glory of God. We must see the standard that God has for us—and for his people.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This probably refers to Old Testament times when the people had to wait for the will of God to be

proclaimed by the priests. Now in the New Covenant, we can all make contact with God and be changed into his likeness.

James 1:21-24 says, “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls. For if any be a hearer and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.” Every day, when you look into the word of God, it is important that we see the image of Christ there. That’s how we can find out what God would like us to do and how He would change us into his likeness.

Every one of us will be using one of two words in response to what we shall hear: It’s either, “Amen.” or “Ouch!” Probably we’ll need both, depending what we hear. In studying, I’ve already found myself saying “Ouch!” because I haven’t reached what I want. As we seek to be transformed into the image of God, we need those two words.

Probably most of us have come to a place where we have wondered why God led us to serve where He did. “Why have I been called to carry this work? I cannot carry it!”

We feel like throwing in the towel. I remember the day I was sitting in a mud hut in Kenya with one of our local brothers. He was having Bible studies with his local community. He told me, “The other night I was sitting here and I was thinking this is such a hard work to lead these people. I felt like just giving up and telling no one where I’m going.” Have you ever felt like that? Think of Moses—600,000 people, trying to get out of Egypt, a pillar of fire or a pillar of cloud going ahead of them, they know they’re following God, they’re going out with a high hand. Then all of a sudden they’re up against the sea, with a mountain on the left and the right. On one side of the mountain, I believe there was a military outpost that blocked anyone coming in from the sea. On the other side was a pagan temple, heavily guarded.

Exodus 14:3 says, “And Pharaoh said, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness has shut them in...” Can you imagine Pharaoh’s glee when he realized where the children of Israel were headed? So he brought his army tightly behind them. He thought they had no place to go.

At that point, the children of Israel started to lash out at Moses. “Are there no graves in Egypt? Is that why you brought us here?” Even though there appeared to be no escape, Moses knew they were in God’s right place.

My friend, if you have felt the call of God upon your heart and life, though things look impossible, if you have followed the pillar of fire, the guiding light of God's Spirit, you're in the right place, and God will take you through.

They had no escape and so Pharaoh had his troops sit down behind them to bide his time. What happened next? God stepped in! He told Moses, "Go forward!" But there's water! "Take your rod out and stretch it out over the sea." God sent an east wind that dried things up in spite of a wall of water on the right and the left. They walked right through.

I want you to think of the arrogance of what happened next. How could Pharaoh have forgotten what God had done back in Egypt? How could he be so arrogant that he thought that just because Israel could go through on dry ground, he and his troops could do so, too? They brought in their chariots and their wheels came off and they began to realize that God was fighting for Israel. "Let's turn around and get out of here!" But by the time they came to that realization, it was too late. The waters that were a wall of protection for Israel, became the waters of destruction for those who worked against the purposes of God.

The glory of God can be seen when things seem impossible, if you and I are only able to keep our eyes on the

glory of God. Let us take heart that we have come into the kingdom for such a time as this. Let us stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

You and I should never forget how God would show his glory. Psalm 19 starts with these words: "The heavens declare the glory of God." There are three witnesses to the authenticity of the Word of God. 1. The witness of the Old Testament versus the New Testament. 2. The witness of Creation. 3. The response of a person who responds to God with a sense of need, then repentance and obedient faith.

You and I need a vision of the sovereignty of God. We are disposable in the hand of God. In spite of Stephen's complete trust in God, he was asked to give his life as a martyr for Christ. When the three Hebrew children said, "God is able to deliver us." They were not demanding that God would deliver them. They said, "O King, God will take us out of your hand no matter what. We will be faithful to our God!" They claimed God's provision that if they died in that fiery furnace, they would still be delivered from the power of that king.

The glory of God is seen at the cross. The repentant thief asked the impenitent one, "Dost not thou fear God?" He further acknowledged that they deserved this condemnation. He was not withholding God's touch

by shifting blame to someone else. When Jesus said in a loud voice, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” it was the voice of a conqueror. It was not the weak call of someone out of breath.

The glory of God was seen when the stone was rolled away and Jesus rose from the grave.

My King

[Abridged]

All earthly kings must become kings of my King. My King is a seven-way King. He is a King of the Jews, the King of Israel, the king of righteousness, the king of the ages. He's the king of Heaven; He's the king of glory; He's the King of kings, and Lord of Lords. My King is a sovereign King; no means of measure can define his scope of vision; no telescope can probe the coastline of his boundless sky; nobody can keep Him from pouring out his blessing. He's enduringly strong; He's eternally steadfast; He's immortally graceful; He's entirely powerful. He's the greatest agronomist that has ever crossed the horizon, He's the Son of God! He's the sinner's Savior; He's the centerpiece of civilization; He stands in the solitude of Himself. He's august and He's unique. He's unparalleled and unprecedented. He's the loftiest idea in literature. He's the highest personality in philosophy. He is the foundational doctrine in true theology. He's the paramount necessity of spiritual religion. He's the miracle of the ages.

He's the superlative of everything good that man could call Him. To the artist, He is altogether lovely; to the architect, He's the chief cornerstone. To the astronomer, He's the Sun of righteousness; to the beggar He's the bread of life; to the banker, He's the hidden treasure. To the builder, He's the sure foundation. To the carpenter, He's the door. To the doctor, He's the great physician. To the educator, He's the great teacher. To the engineer, He's the new and living way. To the farmer, He's the sower and the lord of the harvest. To the florist, He's the Rose of Sharon; to the geologist, He's the Rock of Ages; to the juror, He is the true and faithful witness. To the jeweler, He's a pearl of great price. To the lawyer, He's a counselor; to the newspaperman, He brings tidings of great joy; to the optometrist, He's the light of the eye. To the philosopher, He's the wisdom of God. To the preacher, He's the Word of God! To the sculptor, He's the living stone. To the servant, He's the good master; to the statesman, He's the desire of the nations. To the student, He's the incarnate truth. To the theologian, He's the Author and Finisher of our faith; to the worker, He's the giver of rest. To the sinner, He's the Lamb that takes away our sins. To the Christian, He's the Son of the living God, our Savior, our Redeemer, our loving Lord. He's the only one qualified to be an all-sufficient Savior.



YOUTH MEETINGS ANNOUNCEMENT

The 2013 Christian Youth Meetings are scheduled for the weekend of July 26-28. The districts and their meeting places are as follows:

Northeast	unconfirmed
North Central	Melita Fellowship, Utica, OH
Northwest	Rosewood Fellowship, Shipshewana, IN
Southwest	Cedar Crest A. M., Hutchinson, KS
Southeast	Cross Hill Mennonite, Cross Hill, SC

Dan Byler, Huntsville, AR
Secretary, Youth Planning Committee,



Simply Living

Michael Overholt, Franklin, KY

In the flurry of modern life, I am often struck with the simplicity of that which brings value and meaning to life: family activities, time spent with friends, or a walk through God's world of nature. With our high-speed lifestyle, our maze of modern technology, and the availability of high-octane entertainment, it is easy to lose sight of these good things.

The best things of life are usually simple things. Who can place a value on an evening with your family, or the joy of watching the stars at night? Who can improve on the sound of

good, four-part singing, especially with the little voices hitting their own special notes now and then? What restaurant can top the satisfaction of grilling hamburgers and hotdogs in a person's own backyard? Can anyone beat the joy that comes from pulling one's own produce out of his garden? These simple things cannot be replaced.

The modern world tries to replace all of these. Society will tell you that you will be happier with your friends playing volleyball in a gym than you will be at home. And, forget the


stars at night, boot up the computer and play the latest electronic game. Oh, and tomorrow is my child's birthday, and celebrating at Cheddar's Restaurant only makes sense. And, by the way, who in the world would want to sweat all summer just to get a few potatoes from the ground? Just stay at work a few minutes longer, come home later, and make the money to buy them at the supermarket. And while you're there, pick up the latest issue of *Hot Rod*.

As society we are doing more things for amusement than ever before, and yet broken homes and dissatisfaction with life are on the increase. We've taken the desire for enjoyment, divorced it from real life, and called it fun. Fun that is divorced from real life seldom, if ever, delivers on its promise of fulfillment. The electronic game cries out for more time. The restaurant beckons you back. Man-made entertainment quickly enslaves one to the next event—the next escape from real life.

Entertainment ruins our taste for the good things of life. Recently, as I was sitting in church, I noticed the young boy sitting in front of me. His fingers danced across the songbooks, doing the appropriate jumps and dodges as he relived his last electronic game. For him, the sermon could not compete with

the memory of the game. The same is true for older folks. The sunset cannot compete with the bright neon lights of the storefront. The quiet songs of the family seldom measure up to the beautiful music pouring from our stereos. The family game of croquet is not as exciting as the theater. The natural joys of life have blessed mankind for centuries, yet, as unbelievable as it sounds, a couple short decades of modern entertainment has succeeded in spoiling our taste for those good things. The result is a net loss to the overall quality of life. That which promised more has delivered less.

Life lived correctly has its own moments of joy woven throughout the day. Instead of seeking to escape daily life, we should seek to make daily life worth living. Getting one's hands dirty in the garden is healing for the soul. Talking and playing with the family builds memories that last a lifetime. Sharing heart-to-heart with a friend brings peace to life's struggles, a peace that lasts far beyond the temporary reprieve offered by entertainment. The sunset heals the scars of the day; the sunrise brings the joy of new beginnings. God created the grind of daily life to be lived with satisfaction.

Learn to enjoy life in its simplicity. It's God's way. Call it simply living. 

When Atheists Speak

The following scene takes place in ancient Asia Minor where the Gospel once thrived. Today it is one of the least evangelized countries in the world. It is estimated that in this country of 77 million, there are only 5,000 followers of Jesus Christ. Let us pray for the believers and that people there might come to the knowledge of the truth. The writer of this article requests anonymity. This written letter was to his friends. —FS

I have been staying busy and have been so blessed with sharing the Good News with people. I have formed some really interesting friendships in the last few weeks. Language study continues to challenge me to the core, but this is a real gift for it provides times of interaction with others.

In coming to this country I was prepared for friendships and encounters with Muslims. I have many opportunities to visit with these people. But my numerous encounters with atheists came somewhat as a surprise to me. The fact that I live near and attend a large university helps to explain the reasons for these unexpected friendships. However, I'm not complaining about these

relationships. These encounters have been challenging and incredibly exciting. Many doors have opened to share the truth. Recently, I was introduced to a whole new set of these people and have already had quite the audience with them and opportunities to boldly and openly share the Gospel.

I love these people. The majority of them are hungry for truth and eager to talk and ask questions. I definitely believe that God has led me to them to share the Good News. However, in the case of my one friend it feels like God has also led him to shake me up and deepen my resolve to follow Christ. Can God speak through atheists?

I met "Matt" last fall and have

spent many hours with him. He was a devoted atheist that would laugh at me when I referred to a personal relationship with God. But he is on a desperate search for truth and his attitude toward me has changed dramatically in the five months that I've known him. He is slowly working his way through The Word and is now asking questions like, "If I die, what will happen to me?" Now, instead of mocking me when I talk about praying, he is texting me before university exams and asking me to pray for him. These things excite me!

I met "Matt" some months ago for a time of tea and discussion. In the course of our conversation, I began to explain to him the truth of Jesus as the only way of salvation, using Acts 4:12 as a starting point. He was silent for a bit as he thought about what I was telling him and then he asked a question that surprised me (coming from him) and shook me to the core. These were his words: *"If this [the exclusivity of Christ for salvation] is true, what will happen to all the tribes of people in Africa that know nothing about this? What about all the people in my country that don't know this? Will they all go to hell because they haven't been told? And my mom, she's never had anybody tell her these things! Am I just a fortunate person because I met you?"*

The basic content of this question I've heard before coming from skeptics. It wasn't the content of the question that surprised me but the manner in which he asked. "Matt" did not ask these questions as a skeptic raising an intellectual argument for the sake of debate. Rather he asked with horror as he realized the ramifications that exist for millions of people if these claims of exclusivity are true. And for a few brief seconds an embittered skeptic glimpsed the urgency of a truth that far too many of us have never seen. Friends, if a man who is full of hatred and devoid of Christ's love can briefly experience the weight and the horrible end of the unreached, how much more should we, who have had God's love "poured into our hearts" (Romans 5:5), feel the urgency of the unreached and be moved to self-sacrificial action. When "Matt" spoke I felt as if God had opened a new window for me into His heart and His love and desire for the unreached. I was jolted by a realization of how small my passion is and how large my selfishness is.

God used an atheist to convict me and the last few months I have been doing a lot of thinking and heart searching. I hope the Lord is purifying me and increasing my passion for the lost. Friends, we have

a world to confront, battles to fight, and darkness to pierce. Millions lie waiting for freedom. More are dying without the eternal life we possess. Our Savior loved the world with a love so powerful that He suffered unimaginable torture and gave His life, to provide forgiveness from sin and freedom from bondage. And it is a despicable thing if we who have tasted of the Lord's goodness and see people perish simply pursue risk-free lives and blissfully bask in the freedom and forgiveness which we have been given. We belong to a Kingdom with a King and none of us are exempt from fighting for His cause. We are all soldiers in this spiritual war!

We have a world to confront, shackles to shatter, and a message to proclaim. Millions live and die without exposure to the "light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). The cause of the Kingdom is the glorification of the King and our duty as citizens is to live and die for the proclamation and spread of this glory. Any other interest must die to this duty. Any other pursuit is treason. Our King is jealous of His glory and He works through those and with those who are zealous in proclaiming his glory.

Our King wears a bloody robe (Rev. 19:13). It is because of His blood that

He is our king! Sacrifice, blood, and death are the causative factors of glorification in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17). We so quickly shrink away from these. White and dry robes are much more comfortable than red and sticky ones. But our blood-robed King has a cause. He is seeking and asking for devoted followers who will dare to carry His standard and march into war—people who are willing to wear bloody robes. The proclamation of His glory requires prayer warriors, men and women filled with passion for the unreached and willing to sacrifice and expend time and energy in the ministry of intercession. This cause requires individuals who are willing to forsake all that is familiar and devote a lifetime among people, adopt a new culture, learn new languages, and likely risk their personal safety at times. This cause requires mothers and fathers who are willing to raise their children in a culture far distanced from the world of McDonalds and extended family Christmas parties. This cause requires seasoned veterans of the faith, at home and on the foreign field who are committed to discipling and sending workers to take the message of the cross to a lost world and then supporting them.

I met with "Matt" again later. It

was a beautiful, sunny day and we sat by the seaside and conversed while sipping Starbucks and watching the crowds pass by. This time he asked what it means to be a follower of Christ. I explained to him the basics and talked about the sacrifice that is required and the necessity of every believer to be passionate about sharing the Gospel with the world. This was the nature of his response: *“America has many Christians and so many churches. Many people have gone to other countries and the Gospel is growing in other countries. What about our country? Why aren’t more people coming here? Look at all these people (pointing to the hundreds of people walking along the seaside) none of them are hearing what you are telling me. Do they need to know this? Has Christianity forgotten about my country? Why doesn’t your church send some more people like you? Please tell Christians in America to come to my country. We need to be flooded with Christians who will share the Gospel. Why aren’t they coming?”*

I looked at him with teary eyes and all I could reply was, “I don’t completely know why but I pray that more people will come.” Yes, God can even reveal His heart and desires through the words of an atheist.

The lack of workers living here

is saddening and the struggles and pressures that face those who do come often scare them away. If my information is correct, eighty per cent of the workers that come to this country return home within two years and another eighty per cent of those remaining leave within the next two years. This is astounding in light of the fact that it generally takes nearly four years to really master the language. This is a land strong in spiritual darkness and a massive prayer effort is needed for these people. Pray for devoted workers to be sent to countries in darkness. Please pray for “Matt.” While he likely wouldn’t admit it yet, his questions and attitude make me question his status as an atheist. I am so excited to see how the Lord is moving in his life.

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them who preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things?” (Romans 10:14, 15).

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Characteristics of a Proverbs 31 Woman – Part Two

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

Father's Day is a day set aside to honor fathers. The Bible clearly teaches that children are to honor their fathers. Wives are also to respect their husbands. Honor and Respect should be a daily practice. It is good and right to use this special day known as Father's Day to show love and care for our earthly fathers. Wives can give tribute to their husbands (and father of their children) by helping their children make Daddy's day special, like planning a picnic or barbecue, making a card or gift for him. There are many ways for adult children to bless their fathers. It could be a telephone call or a card, for those far away (a surprise visit would be greatly appreciated) or for those around home, taking Dad out for lunch, or asking him to go along on a road trip for a day or two, or offering to do some work for him, like helping in the garden or with other jobs needing to be done.

In continuing with our thoughts from last month on the characteristics

of a Proverbs 31 woman, I believe the best gift I can give to my husband is to be a woman who "fears the Lord." In verse 28 of Proverbs 31, we notice that her husband praises her. Why? Because she is a godly woman. What more could we ask for, but to know our husband delights in us and encourages us to follow after God?

This month, we will look at five more traits of a wise woman, taken from Proverbs 31: 21-31:

- **She is equipped.** (verses 21-24)

A woman needs to be equipped in many areas of life. I am thankful that God has equipped us with motherly instincts to care for the new-born baby. *I realize this may not always come naturally for all women, and at times, someone must come alongside to be a mentor to to a new mother.* Many areas of preparation are needed to provide for our children's physical, spiritual, and emotional needs. There are meals to prepare, proper clothes for all types of weather, and a house to keep clean and inviting. At times, the mother may need to help with

providing financially for the family. A mother must be alert to the hurts and disappointments of her child. She is also concerned and monitors the spiritual understanding of the children. Along with meeting the children's needs, she cares about her husband and encourages him in his job or profession.

• **She is a woman of strength and honor.** (verse 25)

A woman of strength is a woman of character. She faces life with confidence. She does not collapse under each difficulty and disappointment, but she draws on God's grace for the situation at hand. She finds joy in life's challenges. There is a dignity and honor in her daily walk and countenance.

• **She is a blessed woman.** (verses 28,29)

Young mothers, you may find it hard to imagine that the time will actually come when your children express appreciation to you for all of those sleepless nights, the long hours of ceaseless labor, the difficult teen-age years and the selfless giving of your love to your family. But the time does come. I believe there is no greater joy that can come to a mother


as she grows older than to be loved and appreciated by her family, her children, and her husband and above all else to know that her children love and serve God.

• **She is God-fearing.** (verse 30)

A God-fearing woman is a woman who loves the Lord. She spends time with God in His Word, the Bible. She is a woman of prayer. She radiates God's love to those around her. She is at peace because she knows that God is in control. She trusts God to care for her family. She is forgiven and she forgives.

• **She is a woman of good works and good deeds.** (verse 31)

Our Proverbs 31 woman, like Dorcas in Acts 9:36, is known for the good deeds she does for others. There are many opportunities to reach out and help in today's world. I believe as we touch one life, some of the pain and suffering in the world is relieved. We don't do it to seek praise from people, but out of love and gratitude to our Heavenly Father for all the good things He has done for us.

We can choose to be a Proverbs 31 woman, a woman who loves God and blesses those around her. 

Prayer provides power, poise, peace, and purpose.

So Glad for My Dad

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Eighteen-year-old Josiah was happy! Driving a brand-new big-cab tractor—a shiny red Case MX 260—was just great. He loved disking the plowed field on a sunny spring afternoon and feeling the power of the modern tractor!

As he drove along he thought about the warning Jim, his boss, had given him. “You go disk; I don’t think it is too wet, but it could be. Be careful, Josiah, I don’t want this new tractor all muddy and stuck.”

Josiah was grateful his boss was mostly nice to him, yet he knew from experience that he had a short temper. He liked how he also allowed him to drive his pickup truck. Once though, he had driven over some bean plants and that had made him quite unhappy!

How would I be if I had only one arm like my boss? Josiah pondered. Jim, his boss, seemed bitter over that loss. When he was only twelve, his dad had sent him up the silo, and while he was working up there, his sister started the unloader and the

terrible accident happened. Losing an arm shook up his life and he seemed bitter.

The big red tractor purred smoothly over the freshly-plowed field. Josiah stayed away from a spot that looked rather wet. Everything was going well until suddenly he felt the tractor starting to spin. Oh, no, the brand new tires were spinning and digging holes in the muddy dirt. He looked back quickly and was shocked to see that the disk was dragging wet soil and it was piling up in front of the disk. No wonder he was spinning! He couldn’t back up and get out of the mud, so he tried to pick up the disk. The soil was too wet and soft, so he folded the long wings of the disk up. That only made the problem worse and the disk sank deep in the gooey muck. Josiah’s heart sank in the mud of despair. What could he do now? Oh, what could he do?

His boss would be feeding animals in the barn now, so Josiah pulled his phone out of his pants pocket and

called him. He told him what had happened and that he was stuck. His boss started “chewing him out.” He said impatiently, “I didn’t get stuck in the last 30 years and now you go and get my new tractor stuck. Just leave the tractor and walk in. I’ll try to figure out what to do.”

Josiah was sorry. He had tried to be careful. He got off the tractor, and then he had a great idea—he would call his dad. “Dad,” he said, “I got the new tractor stuck. I wish you would come, Dad.”

Dad said no unkind, scolding words; he just said, “I’ll be right up.” What a wonderful thing. Dad cared! Dad was coming to help him!


Dad came driving their tractor in the field lane. Josiah was so glad to see him. He spoke calmly and asked what had happened. He had talked to the boss, Jim, and that had helped make things better already.

Dad helped all he could and was not afraid to get dirty. Jim brought

out another big tractor, an MX 240. They hooked up the disk to a chain and pulled it out of the mud. After that, they could easily drive away with the new tractor. The tractor would need to be washed, but then things would be as good as new.

This experience was a building block in their father-son relationship. Josiah knew his dad came to help him because he loved him, because he really cared about him. His father seemed like God, because Psalm 103:13 says, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

Josiah will remember that day all of his life—the day his dad came to his rescue. That day he better understood the Father heart of God.

God, our wonderful, loving, heavenly Father is never too busy doing other things. He is always there—right there to help us, to hear our call, just like Josiah’s dad was there for him. 

A good business manager looks for optimists as salesmen and pessimists to manage the credit department.

Dear Youth,

Am I my brother or sister's keeper? The implied answer from Scripture is, "Yes." While we cannot make choices for other people, God does call us to reach out to others and do what we can to help them spiritually. While it is good to have confidence in each other,

we cannot automatically assume that our friends and acquaintances are prospering spiritually. Mature Christians have been known to backslide spiritually.

This month's question is based on the April Youth article, Thank you for this month's responses.

—EE

This Month's
QUESTION

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

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

I think we as youth sometimes get caught up in thinking that our youth nights are for us to have fun. In order to help each other, we need to get our focus off ourselves and focus on things of God. Getting together for Bible studies is something that can be very enjoyable and encouraging. It is great to be able to sit down and discuss various life issues. Passing out Gospel literature is something that may look a bit scary to begin with, but I have found that sharing God's Word with others has a way of strengthening my own life.

As far as assisting those who may

be losing their spiritual hunger, I have to think of the quote, "You cannot give something you do not have." First of all, we need to be filled with the Word of God before we will be able to help others. We need to guard against being judgmental of those who seem to be struggling in their Christian lives. A "holier than thou" attitude or trying to shove Christianity down their throats will definitely not help to encourage this person and will probably instead turn them off. I do believe that there is a point where we need to share our concern with this person, but we

need to do it out of a spirit of love. Prayer is also a very important aspect when it comes to knowing how to properly approach this person.

Freida Beiler, Sabina, OH



One of the main things is to be filled personally, or at least want that more than anything else. We cannot expect change unless we have a passion for what we want to see happen. This passion will also make us pray about it, which is an important step. On a more practical note, being committed to keeping each other accountable for our personal walk with God will really help us stay focused.

Jeanine Beachy, Winfield, PA



First of all, we have to be willing to talk about spiritual issues together. It's easy to talk about the weather or work or whatever, but can we talk about Jesus? Do we share with other young people about what He has done in our life? For myself, I have found that talking about Jesus gets me excited about doing what He wants me to do. So when I talk to others about Him, I can pass on some of that fire. One specific way that our youth group has tried to do this is through youth Bible study. We can talk honestly about what we are going through and problems we face. We can also call each other

to a closer walk with the Lord, and share our own experiences. This has definitely been a positive influence in our youth group.

As for assisting those who seem to be losing out, that's a difficult question. It's hard to know how to handle those who begin to walk away. Too often, I think we just ignore the problem and act as if nothing is wrong. We need to love each other enough to reach out to those that seem to be struggling. But in the end, it is a personal decision to serve the Lord. We can't make that decision for others, so let's not put ourselves on a guilt trip if others choose not to serve Christ with their whole heart. Let's make sure that we do, and pray that God would help them to make that choice too.

Ryan Eicher, Freeport, OH



Organize a group to memorize scripture together. A group of girls from my church once memorized the book of Philippians together, and it was a great experience for me. Doing it with friends kept me accountable and made me get it done. I was amazed at the blessings I received and the insights I got from memorizing Scripture. This could be a huge blessing to dedicated Christians, as well as drawing lukewarm Christians closer to God.

Abigail Troyer, Plain City, OH 

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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

A good name, like good will, is attained by many actions but may be damaged by a single carelessness.

• • • • •

Why doesn't someone invent a car that goes no faster than the driver can think?

• • • • •

Don't expect to touch a person's heart with something else than your own.

• • • • •

Overeating is a fault that's hard to keep secret.

• • • • •

The passing years make everyone older but not necessarily wiser.

• • • • •

A falsehood believed by thousands is still unsafe and untrue.

• • • • •

How strange for parents to speak of the modern generation as if they had nothing to do with it!

• • • • •

Silent people aren't the only ones who don't say much.

• • • • •

If a friend must be perfect, we will never find one.

• • • • •

Live so that swallowing your own medicine doesn't make the spoon seem very large.