



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

Galatians 6:14

OCTOBER 2013

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

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O God, Our Help In Ages Past


Isaac Watts

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come;
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight,
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come;
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home. 

Mealtimes That Bless

As I think about my childhood I wonder if some of us have turned to things of lesser value.

Let's take mealtimes, for instance. If we're hungry, is that simply a time to grab a bite to eat? And what does it matter if we just take care of our own needs? It seems to me that, when that happens, we miss a good opportunity for enrichment through interaction.

Mealtime may not seem like a very important subject, but let me describe it during the Great Depression of the 1930's in my growing up years. I think this offers insights for good family foundations and positive values for life.

Back then, we were usually hungry and needed no second invitation to the table. When the word came from the kitchen that the food was ready, we headed for the table, took seats, paused, and waited till Dad had asked the blessing on the food. His prayer often included several appropriate lines from Psalm 145: 15,16, "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every

living thing."

After prayer, we passed the food—family style. It was not good to take a bite or start eating until the first course had been passed to everyone. Furthermore, it was expected that we at least sample everything Mom and the girls had prepared for the meal.

The fare was quite simple and as inexpensive as possible. During the Depression, my parents had a very hard time making ends meet. At one point when Mom and Dad decided to buy cold breakfast cereal again, it was greeted with gratefulness. I was quite young at that time, but as I recall, the children did not complain while money was too tight for tastier breakfast foods. That was a time when simply having enough to eat was great.

Even today, I think children should be helped not to make selfish, empty-calorie food choices, because we know that great hunger still exists in many parts of the world, while America struggles with childhood obesity. Thankfully, we can share our abundance through relief agencies worthy of our trust.

But those times long ago were not

perfect either. Although conversation flowed freely during mealtime, work on the farm was usually waiting and Dad would sometimes remind us to keep eating. Perhaps he is not to blame, but I wish I had the habit of eating more leisurely. Unless I make a conscious effort not to, I tend to eat faster than I should. It takes time to chew sufficiently for saliva to adequately mix with food. If we swallow too soon, not enough mastication has occurred to provide the better aspects of digestion and satiation.

When everyone had finished eating, we paused while Dad offered to God thanksgiving for the meal. That pause added order to mealtime. In that way, no one jumped up as soon as he or she had finished eating. A certain stability is missing when mealtime comes to an end at each person's whim. Should we not wait at least until the host dismisses everyone?


Most depression-era meals included no dessert. There was no pizza, that favorite Italian food which made its debut in the United States in the early 50's. A good-sized garden, a flock of laying hens, and some milk cows contributed much of the fare on the family's table. About the only time we drank soda pop was on an occasional trip to town. But, almost always, the windmill by the house kept us well-supplied with good,

refreshing water. One highlight of many Saturday evenings when the older siblings came home from their live-in jobs, was a 10-quart freezer full of homemade ice cream. Mmm, that was good!

Do the practices of earlier times have meaning for us today? Might it be worthwhile to strive for more order at mealtime? While I don't see sitting down at a table to eat, or waiting until the food is passed to start eating, or prayer after meals, or children's poor food choices as being directly addressed in the Scriptures, might it be good to consider and recapture some of the better features of family mealtimes of the past?

Some folks apparently think that past practices are worth very little. Regardless of how we analyze the faith and practice of our fathers, I see it as the sign of short-sightedness to discount their choices when we could be expending our efforts at doing better than they did at passing on a goodly heritage of faith.

I invite your input on how to make family mealtime a blessing.

Recently, I read a thought-provoking gem of wisdom that relates to providing structure to life: "*Tithing*—God's training wheels for generous giving. *Church standards*—God's training wheels for holy living. They keep you upright until you can pedal on your own." (From *Life Lines*, July-August, 2013.) —PLM 

Make Speaking Easy for the Preacher

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Once again, the prayer before the morning sermon implores God to “make speaking easy for our brother.” Is that based on the assumption that preaching the Gospel of Christ is hard? An “easy believism” should perhaps be matched by easy speaking in the pulpit.

Sometimes life is hard. Finding an easier way seems to be the quest of our lives. Historically, ease in Zion resulted in not taking God and His pronouncements seriously. The result of one who pursues an easy life is never good.

To be sure, preaching is hard work. Study. Prayer. Sermon notes. Review. More meditation. Reducing the bulk. Final draft. Inner preparation of the heart. Apprehension.

The loss of passion in the pew relates in part to the loss of passion in the pulpit. The numbers in our churches are increasing and we have more preachers than ever. I fear that we have produced more preachers, but that we have generated less passion.

Besides that, in our public prayers and our moderator’s introductions of speakers, it seems to be mostly about “Sharing.” We are led in prayer about the speaker “as he shares.” When the speaker is introduced, we are informed who the brother is that “will be sharing this morning.”

Combine the easy speaking with sharing from the pulpit and by the noon meal you have forgotten the “message” of the morning church service. Does that which is given without much forethought also require little afterthought?

This is not a call for every other preacher in the pulpit to be the fist-thumping, foot-stomping kind. Feeling strongly about your message does not require such theatrics. Nor does it mean becoming teary-eyed and whimpering through every sermon. However, too many preachers today do not seem to feel deeply or strongly about what they’re “sharing.” Perhaps it proceeds from the thought that since we all are saved anyhow, what more do we need, or

how much less would get us by?

Preaching the Gospel is a calling from God. A particularly serious sermon is often afterwards met with “That must have been a hard sermon for you.” No, not necessarily. A serious message should not be equated with a hard delivery.

Those at ease in Zion might wish for an easy faith without soul-jarring conviction. Let passion be reserved for Monday morning’s business pursuits. Why disturb easy-believism with a serious Sunday morning sermon? Since faith is easy, preaching should also be easy.

If we can get our preacher past the sharing time with an easy-speaking sermon, we will really have brotherly oneness. One shouldn’t make the Christian life hard when God meant it to be easy. But did He? Faith is not easy. Faith is hard. Believing God was not meant to be easy. Faith precedes obedience. When the believing part has been wrestled with and settled, obedience comes next. The main difficulty with obedience is actually the difficulty with what precedes it, which is the part of faith. It is never easy to live out in life what the heart refuses to accept.

Instead of praying for an easy life, let us pray for soundness of faith on our part as listeners. For the minister,

let us pray that God will give him a burden for God’s will revealed in God’s Word. The prayer before the sermon could include God giving the minister a passion for God’s will to be proclaimed.

Let’s be done with this popular easy-believism that comes from easy speaking as the preacher shares God’s Word. Join together in praying for the minister in his study. Pray for seriousness and urgency on his part.

Along with that, let’s give more thought to a serious anticipation of the Bible and its specifics this next Sunday morning. Let faith on our part be recognized as a distinct Christian duty and exercised as the tough Christian discipline God intended to be.

Remember Noah. Think about Abraham. Recall the faith of Job. Remember Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah, Esther, Ruth, Joseph and Mary, John, Peter and Paul. Faith is not easy; it never was.

Preaching that awakens faith, the real kind, likewise needs not be easy. It should be serious and sincere.

The Bottom Line is that easy speaking in sharing can produce an easy faith. But a serious faith can only be awakened by serious preaching and serious living.



The Christian and Nonresistance

Harold S. Martin, Lititz, PA

Nonresistance is a principle taught in the Scriptures. The word “nonresistance” is coined from the words of our Lord when He said, “But I say unto, that *ye resist not evil*, but whosoever smites thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” From the very origin of the Anabaptist Movement, nonresistance was one of the chief pillars of its doctrinal belief. The historian, Robert Proud, says that the Anabaptists “hold it not becoming those who follow Christ, to bear arms of fight, because they say their true Master has forbidden his disciples to resist evil.” Nonresistance is really a result of the doctrine of grace. Certainly those who have become recipients of God’s grace in their own lives should show the same grace toward their fellowmen. God displayed His grace toward us while we were yet sinners. He loved us when we were enemies, and just so we are to love our enemies, and to display grace toward those who persecute us. The principle of nonresistance must be practiced in times of peace as well as in times of war. The Christian must be careful not to take revenge. The

Scriptures teach against retaliation with the tongue, and against suing at the law. The early Christians were commended because they took joyfully “the spoiling of their goods” (Heb. 10:34). They refused to resist evil; they didn’t fight back; they knew they had a heritage in Heaven that the spoilers couldn’t touch.

PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE

Every principle has some basic principles upon which it is built. We want to name three principles that underlie the doctrine of nonresistance.

A. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world. There are two kingdoms of men in the world: those who have been regenerated by faith in Jesus Christ, and those who are unregenerate. Jesus says, “My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight” (John 18:36). Christ’s kingdom is made up of those who have experienced the saving grace of God in their lives. His kingdom is not supported by armies nor maintained by taxes. Rather, it is a kingdom composed of persons who voluntarily believe in Jesus Christ,

and seek to become like Him in their daily character and conduct. One who is a member of Christ's kingdom is different from the standards of the kingdoms of this world. One who claims to submit to Christ's kingship will find that the army, the navy and the air force are not for him.

Because Christ's kingdom is not of this world, the early Christians refused to participate in military service. Tertullian says of the legions of the Roman army, "Not a Christian could be found among them." In the early days of Christianity, the Church said, "if they wish to be baptized in the Lord, let them cease from military service, or not be received." The historian, C. J. Cadoux says that no Christian after his conversion "ever thought of enlisting in the army, until two hundred years after Christ." The early Christians recognized that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and that His standards are much higher than the standards of the world-kingdoms, and therefore nonresistance was believed and practiced by the entire church.

B. The spirit of Christ is not of this world. Jesus came into a Samaritan village one day and the Bible says that the folks there did not receive Him. When James and John saw this, they wanted to call fire

down from heaven to consume these people. But this was all contrary to the spirit of Christ, and it must have sorely grieved Him. Luke 9:55 says, "'But (Jesus) turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.'" Taking the lives of human beings is contrary to the spirit of Christ.

General Leslie McNair (in a *New York Times* article) described the attitudes and the spirit promoted in the armed services. He says, "Our soldiers must have a fighting spirit; if you call that hating enemies, then we must hate with every fiber of our being. We must lust for battle; we must scheme and plan night and day to kill; we must hit harder and harder; we must become tougher and tougher; the avowed purpose of the army is to make killers out of every soldier." Can you reconcile such an attitude with the teachings and the spirit of Jesus?

One young man who had been in the army during World War II, tells of how one of his buddies in training was kind of softhearted. When they were training, they were to drive their bayonets into the stomachs of a dummy victim. The fellow was kind of slow and timid about the whole thing, and finally the officer lost his

patience, swore at the young fellow, and ordered him to get up in front of that dummy and “cut out his guts.” He reminded him that this was war; and not a Sunday School picnic, and that every man in the camp was there to learn how to kill the Germans.

It’s impossible to have the spirit of Christ within and at the same time bear arms. The carnal sword and the spirit of Jesus do not point in the same direction.

The methods of Christ are not of this world. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10:3,4, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” Jesus endured much reviling and persecution when He was here on earth, and yet never once did He use carnal weapons for defense. And the same thing can be said for true Christians down through the centuries. They have won their battles by using the breastplate of righteousness, and the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

The Christian doesn’t use carnal weapons, but this does not mean that he is helpless in the face of evil and unrighteousness. Take the weapon of prayer, for example. When (during the persecutions of the early church)

Peter was cast into prison, the Bible says, “Prayer was made without ceasing, of the Church, unto God, for him” (Acts 12:5). The people prayed. The power of prayer was pitted against the power of the armed might of the Roman Empire—and those who prayed, won the battle! The iron gate opened, and Peter was set free. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

Another powerful weapon used by the believer is the practice of deeds of kindness. Jesus says, “Do good unto them that hate you.” Paul puts it this way: “If your enemy hunger, feed him.” We have a beautiful illustration of the victory of kindness over evil in 2 Kings 6. The Syrian army had been delivered into the hands of Israel through the intervention of the prophet Elisha. And when the king of Israel saw that the enemy had been delivered into his hand, he said to Elisha, “Shall I smite them?” and he said again, a second time, “Shall I smite them?” this may have been the most natural course of action, but Elisha said, “Thou shalt not smite them (but) set bread and water before them that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.” Elisha was saying, “Feed them and let them go. Show them kindness.” And that’s what the king of Israel did. And you know, there’s an interesting postscript

to this story: 2 Kings 6:23 says, “So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.”

The Christian’s weapons are spiritual. He conquers with the power of the cross. Menno Simons used to say, “Our fortress is Christ; our sword is the Word of God; our victory is faith in the Almighty. We leave swords of iron and steel to those who consider human blood equal to swine’s blood.” The Christian has spiritual weapons.

These have been principles upon which the doctrine of nonresistance is based. The kingdom of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, and the methods of Christ are not of this world.

PROBLEMS OF THE DOCTRINE

Almost every doctrine carries with it some related matters that seem to be problems. We want to look at the problem of Israel’s practice in Old Testament days. The Old Testament frequently tells about the wars of Israel, and many of these wars were authorized and commanded by God. It’s hard for the Christian to reconcile this with the command to “resist not evil” in the New Testament. Jesus said the Scriptures cannot be broken, and they do not contradict themselves, and so the problem seems to be very real.

There are at least three things we must remember here:

A. Israel was a nation of this world, while the church is a spiritual nation not of this world.

Israel was a nation just like any other nation, except that God had chosen her for a special purpose. The Israelites lived in a particular location on earth; they had boundaries to their possessions; they maintained a government, with a capital city, a throne, a king, and a royal family. And to maintain this nation in the land, God permitted the use of force. But the Church is not such a nation. The Church is a people called out of darkness into the light of the Gospel, from every land and every nation. There’s no particular geographical location, there are not boundaries to maintain; there’s no capital city; there’s no regal throne. Israel was a nation; the Church is not such a nation.

B. Israel was not a regenerated people, while the Church is composed of those who are regenerate. Romans 8:3,4 says, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; **that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Israel could not perform the righteousness of the

law, for she walked after the flesh. But Christians have been regenerated, and thus are equipped for a new kind of life, and they are called upon to follow a much higher standard than the Old Testament law.

C. Israel operated under the dispensation of law, while the Church is living during the dispensation of grace. Jesus says, “Ye have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but if any man shall smite on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” This is an extension that Christ Himself made. He participated in giving the Old Testament law, and certainly He has the right to broaden it. Someone says, “But God never changes, and if God doesn’t change, then He can’t *approve* of war in the Old Testament, and *condemn* it in the New Testament.” But this is a faulty argument. It’s true that God never changes, but His methods do change from time to time, from age to age, from dispensation to dispensation. The relationship between the Old and New Testaments is a study that requires more space than we will take here, but remember that the truths of the Old Testament receive a new and deeper significance in the New Testament, in light of Calvary and Pentecost. The New Testament

is the Christian’s final authority for faith and conduct. If we are to have a true understanding of the will of God, we must always accept the New Testament’s interpretation of the Old Testament.

Some folks have a problem accepting the doctrine of nonresistance, however, because of a few statements Jesus made, as recorded in the New Testament.

Jesus said, for example, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.” But here the context clearly shows that the word “sword” is a figurative word, which indicates the division and persecution and misunderstanding that will arise in families and communities when there are those members of the family or community who follow Jesus. The parallel reference in Luke 12:51 says, “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division; for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided; three against two, and two against three.” Sometimes Christians will find even members of their own families turning against them.

In another place, Jesus says, “He that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip. And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one” (Luke 22:36). Jesus

spoke these words just before He went into the Garden to pray. And just a little later, when the crowd had gathered to take Jesus, Peter used the sword. He smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. But Jesus rebuked him for using the sword, and then He said to him, "All that take the sword shall perish by it." Then Jesus graciously restored the servant's ear. Whatever else Jesus meant by the words, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one," He certainly did not mean that the disciples were free to injure others with the sword. A dagger such as the disciples carried, was often used to slay animals for food.

There are other problems associated with the doctrine of nonresistance, but the basic principles upon which the doctrine is built, are clear. Each one of the problems that sometimes is associated with the doctrine, is really only a seeming contradiction.

PROTECTIONS FOR THE DOCTRINE

There are always some who try to make a teaching mean something that it was never intended to mean. For the purpose of safeguarding the doctrine of nonresistance, several things should be pointed out.

A. War is permitted for civil government. Jesus said, "If my

kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight" (John 18:36). Jesus recognized that the very nature of the kingdoms of this world demands that they be defended with armed might. The hardness and greed of unconverted human hearts, sometimes seem to understand nothing but the language of force. The sons of God can live a life of love for their enemies, but the sons of men are living under the rule of Satan, and are governed by the law of force. Paul says of the state official (in Romans 13), "He beareth not the sword in vain; for he is a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." The masses of this world will not allow God's Word to control their lives, and therefore they must be held in control by the sword. The state has the authority to punish, it has the right to carry the sword. If there had been no civil authority, only anarchy and chaos would exist, because of the wickedness of human hearts. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament recognize the authority of the state to maintain order by the use of force. And because we recognize this permission in the Scriptures (for governments to use the sword) we cannot (according to modern use of the term) be called "pacifists." Pacifism covers many

types of opposition to warfare. It is Satan's counterfeit for the doctrine of nonresistance. True Christians have never advocated the doctrines of present-day pacifism. The pacifist aims to establish a better world by eliminating war; he attempts to bring peace and harmony among the unregenerate nations of the earth by working through political influence; his primary mistake lies in the fact that he believes in the innate goodness of man. One pacifist group told President John F. Kennedy, "We believe there is a divine power in man that can save the world from war and destruction." But this contradicts the teaching of our Lord when He says, "For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed murders and wickedness" (Mark 7:20).

The peace emphasis promoted by most leaders within the churches of America today, is not the doctrine of nonresistance taught by the Bible. Nonresistance describes the faith and life of those who accept the Scriptures as the revealed will of God, and who cannot participate in warfare because their Lord forbids it. He teaches us the law of love. Pacifism, on the other hand, is something different. Roland Bainton says that modern pacifism (as promoted by most civil and religious

leaders today), is not based so much on Christian principles, as it is on a mere desire for survival. Many of our leaders object to war, not because of loyalty to Christ and the Scriptures, but because they have a fear of death and destruction in this awful atomic age.

B. Wars will continue until the end. The Bible does not teach that a time will come during this age, when wars will cease. Daniel 9:26 says literally, "Even unto the time of the end, wars and desolations are determined." Jesus, when describing the closing days of this age, says there shall be "wars and rumors of wars." In the closing days of this age, the armies of the world, under the leadership of the Antichrist, will march against Jerusalem for one final burst of rage against God and His people, and there they shall utterly perish (Joel 3:9-12). The Bible teaches that the nations of the world will be universally armed, not disarmed, as we approach the close of this age.

Our early Anabaptist forefathers were not optimistic about the prospects of peace for this age. Harold S. Bender says that they "saw the whole of history (from the fall of the first Adam down to the Second Coming of Christ) as a great battle between God and His enemies. There

was no humanistic vision of getting rid of war in history.” The Christian does not expect that economic justice and political cooperation are going to be ushered in by efforts of unrighteous men. Our hope for changing the world, lies in the coming of Christ, who will “judge among the nations,” and usher in a kingdom of peace. In the meantime, the Christian obeys his government, pays his taxes, and respects governmental leaders. And only if the government expressly commands us to do that which God has forbidden, only then do we follow the example of Peter and John, when they said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

War is a terrible thing. One of the survivors of the atomic blast at Hiroshima describes what she saw. She says, “All the houses were demolished; the crumbled walls stretched for many, many miles; people rushed out from the center of impact; their bodies were burned; their skin was hanging down like tags; their faces were swollen to twice their normal size; people were crying aloud with pain.” She says, “I saw someone walking, dragging something along. To my surprise it was his own intestines. His stomach was ripped open, and he was dragging it along as he walked without knowing what he was doing.

“She continues, “My oldest daughter had only two slight wounds, but a month after the bombing, she died from radiation.” A soldier who witnessed the air raids in Germany says he, “Saw people coming out of their shelters—insane, wandering about, running away, not knowing where to go. Thousands were killed. Still others died of disease and cold and starvation.” No one can ever measure the suffering and misery and heartaches that have resulted from war. And on the Judgment Day, God will hardly look down upon the soldier’s bloody hands, and say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

To serve as a conscientious objector to war may bring ridicule from friends, but one who practices nonresistance in life, can stand before God with clean hands, unstained by human blood. And always remember that “a conscience void of offense before God and man” is a greater reward than any human decoration ever offered for bravery on the battlefield. Be grateful to God if your government has provided for alternative service of a constructive nature.

[From *BRF Witness*, Vol. 3, Number 1, 1968. Submitted for publication by Ken Kauffman, Huntsville, AR. Used by permission.]



marriages

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

Albrecht-Gerber

Bro. Randy James, son of John and Florence Albrecht, Lucknow, ON, and Sis. Teresa, daughter of Clare and Gwen Gerber, Wingham, ON, at Lucknow Christian Reformed Church for Whitechurch A.M. Church, on June 15, 2013, by Arthur Gerber.

Eby-Beachy

Bro. Ryan, son of Dale and Alma Eby, Dundee, NY, and Sis. Lynita, daughter of Mark and Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH, at Maranatha A.M. Church on Dec. 8, 2012, by Paul Leroy Miller.

Hostetler-Beiler

Bro. Eugene, son of Edwin and Esther Hostetler, Auburn, KY, and Sis. Norma Grace, daughter of J. Omar and Naomi Beiler, Sabina, OH, at First Baptist Church of Kettering for Faith and Light Mennonite on July 13, 2013, by Duane Troyer.

Hottle-Beachy

Bro. Matthew, son of Donald and Barbara Hottle, Parsons, WV, and Sis. Aimee, daughter of Philip and Ruth Beachy, Salisbury, PA, at Cherry Glade Mennonite for Mountain View Mennonite on August 3, 2013, by Jerry Yoder.

Mast-King

Bro. Quinton, son of Darrell and Debbie Mast, Russellville, KY, and Sis. Crystal, daughter of Dave and Faith King, Cumberland Furnace, TN, at Lighthouse Mennonite Church on August 16, 2013, by LaVern Eash.

Miller-Heisey

Bro. Philip, son of Daniel and Linda Miller, Strawberry, AR, and Sis. Loretta, daughter of Dale and Suzanne Heisey, Marsella, Costa Rica, at Iglesia Menonita La Estrella for Hermandad Cristiana de Marsella on May 18, 2013, by Dale Heisey.

Schrock-Weaver

Bro. Kenneth, son of DeWayne and Lucy Schrock, Odon, IN, and Sis. Hannah, daughter of Freeman and Mary Weaver, Cullman, AL, at Fairview Church of God, Falkville, AL, for Emmanuel Mennonite Church on August 17, 2013, by Stephen Schrock.

Stoltzfus-Petersheim

Bro. Sheldon James, son of Ben B. and Lois Stoltzfus, Honey Brook, PA, and Sis. Veronica Dawn, daughter of the late John Ray and Barb Petersheim, Kinzers, PA, at Pequea A.M. Church on June 29, 2013, by Ben A. Stoltzfus.

Weaver-Miller

Bro. Andre, son of Paul and Orpha Weaver, Wellston, OH, and Sis. Sharon, daughter of Gerold and Becky Miller, Russellville, OH, at Georgetown Church

of Christ for Still Waters Mennonite Church on June 29, 2013, by Paul Weaver.

Yoder-Beachy

Bro. Timothy, son of Richard and Susan Yoder, Hutchinson, KS, and Sis. Margretta, daughter of Mark and Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH, at Maranatha Fellowship Church, Sugarcreek, OH, on August 17, 2013, by Paul Leroy Miller.

Yoder-Yoder

Bro. LaVon, son of Menno and Nona Yoder, Salisbury, PA, and Sis. Angela, daughter of Michael and Delores Yoder, Grantsville, MD, at Maranatha Assembly of God for Mountain View Mennonite on July 20, 2013, by Jerry Yoder.

cradle roll

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

Almada, Lucio and Sheryl (Stoltzfus), Paraguay, SA, third child, first dau., Netta Leticia Amanda, June 26, 2013.

Gerber, Timothy and Mary Beth (Gerber), Gadshill, ON, ninth child, fourth son, Thomas Glen, July 19, 2013.

Glick, Emanuel and Sarah (Fisher), Narvon, PA, fourth child, first dau., Sarena Beth, May 15, 2013.

Hershberger, Paul and Cynthia (Miller), Partridge, KS, seventh child, sixth dau., Ramona Lyn, Aug. 25, 2013.

Iwashige, Shane and Dorcas (Kuepfer), Partridge, KS, second child and son, Carson Dale, Aug. 24, 2013.

Kanagy, Jeffrey and Rachel (Shank), Blackville, SC, second child, first dau., Heidi Annette, Aug. 7, 2013.

Kauffman, Lonnie Eugene and Shannon Mae (Miller), Ronks, PA, first child and son, Brock Davis, May 17, 2013.

Miller, Arlen and Naomi (Summy), Stuarts Draft, VA, third child and son, Isaac Wyatt, July 15, 2013.

Miller, Delmar and Rhoda (Mast), Owenton, KY, eighth child, second dau., Laura Mae, Aug. 2, 2013.

Miller, Joseph and Lisa (Yoder), Holmesville, OH, third child, second son, Andrew Joseph, May 27, 2013.

Overholt, John and Heidi (Kuepfer), Minerva, OH, first child and son, Troy Alexander, May 17, 2013.

Plank, Dennis and Rose (Otto), Arthur, IL, fifth child, fourth son, Rylan Drew, Aug. 2, 2013.

Steckly, Shane and Sharon (Kuepfer), Wingham, ON, seventh child, fourth son, Ryan James, April 4, 2013.

Stoltzfoos, Clifford and Katrina (Zook), Gap, PA, first child and son, Kaden Dre', May 16, 2013.

Stoltzfus, Dwayne and Lois (Troyer), London, OH, third child, second dau., Kezia Praise Lily, July 22, 2013.

Yoder, Jesse and Teresa (Yoder), Owenton, KY, third child, second son, Roland Jay, July 27, 2013.

Yoder, Joshua and Mary Ann (Yoder), Owenton, KY, sixth child, third dau., Joy Elizabeth, July 4, 2013.

Ysaguirre, Uzzen and Emily (Barton), Hattieville, Belize, third child and son, Evhian Shazawn, June 29, 2013.

ordinations

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

Bro. Paul Plank, 48, was ordained to the office of deacon at Pleasant View Church, Arcola, IL, on August 18, 2013. Preordination messages were given by Darlton Bontrager, Kokomo, IN. The charge was given by Howard Kuhns, assisted by Lavern Miller and Wilbur Gingerich. The lot was shared with Matthew Bontrager, Duane Horst, and Tim Kuhns.

Bro. Luke Troyer, 32, was ordained as minister at Plainview Mennonite Church, Auburn, KY, on August 4, 2013. Preordination messages were given by James Miller. The charge was given by Raymond Fisher, assisted by Jonathan Overholt and Leroy Kauffman. The lot was shared with Tim Yoder and Jason Graber.

Bro. Jeremy Weaver, 26, of Jackson, OH, was ordained as minister at Still Waters Mennonite Church, Jackson, OH, on August 11, 2013. Preordination messages were given by Mark Yoder, of Chachagua, Costa Rica. The charge was given by Paul Weaver.

obituaries

Miller, Alma (Mast), 57, of Sarcoxie, MO, died August 5, 2013, surrounded by her family. She had had a 17-year battle with cancer. She was born Oct. 1, 1955, daughter of Andrew and Malinda Mast.

Alma was a member of Spring River Mennonite Church, with a great concern for her family.

On April 24, 1975, she was married to Aaron Miller, who survives. Other survivors include six sons: Ivan, El Dorado, MO; Allen (Leona Schrock), LaRussell, MO; Timothy (Ruby Miller), Jerico Springs, MO; Titus, Lincoln, MO; William (Jolene Farmwald), Leitchfield, KY; Harlan (Rosetta Wengerd), Warsaw, MO; and two daughters: Loretta; Martha

and her special friend, Kevin Yoder, all of Sarcocie. She is survived by 11 grandchildren. She is also survived by her father and step mother, Andrew and Sarah Mast of Shreve, OH; three brothers and one sister: Raymond (Sara Mae) Mast, Chili, WI; Eli (Rachel) Mast, Seymour, MO; Melvin (Miriam) Mast, Lamar, MO; Mary (Sanford) Schlabach, Summersville, MO.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Malinda Mast, an infant brother and a granddaughter.

The funeral was held at Spring River Mennonite Church on August 9, with Michael Sommers, John Beiler, and Herman Schrock serving. Alma's six sons were pall bearers. Interment followed in the church cemetery.

Sommers, Katie (Beachy), 88, of Minerva, OH, died June 23, 2013. She was born at Hartville, OH, to the late Benedict and Anna Beachy.

She was a member of Christian Fellowship, Minerva.

On Jan. 1, 1946, she was married to John Sommers. He preceded her in death on Oct. 27, 2008. Surviving children are Joseph (Sharon) Sommers, Minerva; Mervin, North Canton; Eli (Barbara) Sommers, Hiddenite, NC; Paul (Mary) Baltic; Willis (Marlene), Salisbury, PA; Martha, Minerva; Mary (Freeman) Byler, North Bloomfield; Reuben (Miriam), Salisbury, PA; Marlene, Minerva; 41 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren; three sisters: Fannie Hostetler, Benton; Edith (Floyd) Miller, Colorado Springs,

CO; and Martha (Bill) Gingerich, Hartville.

One daughter, Miriam, preceded her in death.

The funeral was held on June 26, at Christian Fellowship, with Johnny Miller and Joel Gingerich serving. Perry Troyer conducted the committal at the church cemetery.

Stoltzfus, Anna K, 85, of Morgantown, PA, died May 12, 2013, at her home. She was born Jan. 15, 1926, daughter of the late John F. and Mary F. Stoltzfus.

She was a member of Pequea A.M. Church.

On Dec. 5, 1946, she was married to Gideon Stoltzfus. He is deceased. Their children are Mary Beth (Mark) Thompson, Honey Brook; Ben. B (Lois Martin) Stoltzfus, Honey Brook; Mark (Melody Stoltzfus) Stoltzfus, Honey Brook; Hannah (Amos) Fisher, Ephrata; Leon (Carolyn Nissley) Stoltzfus, New Holland; J. Paul (Bonnie Yoder) Stoltzfus, Prospect, VA; Becky (Freeman) Yoder, Millington, MD, 33 grandchildren, and 21 great grandchildren. Other survivors include five brothers: Henry U., Jacob K. Aaron K. (married to Susie), David K. (married to Priscilla); and John U. Stoltzfus; five sisters: Mary (Sam) Ebersol, Malinda (Jonas) Stoltzfus; Priscilla (Christ) Stoltzfus, Sarah (Eli) King, and Lydia Stoltzfus.

She was preceded in death by one sister: Katie Smucker, and two brothers: Amos M. and Ben F. Stoltzfus.

The funeral was held at Pequea Church

with Jonathan Stoltzfus, Melvin Zook, and Floyd Stoltzfus serving. Interment was made in the church cemetery.

Yoder, Arlene S. (Yoder), 81, of Paris, TN, died of cancer at Oasis of Hope hospital in Tijuana, Mexico, on July 28, 2013. She was born Nov. 25, 1931, in Norfolk, VA, daughter of the late Simon M. and Katie (Miller) Yoder.

She was a member of Calvary Christian Fellowship, Cottage Grove, TN.

On Oct. 16, 1952, she was married to Simon M. Yoder, who survives. They lived in matrimony for 60 years. She was a faithful wife, a loving mother, and grandmother to her large family. Surviving are seven sons: Alvin (Emma), Lamar, MO; Norman (Dorothy) Paris; Elwood (Julia),

Russellville, KY; Elmer (Pauline) and Everett (Elmina), both of Paris; Lyndon (Joann) Bloomfield, MO; and Ralph (Janice), Paris; and four daughters: Pauline (Alvin) Schrock, Olney, IL; Martha (David) Wengerd, Lamar, MO; Viola (John) Nissley, Rutherford; and Kathy (Jonas) Schrock, Litchfield, CA; 76 grandchildren and 79 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by one brother, Simon Peter, one sister, Barbara Kanagy, two infant granddaughters and two great grandsons.

The funeral was held on Aug. 4, at Calvary Christian Fellowship, with Henry Nissley, Kevin Yoder, and Philip Yoder serving. Burial was in the church cemetery with Ervin Yoder conducting the committal.



observations

A kind brother, Ivan Schrock, recently gave me a book by Ben Carson, entitled, *America the Beautiful*. “Rediscovering What Made This Nation Great.” The author is aware that there were some serious wrongs in U. S. History. The mistreatment of native Americans and slavery of Africans forcibly brought here and enslaved are major blots. Contrary to some other reports, he offers documented evidence that the founding fathers were men who expressed a firm faith in God. They

acknowledged that the country could only succeed with divine blessing. To believe in God does not necessarily mean that they were Christians. They were careful to make provision that religious people could practice their faith without fear of persecution or government intervention.

The author and his brother, Curtis, were raised by a mother whose husband had abandoned them. She worked long and hard to provide for her sons. The fact that they were African-American made the

boys objects of ridicule by white schoolmates. Ben was nicknamed Dummy. At some point, the mother addressed the problems they were having with their school work in an interesting and creative way. Her sons were required to read two books a week and make a written report for their mother. This left no time for television.

At first, they considered this a heavy burden, but eventually, they began to enjoy reading. The experience awakened a dormant learning potential. Ben went from being a dummy to an A student. Other students came to him when they needed help with their studies.

Ben Carson had discovered that by applying himself he could do well in school. His ability and determination served him well throughout his long preparation to become a medical doctor and widely-known neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland.

The author includes some things about his growing up years that were not complimentary. At one point, he had a serious problem of a very hot temper he could not control. The mere fact that it bothered him was not getting ahead of the problem. One such time he thrust a knife toward the abdomen of his opponent. The knife blade broke when it hit the

belt buckle of his intended victim. When Ben came to his senses, what he had done deeply troubled him. He realized that this could have shattered his dreams of becoming a useful and productive adult. He locked himself into a small enclosure for three hours and pled with the Lord for victory over his hot temper. He says he never lost his temper after that.

The author believes that persons who are financially able should want to share with people who are disabled. He is concerned that our government does not operate in a way that encourages able-bodied persons to expect a government handout. He is concerned about our rapidly growing national debt, saying that it amounts to \$50,000 for every man, woman, and child in America.

The final chapter of this 205-page book includes these headings: "Compromise Opinion and Principle," "The Difference between Liberation and Accommodation," and "Being Logical, not Political."

I found the book very insightful and thought-provoking, however, because the author is human, the reader should remember to "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good"

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Christian Aid Ministries (CAM) provides able leadership for some

18 different groups who are affiliated with Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP). The common identity of these groups is that they are Conservative Anabaptists. This means that they are neither Anabaptist mainstream nor ultraconservative. They all believe the New Testament teaching on separation and non-conformity is to be taken seriously.

As church leaders, parents and young men give this opportunity serious attention it will continue to bless those involved. On August 14, 2013, CAM had their annual meeting in Homes County, Ohio, with CASP representation. It is interesting, actually unusual, to sit with a group holding common concerns and identity, and yet significant variety in background and practice.

Lynn Diller spoke to the group on the topic, "Boot Camp." This term refers to military inductees' introduction to the life of a soldier. The rigorous and cruel treatment they are given is an effort to condition the men to obey any orders without question. It is simply blind obedience. Perhaps from a military standpoint, it is necessary, considering what is expected from a combat soldier. This awareness should strengthen our resolve to follow the Prince of Peace.

Bro. Diller went on to distinguish

blind obedience from faith obedience. This assumes that the Christian will want to be obedient to God, even if he doesn't fully understand all the "whys" and "wherefores." A response of obedience to parents, church leaders and the body of believers may not always appeal to the intellect, but is much safer than to allow an independent spirit to disregard God-given safeguards. Regrettably, the talk was not recorded. But there was widespread sentiment that this is a message and emphasis that many of us need to hear. Brother Lynn is cooperating with this sentiment. Presumably there will be additional information about this at some future time.



Almost a third of this year's high school graduates who took college entrance tests (ACT), are not prepared for college-level writing, biology, algebra, or social science classes. The Associated Press report also says there is a wide difference between fields of student interest and likely job openings.



An unusual situation has come to my attention that causes me to investigate a bit more. Donald White, 64, married a widow at Aylmer, Ontario, who has Old Colony Mennonite background. Donald,

having been a Catholic priest, was not previously married. Both have been at Aylmer about six years and are members in the Amish Church there.

Earlier Bro. White had spent two years or so at Farmington, NM, and had worked with Lamp and Light Publishers. He is presently their editor of French materials.

-DLM

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Currently there are 13 states, plus the District of Columbia, where gay marriage is recognized. In the past several months, I've noted that several businesses serving the wedding industry are facing lawsuits for refusing to provide services for gay weddings. The case of a florist, as well as one who bakes wedding cakes and a photographer, are examples of persons facing litigation because they feel it constitutes a compromise of conscience to contribute to a gay wedding in this way. After gay marriage acquires the status of a legal civil right, eager activists and the courts take a keen interest when those "rights" are violated. Among churches who view homosexual relations sinful, there is a growing interest in having a clearly articulated statement of position or


organizational bylaws that reflect the biblical view of marriage as being between one man and one woman. To date, there is no record of any church or pastor in the USA getting sued for refusing to perform a gay marriage, so questions regarding the legal benefits of such a statement remain untested.

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There are approximately 327 million mobile phones in use in the USA. Our population is 310 million, according to Wikipedia. I suppose that where cell phones outnumber people, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that this culture has become very dependent on mobile technology. In the immediate aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombing, uncertainty about how the bombs were detonated led authorities to block cell phone access to that area for several hours in case cell phone signals were used to remotely activate the bombs. There was considerable consternation on the part of people with loved ones near the bombing who were unable to call to verify if they were alright. As I mused about this situation, I thought:

- I hope that those who are in charge of deciding if a security threat warrants such a blackout think about the validity of the threat the next time the question presents itself.

• The more dependent I become on the web of technology (and I'm including roads and electricity and wireless communication and air travel) the more possibility I

face of having that dependence interrupted by weather, executive decisions and other things I have no ability to anticipate or control.
—RJM 

ANNOUNCEMENT

In the May, 2013, *Calvary Messenger*, I asked for testimonies from folks who like myself have become Mennonite, but did not grow up in the Mennonite church. I have now heard from a number of folks from non-Mennonite background, but many of you have requested more time, so I believe it would be good to extend the deadline for these testimonies to the end of the year. Hopefully, this gives enough time for people to pray about the idea of sharing their testimony and getting it down on paper.

I'm sending this to the editor on August 13. I realize that the October issue is being prepared and getting this in the October issue is later than I wish it were, but let us hope this extension helps give you the added time you asked for.

One other adjustment should be noted: I recently moved to Cross Hill, SC, to teach school. My address is: 14535 Hwy, 39, Cross Hill, SC 29332. Also my email address is changed to: kebecher90@gmail.com.

I graduated in May and am trying to phase out my Wabash mail.

Blessings in Christ, Keaton E. Becher 

*Would it be revenge to your doctor
to pay your bill with an illegible
signature on the check?*

The CASP Program

In the later 1990's, the US government became more active in discussing and preparing for what they would do in the event of a military draft. Several meetings were held between concerned brethren from various conservative Anabaptist groups and representatives of Selective Service System (SSS). Of particular focus in these meetings was the question of what types of alternative service would be acceptable to us and to SSS for our young men.

SSS encouraged these groups to develop programs that would fit their guidelines and submit them for approval. After a time it became burdensome to SSS to meet individually with each small division of the conservative Churches. In 2005, Christian Aid Ministries (CAM) was asked by several groups if they would provide oversight and leadership to a program that would allow church groups to pursue their individual goals with CAM as a link between SSS and various church groups.

Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP) was developed in response to that request. As a draft preparation service program, CASP's primary purpose is to provide a SSS-approved place of employment for conscientious objectors to serve their required time should a draft

be activated by the US government. These places of employment must be not-for-profit positions that enhance the health, safety and interests of the United States.

Each church group participating in CASP administers their own program and takes responsibility for their own projects and Alternative Service Workers (ASW). Each group reports directly to CAM and CAM compiles the information from these reports and forwards that information to SSS.

These projects serve two purposes: One, to prepare for a possible draft by having policies, programs, and experienced personnel able to be activated and operational by the time SSS would need to find places for the hundreds of our young men who would be asking for Alternative Service. Two, to use this preparation as an opportunity to provide service opportunities to some of our young men while meeting needs that already exist in our country.

The Peace and Service Committee of the Beachy A. M. churches has responsibility to develop our CASP program. They have established a permanent base in the city of Hutchinson, Kansas, working with a group similar to Habitat for Humanity called Interfaith Housing Services

(IHS). IHS provides CASP with a house to use for a base, arranges projects refurbishing houses for needy people, and provides the material for these projects. We provide the labor and the supervision to complete these projects. There have been four years of projects in Hutchinson and the arrangement has been very satisfactory. The local Beachy churches have given a lot of support and assistance. They also have a local operating board to oversee the service unit while terms are in session.

We believe there would be opportunity for expansion of this program with similar projects in other areas or with other types of projects. Before expanding further we would need three things from our constituency: one, a church community willing to get involved in much the same way the Kansas churches are; two, funding; and three, enough interest from more young men to serve in this way.

The current committee is David S. King, Belleville, PA; Elmer J. Miller, Goshen, IN; Mervin Lapp, Latrobe, PA; Dan Byler, Huntsville, AR; and Tim Miller, McKenney, VA. Contact any of the committee if you have input for us or would like to schedule a CASP presentation for your church.

Announcement for Hutchinson, 2014

Present plans are for two, four-week Conservative Anabaptist

Service Program (CASP) projects at Hutchinson, KS. The first one is to start January 6, and end on January 31, 2014. The second project is to start on February 3, and end on February 28, 2014. These projects involve remodeling and repair of homes in Hutchinson.

We have found some of the leadership needed for these two, month-long terms of service in early 2014. We are presently inviting eight draft-age men (ASW) per term to come and join in this work in behalf of the poor. Please help us reach our goal of eight men per term. Dan Byler, Huntsville, AR, [home phone: 479-738-2444; cell: 540-790-3084] is recruiter for this project.

We are also inviting constituency churches to help with the financial support of this program. As little as \$4 per member in our churches would meet the expenses incurred in sponsoring these two terms of service. Contributions may be sent to Elmer J. Miller, 63511 CR 33, Goshen, IN, 46528 [574-642-3056].

Contact with the Kansas CASP committee can be made by calling Oliver Troyer [620-567-2360].

Timothy D. Miller,

Chairman, Peace and Service Committee

21604 Westover Drive

McKenney, VA, 23872.

[Home phone: 804-895-4288; Cell: 540-718-0096]



Kingdom Living

Eli M. Yoder, Millersburg, OH

In 1955, a colored lady was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus in Birmingham, Alabama. Instead of letting her walk to work, a young white girl would let her ride with her to work. Some time later, a video was shown of the white girl walking past her own family and standing with a colored group singing on the street. She was scoffed at by *her own* family. *Mennonite Weekly Review* (now *Mennonite World Review*) called that kingdom living. I sat beside a table of colored people in a restaurant and asked them if they saw that video. They said they had and thanked me for mentioning it.

Jesus gave many parables of the kingdom. The kingdom of God, He said, “comes not with observation.” Is it like the wind? We can’t see it, only what it does. What we see is temporal. What we can’t see is eternal.

Jesus likened the kingdom to ten virgins. Five were wise, and five were foolish and had no time for the Word. When they heard the call, they went to buy oil, but when they came back, the door was shut. It was too late. How is it with us? Do we have enough oil? This story reminds me of my first wife Ella with an aneurysm in the hospital. The doctor told her, “If that breaks, you die.” With a smile on her face,

she replied, “I am ready to die.” Ella had extra oil.

The hospital personnel put us on the Life Flight to take us to Cleveland Clinic. I was strapped in beside her and then, even before we took off, that aneurysm broke. There were some things I wanted to discuss with her. I thought I’d wait till we get to Cleveland, but I had waited too long and the door of opportunity was shut.

Ella’s favorite Bible verse was Isaiah 26:3, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.”

Do we read our Bibles? That open Bible conveys a lot about our outlook. Once I visited a young man with cancer. He was reading his Bible.

Another day, after combining grain for someone in the community, I went to the house to call home for a ride. This sister sat there, reading her Bible.

I took some brethren to Atlanta, Georgia. In Atlanta, we parked and got a taxi to take us to our destination. This taxi was driven by a colored woman, who had her open Bible lying on the dash. One of the brethren commended her for her open Bible. She said she hauled all kinds of people and she wanted them to understand what kind of woman she was.

In Red Lake, Ontario, Canada, I walked into Irwin Schantz’s office.

There he sat, reading the Word of God. The next year, I was there again, but Irwin had died and his chair was empty.

Is the majority always right?

When I started writing this article, I thought of Christian liberty. Maybe we should take a Holy Land tour of Romans 13 and 14 and of all Paul's writings. What convictions and a tender conscience he had if he offended or caused a brother to stumble. Today, many things are decided by how the majority would have it.

Back in 1939, a certain bishop ruled that the oil refrigerator had to be put away. So some oil refrigerators were put on sale. A Mennonite man I worked for moved to a farm with no electricity, so he bought one of these. At the dinner table at noon, his wife said she can't understand why they wouldn't have these refrigerators. She said she thought they should take a vote and see

if the majority would want them. The man reminded her that the majority does not rule in the Amish church. Can we learn something from this? Our leaders might be surprised at what they would learn if they counseled with every member before voting on church issues. I wonder if we have come too far toward deciding things by majority vote.

What is our vision? After the work on the temple ceased, Haggai asked, "Who is left among you who has seen this house in its first glory, and how do you see it now?" In the early days of Bethel Fellowship, Yost Miller was leading the flock. In later years, when his memory was failing, he still would say, "Jesus is coming. Behold, I come quickly. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

[Bro Eli M. Yoder, 95 years old, recently lost his second wife. We wish him God's comfort and thank him for continuing to take in interest in this periodical.]



Israel Report

Donnavon Graber, Jerusalem

August 19 – The last month of the Jewish year, Elul, is upon us. Since August 7, we have been hearing the sound of the shofar (ram's horn) as the day dawns, wafting through the open window from the Chabad outpost nearby. Elul is to be the time of introspection


and self-evaluation before the New Year (Rosh Hashanah) and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) of the following month of Tishrei. Elul is considered the month of divine mercy and forgiveness. According to tradition, Moses ascended Mount Sinai with the stone tablets he himself

had hewn from stone on the first of Elul. Also, according to tradition, he descended from the mount the following month on the 10th of Tishrei (Yom Kippur) with God's forgiveness for Israel's covenant betrayal in the sin of worshipping the Golden Calf. The most obvious tradition practiced this month is the daily blowing of the shofar that we hear.

The month of Elul also means that summer is winding down. Parents are getting their children back-to-school supplies for the Israeli school year, beginning the 27th of August. The heat of summer will soon begin to wane. The morning's dawn begins noticeably later. Dates are falling from the two date trees in our courtyard. The date harvest began already in late July and will end in October. The olives are beginning to mature, firm and green, for the olive harvest of October and November.

Just south of the border in Egypt, things are heating up between the military administration that overthrew President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood is the ideological father of Hamas, the Islamic Palestinian party in control of the Gaza Strip. The average Egyptian was fed up with how President Morsi avoided working on the real problems facing the country while he focused on entrenching himself and his party in power.

In the massive demonstrations calling for Morsi's overthrow, it seems that Christians were disproportionately present and active. After the overthrow, Christians have been very vocal in their support of the new regime. And now, in the ongoing violent riots by the Muslim Brotherhood against the military coup, churches, homes, and businesses of Christians are being looted and burned in retaliation. While, of course, the response by the Islamists against the Christians has been vastly disproportionate, it serves us another warning that ambassadors of Jesus Christ betray the cause of God's kingdom when they take up the petty causes of earthly kingdoms and their politics. This is not just true in the Middle East, but in the West, as well.

Jesus didn't demonstrate against the Roman occupation or speak one negative word against it, rather He called people to go beyond the call of duty and honor the despised Roman soldiers by carrying their packs at least twice the distance they were required by Roman law. The application of political coercion and force causes one's political enemies to resist and feel justified while doing so. But the unexpected love that goes the second and third mile is capable of opening people's eyes to God's glorious, transforming love and leaves them with nothing to resist. 

The Joy of Submission

Jewel Yoder, Partridge, KS

[Sis. Jewel Yoder attended Faith Builders Educational Programs. As part of her preparation, she was assigned an internship at Eagle Wings counseling center in Ontario. This testimony was printed in their newsletter this summer—2013. Used by permission.]

When He suffered, He did not threaten but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly... Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of...beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God (1 Peter 2:23; 3:3,4).


"You know," I realized one morning in Bible study, "God is speaking to me here. He is speaking about what He most treasures in a woman's heart. He values my surrendered heart. He wants me to entrust myself to Him just like Jesus did! Jesus submitted to humans because He first of all submitted to His Father. That brokenness is beautiful to God!"

One of my favorite parts of life at Eagle Wings was our lively discussions with the ladies around the study table. At the beginning of the

term, we worked through a study on submission. We realized that even Jesus had to learn obedience through the things He suffered here on earth. He did not want to go to the cross; He cried out, "Is there any other way?" Yet He said, "Not my will but yours." And as He brought His will to His Father, He surrendered it and took on his Father's will. This meant He put Himself in the hands of some very cruel men, who hated Him and wanted to destroy him. Yet Jesus' willingness to be broken meant that all God's wandering children could come home to Him!

Coming under human authority as God intends means that I do not deny my contrary desires but surrender them; I do not stuff my heart but allow it to be broken. It requires suffering because it calls me to hold my desires with an open hand. When these must come under a greater desire, it will bring struggle.

Yet this is how God can make me broken, like Jesus; this is where He can live in me and work through me to bring redemption. When I am humble and broken before Him, and yet quietly, confidently, gratefully content and dependent on Him, it is beautiful to Him!

I appreciated the opportunity of learning from the Eagle Wings staff in my internship. Their vision and love for Jesus was contagious; I am grateful for all God taught me through them. He is completely trustworthy and I entrust myself to Him for the journey ahead! 




Blessedness

Amy Hershberger, Millersburg, IN

If words of earth can have a worth
And beauty that takes breath away,
Of mortal man (though he is but clay).
If a fiery sun near close of day,

And lovely flowers and gentle showers
Of summer rain on golden grain,
Can cause man's thoughts to dwell on God,
And he can have communion sweet—

So sweet, with his dear Lord,
His heart can scarce contain its joyful beat;
If earth can hold such blessedness,
Then what must heaven impart? 

A Visit to a Needy Land

Floyd Stoltzfus New Holland, PA

Our six-week summer course and tour is nearly history. The group of 32 people (including children) make an approximate ten percent increase of Christians in this foreign city of 3,000,000 souls, where there are only about 300 Christian believers.

Some of our group took a two-mile hike up the mountain on the east side for a better view of this modern (yet ancient) city. We observed the miles of huge apartment buildings occupied with eternal souls. Sadly, most of them are headed for a burning hell, unless someone brings them the Gospel and they are saved.

We are tourists and learners. Our day began at a designated place with an hour of inspirational singing, a Scripture meditation, and effectual, fervent praying. After lunch, we had three classes with recesses between. The first period was language study. It is helpful to learn some phrases and the grammatical structures of the language of the people we are seeking to win. The second period was a course in church history. And

the third period was an intense study in learning the history, beliefs and tips on how to engage with the people of this prominent religion.

Our group was dedicated to praying and applying ourselves to sharing the Good News with people by conversation, where possible, New Testaments, and the 25 Bible Story books. Several evenings a week were devoted to sharing the Good News of the Kingdom. In the morning, during the hour of prayer, we recapped events at our meeting place.

Contacts were made at other times, as well. We prayed seriously for the Lord to arrange providential circumstances to meet people by divine appointment and time under the direction of the Holy Spirit. God answered these prayers often while traveling to and from our meeting place whether we were going by bus and metro, walking the streets, going into restaurants or shopping areas. I think of the boy and his sister on the metro sitting across from Marilyn and me watching us intently. We gave the girl (who was oldest and could

speak a little English) a Scripture booklet and the 25 Bible Story book. Her eyes gleamed! She was so happy for something like this to read and said, “thank you!”

While we were waiting at a small bus stop for the next street bus, there was a girl who appeared to be searching for peace. We handed her a New Testament. She thanked us several times. She immediately and unashamedly began reading it as soon as we got on the bus. It was very rewarding that as she stepped off the bus, she smiled warmly and again said, “Thank you!”


We handed two girls (sisters) a Bible at a Metro depot. They warmly received it and began reading with interest. A man who knew English interpreted for us. They said their father lives in New York City and works in a restaurant. They took a picture of Marilyn and me. We took their picture. The one girl went into tears because of the friendship we had made and again thanked us for the Bible. The warm, deep gratitude in receiving Bibles was experienced over and over.

Think of it, receiving and reading the Good News of the Kingdom for the first time! It was so exciting when we met individuals the second time with whom we had given a brief word of testimony before but felt the conversation was left hanging. This

happened several times when swarms of other people were around but God arranged the time and place for another opportunity to share His love.

We traveled in a comfortable bus for 12 hours to another community. We viewed more cities and villages surrounded by thousands of acres of rolling hills with vineyards and olive trees. Thousands of acres of flatlands were decked with fields of harvested grain. Sometimes we saw a shepherd in these fields with a large flock of sheep. Often villages were nestled in the distance in the foothills of mountains. Most of the villages had no Christian church, but it was evident that these people are entrenched in the one of the more prominent religions of the world.

I think of a few Scriptures: “When he [Jesus] saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36). “Wherefore remember, that being in time past Gentiles in the flesh...That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 1:11a, 12).

So without Christ we are no better than they. Only by the grace of God, we are what we are. 

Mommy as Teacher

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

My Mommy days are far behind, now I am known as Mom or Grandma. However, I confess I look back to those days with a sense of nostalgia. As a young mother, you have probably heard it many times, “Enjoy your children; they grow up so fast.” Yet, you find your days long, busy, and full. You wonder, *How can I really enjoy this season of my life?* Psalm 113:9b refers to a joyful mother of children. Yes, it is possible to enjoy the Mommy stage. However, it does not come without purposeful planning. You *choose* to be a joyful mother.

I have observed many women through the years and having been there myself, I know that raising a family is hard work. It is a full-time job, 24-7. It means sleepless nights, tears, heartaches, and disappointments. It also means family, love, togetherness, security, and a sense of belonging. It is a life of service, of giving up my plans, my desires for my family. There are many rich rewards, such as holding a new baby close to your breast, watching

a toddler take his first steps, hearing those precious words, “I love you, Mommy.” Your children are your first responsibility and should be your first priority.

As a Grandma, allow me to share some Mommy tips with you:

Forget Perfection.

There is no perfect mother. God does not expect you to be one. He only wants you to do your best, to make the moments count. There are many books and voices telling you what to do. Follow your heart, a heart attuned to God. Your first priority is the spiritual nurture of your family. Take time to teach them about God and the Bible. Don't take a guilt trip because you can't give your children everything they want, or feel like you don't measure up to another mother. Be the mother God has planned for you to be.

Create a child-friendly atmosphere in your home.

Your home should be a place where the children can play and have fun, a place their friends enjoy coming to. Make special areas for them to set up their toys, perhaps a table to

spread out Legos, dollhouses, etc. Baskets for their books, rainy-day drawers with coloring books, and craft supplies each should have their place. Avoid having too many toys. I have noticed that toddlers enjoy dumping everything out of the toy box more than actually playing with the toys. Teach at a young age to pick up after they play with or use something. Any mother gets frustrated when the floor is covered with things.

Take time with each child.

Each child needs to know that he or she is special. Take time for a bedtime routine; send them to bed with a happy heart. Send them off to school with breakfast and a good lunch to carry. Occasionally put a note in the lunchbox. Be at home when they come home; prepare a snack and listen to their reports about their day. Listen more than you talk. Let them know they are loved and are a special part of your family.

Teach manners.

A mother can become so busy and involved in her own life that she fails to notice the unhealthy habits and bad manners her child has picked up. It is often more noticeable to others than to her. So be alert and be proactive. It is much easier to teach good manners before bad manners are a habit. Start with “Thank you” and “Please.” Do not allow your child to interrupt a conversation. Teach them to show respect to older people.

Develop good table manners at home, and you will be less likely to be embarrassed in public. Teach them to respect other people’s property. Remember that manners are learned behavior. Set a good example to your children by your good manners.

Teach values.

Your home will be a happier place if your children are taught values. Teach them godly values, to love God and love others. Teach them to be honest, kind, and forgiving. Help them to see the value God places on each person, regardless of nationality, skin color or social status. Children need to learn the value of money and place it in its proper perspective. Teach them to value the Lord’s Day.

Discipline your child.

A happy Mommy is one who has disciplined children. I am not suggesting how you discipline your child, only that you find a way that works. An undisciplined child brings shame to the parents. Be sure that you say what you mean, and mean what you say. Elisabeth Elliot tells about taking her dog to obedience school. The dog is taught that when the master gives a command of “no,” the dog listens. She says it is just that easy to say “no” to a child and expect that child to listen. Until the child learns to obey, she or he needs discipline.

May God bless each of you Mommies with much joy in caring for your children.



God Sees in the Dark

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

The Bible says that the darkness and the light are both alike to God! The Donnavon Grabers are missionaries in Jerusalem, that far away place we know as the Bible lands, where Jesus walked and taught. Here is a story about how they helped their neighbor lady late one night.

At midnight, Donnavon had just fallen asleep. But soon Elana, Donnavon's wife, was shaking him awake. "Why are you shaking me? What's up?" Their elderly Jewish neighbor lady had come to the door. She was so distressed she could not even talk sensibly. She had lost the key for her apartment door. There was no way for her to get into her house without breaking in.

Finally, she calmed down enough to tell them what had happened and why there was no other key for her to get into her apartment. Donnavon and Elana kindly convinced her to come inside and take a seat while they find a way to help her.

They decided to call some

locksmiths. Most of them did not answer at such a late hour of the night. Some would have come out to help, but they would have charged prices ranging from \$170 to \$285, which increased the neighbor's distress. She did not have money to spare.

They sat and talked some more. With their limited Hebrew, they finally understood where she had been that evening. In their minds they retraced her steps. A likely place where she could have lost her keys was discussed. She thought there was no hope of finding her keys that night. Donnavon assured her that he could not rest well knowing she was not safely in her own home for the night. She did not want to keep them awake and wanted just to sit out on the apartment stairs till morning.

It took a lot of persuading, but finally she went out with Donnavon. They hailed a taxi to take them to the place where he hoped to find the keys. Meanwhile, Elana was praying. She was specifically praying that Jesus

would shine a light on the lost keys.

The lady became very anxious as they searched the dark sidewalks. And then up ahead, just 15 feet away, Donnavon saw something glisten like a twinkle in God's eye, on the cold Jerusalem stone. It was the lost keys! The elderly neighbor lady nearly danced for joy in spite of her many years! She was so happy she could hardly contain herself. She was so amazed at this wonderful answer to prayer, that she pronounced it a miracle that the keys had been found!

God does hear our prayers. He

delights when we come to Him with our needs.

An amazing thing is that kindness comes back! Some months later Donnavon's family returned to the United States to renew family ties and to attend his sister's wedding. When they returned, this elderly neighbor lady welcomed them back to their apartment with flowers and a gift of food. Kindness had touched her heart for God.

Kindness opens doors of opportunity for witness. All around us are opportunities to show kindness.



youth messages

An Appeal to Youth

By two young men

(Based on a true experience, with name changed)

Arriving back to my dormitory after church, I had walked into my room when there was a knock at the door. "Hey, can we talk for a second?" Caleb asked.

"Sure," I answered, "what's on your mind?"

"Last night was horrible. I drank way too much. I woke up with the

worst headache and what was worse, I saw you leaving for church, which is what should I have been doing, too. I wish I could just get away from the world and live a fulfilling life."

After Caleb left, my heart was heavy. I was burdened and troubled as I realized that what he was struggling with and what he wanted to remove from his life is exactly the same thing

that many youth are attracted to—not just alcohol, but an attraction to our society’s lures and temptations.

The world continues to change, but God and His Word do not. In order for His Word to continue to be active among us until Christ’s return, we as young people must prepare ourselves to take on the responsibility of being good stewards. As fellow laborers in Christ, we want to suggest four ways in which youth can live and prepare for this responsibility of future participation in our society as the upcoming generation of Christians. Of course, these points are not exhaustive, but we see them as being foundational.

Knowledge of the Word: In order to be rooted and grounded and living a transparent life, it is essential for each individual to have a wide knowledge of the Scriptures. What’s the use of trying to follow Christ, if we don’t know how He wants us to live? The Bible needs to be a way of life and not just a book with the answers. God’s Word, hidden in our heart, is the means to leading a pure, wholesome life that will protect us from sin (Ps. 119:9-11). Memorization is an important key to understanding and knowing the Bible, and when the Word is grafted into our lives, the light of Christ shines brighter and brighter in us.

Sincerity: It is of utmost importance to lead sincere and serious lives with the final picture in view. We must realize that in the end, it won’t matter which kind of truck we drove, whether or not we were good volleyball players or if we wore the “right” brand of clothes. Our small, insignificant lives are not a playground—they’re a battlefield. In that battle, we need to be able to withstand sin and Satan’s temptations with the armor of Christ. Fellow youth—*sin is a deceitful thing* (Heb. 3:13)! The prince of this world is always devising trickery to catch us. What we may first deem as quite innocent may easily turn into sin and a stumbling block in our walk with Christ.

Obviously, we don’t need to walk around with sober, unsmiling faces and a high-strung attitude. No, a Christian should be joyful, but there is a difference between a joyful Christian and a frivolous person.

We also can’t be one kind of person with the youth group and another kind on Sunday mornings. The Christian life doesn’t work that way. We need to live transparent, honest lives without a dichotomy of who we are.

Respect: This is something that we must show to the elders and leaders. We as youth in general, tend to


“know it all” and therefore, reject a lot of experience and wisdom from our elders. Many times we could easily save ourselves much hassle and many problems by listening to the ones who have experience. It, of course, means laying down our own opinions and desires and being willing to accept advice—one of the hardest things to do.

Leadership: We need to be youth who are willing to step out and lead in example and witness. Instead of looking outside to the world for our leaders and heroes, we need to look into the church for examples. The church needs willing youth to step out of the norm and realms of comfort and become good examples to younger people. We are to be examples that don't waver but are strong under questioning, examples who know what they believe and why, and are examples who are willing to give up everything for the sake of their King and His Gospel.

Youth today are the decision makers of tomorrow. In order for a society and culture to survive, there must be youth who hold to biblical

goals, ideals, and values. We as youth need to know our Bibles inside and out so we know what we believe. If we don't realize how fleeting and serious life really is or if we are unwilling to learn from our elders now, we will miss our opportunities to grow. We also need to be willing and ready to lead for the future. If we are truly concerned about our future as a society and church, then we must be concerned about our fellow young people and our destination.

We need to be particularly careful that, as youth, we are not putting any stumbling block (Rom. 14:13) in the way of our brothers or sisters, but that we are encouraging one another in the Lord. Let us continue to press toward the mark of the high calling and remember the blessings of grace and mercy we have in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

May it be our desire to be on our guard at all times and, as Caleb yearned, look to walking with Jesus rather than with the world. When we look to Jesus, “the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace!” 

Much is said about what the Kingdom of God stands for; let's not forget what it won't stand for!

(USPS 767-160)
Calvary Messenger
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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

A hospital is where people who are run-down wind up.

• • • • •

It does little good to sit up and take notice if we keep on sitting.

• • • • •

Someone on a fixed income may be in a real fix.

• • • • •

Inflation can make the green pastures of retirement look parched.

• • • • •

Mercy is quite easy to accept. What stings is justice!

• • • • •

A man's comments provide an index to his mind.

• • • • •

There's no law on the books to keep a man from making a fool of himself.

• • • • •

We can lead someone to the light only when we walk in the light.

• • • • •

In the "good old days" problems were more often addressed without raising taxes.

• • • • •

Old age is a time of getting enough exercise by simply staying out of the way.

• • • • •

When some people ask for advice, they want their opinions strengthened,
not corrected.