



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

Galatians 6:14

**MARCH 2006**

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MARCH 2006

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 Saviour;  
 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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## Prayer

Mary Martin · Lebec, CA


*“The effectual fervent prayer of a  
righteous man availeth much”*

JAMES 5:16

Oh, can it be the God who hung  
The world in empty space,  
Will listen when I come to Him  
And seek his holy face?

Our God is sensitive to needs;  
He feels our every care.  
It thrills the Father heart of God  
To see us come in prayer.

The power of God—it thrills my heart.  
It’s Satan’s greatest dread.  
When Christians pray that power comes down  
Till all our fears have fled.

So Christians, let us make it real  
And learn to pray it through.  
Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,  
The power’s there for you. 

## Other Sheep As I See It...

### God Acts

**G**od is at work in my life, but please be patient—He isn't finished with me yet. Paul encouraged the Christians of his day, and all of us, with the fact that He "which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

God is also at work in the world He made. He moved sovereignly when He appointed Joseph to rescue God's people. God saw into the future and prepared His people for necessary learning experiences in the Wilderness School of Hard Knocks. When Joseph's brothers were "scraping the bottom of the barrel," they went to Egypt in desperation and were rescued by their despised little brother, whom they failed to recognize.

God was at work when He rescued Moses from jealous Pharaoh and even laid it on the heart of the murderous ruler's family to provide for the fated baby. Thus Moses had the privilege of growing to manhood and doing the work God had for him.

God watched over Baby Jesus, when He came to earth by shuttling

Him off to safety in Egypt for a while, until "the coast was clear." He prevented power-intoxicated Herod from killing the despised infant in that murderous scheme.

God planned with Jesus to "finish the work" (John 17:4) He had assigned to Him. When Christ's work came to the desired point, God, the Lord of the Universe, stepped aside and allowed bloodthirsty men to torture and kill His sinless son. God knew why He let them do it, but had *they* known it, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8).

### Jesus Acts

The Lord Jesus said He would build His church. He counts you and me in on that, too. He asks those who want to participate in building His church to enter the sheepfold by the door. Jesus gives shepherding duties to everyone who enters His fold.

In John 10:16, Jesus referred to other sheep He has invited. These sheep are not of the first flock. He assured us that He is also bringing them to His eternal home. That's how we Gentiles got invitations to the

marriage supper of the Lamb!

As God is not interested *only* in Jews, so also, He is not interested *only* in Gentiles. Note Romans 11:17,18: “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.” It would be strange indeed for a child who was adopted into the family to assume that his privileges exceed the privileges of natural-born children in the family. Let us not make the mistake of some Gentiles, who assume that they have special privileges—even beyond those of believing Jews—in the Kingdom of God. What upstarts they make of themselves!

A similar exclusiveness can take over our thinking when we assume that our denomination is the only one hearing from God. I praise God for our denominational decisions and doctrinal positions. I affirm the well-known Anabaptist Vision and believe it nearly restored the Apostolic Vision. But I doubt that my theology is perfect. I believe God moves in my behalf in spite of some things I understand poorly.

### **Walking the Balance Beam**

Somehow, I wish we could all become satisfactorily settled in our beliefs without judging harshly those who arrive at conclusions different from ours.

God’s Word gives us God’s truth. He would not have us change our doctrinal positions by how we feel. We are not permitted to regard God’s commands according to our personal sense of justice or mercy. At the end God will be God and we will be judged according to His Word.


Consider this question: What place do writings of more recent times by authors from other denominations have for us? Paul told the Thessalonians, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21). We are to follow that instruction, lest we be quickly convinced, then easily discouraged like the stony-ground hearer of Matthew 13:20, 21.

What shall I do about others who profess Christ but arrive at conclusions different from my own? What shall I do with their ideas? Can I safely examine their insights or is such exposure dangerous? I believe it’s presumptuous for me—or anyone else—to make exclusive claims about being in sole possession of “God’s truth.”

The New Testament does not ask us

to take “hook, line and sinker” what anybody says or writes. Testing what is taught rightly applies to everything we hear, like the Bereans (Acts 17:1). We are thoughtful about teaching coming from our own preachers and writers, but that doesn’t require us to be habitual skeptics. Nor does it require us to make harsh judgments of those who come to different conclusions than we do.

When I think of how God exercises

His sovereignty, my intense efforts at making sure everybody else gets it right brings to mind two incidents where Jesus calmed His disciples who were eager to pronounce judgments on others. (Luke 9:49-56a.) Those two accounts make me think I had better be obeying and working with what I understand God to be asking of me, rather than putting down “other sheep whose thinking is wrong,” as I see it. —PLM 

**reader response**

**Re: Miry Clay**

Dear Paul,

From reading your editorial it feels like you don’t really understand depression.

Are you speaking of a situational depression that is triggered by normal happenings such as financial loss, death, indecision, etc.? This type usually lifts as time goes on and as you cry out to God.

The paper I’m including tells about major and dysthymia depression. [*Plain Talk About Depression*, U. S. Dept. Of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.]


I’ve experienced major depression off and on for most of my life. It is not like draping a wet blanket or being in the dumps. It is very severe and intense. I know this is strong language, but I, and others, too, describe it as a hell on earth. It doesn’t lift for weeks, months, or years.

I’m willing to talk about it or answer questions if you have any.

*Name withheld*

• • • • •

A personal thanks for all your efforts in editing the *Calvary Messenger*. You’ve brought a wider perspective to it and it’s *always* interesting!

*Brenda Nisly, Oswego, KS* 



## *From Allah to God the Father\**

*Not everyone is called to Muslim evangelism, but all can pray for those seeking ways to turn others to God.*

A smiling, fully veiled, 17-year-old, Middle-Eastern immigrant sat on the other end of my bench in front of the Duluth library,” writes Gerald Kilmner. “Our conversation led to issues of faith, and she did not have answers for all of my questions, but I’ll never forget what she said: ‘You seem to understand your religion better than I do mine, but’—and her eyes became more intense as she said—‘I want you to know I will gladly die for my faith.’” She is one of the approximately six million Muslims living in the United States.

Many Americans believe that Islam is a religion of terrorists and that all Muslims hold extreme views. While Christians today are suffering harsh persecution from Muslims in many countries, the majority of American Muslims have no connection with terrorist groups, are tolerant toward people of other faiths, and hold traditional family and moral values.

R. K. Pillai says, “There are a lot of true seekers among Muslims in America. Let’s shed our stereotypes, drop our biases, and see Muslims for

who they really are: people created by God, who are loved by Him, and who need to know Christ.”

Although Islam is the fastest growing religion in the entire world, its followers are some of the hardest to reach. Many of them believe in their religion as deeply as we believe in Christianity. But what they believe is vastly different from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **What Muslims Believe**

The largest single roadblock to a Muslim’s becoming a Christian is accepting teaching that Jesus was God in the flesh. One of Islam’s most basic beliefs is absolute monotheism—belief in one God, Allah, who did not and could not have had a son. The Koran says “he begetteth not nor was begotten.” To them belief in Jesus as God’s Son is blasphemy and considered “shirk,” the only sin God will not forgive. Some Muslims call Christians polytheistic—believing in Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

To be a Muslim, a person must affirm what they call two “witnesses”: “There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet.” Muslims recognize Jesus as a great prophet also, but Mohammed was the last and the greatest.

Muslims have no concept of original sin; therefore, they feel no need for a Savior and Redeemer, and do not recognize Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Islam is a "works" religion, which is precisely why it appeals to some people. Complying with the requirements if the Koran does not take supernatural power. It is humanly possible to confess faith in Allah and Mohammed at least once in a lifetime, pray five specific times a day facing Mecca, share a certain percentage of one's income with the needy, fast from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan, refrain from eating certain foods, and such like.

Muslims believe angels are keeping records, and Allah will decide on the judgment day whether or not a Muslim's good deeds outweigh the bad. They hope the scales will tip in their favor, but believe they cannot know unless they become martyrs in jihad (holy war, fighting those who resist Islam).

Muslims do not know God as a Father or as a God of love. They do not believe it is possible to have a personal relationship with him.

In spite of the many contradictions in the Koran, Muslims believe it is perfect. Someone has said, "The

most urgent need is for Muslims to hear, read, and see the Word of God." How can we help to bring that about when they firmly believe our Bible is corrupted?

***Love and relationship are keys to reaching Muslims.***

Regardless what group of Muslims you relate to, the most important thing is for Christians to have a new attitude of love toward Muslims. That will be a powerful witness to Jesus Christ! One of the most effective things that attracts Muslims to Christ is when they meet a true Christian. They feel the true love that this Christian has for them in spite of the hate most Muslims have toward Christians.

A Christian's approach will depend on the Muslim he is with and should come only after much prayer for wisdom and Holy Spirit guidance to know when and what to speak. Some Muslims do not want to defile themselves by discussing religious topics with a Christian, some attack the Bible and doctrinal issues with the intent of forcing Islam on the Christian, some are ready to discuss and ask questions, and some want to know how to accept Jesus as their Savior.

With some, the only way to communicate the Gospel is through



lifestyle and character—being a good example of a Christian. The Muslim must see something different in the Christian that sets him apart from others. Someone has said, “The Christian home is one undeniable proof to the Muslim of the superiority of the Christian way.”

In order to reach Muslims effectively, one critical point to remember is that you can't win by argument. It is foolhardy to “blaspheme” the prophet Mohammed or the Koran when talking to Muslims. It is helpful, however, to know what both the Koran and the Bible teach on specific subjects.

One personal worker says, “Be a good listener. Follow Jesus' example and ask thought-provoking questions such as: What does the Koran teach about forgiveness? May I show you what the Bible teaches? Be sure to emphasize the nonresistance of Jesus and biblical nonviolence. Remind them that a Christian is one who follows Jesus Christ, not one who simply says he is a Christian and lives otherwise. State what you believe without apology, but do it in love.”

Respect Muslim customs and sensitivities as much as possible. Muslims respect sacred books. Don't offend them by placing your Bible on the floor or on the street. Men should

not try to shake hands with a Muslim woman. Do not offer them pork—and you can let them know that you have been careful not to do that.

By all means persevere in your witness. Muslims need to do a lot of rethinking. We are not God, we are His channels. We do not know where our conversations take their thoughts in the middle of the night.

By Holy Spirit intervention, some Muslims are coming to Christ, often coupled with a friendship or a relationship with a Christian. When we reach out to Muslims, we must be prepared to labor hard and long in the loving way Jesus taught us. We must build solid relationships in our homes, in their homes, and wherever we can.

A Muslim who embraces Christianity in a Muslim country has thirty days to return to Islam; otherwise, he could be killed by any Muslim without penalty to the killer. Here in America, Christians must be prepared to become the Muslim's family if he accepts Jesus. Many of them, even here, will lose their own families and be severely ostracized and persecuted. Will we be there for them?

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

• • • • •

### One Christian Worker’s Experience

*Gerald Kilmer · Hayward, WI*

Mennonites paid a high price with their resources, and even life, to go into Somalia with the Gospel when the door opened to religious freedom in 1950. But the window of opportunity to evangelize was very short. The Muslim population in Somalia was then 99%; today it is 99.5%

We marvel that God has sovereignly and providentially brought some of these people right into our U.S. and Canadian cities. Today on the streets of Minneapolis, we meet people who once attended Mennonite schools and churches in Somalia. But it was rock-hard ground then, and it is rock-hard now. According to the mandates of Jesus and Old Testament prophet examples, *rock-hard* does not mean we are excused from carrying out the ministry of reconciliation. Progress is being made ever so slowly.

It is our blessed privilege to put the Gospel into the hands of Muslims in their own language on a weekly basis. We have learned that going back to the same street corner every week on the same day of the week and at the same time gives us opportunity to

meet folks we already know, as well as new people. Many times they have never read even one Bible verse in their whole life.

We have learned that it never pays to argue. Challenge, yes, but argue, never. The door is wide open in America today. We hope it remains that way. The world has come to us. They will hardly come to our churches. They are not allowed to. We must meet them at the “well” or on “Mars Hill,” or in the “marketplace.” If we do, they will at times invite us into their homes.

Muslims have a lot of good external things, such as modesty. But that is not enough. They need Jesus. Good Muslims will not be attracted to Christianity by lukewarm, worldly Christians. People who are on fire for God and practice holiness in all areas of life will make a Muslim look at Jesus. We stand in a strategic situation of opportunity. Will we be there for them?

*\*[From ALIGHT, Vol. 18, Sept.-Oct., 2005. Used by permission.]*



People who are wound up too tight are likely to *unravel*.

# *The Significance of the Christian Woman's Head Veiling*

*Eli A. Yoder · Stuarts Draft, VA*

In 1 Corinthians 11, we have instruction or rules of order for the Christian church. This chapter speaks of two ordinances—the woman's head covering and communion. Why do some churches recognize the one and not the other? Jesus' words at parting just before He went to heaven were, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, **teaching them to observe all things....**" These are two of the "all things" He left for us.

The ordinance of the woman's veiling is founded upon the fundamental fact that God has designed order for human relationships that appoints man to lead, even as man looks to God for leadership.

We need teaching on the head covering. Why is this? It's like it was at the first Passover. God said, "When your children ask you, what mean ye by this—ye shall explain the meaning of it." It is a keystone of Christian nonconformity in personal appearance. A keystone is a wedge-shaped stone put in the top center of an arch, giving strength to

the whole structure. Study of history shows that once this practice falls by the wayside, it's only a matter of time till other marks of Christian nonconformity become extinct. In Revelation 3:2, the church of Sardis was admonished: "Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die."

The covering signifies purity, modesty and virtue of character. This is possible as each one accepts God's order. In 1 Corinthians 11:3, we are given God's designed order. Jesus, in John 8:29, said, "I do always those things that please Him." He gladly accepted God's order—do we? Even though the Father and the Son are one, Jesus was in subjection to the Father. Indeed, He did not consider His equality with God as something to be selfishly grasped. (Philippians 2:6) Man and woman are equal before God, yet man is assigned the leadership role.

The covering on the head is an outward sign of being in the place of subjection. It is interesting to note that as the wearing of the covering is practiced less and less, women

become more and more active in leadership roles and positions.

We notice that Scripture does not say “husband and wife” but “man and woman.” This includes not only wives, but also single women.

Man is to lead, whether it’s as husband of a wife, father in the family or elder in the church. We men are not free to be bossy or to lead with domineering attitudes. We are to love our wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.

Women are to be subject unto Christ through man or their husbands in everything, according to Ephesians 5:22, 23. Man typically excels in strength and executive capacity. Woman excels in tenderness and finer qualities.

Not only is the veiling to be worn when praying, but at all times, for it shows her subjection to man and her recognition of God’s order.

1 Corinthians 11:4 says, “Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonoreth his head.” A head covering having religious significance is worn by Jewish men and Catholic priests. We men do not violate Scripture when we wear a protective covering and take it off in worship, in prayer and in prophesying. The woman does not wear her covering because of rain, heat

or snow, but as visible evidence of her acceptance of God’s order. If she needs weather protection, she is free to wear something for that purpose, in addition to the scriptural veiling.

As woman exercises God’s order in a God-fearing way, it produces harmony, blessing and peace. It gives her a right to pray effectively and to speak to others about the Lord. It serves as a “No Trespassing” sign to Satan and his demons. (1 Cor. 11:10) Psalms 34:7 says, “The angel of the Lord encampeth around them that fear him and delivereth them.”

According to 1 Corinthians 11:5, if she is not covered, she may as well be shaven, which would not be right. In worshipping with her head uncovered, she is not only dishonoring man, but also Christ, who is head of the church. Colossians 1:18 says, “He is the head of the body, the church.”

Some fail to notice that the hair is given for *a* covering. Notice the word “a.” If the hair were the only covering spoken of, we would expect it to say, “The hair is given for *the* covering.” For example, if two windows are open and I desire to have one closed, I might say, “Please close a window.” If there is only one window open, I would say, “Please close the window.” So God inspired Paul to write of two coverings—the hair and the veiling.

Verse six says, “For if the woman be not covered let her also be shorn.” If the hair were the only covering spoken of here, it would require removing the hair to remove the covering, which seems quite unreasonable.

What the veiling should cover is indicated by the other covering—the long hair, which covers the top of the head.

When we see a woman wearing this sign we expect her to live her life according to what the covering signifies—devotion, piety, reverence to God, modesty, purity, respect for man, and obedience to God. If this is not the case and these virtues are missing, changes are necessary. To make the wearing of the veiling appropriate, take it as a message from God that you should conform your life to God and to what the veiling means, rather than to disregard the veiling and conform your appearance to the world. This is a Bible teaching and Paul said he taught these things to all believers everywhere he went. (See 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 4:17)

Let us notice that it says in KJV “covering,” not “symbol of a covering.” If we intend to protect a load of hay from the elements, we must cover more than one-half or three-fourths of it or the hay will get wet. So we believe sisters should cover most of

the hair.

We may ask, “How long should a woman’s hair be?” If you cut off some of the hair, it is shorn. If you cut it all off, it is shaven. If you don’t cut off any of it, it is long.

Some may say, “Why not wear a scarf, a hat, or a hood instead of a veiling?” Such coverings have not been assigned spiritual significance. They are not a sign of a relationship with men or God. When a ship sails, it flies the national flag of the country it represents. By looking at the banner flying from the mast, we can tell who owns the ship.

Some may say, “We know of some real Christian women who don’t wear veilings.” Who are we to trust—such women or the Word of God?

Some say, “My church does not observe it.” If your church persists in disobeying God, you had better seek affiliation with a church that honors all the New Testament ordinances. In such a setting you can be in fellowship with those of “like precious faith.” (2 Peter 1:1)

Some say they are ashamed to wear it. So if it were in style, would it be easier? When we come to grips with what that means, we can see that we lack willingness to be identified with Christ. If we don’t deal with the issue of courage now, He will be ashamed

of us some day. (Luke 9:26) [Brethren who would encourage sisters' obedience to God's Word in these matters can do so by refusing to present themselves stylishly. -PLM]

Men need the judgment, wisdom and opinions of women. A loving wife is one of man's greatest assets. It may save him from many a foolish mistake. When she makes her thoughts fully known, she should rest her decision with the man or the

men God has placed over her and with her God.

We men—fathers, husbands, single men, and ministers—have a big responsibility, not only to strengthen the things that remain, but to recover ground we have already lost. May God help us do it—in His strength and for His glory!



## *Growing Old*

*Martha Catherine "Katie" (Heatwole) Swope, (1870-1963)*

They say to me many times "But you are old!"  
I know they said it times untold.  
I didn't grow old by the number of years, I'm told.  
Wires crossed and steps slowed,  
I know my body is old.  
But I must tell you, "I'm not growing old."  
It's the house wherein I dwell.  
Inside the house still lives faith, hope and love.  
The outside wall is old, I know full well.  
The Bible says my body is the temple of God.  
Let my prayer be, "Oh Lord, help me to live."  
And be able to say, 'Christ liveth in me'  
The Lord gave me the allotted time to live—  
Three score years and ten makes seventy.  
He then gave strength and lengthened the time  
To fourscore years and seven.

*[Apparently, Sis. Swope, who lived till 93, wrote this at 87 years of age.*

*Submitted by Wilmer Swope]*





## marriages

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

### Hilty-Herschberger

Bro. Menno, son of Menno and Rosie (Schwartz) Hilty, Berne, IN, and Sis. Joanna, daughter of Lester and Susan (Miller) Herschberger, Kokomo, IN, at Howard-Miami Mennonite for Bethany Fellowship, Kokomo, IN, on Dec. 3, 2005, by Marvin Beachy.

### Miller-Swarey

Bro. Jerrel Timothy, son of Maynard and Shirley Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA, and Sis. Karen Ruth, daughter of Ivan and Lena Swarey, Stuarts Draft, VA, at Pilgrim Fellowship on Nov. 12, 2005, by Jesse Yoder.

### Schrock-Gochnauer

## cradle roll

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

**Byler**, Daniel and Julia (Erb), Poole, ON, third child, second son, Donavon Andrew, Feb. 1, 2006.

**Coblentz**, Michael and Wanda (Miller), Hutchinson, KS, third child, first dau., Deborah Cheyenne, June 29, 2005.

Bro. Darrell, son of James and Janet Schrock, Catlett, VA, and Sis. Naomi, daughter of James and Linda Gochnauer, Plain City, OH, at United Bethel Mennonite Church, on Dec. 10, 2005, by Walter Beachy.

### Wagler-Wagler

Bro. John E., son of Eli and the late Mary Wagler, Abbeville, SC, and Sis. Eliza Ruth, daughter of Noah and Emma Wagler, Loogootee, IN, at Simon J. Graber Complex on Nov. 25, 2005, by Myron Mullet.

### Weaver-Glick

Bro. Lonnie, son of Edwin and Martha Weaver, Quaker City, OH, and Sis. Evelyn Faye, daughter of John U. and Rachel Glick, Kinzers, PA, at First Baptist Church of Pequea for Mine Road A.M. Church on Jan. 7, 2006, by John U. Glick.

**Gerber**, Joseph and Anita (Wagler), Brunner, ON, first child and dau., Kristalynn Jana, Jan. 11, 2006.

**Gingerich**, Paul and Ruth Ann (Schlabach), Kokomo, IN, second child and son, Logan Michael, Nov. 22, 2005.

**Graber**, Allan and Rosa (Yoder), Bloomfield, IN, first child and son, Jethro Lee, Jan. 11, 2006.

**Helmuth**, Aaron and Denise (Herschberger), Arthur, IL, second child, first dau., Brielle Nicole, Jan. 7, 2006.

**Kauffman**, Melvern and Patricia (Whitt), Montezuma, GA, third child, second dau., Sarah Elena, Jan. 9, 2006.

**Martin**, Elmoine and Rhoda (Gingerich), Kokomo, IN, first child and dau., Rachel Jean, Nov. 19, 2005.

**Martin**, Jonathan and Lavonna (Yoder), Stanardsville, VA, first child and son, Jackson Trent, Jan. 19, 2006.

**Miller**, Marcus and Lisa (Gingerich), Kokomo, IN, first son and third dau., (twins), Kevin Wayne and Kaylene Marie, Dec. 27, 2005.

**Overholt**, Albert and Judy (Diem), Abbeville, SC, third child, second dau., Renata Joy, Jan. 10, 2006.

**Plank**, John and Jolene (Weaver), Montezuma, GA, first child and dau., Larissa Jo, Jan. 11, 2006.

**Stoltzfus**, Brent and Rhoda (Stoltzfus), Brooklyn, NY, third child and son, Joshua Mark, Jan. 9, 2006.

**Stoltzfus**, Elvin and Dorothy (Schrock), Honey Brook, PA, fifth child, third dau., Abigail Joy, Jan. 9, 2006.

**Stoltzfus**, Mahlon and Ruth (Bender), Rural Retreat, VA, fourth child, second son, Kenton Jevon, Jan. 29, 2006.

**Stutzman**, Eric and Nadine (Yoder), Zephyrhills, FL, sixth child, fourth dau., Evelina Grace, Jan. 18, 2006.

**Wagler**, Jeremiah and Marie (Graber), Odon, IN, second child, first dau., Destiny Dawn, Nov. 7, 2005.

**Wagler**, Lynford and Theresa (Wagler), Montgomery, IN, fourth child, first son, Seth Lynford, Jan. 4, 2006.

**Weaver**, Freeman and Mary (Troyer), Orrville, AL, eleventh child, fifth son, Daniel Lee, Dec. 30, 2005.

**Yoder**, Aaron and Debra (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, first child and dau., Breonna Joy, Jan. 7, 2006.

**Yoder**, Elmer and Rosanna (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, seventh child, sixth dau., Kristen Deanne, Dec. 26, 2005.

**Yoder**, Henry and Norma, Leitchfield, KY, third daughter and first son, Cheyenne Lorene (Feb. 20, 2001); Logan Henry (Oct. 8, 2002); adopted Dec. 20, 2005.

**Yoder**, Jadon and Bethanie (Hochstetler), Hicksville, OH, first child and son, Kendrick Jadon, Dec. 24, 2005.

**Yoder**, Loren and Mary Ellen (Yoder), Free Union, VA, sixth child, second son, Micah David, Jan. 9, 2006.

**Yoder**, Timothy and Wilma (Yoder), Uniontown, OH, fourth child, second dau., Sheila Renee, Jan. 10, 2006.

## ordinations

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

**Bro. John Esh**, 34, was ordained to the ministry for the church's outreach in New Jersey, at West Haven Amish Mennonite Church on Jan. 8, 2006. Bro Jason Smoker was preordination speaker.

The charge was given by Lee Stoltzfus, assisted by Leroy Lapp and Wilmer Peachey. Sharing in the lot were Steve Stoltzfus and Amos Lee Stoltzfus.

## obituaries

**Bontrager**, Anna Mae, 67, Arthur, IL, died Dec. 20, 2005. She was born Sept. 7, 1938, daughter of the late Chris and Lizzie Ann (Miller) Bontrager.

She was a member of Pleasant View Church in Arcola, IL.

Survivors include five sisters: Verna Bontrager, Sarasota, FL; Mary Chupp, Tuscola, IL; Clara Herschberger, Arcola, IL; Katie Helmuth, Glen Flora, WI; Lorene Herschberger, Sullivan, IL; three brothers: William Bontrager, Millersburg, OH; Irvin Bontrager, Shippshewana, IN; Sam Bontrager, Purdin, MO; two half-brothers: Melvin Bontrager, Kokomo, IN; Raymond Bontrager, Sullivan, IL; and four half-sisters: Carrie Herschberger, Arcola, IL; Fannie Schrock, Sarasota, FL; Mattie Miller, Arthur, IL; and Elizabeth Diener, Humboldt, IL.

She was preceded in death by two half-brothers and two half-sisters.

Funeral services were held at Pleasant View on Dec. 23, with Howard Kuhns officiating. Burial was in the Pleasant View Church Cemetery.



**Nissley**, Alma N., 77, of Catlett, VA, died peacefully at home following a short bout with cancer on Jan. 24, 2006. She was born Dec. 6, 1928, daughter of Noah and Mattie (Byler) Miller.

She was a homemaker and faithful member of Pine Grove Mennonite Church.

She was married on April 10, 1947, to Dan Jay Nissley, who survives. Also surviving are 13 children: Dan Jay, Jr.(Martha), Calverton, VA; Amos Leroy (Lydia), Catlett; Barbara Ann (Albert) Bender, Calverton; John David (Susanna), Martha Marie (Lewis) Bender, Sylvan Edward, Samuel D. (Nancy), Allen Ray all of Catlett; Dora Esther (James) Martin, Cynthiana, KY; Sharon Rose, Paris, TN; Rachel Fern (Robert) Martin, Cottage Grove, TN; Steven Isaac (Edith) and Fannie Mae (Henry) Nissley, both of Paris, TN; 70 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, and three brothers: Allen, Enos, and Joseph, and one sister, Mary Ann. Surviving are step mother, Fannie Miller, Winfield, PA; three brothers: Sylvan (Laura) Miller, Strawberry, AR; Noah, Jr. (Mary) Miller, Linn, MO; Ervin (Alma)

Miller, Huntsville, AR; and two sisters: Ada (Rufus) Peachey, Mifflinburg, PA; and Irene (Marvin) Yoder, Winfield, PA; one sister-in-law, Fannie (Miller) Byler, Grove City, MN and one brother-in-law, Lee Hostetler, Cottage Grove, TN.

Funeral services were held at Pine Grove on Jan. 26, with Eli Yoder and Bennie Byler serving. Henry Brenneman officiated at the burial in the church cemetery.



**Yoder**, Martha “Mattie”, 80, of Goshen, IN, died Jan. 25, 2006. She was born Aug. 8, 1925, daughter of the late Sam and Sarah (Yoder) Yoder at Hazelton, IA.

She was baptized as a member of the Amish Church and later became a member of Fair Haven A.M. Church, Goshen.

She was married on Nov. 23, 1948, to Rudy C. Yoder, who survives. Six sons survive: Sam (Emma) Yoder, Goshen; John Yoder, Goshen; Enos (Carolyn) Yoder, Middlebury, IN; Ray (Mary) Yoder, Middlebury; Ben (Ada) Yoder, Orville, OH; Rudy (Mary) Yoder, Six Lakes, MI.

Close relatives surviving: a sister, Malinda Hershberger, Dalton, OH; four half-sisters: Katie (Joe) Gingerich, Ethridge, TN; Lizzie (Enos) Mast, Sonora, KY; Amanda (Dennis) Zook, Park City, KY; Fannie (Paul) Miller, Lawrenceburg, TN. A brother, Sam (Elizabeth) Yoder, Barnesville, OH; three half-brothers: Andy Yoder, Mayfield, KY; Levi Yoder, Hillsboro, MI; and Joe Yoder, Sonora, KY.

Close relatives deceased: two grandchildren, two brothers Rudy and Eli

Yoder; two sisters: Naomi Hershberger and Lydia Ann Hershberger, and two half-brothers: John and Enos Yoder.

Funeral services were held at Fair Haven Church with Wilbur Yoder and Ray Stutzman serving. Interment was in the Thomas Cemetery, rural Goshen.



**Yoder**, Mary, 82, of Montezuma, GA, died at her residence Nov. 18, 2005. She was the daughter of the late Mahlon and Sarah (Kramer) Weaver.

She was a member of Montezuma Mennonite Church.

She was the wife of Rufus Yoder, Sr., who died October 21, 2003. Surviving are three daughters: Dorothy (Mart) Schlabach; Pauline (Stanley) Yoder; Barbara Ann (Milton) Yoder, all of Montezuma; eight sons: Melvin (Laura) Yoder; Irvin (Beulah) Yoder; Rufus (Naomi) Yoder, Jr.; Floyd (Prudence) Yoder; Marvin (Bertha) Yoder; Merlin (Shirley) Yoder; all of Montezuma; Robert (Mary Lois) Yoder, Jesup, GA; and Raymond (Louella) Yoder, Falkville, AL; 68 grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren; three brothers: Noah Weaver, Eli Weaver, Mahlon Weaver, Jr.; three sisters: Emma (William) Yoder; Katie (Floyd) Yoder; and Barbara (Elvin) Yoder.

Others who preceded her in death were daughter, Bertha; granddaughter, Rhonda; brothers, Clarence and Irvin Weaver; and sister, Bertha Zook.

Funeral services were held on Nov. 22, at Montezuma Mennonite Church with Donnie Swartzentruber, Daniel Yoder

and Merl Beiler serving. Burial was in the Montezuma Mennonite Cemetery.

## observations

**T**im Kliewer from Hillsboro, KS, is a Mennonite pastor and a former high school science teacher. He wrote in *The Hutchinson News* (1-14-06) relative to the continuing controversy over teaching Darwinistic evolution in Kansas public schools. He identifies his acceptance of creation by intelligent design as a faith belief, not a scientific fact.

He mentions further that macro-evolutions (the view that nature has evolved without intelligent design) is not an observable, provable fact. He identifies four specific steps to be followed for something to become scientifically credible. This has not been done nor could it be done with evolution, a “science, falsely so called” (1 Tim. 6:20).

Kliewer asks, “How much unscientific ‘religious’ pressure must we endure from people who call themselves scientists, while ignoring the scientific method?”

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The continued increase in health care costs together with what seems

to be an increase in certain chronic health problems makes the climate right for opportunists who see the potential for profit in these circumstances. We receive many health-related mailings.

We can dismiss all such alternative suggestions as unacceptable. A person who is committed to medical orthodoxy will typically dismiss any apparent benefits as purely “anecdotal,” that is: any perceived benefit does not come from the alternative product used. I understand that this is based on the persuasion that any product that is not thoroughly tested by certain authorities should never be considered reliable.

It seems to me that it is becoming more common that persons with medical degrees are thinking “outside of their medical boxes” and making recommendations accordingly.

A kind reader has sent me an 18-page document that was written by James R. Privitera, M.D. His medical credentials include practice in fields of allergy, immunology, rheumatology and nutrition. He has a private practice in Covina, CA. He writes about olive leaf extract. Clinically,

the product first became available in 1995. He notes that while there is no long-term perspective, initial results are very promising. It shows impressive benefits against many common health problems. It is considered non-toxic and compatible with other products. However, as with any product, this should not be considered a cure-all.

The person who sent me this information had surprisingly good results with an arthritic condition. He mentioned several other people who seemed to get good results. This included digestive disorders, certain allergies, and the strong tendency to get colds/coughs. I have verified the reliability of these testimonies. There are several reasons why I decided to provide this information.

I believe we should all be concerned about affordable health care and should practice good health habits.

This is a generic product that is available at reasonable cost through health food and supplement outlets. It was recommended by a professional with impressive medical credentials. There was no apparent profit motive involved. People in my acquaintance who have favorable testimonies are not involved in marketing the product. Nor am I. All had different problems.

I have permission from Henry Petersheim (864-446-2151), Ken Nisly (870-741-7929) and Mrs. Jesse Wagler (864-446-3287) for interested people to make further contact. Address on the 18-page document: <http://cure-zone.com/foods/oliveleaf.html>

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There are widely different opinions about conventional or alternative methods of health care. To have a closed mind against consulting a medical doctor in a timely manner has sometimes been proven fatal. It is the part of wisdom to be humble.

J. I. Rodale was a very vocal, self-proclaimed authority on certain alternative health-related philosophies. He is quoted to have said that he plans to live to be 100 years old. He died in his sleep before he was an old man.

A brother who is an experienced Christian counselor tells me that he has met people who were so anti-medical and so closed and confused that it seemed nearly impossible to help them. It seems obvious that such people are neither wise nor humble.

Furthermore, people who subscribe only to orthodox medical authority are not immune to being closed-minded to their own hurt.

A cautious openness to the uncon-



ventional need not mean gullibility, using products that are worthless. We should be aware that there are products available that are unacceptable from a Christian perspective.



According to a recent George Barna poll, only about 9% of evangelical students believe in anything called absolute truth (*Christianity Today*, 12-04). Much of this seems to be finding its way into churches through the public schools.

Jesus said, “The truth shall make you free.” This simple statement is profound and far-reaching. To respect truth for what it is generates stability, security, order and freedom.

To assume that truth is something less than absolute and subject to our limited and varied understanding is to re-define truth. Such a conclusion is no longer truth-centered, but has become man-centered and unstable. It generates chaos and bondage. Only the Perfect Master can make us “free indeed.”

We need our Lord, who is the way, the truth and the life. (John 14:6) He prayed in the high priestly prayer that we might be sanctified through God’s truth and punctuated this plea with, “Thy Word is truth” (John 17: 17).

There is a rapidly spreading cancer in the land that is leaving untold

damage in its wake. This cancer states simply that truth is not absolute, but relative. Rather than being fixed and final, truth becomes subject to human reasoning, preference, and convenience.



What got me started writing about the above item was a news item by the Associated Press (*The Hutchinson News*, 1-29-06). A book addressing this issue is entitled, *The Truth about Tolerance, Pluralism, Diversity and the Culture Wars*. The authors are Joseph G. Conti and Brad Stetson. It is published by Inter Varsity Press. They identify wrong views of truth as follows:

“Truth is what I want it to be.”

“Truth is what I feel.”

“Truth is what works or what works for me.”

The authors assert that the drift from belief in objective truths about morality, religion, and politics is culturally pervasive, yet intellectually degraded.

One foundational part of nonconformity to the world is to be committed to receive and live by the truth as it is clearly taught in the Word.



*The Wal Mart Effect* is a recent book written by Charles Fishman. The following is excerpted from Kathleen

Parker's report about the book:

—Wal Mart isn't just a company. It's a global market force—a nation unto itself. (“If Wal Mart were a nation [its sales volume] would rank it between Belgium and Sweden as the world's 19<sup>th</sup> largest economy.”

—Harold Meyerson, *The Washington Post*, quoted in *The Hutchinson News*, Aug. 31, 2003.)

—Americans spend \$35 million every hour at Wal Mart, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

—Wal Mart does not put little people out of business. Consumers who choose to patronize them over their competitors do.

—In 1990, Wal Mart had just nine super centers in the U. S. In 2000, they had 888.

—Wal Mart buys all their salmon from Chile. It undersells other retailers by at least \$2 a pound. These salmon are raised in underwater pens, with as many as one million per farm. They are fed antibiotics to prevent disease. A million salmon produce as much waste as would 65,000 people.

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The United Methodist Health Ministry in Hutchinson, KS, and the Kellogg foundation sponsored a study of 1,060 patients interviewed at three different clinics that serve low-income people. The report shows that

many of these people do try to pay their bills, “but in spite of their struggle, they come up short. Something's wrong when so many people use up their hard-earned savings, borrow from friends, take out loans and jeopardize their credit in order to pay off their medical bills.” The problem affects all racial and ethnic groups.


—Nearly two-thirds of the people interviewed are currently behind in medical bills, whether or not they had insurance.

—Nearly half said they delayed a doctor's visit because of it.

—One in six respondents said they were refused an appointment because of an unpaid bill. (*The Hutchinson News*, 2-3-06)

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A related item in the same issue reports some small-scale chain stores, as well as megamarkets, like Wal Mart and Target, who have started trial runs with in-store medical clinics. Cost and convenience drive this trend. It is generally staffed by nurses or physician assistants.

Generally such services have a limited range of tests and treatments at a lower cost than a doctor's office. This new venture is attracting some huge investments. Board members include former Secretary of State, Colin Powell and other notables.—DLM 

## Work, Weariness, and Wisdom

Aaron Lapp · Kinzers, PA

Second to, “How are you?” the most common question we seem to ask is, “What do you work?” Work is a common topic of conversation. It provides a mutual point of interest among us. It is an easy topic for general conversation, even between strangers.

Most people have some sort of struggle about their work. Few things always go as planned. Weariness and frustration come when we plan too much work.

### Work and Submission

*Work is a blessing.* Being able to work is a privilege. Enjoying our work brings fulfillment. Earning money is satisfying. Pleasing our boss is rewarding. Satisfying the customer is gratifying.

*Work is a creation principle.* It is timeless and unchanging. “The Lord God took the man, and put him in the garden to dress it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15). Work was a part of God’s design for man before Adam’s original sin. Work is not part of the curse against sin, a punishment for disobeying God. Work was planned for maintaining the Garden of Eden even before the

assignment of maintaining it was lost through sin.

*Work is not a result of sin,* but sin has changed the nature and purpose of work. Man was a supervisor-steward before Adam’s sin. Since the fall, man must now work also to survive. Those two ideas are primary reasons for our working—for stewardship and survival. Those who would not need to work for survival should still seek to work as stewards. Fortunately, most of us need to work for survival.

### Weariness Without a Vision

*The weariness of work often comes from the lazy streak in us.* Perhaps the workaholic is disposed to his work so he has more time off—either later in the year, or later in life. Does everyone have a lazy streak? I think we do. For instance, how many of us, if given a chance of receiving \$1000 either as an outright gift, or in return for 100 hours of work at \$10 an hour, would refuse the handout?

*Weariness of work* comes from a lazy disposition. Lazy minds have lazy attitudes. Lazy attitudes make lazy hands. Lazy hands make lazy people. Laziness has quite a few cousins, for instance:

wastefulness, carelessness, irresponsibility, thoughtlessness, tardiness, claiming ignorance, complaining, and unthankfulness. And, mind you, these are all first cousins to laziness. Once a young man applied for a new job. The boss asked him if he was a responsible young man. “Oh yes,” the young man said, “why, at my previous job, every time something went wrong, they said I was responsible!”

At the time of this writing, the World Series baseball games are in progress. Now football (a game I never understood) is shifting into high gear. Tens of thousands go to the games, take time off for sports of a dozen varieties year round. Being spectators must add to their weariness.

We plain people keep on working. Does it show up somewhere? Quite frequently it does—in the vehicles we drive, in the houses we build, and in additional evidences of consumption indicated by hobbies and collections, vacation homes, shopping, cameras, and sports activities. Charles Wesley in the 1800’s noted that when people professed faith in Christ and became “saved,” their possessions increased.

The average American makes more in one week than the average Somalian makes in a year. Dale Heisey noted that “the annual per capita income in Romania is \$6,900; Hon-

duras—\$2,600; Uganda—\$1,400; Somalia—\$500. In Costa Rica, 70% of a man’s income is needed for food. Americans probably spend more for clothes and how they look and smell than they do for food.”

In Romania, most people don’t go Christmas shopping. They just hope they will have enough food for the winter. Eighty per cent of the people live in apartments. If one tenant doesn’t pay his rent, the landlord is likely to turn off the hot water and heat for all the units. Then each family has their own little space heater and makes their hot water on the cook stove.

### **Wisdom, Plus a Mission**

Employees should seek to make a profit for their employer. Some workers have felt deeply grieved upon learning that the boss makes money on their work. He must. He can’t remain in business if he doesn’t. The boss spends time in management that receives no direct compensation. Then there are buildings, equipment, and vehicles to maintain. The business must sustain these somehow. Additionally, there are the hidden costs of taxes, insurance, depreciation, as well as a measure of risk. Periodically, capital is needed for upgrades and/or expansion. All of this adds to employee job security and potential pay

increases. Some employees have the needed wisdom for these challenges and are proud of their employer.

Some employers have the needed wisdom for these challenges and are proud of their employee. Employers should have reasonable expectations for their employees. Workers should be paid on time. The boss should not pay for work before the work is done. Work that must be done after it was paid for is harder. If the worker is short on money, it may be God's way of teaching him to save. Money could be loaned to such an employee in an emergency. But, generally, it is best for him to see someone else besides the boss for money at such times.

An employer should pay what the job is worth. He should also consider the diligence and faithfulness of his employees and pay them accordingly. And when he does, not every employee will receive the same pay. It is not right—not ethical—for an employee to pry out of fellow employees what the boss pays them. The pay check is a private matter between the employer and his employees.

Some employees would be happier in their work if they knew the boss was happy with them. The boss might think that if he gives *praise*, they'll want a *raise*. Not necessarily! In most relationships, this question

lingers just beneath the first layer of consciousness, "How am I doing?" and "How does he view me?" Praise brightens relationships. Praise brings out the best in people, especially is a little praise needed—sorely needed—if there has been some expression of criticism. At such times, some honest praise can bring healing. It assures and confirms the employee of his personal worth and restores good relationship.

There are six things that an employer doth hate, yea, seven are an abomination to him:

1. Being late for work.
2. Always having a "better way" to do it.
3. Having a grumpy spirit.
4. Looking at the clock repeatedly in the last half hour before quitting time.
5. Being careless and reckless with equipment.
6. Trying to find out what fellow employees are being paid.
7. **Sowing discord among fellow employees!**

**The Bottom Line** is that asking each other, "What do you work?" is still a good question. But it might be more stimulating to character building to ask, "Do you like your work?" and "How does the will of God for your life fit in with your work?"



# Ministers' Meetings Messages—2005

*The set of eight tapes (including four workshops, which will not be reviewed in this periodical) of these meetings is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA 20136, for \$40, plus S & H.*

## 10. The Eternal Purpose of God

—Elmer Smucker, Lott, TX

**G**race, mercy and peace be unto you” is the greeting that Paul used when he addressed pastors in the Scriptures. These three words have much to teach us about God, about our roles and about how to live out godliness.

There are some things that God has reserved for secrecy in the Godhead. While we in our humanity cannot expect to plumb the depths of God’s purpose, we shall attempt to go beneath the surface of things. In Ephesians 1:1-12, we have some important insights given. Romans 8: 28-34 further spells out some of God’s purposes for His children.

The Word of God is multi-faceted. You can’t put it in a narrow box. It is God’s unalterable plan to transform a sinful and damnation-deserving people into the image of His own dear Son. This work procures forgiveness without the slightest stain on God’s holy character. It is a work that is

more concerned about His glory than it is about our welfare. Its consummation is the gathering together of all the redeemed to an eternal inheritance.

God’s purposes are perfect. It was all His idea. He didn’t need our counsel. Human fallenness could not have made any contribution of ideas to what it takes to save sinners. God’s grace has lost none of its efficacy by now, even though many souls have used it. It is as powerful as the day God designed it for our salvation.

What would you, who have been chosen by God to serve God’s people, be willing to give for the privilege of shepherding a brotherhood where every member is fully committed to live for the glory of God? Well, it’s not going to happen. But what would you give for it? What personal handicaps would you accept if it pleased God to give them to you? Would you be willing to be a pastor that gets around on a wheelchair, or is blind?

What would you give for a situation where there are no improper attitudes toward possessions? Or there’s no gossip? Or you would never have to confront in the mirror or in the eyes of your brother a critical attitude?

I want us to see reality. We seem to do well when things go well, but when



they don't, it gets awfully difficult. There's a great difference between being a visionary and being one possessing vision. A *visionary* is given to visions or fanciful theories and who tends to be impractical. Such a person is often driven by failures of the past.

*Possessing vision* is having foresight, or having sensitivity toward the future. Truth has so captured the person's heart that it makes him move.

I am deeply committed to statements that are true. I haven't always known where to draw the line in identifying issues that are worthy of discussion and formulation. But I also want to take those doctrinal statements and make them meaningful in my life and in the lives of those around me. Would it not seem right that we learn from the Master Himself how to serve Him and those around us?

Our Savior willingly endured humiliation and in that showed us His humility. That humility was part of the eternal purpose of God to save you and me. His mercy is part of His perfection. So also is His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering. We can add nothing to the finished work of the cross. If He deigns to forbear with us and share His work with us, it seems only right that we also forbear with those with whom we work in the

work of God. As He's longsuffering, so He expects me to be longsuffering in my work for Him.

The meekness of Christ in suffering is very helpful in knowing what He desires of us. How do we react when we face criticism? Do we think it important to give a lot of attention to making sure that our reputation is preserved? Does it help to increase voice volume when making a point? Especially when there's conflict going on, is that the time for the minister to be quite forceful? How does that relate to reaching sinners, according to the eternal purpose of God? Have you ever ridiculed any of your members publicly? I hope not. Maybe we should ask our brothers and sisters if we have. Let us not scold our flocks.

The eternal purpose of God is a settled matter. We can add nothing to its design, but by the grace of God, we have been entrusted with the glorious privilege of laboring with Him in the fulfillment of that purpose. God bless you brethren—and you wives whose contribution enhances your husband's contribution—as you serve according to the eternal purpose of God.



## Breaking Down Cultural Barriers—Part Two

Timothy Weaver

### Language Barriers

**T**he language barrier is the second barrier we want to consider, and it is probably more obvious than the economic barrier. Though we have tried, it really has closed the door of communication for most of us. Thankfully, it is not insurmountable. We know the Lord confounded the languages at Babel because of the pride of man. It seems that the confusion of languages at Babel was a continuation of the fall of man that took place in Eden. We also know that language is not a barrier to our Lord. He was able to make a donkey speak when necessary. He made it possible for needy souls at Pentecost to hear the message in many languages. He arranged for Greek to be a widely understood language for the propagation of the truth in New Testament times. Our God communicates in any language.

We need to see the language barrier as something that stands between us and needy souls around us. We must be diligent to continue to seek to understand the national language of the host country. We need to

pray for divine guidance and help to overcome the barrier of language. This barrier came upon the human family as a result of pride, and it is especially good for our pride to learn a foreign language, for it tends to humiliate us. It can help us improve our understanding of others and their difficulties, and it should help us to appreciate when others are understanding and patient with us. This should produce in us a desire to do the same to them.

[In Latin America] we must continue to emphasize learning the Spanish language. None of us has arrived; we need to continue to improve by maintaining a learner's attitude. Spanish schooling is good, but personal study is also necessary and only with practice can we become proficient. Keep the dictionary in good use, check when you need to and listen and learn from what you hear. Memorize Scripture in Spanish, hard as it may seem at first, because that will give you a greater base to draw from when testifying. Use very little English after church services or youth meetings.

## Social Barriers

The last cultural barrier we want to consider is social differences. Every society has a way of thinking and a set of values and priorities. To understand cultural barriers, we should understand our own culture in which we grew up. Our background reflects many things, and some of them are important to our consideration of other cultures.

Most North American Mennonites descended from immigrants who fled Europe for the New World, looking for freedom to worship and to meet their own needs in their own enterprises. Those efforts were often encouraged and protected in North American society by the citizens already living there. Even today, North Americans tend to respect industry, thrift, courage, and religious conviction.

Our background also is mostly non-Catholic and non-Protestant. Most of us have been taught the truth about the sacramental rituals of the Catholics and the cheap grace of the Protestants.

We have been brought up to expect that a professing Christian ought to truly believe the Bible, and that means that he will be serious about obeying it. This is a priceless heritage and a peer pressure that influences us

in the right way. Our heritage makes the family-oriented lifestyle common and precious to us. The basic moral values our heritage assumes are a tremendous help and protection to us as we also hold them dear.

But what is the heritage of our Guatemalan brethren? Society here tends to ridicule “extreme Christians,” which are those who actively practice Bible teachings. It is also difficult to maintain right lines of separation with ungodly or unscriptural family members. For security, most Guatemalans live near to other people. This creates a whole package of influence problems for raising a Christian family. Because land is scarce and expensive, most families live on small plots of land. This compounds the same problem. The cheap religion offered by so many around them makes it difficult to develop a real burden for the salvation of souls, since so many feel they are not lost. For those who consider the cost of biblical discipleship too high, cheap religion is always at the door as a ready option. Besides, the cultural tendency to not be honest and transparent does influence how our brethren think. Add to that the prevalent mentality of “live in poverty and love a party,” and you have a better understanding of what our Guatemalan brethren live with.

Our Guatemalan churches were not founded by poor immigrants looking for an escape from persecution. In some cases, being a Mennonite has carried a certain prestige, possibly because the majority of mission workers are North Americans. In other cases, we have found that the Latin American tendency is to suspect that anyone who is well-to-do has somehow, somewhere been shady in his business practices or has taken advantage of others to gain what he has. In other cases, the Latin American tendency to be anti-American has affected how our brethren think about us, which has made it hard for carnal individuals to relate properly to church authority, connecting it to American imperialism. These various influences in society affect how our Guatemalan brethren have been taught to think.

In general, Guatemalans maintain close ties with their friends and neighbors, but especially with their families. It has been difficult to help Christian parents see the importance of separation from the world on the family level. Young people also find it difficult to relate as Christians to their friends.

While there tends to be too much

closeness with worldly individuals, it still seems difficult to help brethren develop a burden for close brotherhood ties. We tend to see less social interchange between families within a congregation than is healthy. It has also been a challenge to develop a burden for the purity of the congregation. Many brethren here want to do all they can to “avoid problems,” so they are reluctant to share information with other brethren and church leaders who may need to know about certain matters.

As we relate to social differences, we need to constantly watch for and avoid better-than-thou attitudes as we hold up biblical ideals for church life. We need humility and the vision to serve.

Barriers exist and they do present challenges. Yet may we remain convinced that the common ground of salvation through Jesus Christ is the most effective “barrier solvent” that exists. Let us go forward in His strength.

*[Timothy Weaver is a missionary in Guatemala serving with Conservative Mennonite Fellowship Mission. Used by permission from The Harvest Call, September, 2005.]*



# *For Whom Do We Fight?*

*Karl McKinney*

*Karl McKinney is former co-pastor at Reba Place of Rogers Park in Chicago and now works for Mennonite Mission Network.*

Last July, a courageous man who served the United States in a modern war questioned whether I was actually a “born-again Christian.” How could I be born again and be committed to nonviolence, nonresistance and conscientious objector commitments? He was not courageous enough to raise this question to my face; he told my wife these things.

When I saw him, I had enough courage to invite him to question my discipleship to my face rather than berate me to my wife. But this veteran declined the opportunity I welcomed.

He also declared his allegiance to Jesus Christ. I explained my understandings: “When a man or woman obeys Jesus Christ, every other allegiance must be disavowed or put in its secondary place to the kingdom of heaven...Earthly weapons cannot be used by the disciple of Jesus Christ.” That was all I got to say without his constant interruption, so I’ll articulate part of my understanding here.

For the majority of Western Christians, separation of church and state extends only as far as tax exemptions and the free exercise of religion. Too many Western [nominal] Christians are willing to take up arms in defense of their nation and its self-interests. It escapes ambivalent Christians as well as some supporters of nonviolence or nonresistance that the church has a mandate that defines its purpose and supersedes nationalism and party spirit. In Europe and North America, the demands of nationhood tug at the hearts of [professing] Christians, sending them into a tailspin of hatred, self-indulgence and war.

Anabaptists also are more nationalistic than in previous times. Anabaptists in the West are divided about nonviolence and nonresistance, while other Christian traditions are turning away from the harlot of Christendom and finding assistance in the older Anabaptist writings.

Ambivalent Christians who love the world may be ignorant of the impact of their betrayal of Jesus now, but not for long. For a follower of Jesus Christ to embrace violence against other people would be like a U.S. naval officer switching sides

in the middle of a military conflict. Jesus' followers live for the salvation of the souls in every tribe, tongue and nation. Their privilege is to die for their enemies, not assist in annihilating those enemies...

What is peace without the Messiah? What is justice without the cross? Where is mercy in a world where brewing hatred and self-interests constantly collide?

I turn my American veteran antagonist's question upside down: How can one claim to be born again if after the [new] birth one is just as committed to violence as before? All the rationale for warfare and violence are children of carnal reasoning.

The church represents a different purpose, one given by the kingdom of heaven. It does not include the use of weapons and the representation of the kingdoms of this world in warfare.

If we fight for the safety and self-interests of our nation, how can we be followers of Jesus? How can we fulfill our purpose from heaven if we fight for temporal things?

To be part of the body of Jesus Christ is to enter into warfare. If Anabaptists are part of Jesus' body, they must fight, but not with carnal weapons.

• • • • •

*The above article first appeared in The Mennonite (April 19, 2005). It is used by permission.*

*Further comments by James Her-  
shberger, Stuarts Draft, VA: Let us be  
faithful in our calling in the peaceable  
kingdom of God. "...take the helmet of  
salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,  
which is the word of God..." (Ephesians 6:17).*

*It is of considerable interest to think  
of the terms "conservative" and "liberal"  
as they apply to the above article. One  
aspect of conservative means to adhere  
strictly to established truth. To be liberal  
allows one to make room for some  
variation in application and practice.  
Contrary to the views expressed by the  
news media, fundamentalist churches  
and politics, the above article is very  
conservative. Minister McKinney  
adheres to and affirms absolute truth—the  
teachings of Jesus and the New Testament.  
Those who participate in warfare, while  
claiming to adhere to the Gospel of Christ,  
because of their deviation from the truth  
are the liberals. Wouldn't it seem more  
accurate to say they are deceived?*

*Although it really doesn't matter,  
it is of considerable interest and  
significance that Karl McKinney is  
African-American.*



# Death and Dying

Ken Nisly · Hillcrest Home · Harrison, AR

*The staff at Hillcrest Home might attend several funerals a month. After the recent death of a fervent Christian, Bro. Ken and Sis. Gloria Nisly went to the funeral home to visit the bereaved family of the deceased resident on the evening before the funeral. The family really welcomed them, but they noticed that only a few people came to visit. It struck Ken how much it would have meant to them to have others come and offer words of sympathy.*

*Here are some of Ken's reflections as he thought about that situation and the appointment we all have with death.*

—PLM

**H**ow much time do you think we have left on planet earth? I know none of us knows, but I also know that we humans often think that the time of departure is at some far-off date. But in reality it may be a whole lot closer than we would like to think. Since coming here a year and a half ago, we have had 31 people in our care pass on into eternity.

So you see that death is something we see more of here at Hillcrest Home than most people do. As often as possible, we attend these funerals, so I am reminded quite often that life will some day come to an end. Let's look

at some thoughts from Scripture on this subject.

We are all aware that death began with Adam and Eve when they took the forbidden fruit. It was in that disobedience that their bodies began to die. In fact, because we are born with a sinful nature, when we are born we begin the dying process. With every passing minute, eternity draws closer.

Genesis 3:19 says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, **till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**"

Death was part of God's curse on mankind because of their sin. Some day, with the exception of those living at Christ's return, we will all be returning to dust as God ordered.

Israel's encounter with fiery serpents in Numbers 21 made them realize that they had brought this terrible thing upon themselves by their disloyal complaining against God and Moses. They said to Moses in verse 7: "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD that he take away the serpents from us."

Can you sense the desperation they felt in this situation? If you had been



in their shoes, you would realize that you had sinned and that these snake bites were fatal. Then you'd also realize that if you looked at that snake on the pole you could live. And then, after you had looked and escaped death, you would possess an urgency to get others to take a look also. Without that, they would die. With it, they could live. It was the best news possible for that desperate situation.

Did you know that we were also bitten? Unless we turn from our sinfulness and look at the Lamb of life, we will not escape death.

#### **What was Jesus' response to death?**

One day Jesus met a funeral procession. (Luke 7) It would be interesting to know what Jesus' thoughts were as He met those grieving the death. The Bible doesn't say, but I wonder if Jesus might have been thinking of His own mother, of His coming death and how that might affect her. As we know, He raised that widow's son to life.

In John 10:10b, He gave us the treasured words, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." In John 11, one of Jesus' good friends had died and He didn't show up till a few days later. Verse 35 says that Jesus wept.

Just as surely as Lazarus died we too shall die some day. Most of us have experienced the passing of a

relative and are quite aware of how final the drawing of that last breath seems to those left behind. No more conversations. No more advice. No more encouragement. It is over and it seems so cruel. We know, however, that Jesus is touched by that. If He were here in the flesh, He would weep with the survivors.

He also said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:25,26). He gave this promise at the raising of Lazarus.

After He had brought Lazarus forth alive, He told the grieving crowd: "Loose him and let him go." Is this also what He would tell us? Yes, we miss those who have gone on and I think God would have it that way. But if we could see the delight, the freedom from temptation and pain, the rest and joy of those who prepared to meet Him, we would more readily let them go. We would draw near to Him in worship *here* as we realize they are drawing near there as they worship Him *there*.

*[Adapted from Newsletter Volume 53, Number 12, by permission.]*



## Teaching Manners to Your Children

Mary June Glick

**M**anners are a part of godly family living. The Bible teaches us to be kind to each other, to do to others as we would have them do to us, to show respect and honor, and to esteem others better than ourselves. As we teach manners to our children, we are teaching them to place value upon another person created by God.

Manners are taught best by example. Each family has their own code of what is important but we also want to be conscious of things that are important to the church and to society as a whole. Treat your children with respect and courtesy. Our children observe our manners in the home. They see how we respond to each other. They will also see the way we respond to others on the road, and even how we relate to others in the grocery store. Do we try to get the best at a yard sale before someone else gets it? When there are limited supplies available on sale in the store, are we kind and courteous to the sales clerk or the person in line ahead of us? We all forget at times but our goal should be to show God's love where-

ever we go and to remember someone is noting our example.

Even very small children can learn to be polite. They can say, "Yes, thank you," or "No, thank you." Mealtime is a wonderful time to teach manners. Make it a fun experience; don't become angry when they mess up. We can approach this systematically. First, they wash their hands, then set the table properly. There's no respect conveyed in just dropping things haphazardly on the table. Teach the correct manner of placing the silverware with a napkin and arranging the dishes attractively. Let them fix a little centerpiece.

Pass all dishes in the same direction. Eat with mouths closed. Mealtime should be pleasant, not a time for scolding and reprimands in the presence of all. Children should learn to taste everything and NOT grumble about what they don't like. They should remain seated until everyone is finished or else ask to be excused. Boys should be taught to remove caps or hats during mealtime.

Practice hospitality in your home. Visitors give children a good oppor-

tunity to put to use the things they have learned. Let them help you serve the guests. Teach children to relate to adults and to carry on a conversation, but not to monopolize it. They also need to learn not to interrupt when you are speaking with someone. Teach them to look at people when they talk to them. In the South, children are taught to say “Yes, ma’m,” and “No, ma’m.” Such manners are expected in public.

When you are visiting in a home, teach them to say, “Thank you” and to write a thank you note when they receive a gift. It is good manners to speak graciously on the telephone, and to take a message correctly.

Siblings must learn to be kind

to each other. They should not be allowed to call each other demeaning names or to belittle each other. People have been scarred for life by a name given in childhood. Make sure your child is kind to others, not making fun of anyone or forming a clique where someone is excluded. Teach them to say, “I’m sorry,” when appropriate or, “Please, forgive me.”

I know this seems like a big order and I wish I had done a better job of it myself as a mother, but it is good to reach for a high goal and to keep striving. Remember that we are working with future adults who will some day face a big world of their own. They will thank us for what we taught them.



## junior messages

### *The Bitter and the Sweet—Part Two of Three*

Anita Yoder

*The Flints adopted Annie Johnson and her sister, after the little girls lost their mother. Their birth father died after their adoption. The girls experienced a happy childhood with the Flints, but then life took another bitter turn.*

**A**nnie had a generous spirit, showing willingness to share what she had with others. She was also quite sensitive and acknowledged that God needed to teach

her patience. Being sensitive allowed her to see needs in other people’s lives. God used her caring nature to minister to them.

After she finished high school, Annie was asked to come back to the same school and teach. She felt caught between making money and staying at home to be with her mother, who had suffered from a light stroke. She did take the teaching position and taught

the primary class.

In the second year of teaching, symptoms of arthritis began troubling her. She tried several doctors, but it grew steadily worse, so much so that in her third year, she seemed hardly able to finish the year. By then the arthritis made it difficult for her to walk.

After the third year of teaching, Annie and her sister found themselves alone again, for both their parents died within several months of each other. Now they were twice-orphaned, had little money and only one of them was able to work.

Their faithful friend, Aunt Susie, came to their rescue. She suggested that Annie might find help for her ailment at a sanitarium at Clifton Springs, New Jersey. Susie had been there and received help and was convinced that Annie could find healing there. But instead of help, Annie was given the news that she would not get

better. The verdict that the doctors gave was that she would only become more helpless—an invalid.

Annie struggled to accept this situation bravely. How would she and her sister support themselves? She was now in the care of others and they would need to be compensated somehow. They cried to God for answers. They received rent for the house that was left to them. Would there be any profit in Annie's writing skills?

Annie decided to try, so, lying in bed, she took a pen in her crippled fingers. What would God do with her young life? It all seemed so hopeless!

How will God tell Annie that she will not be able to comfort others, unless she knows the comfort that Jesus gives to her? What will happen if she tries to write about grace and mercy before she receives grace and mercy to endure her predicament?

(to be concluded)



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## *Praise the Lord!*

**D**o you remember the problems we had with the license for the orphanage in Romania? We put out a prayer plea when it looked like we could lose the children.

Do you remember how God worked at that time? Let us take courage again. We just got word (1-23-06) from the authorities in Romania that they are granting a license for **two years!**

Let us give God a praise offering for His abundant mercy!

—*Alvin Mast · Christian Literature Department · Christian Aid Ministries (CAM)*

## Dear Youth,

This month we are taking a break from the question and answer format. The question that was asked in the January issue will be answered in a later issue. I am still glad for any questions, articles and poems that you wish to submit. —EE

## Daniel, Man of Strength

*Caleb J. Gingerich · Amanda, OH · Age 16*

When we think of Daniel, many of us think of the ever-popular story that we have heard since we were in preschool—the story of Daniel in the lion’s den. But Daniel’s life was much more than just that one spectacular occasion. Throughout his life he rose above his circumstances and stood for what was right.

Daniel’s life was not an easy one. After being torn from his home at an early age, he was taken to downtown Babylon, the capital of the enemy’s empire. God was punishing Israel for their wickedness; but Daniel was a man of God! He could have become bitter about the whole situation and yet he did not. As in this case, often when sin is committed, the righteous have to bear punishment along with the evildoers,

Early in life, Daniel and his three friends were among those selected for special training. They were given nutritious food instead of the king’s

sumptuous fare. God blessed them and they learned their training well. After only three years, the king himself tested them and found that Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were ten times wiser than his own wise men and magicians. It would have been easy to become proud and to look down on those around them, but Daniel and his friends were humble despite their tremendous accomplishments.

God was with Daniel in everything he did. Once when the king forgot a dream he had, he ordered his Babylonian wise men to tell him what his dream meant. Of course, they were completely stumped. The furious king demanded that all the wise men, including Daniel, be executed. After talking to the king, Daniel was given a vision from God interpreting the dream. The delighted king promoted Daniel, but always thinking of others, Daniel requested higher positions for his friends as well.

The stories go on and on. Daniel served under several kings as the empire changed hands. Through God, he interpreted other things as well. Then there is the story of the lion's den that he was thrown into as a result of some jealous princes. In everything he did, he always gave the glory to God and used his powerful influence for good.

In today's world, many people would justify Daniel if he had become bitter and angry. "Oh, he was a victim of circumstances," they might say. "He's allowed to act like that." The fact that he did not become maddened with life makes a strong case to show that people choose to act how they act. Daniel

*chose* to make the best of things and he *chose* not to forget God or become upset. Circumstances do affect our lives, but we choose *how* they will affect us. Daniel was a man of strength; so he let the adverse circumstances mold him into a better man. In fact, if everything would have gone right for him in life, we likely would not know him as such a man of faith today.

Circumstances will either crumble a man or build up a man. Daniel grew in spite of his trials in life. Am I using life's circumstances as stepping stones? Are you?

## What If?

*Andrea Mast · El Salvador*

What if I wouldn't be me?  
Who would I be?  
What if I hadn't been born into this family?  
Whom would I belong to?  
What if I hadn't decided to follow Christ?  
What would my soul be like?

What if Jesus had not died for me?  
Where would I be?  
What if God had not loved me?  
Would life be worth living?  
What if God would not be holiness, light and love?

*Yes, what if?*

Then God would not be God.  
Life would be worthless.  
My soul would go toward hell.  
My soul would be dead.  
I would belong to myself.  
I would be nothing.

But God is God.  
Life is wonderful!  
I'm going to heaven.  
My soul is alive!  
I belong to Jesus and  
I am God's child.



# THOUGHT GEMS

It is never right to do wrong to do right.

• • • • •

If you don't respect the Word of God,  
you won't respect the preacher who preaches it.

• • • • •

Young lady, your ears were made for hearing,  
not for the display of gaudy jewelry.

• • • • •

Surreal art and raucous music indicate that  
our values are not anchored in absolute values.

• • • • •

Like a train, the church must have doctrine as a  
track to run on, and it must be the right doctrine.

• • • • •

Church attendance seems to depend on how close we  
are to God, not how far we live from the church.

• • • • •

It is a strange idea that supposes we can keep the church  
out of the world by bringing the world into the church.

• • • • •

If a person wants to be in the limelight,  
he will not be a bright light for Jesus.

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