



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

Galatians 6:14

APRIL 2014

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

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Prayer

Tim Yoder, Lewisburg, PA

When I kneel down to pray,
Is it only I who need to say
The words that are upon my heart,
Or should I hear what's on God's heart?

When on my heart great needs do press,
Do I bend down and give way to stress,
Or do I come with heart bowed low,
And wait for God my path to show?

I do not walk this way alone,
For I have never walked this day before.
So I journey with my Lord,
I must stay close or be forlorn.

My Lord Jesus prayed when heart was sore,
And so He knelt and God implored.
Do I with such fervor adore
The God who knows what is in store?

When God does come with quiet voice,
And gives His answer, not my choice,
I must then rise and follow strong,
And faithfully walk with whom I belong.

'Tis then I find a quiet rest,
And find that then in God I'm blessed.
So, my dear fellow pilgrim, talk with God,
Hear His voice as you journey this sod.

So before we rush right through our day,
Take time, believer, on your knees to pray.
And as through the day you labor on,
Stay in step with Him to whom you belong.

Jesus said to pray and not to faint,
For that is not the way of the saint.
So follow the command of our dear Lord,
T'will draw us together in one accord.

So be a prayer warrior, strong and true,
With needs great or small, know what to do,
Labor fervently in all your prayers,
That you may stand perfect and His will declare.

Come to God with heart made pure,
Then God will your heart assure.
Now come in prayer with faith that is strong,
And go on your way with God-given song.



The Answer of a Good Conscience

Many years ago, when Jesus walked among men, He said, “Suffer the children to come unto me and forbid them not.” A generation ago, Mennonite minister Gideon Yoder said something similar: “Children are the seed corn of the Kingdom.” How early in life to baptize a young person has been a source of much discussion through the years. Let me offer some thoughts for your consideration:

We are well aware that our faith forefathers got their nickname from their steadfast stand on believer’s baptism. They maintained that babies and very young children are safe in God’s grace (Matthew 19:14). They are not yet ready for the rite that gives responsibility and privilege in the body of Christ. Those who disagreed with them, derisively called them re-baptizers (“Anabaptists”). In fact, many of them were martyred for their stand against infant baptism.

Amazingly, among their faith descendants today a wide variation in age for baptism has developed. Some five-year-olds have been baptized.

At the other end of the spectrum, I think some parents approve of their offspring waiting for baptism until their early 20’s, just before marriage. I doubt that Felix Mans (martyred by drowning in the Limmat River in January, 1527) thought he was giving his life for either of those options. He probably would have said about the latter case: “Better *late* than *never!*”

What shall we say to young children of sincere faith who are eager to accept Jesus? Surely we don’t tell them they are too young to choose Christ. We can lead them to peace with God when they tell us what gives them a sense of need. We pray with them and assure them that Jesus is pleased with their desire. We lead them to peace. We can tell them that they are Christians, but that baptism will mean more to them when they are older—and that God approves of waiting. We can explain that in life we must learn patience and times of waiting and that it is better not to demand right away everything that we might want.

Why did God instruct Jewish

parents to give their boys and girls some adult responsibility and privilege at age 12 and 13? I believe it was a question of maturity. Desire in a child before puberty for having Jesus as Savior is mostly awareness of having done a *sinful act* and little, if any, awareness of *the bent in the human heart toward sin*. These two categories of sin are addressed in 1 John 1:8 and 10. When adult desires awaken, the child begins to realize that it is easier to do wrong than to do right.

Here's a final question: *Must someone be lost before they can be found?* I don't think so. I believe that when the child realizes that he has a sin "factory" within, he can bravely face it. That awareness is accompanied by a deeper sense of condemnation than that of merely having told a lie, for example. That is the discomfort of, "I did wrong." Later it can go deeper and say, "Woe is me! I'm a sinner who more easily does what is wrong than what is right." When that awareness comes, to repent *right then and there* does not require a time of being lost. I distinctly remember how I trembled with guilt when I realized that my temper was out of control. I also remember the heightened sense of need that came with that awareness and the relief of confessing *my sinful*

acts and my sinfulness to God.

I invite your comments and hope to publish pertinent material from readers some time later. Think about it.

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Good Manners

In December, Martha and I got an invitation from non-Mennonite neighbors to a come-and-go, 9 o'clock Christmas morning breakfast. We gladly accepted.

December 25 dawned clear and cold. Upon our arrival, we were warmly welcomed. As we entered, we saw on their dining room table a wonderful spread of good food. Soon we ate and were satisfied. It was absolutely delicious! In fact, we felt so pleased that one "thank you" seemed inadequate.

I don't remember just how we expressed our appreciation, but I know we thanked them several times. As we had forewarned our hosts, we wanted to attend the Christmas service at Cedar Crest at 10, so we left fairly soon after eating. As I recall, we offered a final emphatic "Thank you for everything!" Martha had prepared a simple gift of food that we then left with them.

A few days later, we got a written note of thanks in the mail from our hosts for the token of appreciation we had left with them. We had assumed

repeated verbal thanks for the wonderful breakfast was appropriate, and sent no written acknowledgment. But then I wondered, *Did we seem ungrateful? Had we insulted them for their great efforts that morning?*

Is this question a problem for others? Is simple language too simple to convey genuine appreciation? Would we make better sense to our neighbors if we were more effusive? Is verbal thanks enough? After all, the psalmist David use considerable repetition in his praise to God. Does that give us a pattern for this question?

I would like to hear from you. What do you think? How do think

we might convey the most genuine Christian grace in social contacts, especially contacts outside the brotherhood? Is this something that is best lived out, comparable to letting our simple “Yes” be “Yes” and our “No” be “No” (Matthew 5:37)?

Your responses will be noted and, I hope, published at a later date. What do you see as most appropriately fulfilling scriptural admonition, such as: “Let love be without hypocrisy” (Romans 12:9a NASB) and “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..., and be ye thankful” (From Colossians 3:15)? No doubt other Scriptures apply to good manners.

—PLM 

reader response

Re: Honesty—Praise or Punishment?, Feb., p. 8.

This is a very well-written description of the climate in churches that nurtures the level of honesty the author idealizes. “When troubled hearts share with us we dare not focus on doctrine before we pay attention to the heart. When an

individual is hurting and struggling inside, no amount of doctrine or correct theology will heal or change the heart. When the heart is healed and cleansed the hunger for doctrine and theology will follow!” goes right to the core of what love in a brotherhood should look like!

Brian Miller, Middlefield, OH 

The “Necessary” Parts of the Bible

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

In the new openness in the church it is now possible to get down to the real issues about things that are basic and actually matter. The climate of openness and sharing is a great way to develop the spirit of unity, we are told. Prevailing opinion by several main talkers have it that most people are bothered by some “unnecessary parts of the Bible.” Everybody wants an open meeting, they say. Let’s do it the brotherhood way, based on consensus and equality. This imaginary meeting begins.

First off the runway is Bill Piper. He says that where we are going is more important than where we come from, so everyone knows Genesis through Deuteronomy isn’t necessary. The vote carries to remove it.

Jerry Stew then says most people have long felt the prophecies have nothing to do in our day about Jesus coming to bring salvation. He made it clear that we can be saved without having both the major and minor prophets in our Bibles. “Let’s rid ourselves of this unnecessary bulk.” So that is cut out.

Joe Blow pipes up and says that there is a growing feeling that the biblical books of poetry are largely frivolous and fanciful. His comments, he says, represent a number of people who concur that the books from Job to Song of Solomon are not all that necessary. Those are removed.

By now, Tom Cobblestone is emboldened to say what is on his mind. Brother Cobblestone finds it rough going to read through all that dry history in the Old Testament, he says. He then proposes that all the history books be put on the “not necessary” list. Enough people present agree to take that out.

At this point, Bill Piper claims to have a unique overview of the whole biblical landscape and compliments people for their calmness and for the fact that no one was creating any upsetting updrafts that would make tough flying.

Harry Messenhammer asks if he could share a thought to keep the meeting moving. He says he has an original thought which he never thought of before. Bro.

Messenhammer says the simple Gospel is really only about Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. Harry has an appreciation for basics and so he proposes that for the sake of the record all we need is one of the Gospel writers that includes the account of Jesus' trial and death. The rest can be cut out.

Louis Ficklenose said that this really brings him to his point. If the only doctrine necessary to our salvation is given once, then the other portions of overlapping detail are not necessary. So, with that, the axe fell on The Acts of the Apostles and portions of the Epistles.

Fred Stuffer came on next. Bro. Stuffer was just waiting for this moment. He stretched himself up to his full six-foot-two height and acknowledged it is humbling to be part of such a landmark meeting. Bro. Stuffer has it that since one's conduct is not necessary for the most part for the saved life, and it actually is automatic anyhow, the remaining part of the Epistles can be cut out. It is done.

Claude Endslinger says the book of Revelation has long been a bothersome book. Bro. Endslinger said he has heard preachers say that if it isn't in the words of Jesus or verified in the Epistles, it really isn't necessary to our salvation. There was no problem to remove that by nearly 100 per cent.

And with that, the meeting was adjourned with prayer. All that remains of this Bible was the front and back cover and several chapters in Matthew.

What do we have here? This is an exaggerated enlargement of a bit of free thinking among pockets of Christianity. It is the theological contamination of a do-as-you-please form of Christianity. The spreading virus seeks to invalidate and later vacate whole doctrines of biblical verities. When doctrinal vitals are cut out of the body of a given book of the Bible, the literary body of truth of that book can be buried with honors and adorned with a stately grave marker. The marker itself becomes a gratifying monument as to how far we have come (gone) since our forefathers have solemnly tread this ground.

The same people who have ridiculed all that Old Testament history stuff also tend to scorn the book of Revelation. All this has little (and sometimes nothing) to do, they say, with our salvation. In my opinion, such are only a half step away from discounting nonconformity, the woman's head veiling, foot washing, and non-swearing of oaths, and maybe several more "unnecessary and bothersome" beliefs and practices.

The burning question is: "Just how

far can such a person go in cutting out, as it were, any portion of God's sacred word?

In the time of Jeremiah, King Jehoiakim of Judah asked for Baruch, the scribe, to read the message from Jeremiah. The king was in his winter house. A fire was burning on the hearth to offset the day's chill. But he went about to bring a greater chill in the palace. As Baruch read from the scroll, the king took his penknife and cut up the "leaves" and cast them into the fire. Cutting out God's Word or explaining it away doesn't change it. God's Word is indestructible. All kinds of footnotes don't change one jot or one tittle of what is written in His Word.

Modern Israel also has its problems with the Bible. When Isaiah is read in the synagogue, they skip reading chapter 53. Lyndon Overholt served in Jerusalem for a number of years. He said all the members of the Israeli Knesset were given a New Testament. One man, on camera, cut out certain pages and threw them in the trash can. One would think that could arouse some interesting curiosity. Lyndon developed an extended friendship with a Jewish man. At their last visit, he gave him a New Testament. His friend objected. Five minutes later, he called, saying he could accept it after all. What changed? Lyndon wondered. "I called

my rabbi; he said I could accept it if I don't read certain parts. "Excellent! Curiosity has frequently opened the door to the forbidden. By it he could be saved.

Some years ago, Watson Goodman said, "Crossing into Communist Romania in the 1970's, cars were searched for Bibles. Someone asked the Communist guards why they hate the Bible. They said they don't hate the Bible; they fear the Bible. They are afraid of what it will do to them."

Why do some Christians not like some parts of the book of Revelation as it is written? Or parts of 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians 15, Matthew 24, Luke 21, Romans 9, 10, and 11? Oh, some parts are acceptable as they are written. That is the problem. Some of the Bible is accepted as stated; some is not.

Many of our community acquaintances and friends cannot accept the doctrine of assurance of salvation. They don't hate the Bible; they only fear what a literal interpretation will do to them. We have acquaintances who cannot accept the teaching of Scripture concerning the possibility of losing one's salvation after they are saved. They don't hate the Bible; they just fear what a literal interpretation will do to them. We have friends and acquaintances who question portions

of the Bible about future things as it is written, even the words of Christ Himself (The book of Revelation is the words of Christ given to John.) It is how they were raised, not to hate the book of Revelation, but to fear what a literal interpretation will do to them.

What happens when any part of the Bible is discounted? Or intentionally disregarded, or even rejected. Does a weakening of the historical parts strengthen the doctrinal parts? The opposite actually is true. Likewise, any weakening of the Bible at any place will, in time, especially in succeeding generation weaken it randomly elsewhere.

We are aware that those who attempt to discredit creation depicted in the Bible also weaken the salvation in Christ emphasis. Those who weaken prophecies yet to be fulfilled do damage to prophecies already fulfilled. Those who attempt to malign the historical importance of the Scriptures also lessen the impact of its doctrines elsewhere. Either it is all inspired by God and all of equal importance, or else any part can be brought into question and thus set aside without consequence, at least as far as the reductionists are concerned.

Does a disdain for the letters by the Apostles lead us to a more spiritual worship than such as can be derived

from the “spiritual” books of Bible poetry, like the Psalms? No, certainly not. All of the Bible has to do with true spirituality. All of it is conducive to worship and spiritual living.

Does God’s working with Israel serve any good purpose to better comprehend His sovereignty, His person, His character, His attributes and the eternal components of His plan of salvation? Absolutely! The purpose of revelation needs it. Otherwise, great gaps would fail to connect God’s eternal purpose to choosing a people of His own.

Does a depreciation of current unfulfilled prophecy cause a similar depreciation of biblical history? It certainly has and it is still happening under the guise of “enlightenment.” Modern Christianity doesn’t much care about the future, nor about the past.

Some Conservative Anabaptist teachers from 50 years ago and prior generations said in no uncertain terms that faithfulness to the Scriptures allows only one interpretation. Now we aren’t so sure. We are creating a generation who is confused about Bible doctrine. Some give up in despair, not caring which way the ball bounces. One interpretation can allow for a number of possible applications to life, of course. Like nonconformity to the world: There are varied applications of the Bible

principle here. The devotional covering for women, communion, baptism, and nonresistance and have various applications to life. But they are all necessary parts of the whole Bible and are quite easily understood, relative to our application for the Bible as it is stated, and as a whole. That cannot be said for the allegorical interpretation of Bible doctrine, wherever one chooses to apply it.

It would seem likely that when our appreciation for any Bible reading is increased, our understanding rises accordingly. So instead of praying for the opening of our understanding, we should ask God to raise our level of appreciation for unfulfilled prophecy. Or we should pray for an appreciation for the doctrine of assurance of salvation, if we are struggling in that area. Or we should pray to God for an appreciation for holy living, if that is a difficult area for us. Any rise in appreciation gives rise to both our application and our understanding.

We are saying: Pray to God for an *appreciation* of the very words used on any Bible subject. *Thank God* for the very words used on those heretofore difficult subjects. *Visualize* our merciful and faithful God performing His part based on the very words of Scripture. *Wait* on Him to carry it out. *Trust* Him to do all that He has spoken. In some

measure the *eyes* and *heart* of our understanding will be opened after taking the prior steps of appreciation for the Bible as it is stated. Making it hard to understand makes it less appealing to appreciate and it is reduced yet further when it comes to practical applications to life.

“For we know in part and we prophesy in part...” (1 Cor. 13:9). The word “prophesy” here means to speak forth God’s truth, not to utter more future prophetic predictions. We don’t claim to know all about the future and how unfulfilled prophecy will be carried out.

But we do say if we try to force an *understanding* without an *appreciation* for God’s Word, without *thanking* Him for those difficult portions, without *visualizing* God carrying it out as He said, without *waiting* on Him and *trusting* Him, then we’ll need to force an interpretation of some kind as an alternative to letting God be God and depending on Him in *all* He has spoken. If we cannot appreciate a part of God’s Word until we understand it, we are in serious trouble indeed.

We are not talking about what makes sense concerning any piecemeal part of the Old Testament, or of the New Testament. Our burden here is how we approach God and His Word. Our approach to His Word is synonymous to our approach to God

Himself. If we doubt God's Word, we will doubt God Himself. If we believe all of God's Word just as God gave it by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we will be better able to believe God in full measure.

God desires *fellowship*. Our participation in prayer by way of thanksgiving and petition are solicited by God. Additionally, God invites us to participate in His future plan by an explicit faith, without piecemeal rejection of certain passages unsuited to our preferences.

Our God is *informational*. Being relational and seeking fellowship logically follows that from His part, God gives information about Himself and His will for mankind. We call it God's will to man, not only to Christians, but to all people, if they will hear it. If they won't hear it, God's Word is still here for them and us. None is excluded by God from being able to know His will and most certainly to accept His will as revealed in His Word. God has no other plan for those who will not see, and will not hear.

We believe all of God's Word is necessary for our experience in all facets of Christian living. The Bible declares the origin of the world, the principle of sin and the need of a Savior, how to be saved and how to live in victory, the fact of two eternal destinations, and the eventual

judgment of all men. Every part of the Bible is necessary and useful for all men everywhere and for all time. God makes no mistakes, either in what He says, or in what He does. For that He can be fully trusted.


The Bottom Line is that God is sovereign. He has spoken. He will perform His will. God has chosen a people for His own. His eternal purpose includes the promise and provision for a home in heaven for His own. In His mercy and by His grace, God has chosen to give information about some of His future plans. Let us not despise them. It is intended to increase our joy and expectation for a glorious future. Let us rise in our *appreciation* for the entire and complete Bible as it has been preserved and given to us. Let the understanding follow as it can. Where it cannot, let faith be unhindered.

[I do not understand Bro. Aaron to have a "flat Bible." While the first covenant has been replaced by the new covenant (Hebrews 8, 9, and 10), Old Testament writings can still benefit us. Notice how they can impact us in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 and Romans 15:4. Furthermore, I think we all find it meaningful to interpret some passages of Scripture by spiritualizing them. Perhaps we do it too freely, but what about Romans 6 and "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners;...." (James 4:8)?
-Editor]



Second Annual Soldiers of the Cross Evangelism Training Week

Do you find yourself wanting to share your faith, but you're not sure what to say? Are you hesitant to talk to people about your faith, for fear that you will be asked questions that you don't know how to answer? Do you desire to have your faith strengthened, to be stretched, revived, and challenged in your walk with God?

We invite you to join us in Holmes County, Ohio, June 23 to May 1, 2014. The cost is \$275 per person. To request an application, or for more information contact Jay Stoltzfus, 330-473-5145. 

Ministers' Meeting Announcements

The annual Beachy Amish Ministers' Meetings are scheduled April 8-10, 2014, in Yoder, KS, hosted by the Center, Cedar Crest and Arlington congregations.

The theme of these meetings is "Guarding the Gift Entrusted to You," with topics from 2 Timothy 4.

The meetings will be broadcast on the Midwest Conference Line and live streamed on the internet. To listen on the conference line, call 712-432-8774 and enter ID# 481014. To watch on the internet go to: <http://www.ustream.tv/user/sanfordyoder>. Both the audio and the video will be archived so that you may access them later. More details to follow.

- **To request time in a business session, contact James Shetler: jameshetler84@gmail.com or 620-728-9926.**

- **To request display tables or booth space, contact Nathan Nisly: natemarj@gmail.com or 620-728-9925.**

- **If you plan to attend and have not yet received an invitation, contact Harry Shenk: harry@sturdi-bilt.com or 620-899-1438 **

The Rest of the Story

David L. Miller, Partridge, KS

Recently when Paul Leroy Miller attended a Kansas wedding, he brought the Sunday morning message at Center Church. He entitled the message, "The Rest of the Story." He cited incidents from Scripture that from a human perspective were very negative at the time of their happening. But sometimes through God's sovereignty and providence such things turned out much better than was expected.

The lesson that I want to remember is that the only right thing for me to do when bad things happen that are out of my control is to trust the One who has ultimate control of the past, present, and future.

This message is one of the reasons I feel led to write a story that illustrates that point. Here's the story:

A young married Anabaptist couple eagerly welcomed the arrival of their firstborn. Fairly early, it became apparent that their daughter might be handicapped. Only those who have experienced such disappointment can fully empathize with such parents. But the parents continued to trust our Heavenly Father who had examined this trial and had allowed it before they had to face it.

The Lord gave this couple four more children who had no apparent handicaps. Then another daughter was born who obviously was very special in terms of the attention and care that she needed. Both special daughters were non-verbal, requiring a level of care that the family found very difficult to provide. It was at this point and after considerable soul agony that they made the difficult decision to place them in the care of a facility to better meet their ongoing needs.

The parents stayed in touch with these girls with regular visits. Things seemed to be working well until one day when the parents were notified that the younger daughter had an abnormal growth in her abdomen, presumably a tumor. It is hard to imagine how devastating it was to the parents and their family to later find out that their non-verbal, severely-handicapped daughter and sister was pregnant.

This could mean only one thing. A male attendant had violated this helpless resident. Employees included white and non-white men. The news media diligently reported these unusual developments. Under such

circumstances it is not surprising that terminating the pregnancy was strongly recommended.

The national media was vocal and very critical that the parents who were the legal guardians did not consent to abortion. When the baby was born the medical attendants looked long and hard for some expected abnormality. The family gratefully acknowledges that the institution was careful not to disclose names of the victim or her family in the widespread publicity it was given.

With the prospect of being found out without a voluntary confession, a Caucasian employee confessed his guilt. He has served a significant prison term for his conduct that was not only immoral, but also illegal.

The baby was born prematurely, but fared well. The handicapped mother had a married brother with a young son and daughter. They wanted more children but medical reality dictated otherwise. At some point earlier their young daughter announced that God was going to give them a baby. She did not seem to have any idea how this would happen, but seemed very confident that God would honor her request. It was this young family who eagerly welcomed this healthy baby into their home where he was adopted.

He had the blessing and security of growing up in an atmosphere of love


and acceptance. During the course of the offender's imprisonment he contacted the parents of the helpless victim. He confessed his wrong doing and sought reconciliation.

The son is now a young adult who is serious about his Christian life. He has had contact with his biological father, but seems loyal and supportive of his adoptive mother. The adoptive father died of cancer two years ago.

The two older siblings are married and have young families. The widowed mother feels very fortunate to have this son to help alleviate her loneliness. This son is well aware of his background and is willing to share his life story when asked to do so.

This young man seems to have found his niche in the work world. He has worked for three years at the same job that requires basic carpentry skills.

The victim's parents express sincere appreciation for the support they have felt from the church family and a wider circle of friends. This is being written with the approval of the grandparents, the adoptive mother, and the young man himself.

In retrospect, the parents feel that God has made something beautiful out of a very unwelcome situation. If someone would need further contact, Eldon Bontrager, grandfather, offers his phone number: 620-538-3237. Grant Bontrager, the young man himself, is available at 620-538-2568. 

marriages

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

Otto-Godwin

Bro. Mark, son of Daniel and Viola Otto, Arthur, IL, and Sis. Robyn, daughter of Rob and Sharon Godwin, Mattoon, IL, at Trinity Christian Fellowship, on August 10, 2014, by Wilbur Gingerich.

Schrock-Miller

Bro. Matthew, son of Paul and Mattie Ann Schrock, Kalona, IA, and Sis. Kathryn, daughter of Crist and Linda Miller, Townville, PA, at Plainview Gospel Church, Guys Mills, PA, on June 21, 2013, by Delmar Bontrager.

Yoder-Plank

Bro. Grant, son of Nevin and Wanda Yoder, Sheldon, WI, and Sis. Emily, daughter of Lewis and Mary Plank, Montezuma, GA, at Montezuma Mennonite Church on Nov. 15, 2013, by Donny Swartzentruber.

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Freeman and Shaena (Bontrager), Kalona, IA, first child and dau., Monica Taylor, Dec. 14, 2014.

Bowser, Ben and Sharla (Miller), Harrison, AR, second child and dau., Shiloh Ann, Jan. 31, 2014.

Coblentz, Marlin and Amy (Stutzman), Kalona, IA, fifth child, fourth dau., Ariana Hope, July 27, 2013.

Graber, Cliff and Mary (Graber), Odon, IN, second child and son, Blake Carson, Jan. 3, 2014.

Helmuth, Matthew and Rosanna (Schrock), Lovington, IL, first, second and third children, two daughters and one son, Athena Faith, born May 3, 2007; Danny Ray, born Aug. 27, 2008, and Karah Kay Anne, born Oct. 2, 2009. Adoption completed may 2, 2013.

King, James and Anita (Stoltzfus), Narvon, PA, second child, first son, Peyton Thomas, Feb. 4, 2014.

Kirkman, Ben and Malinda (Knepp), Montgomery, IN, first child and dau., Adara Rose, Dec. 27, 2013.

Knepp, Stanley and Shannon (Yoder), Loogootee, IN, sixth child, first dau., Andrea Rose, Jan. 1, 2014.

Lapp, Thaddeus and Edith (Mast), Malta, OH, second child, first dau., Brianna Rose, Jan. 21, 2014.

Miller, Glendon and Lisa (Yutzy), Huntsville, AR, fourth child, first son, Tayler Levi, Jan. 22, 2014.

Miller, Marc and Julia (Mast), Crossville, TN, first child and son, Tyler Lane, Jan. 28, 2014.

Overholt, Travis and Lisa (Yoder), Kalona, IA, (presently serving in Dominican Republic) third child, second dau., Kelsi Hannah, July 23, 2013.

Petersheim, Philip and Marla (Yoder), Meyersdale, PA, seventh child, third son, Lincoln Grant, Feb. 12, 2014.

Slabaugh, Elmer and Julia (Miller), Lott, TX, second child, first son, Flint Watson, Jan. 24, 2014.

Stauffer, Jacob and Marie (Showalter), Mt. Pleasant Mills, PA, sixth child, second son, Jeremiah Jacob, Dec. 16, 2013.

Stoll, Scott and Suzanne (Troyer), Bremen, IN, fourth child, second dau., Abrielle Jana, Feb. 26, 2014.

Stoltzfus, Arlen and Angie (Stoltzfus), Morgantown, PA, first child and daughter, Maliyah Raine, Jan. 26, 2014.

Stoltzfus, Daryl and Megan (Troyer), Advance, MO, second child and son, Braden Carter, Feb. 23, 2014.

Stoltzfus, James and Mary Ellen (Stoltzfus), Morgantown, PA, sixth child, fourth dau., Jennica Faith, Nov. 2, 2013.

Strubhar, Carl and Lillian (Miller), Wasilla, AK, fourth child, first son, Gabriel Zeb, Jan. 5, 2014.

Troyer, D. J. and Maria (Yoder), Harrison, AR, first child and son, Alexander Wade, Dec. 4, 2013.

Wagler, Dale and Heidi (Wingard), Washington, IN, fifth child, second son, Darell Freeman, Jan. 26, 2014.

Yoder, Enos and Susie (Yoder), Sullivan, IL, third child, second dau., Olivia Sue, Jan. 10, 2014.

Yoder, Keith and Julia (Stoll), Whiteville, TN, third child and dau., Kierra Jewel, Jan. 17, 2014.

Yoder, Morris and Beth (Martin), Montezuma, GA, second child and son, Weston David, Oct. 21, 2013.

Zook, Jonathan and Marilyn (King), Gap, PA, fifth child, fourth dau., Marissa Hope, Jan. 9, 2014.

ordination

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

Bro. Leland Wagler, 44, of Newberry, IN, was ordained bishop of Mt. Nebo Mennonite church, Newberry, IN, on Feb. 9, 2014. The ordination was held at the Graber Community Building. Preordination messages were given by Perry Miller, Goodspring, TN. The charge was given by Thomas Mast, assisted by Perry Miller and Eugene Eicher. Leonard Stoll was also in the lot.

Beachy, Edna E. (Tice) (Kinsinger), 87, died Jan. 22, 2014. She was born Feb. 26, 1926, daughter of the late Eli D. and Mary L. (Yoder) Tice.

She was a member of Mt. View Mennonite Church. A dedicated homemaker, she faithfully supported sewing circle and other charitable sewing projects to benefit third world countries. For many years she graded lessons for prisoners enrolled in Gospel Echoes Bible courses. She was also “Mom” to many “fresh air” children.

She was predeceased by her first husband, Eli D. Kinsinger on on March 14, 1979 and by her second husband Ernest N. Beachy on Oct. 11, 2011. She is survived by three daughters: Mary, wife of Raymond Yoder, Grantsville, MD; Nona, wife of Menno J. Yoder, Salisbury, PA; and Ruth, wife of Robert D. Yoder, Grantsville; and a daughter-in-law, Shirley Kinsinger, Grantsville, MD; 19 grandchildren, 24 great grand children, and three great great grandchildren. Other survivors include siblings: Henry Tice, Lena Beachy, Sara Tice, Verda Tice, Martha Beachy, all of Grantsville, MD; Miriam Bender, Bittinger, MD, and Rachel Wolfe, Bruceton Mills, WV.

She is also survived by two step-sons: Dan Beachy and wife Emma, Philip Beachy and wife Ruth, and five step daughters: Naomi Petersheim, wife of Paul; Dorcas Yoder, wife of Joseph; and Anna Tice, wife of Dan; Mary Jane Yoder,

wife of William; and Miriam Bruno, wife of Joseph; 29 step grand children, 35 step great grandchildren and numerous step great great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by by her son, Marvin, on Feb. 21, 1989.

The funeral was held on Jan. 26, with Merl Beachy, Jerry Yoder, Tim Yoder and David Kauffman serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Coblentz, Raymond M., 86, of Freeport (Antrim), Ohio, died Jan. 11, 2014, at his home. He was born in Hartville, OH, on Nov. 27, 1927, son of the late Menno J. and Mary M. (Troyer) Coblentz.

He was a faithful member of Antrim Mennonite Church. He was a farmer and enjoyed hunting and traveling.

On March 13, 1947, he was married to Mary N. Schrock. She died on Oct. 1, 2009. Surviving is a daughter, Kathryn Miller, Stark City, MO; two sons, Norman (Dorothy) Coblentz, Quaker City, OH; Don (Lorene) Coblentz, Freeport, OH; five brothers: Emmanuel Coblentz, Sugarcreek; Jonas Coblentz, Conneatville, PA; Henry Coblentz, Fredericktown; Eli Coblentz, Bryant, IN; Wallace Coblentz, Unionville, MO; four sisters: Nancy Coblentz, Belize City, Belize, Central America; Anna Schwartz, Berne, IN; Amanda Raber, Suceava, Romania, and Esther Ranali, North Canton, OH; 24 grandchildren and 30

great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by two brothers: Menno Coblentz and Daniel Coblentz; a sister, Mary Yoder, and a son-in-law, Enos Miller.

The funeral was held on Jan. 16, in the Antrim Mennonite church with Jason Miller officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Hostetler, Samuel H., 77, of Linn, MO, died Jan. 16, 2014, at his home. He was born in Elkhart County, IN, on Sept. 18, 1936, son of the late Henry and Sovilla (Weirich) Hostetler.

He was a member of Sunnyside A.M. Church, Sarasota, FL. In 1988, he was ordained as deacon in the Mint Hill Mennonite Church, Linn, MO. Samuel was involved in humanitarian work in Honduras, where he helped construct two bridges. He was administrator for 11 years at the Cedar Crest Children's Home in Osage County, MO. Samuel loved to be around people, spending time with his family and grandchildren visiting and singing.

On Oct. 23, 1958, he was married to Martha Elnora Yoder in Topeka, IN. She survives. Other survivors include seven children: Danny Hostetler and wife Verna, Linn; David Hostetler and his wife Joy, Jeromesville, OH; Duane Hostetler and wife Anna Mae, Malta, OH; Darlene Miller and her husband Ervin, Linn; Daryl Hostetler and wife Ruth Ann, Linn; Delbert Hostetler, Sarasota, FL; Donnie Hostetler and wife Sarah, Jefferson City, MO; 21 grandchildren,

eight great grandchildren, a brother, Eli Hochstetler, and wife, Elizabeth, Hutchinson, KS; three sisters, Mary Mast, Ethridge, TN; Alice Bontrager and husband Abe, Kenton, IN; and Susie Miller, Middlebury, IN.

He was preceded in death by one brother, Daniel Hochstetler, two sisters, Fannie Dykes and Elizabeth Nisley, one daughter-in-law, Esther Hostetler.

The funeral was held on Jan. 19, with Dennis Miller and Bill Yoder serving. Burial was in the Mint Hill church cemetery.

Yoder, Elmer L., 71, of Hartville, OH (formerly of Quaker City, OH), died Jan. 19, 2014, at the Aultman Hospital in Canton, Ohio. He was born Oct. 19, 1942, in Greentown, OH, son of the late Levi and Katie (Miller) Yoder.

He was a member of Bethany Mennonite Church, Hartville. He was a farmer and masonry worker.

On Oct. 24, 1963, he was married to Amanda Troyer. She died April 20, 2007. Surviving are three daughters: Mary Yoder and Alta (Michael) Weaver, both of Quaker City, OH; Susan (Anthony) Beachy, Maryland; two sons: Dale Yoder, Cambridge, OH; and Elmer, Yoder, Jr., Quaker City, and nine grandchildren. On August 12, 2012, he was married to Miriam (Miller) Yoder of Hartville, OH. Step children surviving are: Mary Jo (Mose) Miller and Norma (James) Miller, both of Hartville, OH; and Juanita (Gary) Hershberger, Alliance, OH; John (Holly) Byler, Greentown, OH; and

Vernon (Tracie) Byler, Hartville. Other survivors include 13 step grandchildren, one step great grandchild, a sister, Alta (Mose) Troyer, Hartville; two brothers: Ernie Yoder, Uniontown; and Freeman (Pat) Yoder, Alliance, several nieces and nephews and cousins.

The funeral was held on Jan. 14, at the Antrim Mennonite Church with Dave Slabaugh and Jason Miller officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.


Yoder, Rhoda C., 91, of Grantsville, MD, died at WMHS Regional Medical Center, Cumberland, MD, on Feb. 5, 2014. She was born Sept. 17, 1922, daughter of the late Elmer and Sadie (Hershberger) Schrock.

She was a homemaker and a member of Mt. View Mennonite Church.

On August 30, 1942, she was married to Crist H. Yoder. He died Oct. 29, 2003. Survivors include sons: Paul Yoder and wife Dorothy, Salisbury, PA; David Yoder

and wife, Esther, Grantsville, MD; Mark Yoder and wife, Debbie, Felton, PA; daughters: Lois (John, Jr.) Yoder, Orrville, OH; Dorcas (Pete) Mancinta, Cambridge, MD; Ruth Erma Yoder, Grantsville; Naomi (Ernest) Showalter, Waynesboro, VA; Anna (Beryl) Schrock, Grantsville; Rachel (William) Benneman, West Jefferson, OH; 29 grandchildren and 33 great grandchildren; one brother, Homer Schrock and wife Debbie, Cochranville, PA; one sister, Thelma Beiler, Grantsville; one sister-in-law, Miriam Schrock, Grantsville.

She was preceded in death by six brothers: Evan, Nevin, Simon, Raymond, Herman, and Olen Schrock, and two sisters: Lela Yoder and Orpha Schrock, and two grand children: Kathy Yoder and Kerri Yoder.

The funeral was held at Mt. View Church on Feb. 8, with David Kauffman, Merl Beachy, and Menno Yoder serving. Burial was in the church cemetery. 

observations

One recent editorial (*The Hutchinson News*) is of interest to senior citizens who drive. A decade ago, federal safety officials worried that older car drivers would cause an increase in traffic accidents. They based their fears on the aging baby boomer population.

The editor says, “Don’t count out

older drivers; they have proven their detractors wrong. From 1997 to 2012, fatal crash rates fell 42% for older and 30% for middle aged ones, according to a safety study. The final sentence in the editorial is: “Now if we could just get the middle-aged drivers to slow down.”

I am well aware that aging affects one’s ability to drive safely. The oldest

person in Partridge is widow Louise Taylor, 91. She seems spritely and often walks three blocks to the post office. She used to drive her car, but recently she apparently was unable to have her driver's license renewed. This winter she has come to the post office using a walker "for safety," she said.

In some ways old age may not be welcome. But there is only one alternative to aging: to die before we are old. And we do well to remember that God wants to guide and bless us at every stage of the journey. It is a happy prospect to remember that there is a land where we'll never grow old.

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The editorial page of *The Hutchinson News* also includes a column by local persons who are not employed by the newspaper. "The Western Front" is a section where readers are encouraged to share their opinions.

Henry Ford is remembered for making the automobile affordable to ordinary people by mass production. His philosophy definitely influenced the larger manufacturing industry. Local columnist, Kathie Moore (*The Hutchinson News*) quotes Ford as follows:

"There is one rule for the industrialist: Make the best quality goods possible at the lowest possible

cost paying the highest wages possible."

"A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business."

"A business absolutely devoted to service will have only one worry about service: They will be embarrassingly large."

"To do more for the world than the world does for you—that is success."

• • • • •

Not everyone is caught up in the women's liberation movement: Syndicated columnist Kathleen Parker says: "Our failure to recognize the difference between men and women is undermining much of what makes us a civilized nation." (*The Hutchinson News*)

—DLM

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I noticed a book by Dale C. Allison, entitled: *The Luminous Disk: Finding God in the Deep, Still Places*. I read an introduction but haven't read the book, although it sounds interesting. The author, a Bible scholar, explores selected modern conditions in our environment so common that they have become invisible. One of these conditions is the separation of most of us from the natural world.

Some people don't understand where our food comes from and that, if it doesn't rain for long enough, we will eventually go hungry. Several

years ago, we had a late spring freeze that killed baby birds in our yard. That summer, we had noticeably fewer birds in our area.

The rising level of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere gets a lot of attention in the press. One of the results of that increase, which we don't hear much about, is the proliferation of plant life that needs carbon dioxide to grow. One study indicated that there has been an 11% increase in global foliage since 1982.

I'd be hard pressed to identify bird species by their flight patterns, but some people can. Dedicated deer hunters study behavior patterns of deer to maximize their success. It was only in recent years that I caught on that a high percentage of car/deer collisions happen during the annual rut. Most of us have schedules that are dictated by factors other than our natural world. After all, the day isn't over when it gets dark. We just need to move inside and turn on the lights. The list of illustrations goes on and on.

Several things come to mind as I think about these things:

- Policy is set and laws are increasingly enacted by persons who have diminished connection to our natural world. For instance, some towns have laws prohibiting any sort of livestock, including rabbits, within

city limits. Or how about the horses used for transportation which need to wear a sort of diaper to mitigate the fallout of equine traffic on city streets?

- The more we become disconnected from our natural world, the more we rely on what others say rather than on what we observe.

- This shift is not just "out there." We have been affected, some more and some less, but we've experienced this shift in our communities. I'd like to cultivate the opportunities available to stay connected to our natural world in meaningful ways.



There are no flags in our church auditorium. Official flag protocol says that if there are multiple flags hanging in a church, the United States flag should be displayed in the position of superior prominence. Many churches display both the U. S. flag and the Christian flag. In all cases that I've observed, which are not very numerous, these flags are displayed with the U. S. flag occupying the superior position on the speaker's right hand side and the Christian flag on the left.

About ten years ago, we attended a Vacation Bible school program at a local Baptist church, the children entered carrying the American flag, follow by the Christian flag. The flags were positioned according to

established protocol. The children recited a pledge of allegiance to the U. S. flag first, then the pledge of allegiance to the Christian flag.

We do well to cultivate gratitude for the opportunities and freedoms we have. However, Jesus taught us that it is impossible to serve two masters

equally. Let's be reminded that our primary allegiance to the Kingdom of Heaven will find expression in various ways, including how we pursue or don't pursue conflict resolution personally, within the Kingdom of Heaven, and nationally.

—RJM



What Women Want From the Church: Eden's Design

Anita Yoder, Poland

My faith tradition is conservative Mennonite and I choose to live my faith in this sub/counter-cultural church. This is where I've experienced that God's design for men and women is one that works and allows us to thrive and come closer to Eden's perfection. **It's a creaking, groaning globe we live on, far from Eden, but God's still in charge, and He's still a good designer.**

In my culture, the average young woman is married by age 23 or 24, and she is usually a mother in another year or two, with more babies coming later. Conservative Mennonite women spend large amounts of their energy doing what women do better than men: have

babies, nurture children, and love and support their husband in many creative and amazing ways.

However, being single and childless at nearly forty, I'm an aberration. Being average is over-rated, but what's a single girl to do in church when most of her friends have wonderful husbands and several children? But singlehood is another subject for another day. Back to women and the church.

I have time and gifts and abilities that could serve well as a preacher or a public speaker. I have learned how to use words effectively and how to organize them to do what they need to. But for heaven's sake—for the Kingdom of God's sake—this is not a woman's greatest or noblest or most

needed accomplishment.

Although being a pastor is not an option in my church—and I'm glad of it—my gifts haven't been squelched. I've been given safe places in which to use my gifts, with the support and encouragement of many good men.

Jesus' treatment of women in Palestine gave them dignity and significance that no one else had ever given them. He was counter-cultural then, and He still is. He is tender with our weaknesses and affirms our strengths.

What women need the church to do is to be as Christ to her women: to give the protection that allows them to bloom fully into Eden's design. What women need from the church is a restoration of our design as nurturers and helpers and supporters. This includes affirming women's gifts and protecting their vulnerability. It includes believing their sorrowful stories and defending their tears. It means acknowledging their beauty and affirming their modesty, not objectifying them.

When women are objects, everything goes crazy. When men want a model to dangle on their arms, and a pretty face to look at, or a body to admire, or a person to control, women become something they were not created to be. Women were designed for relationship and

heart connection. We are most alive, useful, and true to Eden's design in these capacities. Objectifying women starts the crazy cycle of proving ourselves, hating ourselves, then screaming about rights and equality.

A woman is most useful, alive, and close to Eden's design when she's being a counselor and comfort, a sounding board and giver of hugs. When God called men to be pastors, He was saving women from themselves and their own innate power.

A woman has power but the greatest power is that which relinquishes itself as Jesus did when He washed feet and served breakfast. There is no limit to ministry when one is intentional about being a servant. I know this is true, but I sometimes stumble and forget and demand honor that is not suited for a servant. I tend to resent lowliness and hiddenness and want to rest instead of work. But *more servant and less princess* is how I really want to live, however poorly I remember it.

In Christ's body, no one is the greatest. Every part has its own role—its own glorious, unique contribution that God dreamed up for them. Women can find enormous satisfaction in doing things that men can't do. Isn't there a place for

everyone to be useful and alive? Isn't that how He designed us to be?

God's ways are wonderful and infinite but I am mystified as to how a woman can extrapolate a calling from God to pastor a church, even while she claims to be a student of and guided by the Word of God. I maintain that if Jesus and Paul could meet any of us this evening in any town on the globe, they'd greet us warmly and laugh with us and tell us stories, but they wouldn't rescind anything they said 2,000 years ago.

Why should they? The original design still works.

What would happen if men and women started looking for lower, more hidden places of service? What if we would stop name-dropping and ogling the most popular speaker or writer, and look instead at the homely, common person beside us and recognize the gold that's hidden in them?

Seems like that's what Jesus did.

Seems like that's what He'd like the church to do.



A Plea for Help

Enos D. Stutzman, Plain City, OH

Calvary Publications has received a letter from a twenty-one year old man living in Longview, Washington, who is looking for fellowship with a conservative, plain Anabaptist congregation. There are some such fellowships in the state of Washington, but, unfortunately, they are in the eastern part of the state, hundreds of miles away. Longview is located on the western side, a few miles from the Oregon-Washington border.

“Please think about planting congregations in this region. Washington is lost in darkness and in need of the Light,” entreats our friend. Woodworking, construction, dairy cattle, and poultry farming are given as possible livelihoods.

If anyone has an interest in responding to this request, you can contact K. C. Jacob Nofsinger, 2614 48th Ave., Longview, WA 98632-5120.

Who will answer this Macedonian call?



Daddy's Chair

Darlene Miller, Linn, MO

It stands forlorn, abandoned there,
A simple thing—an empty chair.
A simple thing? Perhaps it's true,
Yet when it brings fond thoughts of you
A priceless thing it is to me—
A chair befitting royalty!

Through all the years, through bad and good,
Always, always—there it stood!
The “Daddy’s chair”! How well we knew.
That special chair belonged to you.
The chairs themselves—they went and came.
But always one would bear your name.

From there you loved, from there you led,
From there God’s Word you daily read.
From there you shared your love of song.
And taught your children right from wrong.
Now in my memory you’re still there,
Ensconed, as then, in “Daddy’s chair.”

I picture you in Heaven now
And I believe you’ve found, somehow,
A special chair, a hallowed space
Where you can look on Jesus’ face,
And there with voice all clear and new,
You praise Him as you love to do!

Although we mourn that empty chair
We would not call you back from there.
The tears at times so freely flow,
But we’re so glad that you could go.
And though we miss your special smile,
We’ll see you in a little while.

[A beautiful tribute to Sam Hostetler, whose obituary appears in this issue, from his daughter, Darlene.]



Drop the Scissors

Floyd Stoltzfus, Belize City, Belize

Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 gives a four-aspect assignment for missions, commonly called The Great Commission. We are to go, teach, baptize, and teach converts to observe all that Jesus commanded. The burden of this article results from my long-time interaction with youth.

Many sisters in our churches today are deeply committed to faithfully wearing a head covering along with uncut hair. Also, we have many brethren (including young men) who have strong biblical convictions on this teaching and practice. However, there are those women who trim or cut their hair. They justify themselves by saying something like this: “The Bible does not clearly indicate that it is wrong for a woman to cut her hair and besides, you can still have long hair if the bottom is trimmed or cut.”

May I call you to repentance, drop the scissors, and be obedient to biblical teaching!

A missionary wrote to me some time ago, “What Bible basis do Christian women have for not cutting their hair? In Kenya, we

struggle with the issue of native women cutting their hair for cultural reasons. We ask the schools to exempt our girls from the practice of cutting their hair and shaving the head.” This has strengthened my resolve that the clarity of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 lays a firm basis for women and girls to have uncut hair.

My prayer is that the following articles will strengthen the Bible command of uncut hair and the wearing of a sizable covering or veiling (without decorative display of lace or flowery design) for sisters in the church.

Again I plead, Drop the scissors, wear a covering or veiling that covers well, and enjoy surrender to the Holy Spirit.

This is a message for those at home and abroad, regardless of nationality or race, as the Apostle Paul wrote, “For this cause have I sent unto you, Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach in every

church” (1 Cor. 4: 17); and also, “... the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37).

THE VEILING FOR CHRISTIAN WOMEN

By J. Otis Yoder (1914-2003)

There are several basic REASONS in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, why the veiling for Christian women should be worn today.

First, there are ABIDING BASES FOR THE VEIL

There is a divine order. “Now I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of every woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (verses 2, 3). The divine order the Apostle sets before us is God is all in all. Christ follows, and He is the Mediator between God and man. This is not to say that He is any less than God. However, there is an intimate relationship between God and man. The Apostle points out that this is God’s order for human beings. There is God. There is Christ. There is man. There is woman. The veil is based on this divine order.

There is a social relation. “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman is of the man. Neither was

the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man” (verses 8, 9). One can easily find by going back to the Genesis account that the man was first in creation, and the head. He received his responsibility from his Creator.

Harold Martin writes, “This principle is not intended for the man to be bossy or domineering who thinks all the wheels of the home must turn to suit his pleasure. The man is not to become a tyrant! Rather, it is a matter of shouldering responsibility.” *


The woman was created second and brought to the man to fulfill her role. The social relationship God has set up cannot be ignored except to our hurt. The veil is based on this social relation God has established in creation.

There is a natural distinction. “Doth not nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given to her for a covering” (verses 14, 15). We ought to sit at the feet of nature and listen and learn. There is a natural distinction between the sexes. Long hair is a disgrace to a man and it is to be short. Woman’s hair is to be uncut; it is her glory.

* [I have added this quote from Harold S. Martin. FS]

(To be continued. The article “The

Veiling for Christian Women” is used by permission from Heralds of Hope, Inc., and is excerpted from the book, Glory in the Lord; Expositions of 1 Corinthians, by J. Otis Yoder, who was

a devoted Anabaptist Mennonite. He taught and wrote from a deep sense of conviction that the Bible is our word from God. I highly recommend this excellent commentary. FS) 

Headship and Submission

Courtney Koehn, Willcox, AZ

The concept of headship in the Bible comes from the authority of the preeminence of Christ. “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible. Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him...And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:16, 18).

The Word of God requires a believing man to be in submission to the headship of his Savior. The Christian man is to be the head of his family according to the pattern that Christ is the head of the body of believers. This principle is worthy of all diligence and should be in the forefront of our thoughts about our responsibility. It is what changes a young man when he is married.

Something changes even though he is still young and inexperienced and is still the same person he was before. There is a burden to shoulder that was not there before he was married.

The charge of our duty to build a family is written in the heavenly realms by Christ’s example and revealed in the Word of God. A man is responsible to implement the heavenly design for his family. It requires a complete sacrifice of the selfish nature for a Christian husband to be worthy of the reverence and respect of his wife. This is an exact reflection of the humble sacrifice of the sinless Lamb of God. Herein lies the difference between the authority of headship versus commanding lordship.

There are two aspects of authority that build relationships and enhance communication. These two must be coupled together to be successful. They are understanding our family

members and humble sacrifice of one's own desires for the good of the whole. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

We have the perfect example to follow in the discharge of our responsibility of headship. Jesus was completely willing from the start to make the ultimate sacrifice: the sinless one for the sinful, the righteous one for the unrighteous, and the able one for the ones trapped in utter inability. His sacrifice required complete humility, which empowered Him with very effective authority. This concept holds true in all leadership, both natural and spiritual. Husbands and fathers, our challenge lies in having a burden for our homes. Will we take responsibility and shoulder it? Why should we fear when we have the perfect example to look to and from Whom we may receive help?

Our physical needs are to be uncovered when meditating, speaking, singing, and praying about the heavenly things and when discharging our responsibility as spiritual leaders to our wives and children. This is the sign of taking our headship seriously. The Scripture gives headship only to Christ over the body and to the husband over his wife. No other leader receives this privilege and awesome responsibility. Headship is delegated to no one else,

only to Christ and to His reflection in the Christian husband to his family.

But what shall we do with our failures? Our Example was completely sinless and perfect in knowledge. We are fallible and have limited understanding and vision. How shall such poor, undone creatures fulfill and discharge such an awesome responsibility? It can be done by following the living Word that quickens mortal man. This requires a great deal of humility. It requires confession and leadership in repenting and turning to the cleansing and healing blood of the Lamb. It requires a living example of being the savior of the body. In the family, this means being the first one to confess and find the way to God, even though someone else may have the greater fault. It also lends credibility to one's words and bestows authority that is worthy of respect. But only when a man is holding his head, Jesus Christ, in his heart can he receive nourishment to his joints and hands, and then being knit together with his wife and children, he inspires them to increase with the ways of God (See Col. 2). It is difficult for the carnal, reasoning mind to believe that such humbling will lead to more love, respect, and warmth of spirit, which we all desire. Nevertheless, the witness is true. Will we believe it?

The Scriptures also require the Christian woman to be submitted to

her husband after the same pattern. Again the sign is given in the Word. If a Christian woman is not holding her husband in reverence, respecting his leadership in the same way that Christian men hold their Head, Jesus Christ, then she is not worthy of wearing the head covering. The reality of the symbol is not in her heart and spirit. She, by the grace of God, should be able to hold her husband as he holds Christ. Just as there are no conditions placed on a man's reverence and obedience to Christ, so there are no conditions placed on the Christian woman's respect to her husband's leadership. Just as the Christian man can place no limits on his submission to Christ, so the Christian woman can justify no condition as worthy of withholding her respect and reverence toward her husband. The only place she can stand painfully and humbly apart from him is when he intentionally hardens his heart against the grace of God and violates the law of God. If the husband is a believing man, he is worthy of respect in every area of life because of his God-given position. This does not mean that women would not be able to lead, nor are they inferior in understanding and perception. It means God has not given them this responsibility or placed them in this role.

Even if the husband is not a believer in Christ's work on Calvary and does

not have the grace of the Savior in his life, he is still worthy of respect in every area that it is possible to give it to him because of the plan of God. The Christian woman with an unconverted husband will receive a blessing by following the pattern set in the Word. Her influence will be positive, not negative, to their relationship. Her impact on her children will gender respect to their father. As difficult as this may seem, it is God's order.

But what shall she do with his faults and deficiencies? Again the answer is to follow Jesus' pattern. To graciously receive direction and guidance in all areas of life from a man with whom she is intimately acquainted and to respect his direction and hold it in reverence requires much humility and deference. However, according to the plan of God, the blessing will be hers, and the sign of the head covering will be true if she continues to respect her husband and allows him to take the lead whether she completely agrees with him or not. The scriptural approach is to defer to her husband and allow him to affect the guidance. The Bible says Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. This is the godly woman's attitude. If she holds her head in reverence with admiration, there is a respectful time and place to share her ponderings that will lead to changes in her husband that

may be scarcely noticed by the casual observer. This will increase the bond and the nourishment she receives from him.

This is God's wonderful plan. It has worked and will work in every age, in every culture, for every person who believes in it. It is the law of God for the well-being of the earthly relationships and the spiritual walk

of the Christian family. As God's law applies to Christ and His body, the church, so it applies to a man and his wife.

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Christian Courtship Concepts

Luke Bennetch, Fredericksburg, PA

Godly marriages that last a lifetime are becoming scarce in the world. As a godly people we are concerned that the youth growing up in our homes find godly life companions and establish homes on the solid foundation of the Word of God. Courtship is an important time of finding God's will for marriage.

Before beginning courtship, youth should establish a strong relationship with God. They need to know the joy of salvation. They should learn the blessing of worshipping their Creator God. Bible reading and prayer should become daily routines.

Youth should also build good relationships with their parents. While parents bear a lot of responsibility for this, youth have a part to play to connect with their parents in openness. They should choose to

love, respect, and appreciate their parents. They should value their parents' experience and wisdom. They should seek parental advice before courting.

Good habits should be established in youth. Learning to work, to save money, to be on time, and to be sociable should be accomplished before considering courtship. Self-control, along with temperance, must be learned.

Young people should also consider voluntary service opportunities. Many good life skills are learned through mission work, teaching school, helping busy mothers, and helping in relief work. Youth should learn sacrificial giving. Having a good job but giving a hefty portion to the church is a healthy discipline. Choosing to spend less on ourselves and more on God's Kingdom yields

bountiful blessings and honors God above self!

Youth should seek God's face as they consider the questions of courtship. *Who? When? How should I approach this?* Prayer needs to be a priority. Consider Abraham's servant as he prayed for God's direction to find a wife for Isaac. God blessed and prospered that effort. Youth should not pursue companionship based on feelings or good looks.

We should also remember that the purpose of courtship is to find a life companion. It is not just a party, a fun time, or a social status to enjoy. Its purpose is to find the will of God for our lives. Part of this is to understand whether this relationship will be harmonious for years to come. Is there enough commonality of goals, aspirations, and convictions?

There are two extremes that can be taken on the subject of courtship. One is the practice of "dating around" until you find the right match for you. The other is the idea that when a couple starts dating, something is really wrong if they break up. This places young men under pressure to make certain this courtship will go before beginning. A balance is needed where careful considerations precede a courtship, but the door is left open for dissolving the friendship if it seems wise to the couple. We should be respectful of courting couples who are finding their way, and avoid

gossip and supposition. The couples have parents and ministers to lean on for help and counsel.

Wise is the couple that starts slow and thinks deeply about what they are doing. Time between dates is so very important to think and evaluate the relationship. Seeing each other too often and communicating each day will tend to feed fascination with each other and hinder meditative contemplation on the serious questions of courtship.

Courting couples should remember the important things of life. They should find a time for Bible reading and prayer together on each date. They should go to church together, visit relatives, and participate in evangelism efforts. They should seek to understand the heart of their friend. A young man should learn to know his girl friend's mother, and likewise the girl should learn to know her boy friend's father. This is one way to understand who has been molding your friend, and what your friend could become in later years. It is true that children can make choices that are different from those that their parents have made, but patterns tend to reproduce themselves.

Couples need to have a covenant of purity between themselves. A "hands off" policy is very necessary. They need to understand that a little compromise will lead to great compromise. Impurity is like a

sliding board ride to the bottom with no convenient place to stop! Couples should seek to avoid places of undue temptation, where the mind will be tempted to sin. They should be careful about being alone late at night together. They should avoid parked-car and empty-house dates, and spend time together in one of their homes, where the family is present.

Parents should help youth consider their courting plans. They understand the temptations of youth and should help youth make wise choices about what they do when they are together.

Communication is another important part of courtship. Sharing about family life and values is important. Understanding each others' spiritual interests and insights is a must. Learning about each others' habits with earning and saving money should be a part of courtship. Couples should seek to understand what they want to have in their homes, not just what they *don't* want.

Courting couples should not ignore their circle of friends. Only having time for their "date" and always wanting time alone is not wise. Learning to know the friends of the one you are courting will also tell you something about the character of the one you are dating.

Engagement should be a time of commitment. It should be entered prayerfully and with deep commitment to a lasting marriage. It

is a time to plan for a godly wedding. Couples begin to think about setting up housekeeping and planning a wedding trip. Youth should be careful early in courtship to find themselves at rest with their friend. If this rest is not present, it may be wise to put it on hold for a time. Breaking up a courtship after courting for a long time, or breaking up after engagement should be very rare and only with counsel from parents and pastors.

Couple should seek to honor their parents' wishes for their wedding and should keep the church's standards in all their plans. The urge to have a unique wedding often prompts couples to step outside the boundaries of acceptable wedding practices. A marriage founded on the Rock Christ Jesus will be marked by Bible simplicity and obedience.

Remember, courting couples, you will look back and remember these days for many years if the Lord tarries and blesses you with life. Be careful today to forge precious memories of lasting values. Keeping a long-range view will help you make better choices in your courtship. What a treasure to hold memories of a pure, God-honoring courtship without regrets! What joy to be able to tell your children about your youthful days of serving God together!

[From *The Pilgrim Witness*, January, 2014, with permission.]



Positive Cultural Affirmation

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

As we continue our discussion from last month on cultural distinctions, let me hasten to say that Christ is our Peace and has broken down the middle walls of partition between us. (See Ephesians 2:14). Believers are one in Christ regardless of background, social or racial ethnicity or nationality. However, we must learn to understand and appreciate those unique differences among us.

A few simple variations in our way of life include the way we eat or cook can highlight differences among us. For those of us who have grown up in a typical Mennonite community, we are accustomed to our Pennsylvania Dutch way of cooking: meat, potatoes, vegetables, and often rich desserts. Gardening, baking and preserving foods has been part of our heritage. We have learned to sew our own dresses. We try to keep our houses neat and clean. These things are good but they do not make us a Christian. Furthermore,

our way is not the ONLY way to do things. We can learn from each other.

Tips for those who are new to the conservative Anabaptist lifestyle

•Accept love and return it.

The first months in a new church setting can be like a honeymoon. You receive dinner invitations; people talk to you after church and you feel welcome. Everything is new and feels so special. Remember, eventually the newness will wear off and it will be your turn to return that love. You will become a member of the church and be responsible to blend in with the community of believers.

•Invite people into your home.

Perhaps you feel like you won't be able to perform like others. It really doesn't matter; we are all unique and can share what God has given us. You could start with inviting people in for an evening of fellowship, singing or games. Serve a simple snack or a dessert. The food does not need to be home-made; it can be store-bought, which could be a real treat for a child

who is used to home-made foods. Relax and enjoy the evening with your guests.

Invite just a few people to your first dinner. Become expert with a certain meal. I remember one friend who loved to fix spaghetti. We always looked forward to her delicious spaghetti. Your specialty may be Mexican cooking or lasagna or even baked beans and hot dogs. If jello is a dessert for you, serve it as a dessert, even if your long-time Mennonite friends serve it as a salad. Serve the meal graciously, without apologies.

•Ask for help.

If you truly want to learn to garden, bake bread, preserve foods, sew, etc., ask for help. We all want to feel needed and love to be able to help. You need my help and I need yours. If you ask for my help, I will feel more free to ask for yours. Remember, everyone is different—some women may love to teach new skills. Others may be more timid and private, which does not mean they don't love you. They will relate in other ways.

•Offer your expertise.

You have much to offer. Perhaps you have computer skills and would love to share your skills. You may have a college degree in a certain field of expertise. You could offer to assist the church or to help individuals in

that particular area. You may have suggestions on how we could better relate or reach out to others in the surrounding community. You may have artistic skills or social skills which you would love to share. Be available and God will use you. Find an area where you can be a blessing to others.

•Demonstrate a godly life.

Forgive our mistakes. You will find the church you loved so much at first will make mistakes. Do not become disillusioned or discouraged. We all need God's grace and forgiveness. Focus on God. He alone can meet all our needs.

Continue to love and relate to your non-Mennonite family without being judgmental. You are not their Holy Spirit. You are called to be an example to them of a godly life.

Show the love of Christ to people in the church and community. God has a purpose and a plan in bringing you to this place in your journey. Be faithful.

God desires His children to walk together in love and unity.

We will not always have the same preferences, talents, personalities or skills. However, God has planned for us to use those unique differences to build the church and to encourage and bless each other.



Snapshots in Kenya

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Wilberforce's children

Wilberforce, our tall Kenyan language teacher was introducing himself to us and telling us about his life. He said he had 10 children, five living. Five dead. Mark wondered what happened that five no longer live. In his unhurried, emotionless way, he told us, "The first died of malaria. The next of measles. The third was a miscarriage. The fourth got badly burned and died. The fifth was a boy named Troyer. He liked to play with water around the well. One day, he fell in and drowned."

Death and dying is much more common to Africans than to Americans.

Fishing is Dangerous

The cool waters of Lake Victoria lapped around Wilberforce's ankles as he pushed his canoe into the lake. He was delighted to be spending a day with his grandparents. He loved to be there. He enjoyed fishing with

his grandfather and he particularly liked to eat the whole fish that his grandmother would fry to a crisp brown. Just thinking of fried fish made him hungry.

They paddled the canoe out to where there were schools of fish. They let down the nets and quietly waited. Suddenly, the peaceful morning time was shattered by a dark hippo which broke through the surface of the calm lake. Terror seized their hearts. The young teenager, Wilberforce, knew that if that hippo tipped their canoe, he would die, for he had never learned how to swim.

All the fish escaped as the large hippo broke through their nets. Grandpa managed to paddle away from the dangerous beast.

There were no fish for lunch that day. Yet, they were grateful. God had spared their lives. "If the canoe had tipped those many years ago," our language teacher told us, "I would not be here today."

Dogs

In a testimony, Pastor Nick said, “Don’t treat God like you do your dogs.” Dogs here are mutts, often neglected, thin, kicked out of the way. They don’t build houses for them. “When you cook ugali,” he explained, “you don’t think of your dog, but, maybe if something small is left, you throw it his way. Don’t treat God like your dog and give Him something small. Don’t give God the leftovers. Have a plan for giving to God first.”

Follow God

“I had a sore leg,” Carlos shared in his devotions. “My friends told

me. ‘Call the witch doctor; he will heal you.’ My wife is a believer, too. We prayed to God to heal my leg. We did not call the witch doctor. We are so happy that God healed me. We will pray to God alone. If you are a true Christian, you will follow only God.”

Mary Ellen says, “There is much poverty and need in this vast land. There are also many natural wonders and much tropical beauty that we enjoy. Most of all, we want to be a light for Jesus in Africa. Pray for us.”



youth messages

More Than Conquerors

Name withheld

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in a perfect world? A world where love reigns and murder, abuse, adultery, lying, hatred, anger, and war are unheard of? What a beautiful picture that paints! It is one that drastically differs from the place you live in today. But why is it

so different? Why, with people across the world crying out for peace and love, is there still so much chaos and hate? Mankind has a universal problem, a three-letter problem I will address in the following paragraphs. It’s called **sin**.

Sin? What is sin? Sin is “missing the mark,” disobedience to the law

of God, for God is holy and just and cannot tolerate sin in any form. It is because of sin that there is pain and sorrow in this world. When God created the world, it was perfect. There was no sin, nothing to disturb the perfect Creation. Everything existed together in peace and harmony. But then, Eve, the very first woman, fell for the serpent's lie, she and Adam disobeyed God, and access to the Garden of Eden was lost to man forever.

What then? Is there hope? Shall we never return to that peace, to the perfect relationship with God that existed before the Fall? Well, not on earth, but God is preparing something very special in Heaven for those who *overcome* sin. In Revelation 21:7, God says, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Do you see relationship there? We can be sons and daughters of God! I, for one, want that relationship. But how do we get there? How do we "overcome the wicked one"? (1 John 2:13).

Christ, when He took all our sin upon Himself and died a horrible death on the cross, died so that we might overcome. Then, three days later, He rose from the dead. This gives us hope of everlasting life with Him after our earthly deaths. Therefore, all our hope is in Him.

Without Christ, we are powerless to resist the wiles of the devil. Without Him, we are hopelessly, irrevocably lost. But with Him! What a change! When we walk after the Spirit of God rather than after the flesh, the Bible says there is no condemnation for us. No condemnation because God, at the moment we repent of our sins and ask for His cleansing, makes us holy. Holy! Free from sin, free from guilt, free to live "godly in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:12)!

Have you forgotten that old serpent who tripped up Eve in the Garden? He hasn't given up. He's still slithering around, whispering his lies into your ear, trying to persuade you that what he offers you is better than what you have. Hold on to the Word, my brother, my sister! James 4:7, 8: "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." Don't let him tell you that you are not holy. Romans 8:33 says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Verses 35 to 39 of the same chapter assure us that nothing can separate us from the love of God. We are conquerors, more than conquerors, through the blood of Him who loved us!

[Written by a student at Calvary Bible School for a class assignment. Used with permission.]



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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

The best way to be somebody is just to be yourself.

• • • • •

The best thing parents can spend on their children is time—not money.

• • • • •

Skipping church is the beginning of spiritual decline.

• • • • •

It may be natural to be religious, but it is supernatural to be wholly holy.

• • • • •

The lower spiritual life ebbs in a church, the more entertainment it takes to keep it going.

• • • • •

Conscience is like a sun dial—when the God’s truth shines upon it, it points the right way.

• • • • •

Cooperation can be spelled with two letters: WE.

• • • • •

Few things go so far and cost so little as courtesy.

• • • • •

It is more important *what* is right than *who* is right.

• • • • •

Life’s greatest freedom comes in being a bond servant to Christ.