



CALVARY MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

NOVEMBER 2014

Meditation	
<i>Seasons of Life</i>	1
Editorial	
<i>Distorted Vision</i>	2
Reader Response.....	4
The Bottom Line	
<i>Expository Preaching</i>	5
Torch of Truth.....	10
Marriages.....	14
Cradle Roll.....	15
Ordinations	17
Obituaries	17
Observations	20
When You File Past My Casket.....	24
The Two Views on Life.....	26
Ministers' Meeting Messages — 2014	
<i>Preparing and Presenting the Message</i>	27
Helpers at Home	
<i>A Life of Thanksgiving</i>	32
Junior Messages	
<i>The Best Christmas Ever - Part One</i>	33
Youth Messages	
<i>Dear Youth</i>	35
Thought Gems	back cover

Seasons of Life

Amy Hershberger, Millersburg, OH

Summer's sun is westward sinking;
Autumn's grandeur is begun.
And, reflecting, now I ponder
Ere another year is done.


In the brightness of the springtime.
When all life was fresh and new.
Winter-weary hearts were quickened
By a joyous summer view.

Then the toilings, and the labors
Of the long and care-worn days,
Culminating, now are gathered
With the bounteous harvest praise.

For we know it is essential
To prepare for winter's blast.
So the sowing of the springtime
Waits until the cold is past.

Likewise are life's changing seasons,
For the youthfulness of spring,
Is the planting of the summer
And the autumn's gathering.

And these fruits will then determine
How the winter's needs are met.
For the One who makes the increase
Is the Lord of harvest yet.

When we fall asleep in Jesus
And we wake in Zion fair.
Earth-worn hearts are quickened
By eternal springtime there. 



Distorted Vision

Human vision does not stay good. It gets distorted. When that happens, we may misinterpret what we see. To spiritualize this, consider this question: **What makes us persons of value?** Is it appearance? Is it intelligence? Is it work? Is it finances? Why *are* we important? It's easy to get these things out of focus.

According to *World* magazine (9-20-14), Rick Warren, Pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, once went into a prison to preach. He was to address what he guessed to be from 4,000 to 5,000 men in an outdoor prison courtyard.

The men were milling around and Rick needed to get their attention. He took a microphone to make his voice carry over the entire group. Rick started by holding up a 50-dollar bill and asking, "How many of you men would like this \$50 bill?" What looked like five thousand hands, shot up. Then he crumpled the bill, tore it a bit, and asked, "How many of you would still like it?" Again the hands went up. Next he spat on the money and stomped it into the dirt, then

picked it up and asked, "How many of you would like it now?" They had not changed their minds. **They all still wanted it!**

Rick continued, "Now, for many of you, this is what your father did to you. You've been mistreated. You were abused and told you wouldn't amount to anything. You've done a lot of dumb things, too. You've sinned. You've done some crimes, and you're paying for them. You've been beaten. You've been torn. You've been dirty, **but you've not lost one cent of your value to God.**"

We wonder if they had ever realized that before. That day 79 men reached out to God. They repented, confessed their sins, and gave their lives to Jesus!

Each Person's Value

Do good looks give us value? Beautiful women and handsome men—God must surely be pleased with His handiwork. We know that slovenliness is a disgrace. But cannot girls and women add to their value by dressing to reveal rather than to conceal feminine charm? Does it require cutting their hair and putting it on display? Does applying makeup

help? Does wearing jewelry (with or without making holes in the body) increase one's value? Can boys and men add to their value by tattoos or with Mohawk haircuts or grungy clothes? If they dress to look "cool," with their caps turned backward or through styles that swing from one extreme to another, such as very tight trousers in one decade to very loose and tattered ones some years later, the question still remains: Do comeliness or stylishness give a person real value?

Is it mental capabilities that give us value? After all, mental laziness is no better than physical laziness, is it? But does cleverness, a high IQ, or a good test score give one greater value? After all, certain demanding assignments are more likely given to those who can handle greater mental challenges. We reason that we must not ignore nature's intellectual endowments. Seriously though, do the mentally elite have greater value?

Does our work give us value? Doing our work well is certainly good. Laziness is not a credit to us or our Creator. And if something's worth doing, it is worth doing well. Working for the approval of an employer is honorable. We do good work when we do it not only to make a living, but because we're doing it for God. When that is the case, God

is glorified and we have earned good satisfaction. But the question still remains, is it good workmanship that gives us value?

Is it wealth that establishes value? Sometimes we hear that a person of wealth is "worth so and so much." We could also ask, "Do the skills that enable a person to succeed in business not indicate greater-than-average wisdom?" After all, is it not to all our benefit if sincere and well-heeled stewards of God are generous in the work of the Kingdom? And should such persons not have greater influence in brotherhood decisions? Oh, really? Does a person of wealth have greater value than one just above the poverty line?

In 1 Corinthians 4:7, Paul raises questions about differences among people, **"...who maketh thee to differ from another? And what has thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"** These rhetorical questions have answers so obvious that Paul does not provide them. Sanctified common sense will suffice.

God's Pricing System

No, we cannot earn our value. It is given to us. How was it given? Why are we valuable? The answer is surprisingly simple. As in some business situations, our value is

established by the price paid for us! 2 Corinthians 6:20 makes this clear: **“God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honor God”** (CEV). *Our value was established at Calvary!*

Rick Warren’s proffered \$50 bill represents a paltry fraction of each person’s value in the sight of God. Even if we were to take \$50 X 5,000, what would we get? An object lesson—not a meaningful dollar

amount! Let us thank God for His extravagant love for us.

Let us let the Word of God correct our spiritual astigmatism. The glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to correct our distorted vision in what we see in others and in ourselves. Fitted with Calvary lenses, we are able **to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God!** (Micah 6:8)

—PLM 

reader response

Re: Reader Response, August, 2014.

In Bro. Elmer M. Yoder’s response, he states, “I think all prophecy was fulfilled by A.D. 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem.” I believe certain prophecies concerning Jesus’ coming again will yet be fulfilled.

Acts 1:10, 11, “And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

I believe the dead will be raised from their graves.

1 Thes. 4:16, 17, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

I am content to let the Lord include whatever events He wants to when He comes.

Willis A. Nisly, Hutchinson, KS 

Expository Preaching

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

A minister-brother wrote to say that one of my articles caused him to think that some more input on expository preaching would be in order. You can thank Reuben Kaufman for that suggestion. It spawned two other articles on the subject, this one and another one that I'm preparing for next month.

Our annual ministers' meetings refer to it as the peak of preaching. We don't miss the mark in saying that we need more of it. Compared to what? One interesting feature for our annual meeting would be to assign one brother each year to give an expository sermon with some explanation of what constitutes such a sermon.

Most of our preaching is topical, with some commentary style. Someone has said if sermons were labeled, some could be called "Food," some "Notions," and others "Dry Goods." Good preaching should not be complicated. Likewise, we cause distractions in biblical concepts, like taking simple direct, clear statements from the very words of Scripture and making them complex. This turns

out to be one of the greatest of all distractions.

Expository has the same root as exposition. It is setting forth of "facts, ideas, [and concepts] in a detailed explanation. Writing or speaking that sets forth an explanation for the purpose of exhibition." (New World Dictionary)

Exposition thus serves as an expansion in both interpretation and application to life. The highest form of exposition is to take a chapter from the Bible, then make an outline that sticks to the text and progresses to a Bible-based conclusion.

For a preacher to say, "While this is what the Bible says, this is what it actually means..." and then quotes another verse, is really replacement theology. That is substituting one Bible text with another Bible text according to personal taste or congregational desire. Such statements distract from the truth.

One preacher announced to his congregation, "Today I wish to bring you an expository sermon." That raises the congregation's expectations, even if it is just a wish and is topical

throughout, it may still have been worthwhile. A topical sermon can be worthwhile and interesting and if based on God's Word, it is good. But expository sermons can be better.

Expository sermons are hard work, taking disciplined study and academic concentration. Many people will end up quoting some Protestant authors they find online. Some excellent sources do appear online. We have no easy instructions on how to develop our own. Some among us can develop that by using personal experience and aptitude rather than reading a "how-to" book. Years of training in Bible schools by seasoned expositors has brought us immeasurable help. Observing how others do it is very helpful.

My fellow ministers and I have preached expository messages from both Old and New Testament books. Expository preaching can be done effectively by a plural pastoral team, but it may be an even greater benefit in a single pastorate.

An expositor should stick with the text, the chosen chapter or Scripture section. Bringing in verses from elsewhere weakens exposition and switches it to a topical approach. I believe I'm seeing that being done with more frequency by Anabaptist preachers. Catholic and Protestant theologians have been doing this before our people took up the practice. This hinders our hoped-for expository

preaching and faithful interpretation.

Our church at Weavertown has always used only the Bible itself for the Sunday School lessons. This was started as a German school 90 years ago. It has been a great help toward expository thinking and study. We cover the New Testament and brief selections from the Old Testament in approximately 12 years. Today's lesson was Psalm 66. I frequently write a commentary of the lesson for the teacher who lives in my house.

Today our lesson had three sections. Section One was verses 1-7, "The Impression of God's Works"; Section Two was verses 8-12, "The Experience of God's Trials"; Section Three was verses 13-20, "The Expression of God's Faithfulness."

- Verse 5 says, "Come and see..." Verse 16 says, "Come and hear..."

- God's works, v. 3 and 5, surround worship toward Him. Worship is mentioned in v. 4.

- God takes the righteous "through the fire": and "through the water" (v. 12). Never does He abandon us.

- This Psalm has four "I will's". ("I will go," v. 13; "I will pay," v. 13; "I will offer," v. 15; "I will declare," v. 16.)

In expository study, we scan and read the text. Then we write down what we see. We scan it again, then write some more. We look for similar words or ideas, or words of contrast. The main point might begin with the same letter, or end with the same ending or

suffix. (Illustration: “You *implement*; God contributes *supplement*; and the result is *betterment*.”)

By scanning the text, we get the general flow of thought toward its progression. Similar words begin to stand out. An outline begins to emerge. The beginning and ending have a logical connection, which we don't notice on more casual reading, but is connected by the student who declares its substance. Scanning is more apt to see points that are substantial that contribute toward orderliness. Then in reading the text, specifics can be picked out that add “sineu” to the “bony structure” (outline). Detail need not be boring or without purpose if it is seen as part of the larger picture. One piece of a 1,000-piece puzzle is not very interesting by itself, but when that piece is missing from the 999 pieces that are all fitted together, then its importance becomes clear.

To illustrate, let's say you want to explore the 20 or so miles between Middlebury and Nappanee, Indiana. From an aerial view, you can see both towns at one time. You see the roads, patches of woods, creeks, and other landmarks. Your exploration is done and you have seen it all, right? No.

We will try again, this time by car. The roads are not straight between these towns. But at every turn you might see a house, a barn, a business, a creek, some woods, different people—

the Amish, the Mennonites, other people and other details almost too numerous to mention.

Both the aerial view and the road trip are valuable to help explore this area. The aerial view lets us see how it's connected, but it's the road trip that brings out important details. The aerial view is like scanning the text; the road map is like reading the text word-for-word. The aerial view is the outline; the road trip adds detail that applies to daily life. God's Word lends itself to that.

Sunday School quarterlies are sometimes set up in expository fashion. No one person's work has the final say in how it should be done. Discipline and practice teaches us fruitful study throughout life.

I have done two different outlines for 1 Thessalonians. A neat outline from a commentary could be modified in part as your own. Using someone else's work is not wrong, providing due credit is given for your sources. A few quotes from other sources can be good and refreshing.

Here's an outline that came from my personal study of James, Chapter One:

- Chapter title: The Principle of Purity
- a. v. 1 Salutation
 - b. vs. 2-8 Purity in thought life (mental)
 - c. vs. 9-11 Purity in money matters (financial)
 - d. vs. 12-16 Purity in appetites (physical)

- e. vs. 17-25 Purity in spiritual matters (biblical)
- f. vs. 26,27 Purity in church work (congregational)

My study of James over the years has yielded four lists of chapter titles for this book. Here is one list: “Chapter one: James, the pastor; Chapter two: James, the lawyer; Chapter three: James, the teacher; Chapter four: James, the prophet; and Chapter five: James, the evangelist.” This shows some of what I found in these chapters.

Here’s another outline I did for James, this one about Chapter 3:

- Vs. 1,2 Presumptuous
- Vs. 3,4 Industrious
- Vs. 5,6 Furious
- Vs. 7,8 Injurious
- Vs. 9,10 Devious
- Vs. 11,12 Curious
- Vs. 13-16 Contentious
- Vs. 17,18 Illustrious

Do you see how “aerial views” and “road trip views” study style keeps coming up with interesting and usable ideas? Expository preaching requires expository study which provides training and disciplined study. Expository preaching requires about 10 hours of study for one hour of preaching. Topical preaching requires about six hours of study for one hour of preaching. Commentary style can “wing it” on 2 or 3 hours of study per sermon.

When I first read Psalm 66, it seemed weak to me as a source for

Sunday School discussion. Using the aerial view idea, an outline emerged. Next, the road trip application brought me this:

- Vs. 1,2 No cost to us in praising God
- Vs. 3-7 No cost to us for God’s mighty works
- Vs. 10-12 Personal cost—trials
- Vs. 13-15 Personal cost—worship
- Vs. 16-20 Personal cost—less of self in praise, more about God

This gave me a title I think is fitting: “The Cost for the Righteous.” The beginning and the end are connected by a canopy of praise. God’s mighty works and our worship of God are connected. The central idea of this psalm is our trials, which come again in various ways and times.

I had missed this obscure psalm in the numerous times I taught the Psalms at Calvary Bible School. We acknowledge that God’s gifting is not the same for everyone. Beyond that, though, we all do better with diligence, discipline and just good, old-fashioned digging into God’s Word. Treasures abound!

In Psalm 66, the righteous lift up their voices in praise (v. 1,2); the enemies of God should be convicted (v. 3); the children of men should be assured (v. 5); and the rebellious should humble themselves, (v. 7). The road trip now helps us see things we missed in an earlier road trip. We can never exhaust the boundless treasure stores of truth given by inspiration

of God.

In yet another road trip through Psalm 66, we see how our physical body becomes involved in our awareness of God. It is about the eyes (v.5), the ears (v. 8), the soul (v. 9), the loins (v. 11,), the head (v. 12), the lips (v. 14), the mouth (v. 14), the tongue (v. 17), and the heart (v. 18). All this and we have not yet exhausted this “obscure” psalm. That, brethren, is but a sample of what exposition can do. It provides us something to get excited about. Passionless sermons are too long if given in half the time. A sermon that is too long is more about being too short in *strength*, rather than it being too long in *length*.

Let us do one more survey of Psalm 66: We said the central idea is in verse 9 about our soul being held in life and our feet unmoved. Vs. 10-12, Grief—our troubles; Vs. 13-18, Belief—our response; Vs. 19, 20, Relief—God’s grace. Thus we end our brief expositions of an obscure psalm. There are, no doubt, other interesting things about Psalm 66.

The way we approach God’s Word is the way we preach it. We can’t think and study topically and preach in an expository style. If our research is basically from commentaries, then our sermons will be in commentary style. That is not wrong. Simply put, if we would preach an expository message, we must study that way.

Few men outgrow their need to

profit from others’ commentaries. They can be a spring board to dive in the deep pool of the water of God’s Word. After the dive, we are immersed in the waters and must swim on our own. Too many speakers sit at the edge of the pool and do little more than dangle their feet in the water, swinging them back and forth. They use commentaries primarily for their preaching and teaching. Such speaking is often as dry as they are from their ankles to the top of their heads, because they were too scared or too lazy or didn’t take the time to get in and swim.

Ezekiel had a vision of the waters of God. Ezekiel 47:15 has a man guiding the prophet to “the house.” Waters gushed forth from under the house, first of all, out by 1,000 cubits, with water up to the ankles. In another 1,000 cubits, it was up to the knees. In another 1,000 cubits, it came to his loins. In another 1,000 cubits, the water was too deep to wade. Swim! Swim for your life! That is the picture of the preacher and Sunday School teacher in study, when he first swims for his own life, he then can stand up and speak with a passion for truth, clearly stating things from other parts of the Bible, just as God gave it by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to be applied to life. He has immersed his life in God’s truth, in study and in practice. It has become his life, his experience, his message. As such, it

connects with those who hear.

Meanwhile, the pool is being visited after a day's work and after supper, by the lazy ones or those too tired from their own work. But the pool is open late Saturday night by popular demand. There are so many preachers and teachers who must cram for the Sunday morning assignment. They sit by the pool to get their feet wet, writing copious notes from the commentaries. They never dive in for a fully immersed swim. Instead of having "their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," they will be shaking in their boots to "take up the time" in a churchly assignment on Sunday morning.

The Bottom Line is that expository preaching is hard work. It takes more time in study, in preparation, in mental activity, and in prayer. Men who do not read widely can scarcely use this method. Readers broaden their vocabulary. A few others factors are involved for the serious student of the Word, such as how you choose to interpret God's Word, and from that interpretation make application. But hopefully this is enough to be helpful in getting started with fruitful expository preaching. Commentary study makes commentary sermons. Topical study makes topical sermons. Expository study makes expository sermons.



mission awareness

The Torch of Truth

The following material was graciously provided by Duane Nisly. In April, 2012, Mennonite World Review published a report by John D. Roth, professor of history at Goshen College, Goshen, IN. Roth also directs Mennonite Historical Library and The Institute of Global Anabaptism. Here are excerpts of Roth's article. -FS

The village of Pital de San Carlos—nestled in the shadow of Costa Rica's most active volcano—is home to a small Beachy Amish congregation and the editorial office of *La Antorcha de la Verdad* (The Torch of Truth), a periodical with the largest circulation of any Mennonite publication in the world.

Beachy Amish first settled Costa Rica in 1968. The community has since expanded to include a cluster of thriving congregations of Costa Rican converts, Kleine Gemeinde immigrants from Belize and a host of second-generation Yoders, Schrocks, Heiseys, and Nislys. Every two months the small printing press at

Publicadora La Merced in nearby Santa Rita de Rio Cuarto prints and distributes more than 200,000 copies of *La Antorcha de la Verdad*, a 34-page bulletin-size magazine that finds its way into Spanish-speaking churches, prisons, schools, and homes in nearly 50 countries.

According to longtime editor, Duane Nisly, the periodical began in 1987, intended primarily for Amish Mennonite communities in Latin America. After publication was temporarily disrupted by wars in Central America, the editorial committee re-established the journal for a broader readership, with the goal of “promoting sound biblical doctrine with an Anabaptist orientation” and offering “counsel for a practical Christian life in Latin America.”

Today the majority of its readers live in Nicaragua, Peru, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica, with a strong interest among Christians in Cuba. The vast majority of written responses to each issue come from readers in Cuba.

Each issue begins with a devotional reflection from Nisly, followed by a biblical teaching or sermon, and practical counsel for family life. A section devoted to youth—often a serialized story—a short Bible story, activities or stories for young

children, a recipe and a memory verse or poem round out each issue. Many of the articles are translated from stories or devotionals that first appeared in a periodical from another Christian publisher, such as the conservative Mennonite Lamp and Light or the Old Order Amish Pathway Publishers.

In July-August, 2012, *La Antorcha* initiated a new series of articles focused on “characteristics of the pilgrim church,” that included essays on true Christian worship, separation from the world, Christians and politics, the Gospel and wealth, the devotional covering for the woman, the proper role of the Christian woman, and the concept of biblical authority.

In the first essay of the series, Marcos Yoder made a case for orderly worship, which he described as “heartfelt, but restrained.” Singing should be done “without instruments and participants should be quietly attentive during prayer, the sermon, and congregational sharing.” Yoder recognized that “this point of view is something new for many of our readers, since the majority of congregations in Latin America have adopted a Pentecostal style.”

-John D. Roth

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Editor Duane Nisly offers further

comments about this publishing effort:

Brother Sanford Yoder and others were moved by the vision to produce a Spanish Christian magazine that would fill a void in the Latin community and promote sound, biblical, Christian reading material. In 1987, the first issue was published with a print run of 800. Today, there is a Spanish circulation of 217,000, with 32,000 of them printed in Peru and distributed there.

There are 20,000 printed in Haitian Creole for Haiti. Also, several times a year, 5,000 are printed in Portuguese in Brazil.

Christian Aid Ministries has been funding a large part of the operating costs since the early 90's. The Spanish *Antorcha* is distributed in 47 countries. Many will be sent by mail, or in bulk by air freight.

Examples of how God has used *La Antorcha*: Uriel Manzanares was walking toward the town of Waslala. He was at the end of his rope, brooding over the situation he was in. No money, no job, domestic problems...totally discouraged, when all at once, he noticed something beside the road. It was colorful and it caught his attention. It was a magazine, lying on the road where it had fallen. He picked up the magazine and read the title on

the cover story, "El vagabundo," (The Tramp). He shook his head incredulously and sighed, "That's me, a vagabond." When he got to Waslala, he read the magazine and was so struck by the message that he sought the brethren in town for help. He has since recommitted his life to the Lord—all because God's Word did not return void, but accomplished His purpose.

Don Marcos received an *Antorcha* in the clinic in Naranjo Frontera, Guatemala, where the Verton Miller family serves. Sometimes Don Marcos preaches over the radio. The May-June issue of the *Antorcha* carried an article entitled, "A Different Gospel." He was so impressed with the article that he preached about it on Sunday over the radio. The radio jockey fell asleep in his hammock while Don was preaching, so he accidentally let him go overtime 18 minutes. Marcos was grateful that God had allowed him this extra time. Listeners from several hours up-river commented that they did not even notice the extra time.

Janet Morales picked up an *Antorcha* in the hospital in Salvapan, Belize. She was so impressed with it, that she asked for more of these magazines that are filled with good and sound Bible teaching.

Pablo Yoder reports that when they

hand out *Antorchas*, they pray that they will reach the right place and the right people. But they wonder what happens to the *Antorchas* that are received by people from way back in. Some brethren recently hiked 13 hours to a village where people are asking for help. Back in, as they went past a poor Nicaraguan hut, they found two children looking at an *Antorcha*. How had it gotten back in so far? God's Word prospers wherever it goes.

Marietta Yoder takes the opportunity to share the *Antorcha* and the word of God to people waiting at the Good News Clinic at El Resbaladero, El Salvador. The magazine is a valuable tool for them. The patients can take the magazine home with them and continue to study it.

Eddy Plett, Mexico, is excited about the *Antorcha* in his prison ministry. Juan Arelio, testifies that the *Antorcha* was a tool that brought him to salvation in Jesus Christ. Eddy and Juan are now out of jail and are living in the Mennonite colony and are devoted Christians, preaching the Gospel.

Candida received her first *Antorcha* from a person she met on the street who had received one, but did not

know how to read it. The article on forgiveness and how to have Christ-like relationships struck her. "I took that message to heart," she says, "I am going to try to obey it and I would like to have five more to give to my family and friends who also need this message."

Every day at the clinic in Gressier, Haiti, the staff see an average of 150 patients. They often sit on benches for hours. "We hand out the *Flanbo Verite* magazine to them and they enjoy looking through them, even if they cannot read. So why do they keep on giving them the magazine? Even though the person at the clinic at cannot read, he will likely take it home where his grandson will read it to him. He can then be touched by the words of Jesus.

Chelo wants to be a preacher, but his father is not a Christian. He always waits eagerly for the next *Antorcha* in Creole to be able to learn more about what it means to follow Jesus. Finally, think about what Keith Brubaker said, "God has promised that His Word will not return void..." and maybe some of the magazines will end up as kindling for the cooking fire. But the words of God, once planted in a man's soul are not easily forgotten."

-Duane Nisly



marriages

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

Derstine-Swartzentruber

Bro. Darrek, son of Nevin and Dorothy Derstine, OR, and Sis. Gladys, daughter of Donny and Bertha Swartzentruber, Montezuma, GA, at Montezuma Mennonite Church on June 13, 2014, by Donny Swartzentruber.

Detweiler-Graber

Bro. Aaron, son of Marvin and Marlene Detweiler, Lexington, IN, and Sis. Marilyn, daughter of David and Mary Jane Graber, Summersville, KY, at First Baptist Church for Summersville Mennonite Church, on August 22, 2014, by James Hershberger.

Kauffman-Hobbs

Bro. Kenneth, son of Ken and Barb Kauffman, Huntsville, AR, and Sis. Charis, daughter of Kent and Shari Hobbs, Wichita, KS, at First Mennonite Church in Newton, KS, on July 5, 2014, by Kent Hobbs.

Martin-Troyer

Bro. Kendan, son of David and Christine Martin, Aroda, VA, and Sis. Meredith, daughter of Robert and Nora Troyer, Aroda, VA, on Sept. 5, 2014, at Bible Holiness Church for Oak Grove Mennonite Church on Sept. 6, 2014, by Lamar Hochstetler.

Miller-Stoltzfus

Bro. Jason, son of Mervin and Ruth Miller, Mifflinburg, PA, and Sis. Allyson, daughter of Lee and Barbie Stoltzfus, Gap, PA, on August 16, 2014, at Spring Garden Church for West Haven by Lee Stoltzfus.

Smucker-Hostetler

Bro. Andrew Jordan, son of Amos and Rosanna Smucker, Gap, PA, and Sis. Ashley Dawn, daughter of Nate and Miriam Hostetler, Circleville, OH, at Lancaster Vineyard Church for Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Amanda, OH, on Sept. 13, 2014, by Dale Smucker, brother of the groom.

Stoltzfus-Lehman

Bro. Travis, son of Elmer and Ruth Stoltzfus, Middleburg, PA, and Sis. Heather, daughter of Jason and Eunice Lehman, Aaronsburg, PA, at Shady Grove Christian Fellowship for Shekinah Christian Fellowship, on Sept. 13, 2014, by Dave Beiler.

Wagler-Jantzi

Bro. Alan Elmer, son of Murray and Hannah (the late Miriam Ropp) Wagler, Millbank, ON, and Sis. Joyce Elaine, daughter of Paul and Nancy Jantzi, Milverton, ON, on Sept. 6, 2014, at Cedar Grove A.M. Church by Arthur Gerber.

Yoder-Weaver

Bro. Evan, son of Carl and Mary Jane Yoder, London, OH, and Sis. Amanda, daughter of Lewis and Karen Weaver, Mechanicsburg, OH, at Shiloh Mennonite Church for Haven Fellowship, on Sept. 19, 2014, by Lonnie Beachy.

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Darius and Rosalia (Quevedo), Aroda, VA, second child and dau., Nyah Grace, Sept. 26, 2014.

Beachy, Durlin and Emily (Schlabach), Ruckersville, VA, third child, first dau., Caroline Irena, Sept. 12, 2014.

Beachy, Jevon and Abigail (Troyer), Free Union, VA, first child and son, Franklin Elliot, August 5, 2014.

Bontrager, Anthony and Jessica (Byers), Earlysville, VA, first child and son, Blake Anthony, Sept. 18, 2014.

Byler, Joe and Dianne (Overholt), Auburn, KY, fourth child and son, Jacob Layne, August 15, 2014.

Byler, Perry and Lorianne (Albrecht), Atwood, ON, first child and dau., Carissa Irene, July 23, 2014.

Cantrell, Seth and Sheila (Stubenrauch), Advance, MO, fourth child, second son, Avery Blakley, August 31, 2014.

Eicher, Reuben and Rosina (Miller), Huntland, TN, fifth child, third son, Kaden Grant, August 11, 2014.

Fawcett, Ian and Gloria (Miller), Nappanee, IN, fifth child, first dau., Elisabeth Diane, May 28, 2014.

Galdonik, Michael and Courtney (Forbes), Sarasota, FL, third child, second dau., Hadassah Hope, Sept. 6, 2014.

Gerber, Bradley and Margaret (Gerber), Brunner, ON, third child and dau., Melissa Rose, Jan. 25, 2014.

Gerber, Joseph and Anita (Wagler), Brunner, ON, fifth child, fourth dau., Ashlynn Diane, Sept. 7, 2014.

Gerber, Ralph and Bernice (Wagler), Millbank, ON, eighth child, fourth dau., Janelle Kathryn, June 1, 2014.

Glick, Dwayne and Rosie (King), Perry, NY, seventh child, third son, Jeremiah David, Sept., 24, 2014.

Helmuth, Victor and Edna (Schwartz), Antrim, OH, first child and son, Cayden Wyatt, Sept. 9, 2014.

Hershberger, Chris and Rose (Miller), Jackson, OH, fifth child, third son, Jordan Robert, August 4, 2014.

Horst, Javin and Veronica (Hershberger), Antrim, OH, first child and son, DeShawn Javin, August 8, 2014.

Jantzi, Allen and Linda (Gerber), Wellesley, ON, third child, first son, Ethan James, August 10, 2014.

Jantzi, Derek and Janice (Gerber), Wellesley, ON, third child and dau., Deanna Joy, May 27, 2014.

Jantzi, Gabriel and Jennifer (Willey), Wellesley, ON, third child, second son, Nicholas Clark, July 2, 2014.

Kauffman, Dallas and Dorcas (Hostetler), Oskaloosa, KS, eighth child, fifth dau., Kaneisha Rayne, July 21, 2014.

Kauffman, Melvern and Patricia (Whitt), Montezuma, GA, seventh child, third son, Christopher Eli, June 17, 2014.

Kreider, Nathan and Roberta “Bertie” (Vance), Narvon, PA, third child, first dau., Alyssa Dawn, June 7, 2014.

Mast, M. Caleb and Sandra (Ramos), Nappanee, IN, first child and son, Desmond Hail, July 7, 2014.

Mast, Ryan and Keturah (Schlabach), Crozet, VA, first child and dau., Gianna Ryanne, Sept. 15, 2014.

Correction: **Miller**, Carl and Wilma (Miller), Plain City, OH, eighth child, third son, Bryant Jase, July 23, 2014.

Miller, Jon Eric and Anita (Yoder), Glenmont, OH, first child and dau., Jenna Addison, July 29, 2014.

Miller, Joseph and Connie (Nisly), Las Casitas, El Salvador, sixth child, fourth son, Michael Joseph, May 10, 2014.

Correction: **Miller**, Lloyd and Ruthie (Fisher), Plain City, OH, seventh child, fourth dau., Treva Grace, July 17, 2014.

Mullet, Joseph and Rhoda (Miller), Owentown, KY, second child and dau., Felicity Kathlene, August 21, 2014.

Nissley, Sanford and Renita (Schrock), La Belleza, Paraguay, second child and dau., Isabella Hope, March 13, 2014.

Swartzentruber, Wendall and Mary (Beachy), Montezuma, GA, fourth child and dau., Anabelle Hope, July 19, 2014.

Wagler, Dallas and Jodi (Wittmer), Odon, IN, second child, first dau., Briana Kay, August 8, 2014.

Weaver, Andre and Sharon (Miller), Jackson, OH, first child and dau., Angela Ranae, July 23, 2014.

Wingard, Faron and Roselyn (Weaver), Montezuma, GA, eighth child, fifth son, Adrian Lane, August 13, 2014.

Yoder, David and Audrey (Overholt), Montezuma, GA, second child, first son, Ashton David, Sept. 18, 2014.

Yoder, David and Wanda (Weaver), Sarasota, FL, fifth child, second son, Patrick Ryan, Sept. 17, 2014.

Yoder, Eli and Judy (Mast), Shipshewana, IN, third child and dau., (one deceased), Kianna Hope, Sept. 6, 2014.

ordination

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

Bro. Faron L. Wingard, 42, of Montezuma, GA, was ordained as deacon at Montezuma Mennonite Church, Montezuma, GA, June 29, 2014. Preordination messages were brought by Paul Beachy, Bastrop, TX. The charge was given by Donny Swartzentruber, assisted by Eli Kauffman and Lester Gingerich. Ron Kuhns and Morris Yoder were also in the lot.

obituaries

Bontrager, Henry Earl, 83, died at his home August 12, 2014, from complications of a stroke. He was born Sept. 8, 1930, in Thomas, Oklahoma, son of the late Eli and Delila (Miller) Bontrager.

He was a member of Sharon Bethel A.M. Church, Kalona, Iowa. He often volunteered to help with Mennonite Disaster Services and Christian Aid Ministries.

On Nov. 27, 1952, he was married to Lydia Mae Yoder in Weatherford, OK. From there, Henry and Lydia Mae moved to the Kalona community in 1957, where he farmed until he was 80 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Lydia Mae, two sons E. Wayne Bontrager, Kalona,; and Delmar (Carolyn) Bontrager, Wellman; two daughters,

Laverta (Evan) Beachy, and Loretta (Elam) Stoltzfoos, both of Kalona; nine grandchildren (who liked to refer to him as the peanuts and candy Grandpa), two great granddaughters; three brothers, Eldon Bontrager, Arlington, KS; Vernon Bontrager and Perry Bontrager, both of Kalona; two sisters, Ruby Miller and Anna Mae Ropp, both of Kalona.

He was preceded in death by three brothers, Joe Bontrager, Floyd Bontrager, a stillborn, and an infant sister, Sarah Bontrager.

The funeral was held August 15, with Gabriel Beachy and Lamar Ropp serving. Burial was in the Sharon Bethel Cemetery.

Gingerich, Mark O., 60, longtime resident of Plain City, OH, but temporarily residing at Manassas, VA, died unexpectedly on Sept. 20, 2014, at Plain City, OH. He was born Jan. 23, 1954, son of Verna (Hostetler) and the late Ora J. Gingerich.

He was a faithful member of Haven Fellowship, Plain City. His interests included farming, holding his grandchildren, giving bear hugs, and singing a song for any occasion. They were serving with Choice Books in VA.

On April 30, 1977, he was married to Rhoda Yoder. She survives. Other survivors include seven children: Eric (Monica) Gingerich, Plain City; Emily (Phil) Mast, Manassas, VA; Carrie (Kevin) Stutzman, Montego Bay, Jamaica; Marcus (Andrea) Gingerich, Plain City; Zachary (Allison) Gingerich,

Plain City; Joshua Gingerich, Plain City; and Audrey Gingerich, Manassas, VA; and 10 grandchildren. He is also survived by three brothers: Paul, Marvin, and Sam (Kathy) Gingerich, and four sisters: Emma (Monroe) Miller, Betty (Mark) Hostetler, Becky (Ron) Headings, and Veronica (Randy) Mast.

The funeral was held on Sept. 23, with Lonnie Beachy, Mark Yoder (Holmes County), and John D. Hostetler serving. Bob Yoder, VA, conducted the committal at the burial in the Haven Cemetery.

Hershberger, John Lewis, 77, of Jesup, GA, died May 5, 2014, at St. Joseph's/Candler in Savannah, GA, after a massive stroke. He was born on Oct. 21, 1936, to Joseph L. and Sadie Wengerd) Hershberger, in Lynnhaven, VA, but lived in Wayne County, GA, for the last 31 years.

He was a member of Montezuma Mennonite Church. In recent years he was well-known for delivering home-baked goods and like calling himself, "The Goodie Man." He spent many hours singing with his family. He had special enjoyment in observing weather and other things in nature, especially farming.

On June 26, 1957, he was married to Ruth Overholt. She survives. Four sons survive: Philip Hershberger, Abbeville, SC; John Henry Hershberger, Ellaville, GA; Robin and JoAnn Hershberger, Chesapeake, VA; Chester (Chip) Hershberger, Jesup, GA; four daughters: Hannah and Marvin Schrock, Jesup;

Laura and Gary Kauffman, Thomaston, GA; Lois Hershberger, Jesup; Mary Lou Hershberger, Jesup; 11 grandchildren, two sisters; Betty and Walter Mast, Somersville, KY; Pauline and Pete Gingerich, Abbeville, SC; and a brother-in-law, Ray (and Lorene) Swartzentruber, and many nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held Unity Church of God in Jesup, GA, on May 8, with Marcus Miller, Eli Kauffman, Gene Miller and Lyndon Overholt serving.

Wagler, Nathaniel, 33, of Newton, Ontario, died May 4, 2014, at Listowel Memorial Hospital. He was born July 22, 1980 in Listowel, ON, to Elroy and Diane (Zehr) Wagler.

He was a member of Fellowship Haven Amish Mennonite Church, Monkton.

Survivors include a brother, Timothy, Newton,; sisters, Anita (Joseph) Gerber, Brunner; and Lynette (Ryan) Jantzi, Wellesley; Loretta (and Dwight) Peachey, Atwood; four nieces and two nephews; Grandparents, Jacob and Alma Zehr, Millbank and Katie Wagler, Brunner.

Preceding him in death were his grandparents, Solomon and Lavina Wagler.

The funeral was held on May 8, 2014 at Mapleview Mennonite Church, with ministers of Fellowship Haven serving. Interment followed in Mornington Amish Mennonite Cemetery.

Wagler, Rosanna (Stoll), 82, of Montgomery, IN, died July 31, 2014, at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, Indiana, ten days after a car accident.

She was born Sept. 10, 1931, in Daviess County, IN, daughter of the late Amos and Fannie (Richer) Stoll.

She was member of Mt. Olive Mennonite Church. A homemaker, and gardener, she enjoyed her part-time job at Gasthof Amish Village in guiding tours. Her love of people was manifest in visiting the elderly and shut-ins.

On Nov. 15, 1953, she was married to Willis Wagler, who is deceased. She is survived by four daughters and four sons: Fannita Wagler, Montgomery; Marsha (Loren) Wingard), Washington, IN; Rhoda (Marlon) Wagler, Washington, IN; Velma (Dan) Mast, Holmesville, OH; Dean (Wanda) Wagler, Wayne (Esther) Wagler, Amon (Marti) Wagler, all of Washington, IN; and Nathan (Rose) Wagler, Montgomery, IN; 32 grandchildren; two sisters, Lydia (Simon) Lengacher, Loogootee, IN; and Emma (Howard) Stoll, Odon.

She was preceded in death by a son, Nelson Wagler, a grandson, Wendell Mast, and brothers, Isaac, Enos, and Herman Stoll.

The funeral was held on August 3, at Berea Mennonite Church, with Dave Witmer, Abe Stoll, Floyd Lengacher, and Clyde Stoll serving. Burial was in the Mt. Olive Cemetery.

Yoder, Allen E., 78, of Montezuma, GA, died Sept. 11, 2014. He was born August 25, 1936, in Norfolk, VA, son of the late Enos and Mary (Miller) Yoder.

Allen was a member of Montezuma Mennonite Church, Montezuma.

On April 10, 1956, he was married to Pauline Yoder. Four children survive: Paul (Carol) Yoder, Montezuma; Margaret (Nathan) Schlabach, Masaya, Nicaragua; Shirley (Merlin) Yoder, Newberry, SC; Joyce Yoder, Heweyville, KY; 21 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren.


The funeral was held on Sept. 14 at Montezuma Mennonite Church with Donny Swartzentruber, Irvin Yoder, and Eli Kauffman serving. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Yoder, Pauline, 81, of Montezuma, GA, died Feb. 27, 2014. She was born Jan. 17, 1933, daughter of the late Simon I. and Lydia (Yoder) Yoder.

She was a member of Montezuma Mennonite Church, Montezuma.

On April 10, 1956, she was married to Allen E. Yoder (obituary also in this issue). He survived her by 7 1/2 months. (Note family listed in Allen's obituary)

She was preceded in death by a great grandson.

The funeral was held on May 8, with Eli Kauffman, Sim Yoder, and Donny Swartzentruber serving. Burial was in the church cemetery. 



Jennifer Dale, 36, from Preston, KS, was texting while driving when she rear-ended another car that slowed down to make a left-hand turn. The crash sent the other car into the path of an oncoming semi truck which killed the other driver. Ms. Dale has been placed on a year's probation and she must pay a \$1,000 fine. Her probation requires her to speak at six schools about the consequences of texting while driving.

Perhaps some more of us need to be reminded that inattention or distractions while driving can have serious consequences.

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A number of states that have marriage laws which specifically limit marriage to be between a man and a woman, have had those laws declared unconstitutional by state courts.

The Mormons with the support of several other religious groups including Catholics, are asking the U. S. Supreme Court to rule whether or not states have the legal authority to make or enforce such laws.

The courts on any level are all ultimately subject to a higher court. While the U. S. Supreme Court is the highest legal authority in this country, it will also answer to the

court whose authority is above all human authority.

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I recently received the business meeting notes of the 2014 Ministers' Meetings at Yoder, KS. This 13-page report is a real encouragement, but also a major challenge.

The first page lists the names of newly-ordained brethren. The following pages list reports of 13 different ministries with numerous subdivisions. Missions Interest Committee (MIC) And Amish Mennonite Aid (AMA) were organized in 1953 and 1955. Additional service and mission opportunities have for the most part developed under their leadership. Other ministries have also begun whose roots are not directly traceable to the original two boards.

The big picture at present is not only a testimony of God's blessing to our constituency. This growth happened in a climate of supporting congregations who valued the privilege of being autonomous. But that preference was tempered with the realization that we are decidedly connected to other congregations. Our ideals include a commitment of obedience to the Word that ideally results in a lifestyle that is recognizably different from

the culture who disregards divine directives.

The point is not to be different but to follow the Lord and obey the Word. The difference has basically an inward effect, but there are also outward manifestations. If the choices that congregations make are not sensitive to the broader fellowship this can become misguided and disruptive.

Let me suggest that we think of our lifestyle as not primarily an effort to maintain an Anabaptist identity, but rather an honest effort with a response of obedience. It is interesting that there are a growing number of persons without an Anabaptist history who feel privileged to have discovered that there are actually churches who want to obey the Word even when it is contrary to popular practice. May God give us grace to follow the Lord humbly and faithfully, without apology and without arrogance.

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Columnist Michael Gerson writes that there are now more suicides than traffic fatalities. He says when a friend takes his or her own life our immediate response is, 'I wish I had known that his or her night was so dark; I might have done more.'

• • • • •

If a farm animal was a little undersized, my grandfather Dan A. Nisly (1868-1946), was known

to remark, "It has a whole world to grow in." This could be said of many other things. As a small church group among many other churches, this is not a reason for despair. Our Lord who knows the number of hairs on each head offers encouragement to small bodies of believers. After all, the most traveled road does not lead where we all want to go.

The only important thing is that we are following the One who alone can keep us safe. Never mind that the journey seems a little lonesome, at times. Jesus said in Luke 12:32, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The little flock which is truly Christian will inherit the Kingdom. God is not the least bit stingy.

Bro. Sanford Yoder, Costa Rica, and several other brethren had a vision to provide a Christian bi-monthly magazine in the Spanish language. That story is well-told elsewhere in this issue by their editor, Duane Nisly.

Is it not interesting that the devotional booklet *Beside the Still Waters* and *La Antorcha de la Verdad* (The Torch of Truth) are both the result of a God-given vision? Circulation of each publication is in excess of 200,000. And both ministries still have the whole world to grow in.

—DLM

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From time to time, it can be helpful to ask ourselves if our people and churches have found the right balance between “reaching out” and preserving a safe environment for us and our posterity. So we ask, and hear questions like: “Does our culture constitute needless barriers to seekers?” “Should our energy be primarily spent nurturing those who are here or reaching others?” “How does stewardship of the Gospel look in the 21st century?” “Can we really say we take evangelism seriously as a constituency with our current demographics?”

While these questions can be helpful and appropriate, even if they are somewhat uncomfortable, I don’t believe they are helpful if we consider them with the assumption that we must choose between reaching out and safety. When we, individually and corporately, move forward with clear conscience and under Holy Spirit direction, we can trust the safety issue to the One who sees the future. A focus on faithfulness is much more helpful than loyalty to an “outreach” or a “safety first” agenda.

Maybe now is a good time to revisit a quote from Menno Simons. These comments were made several centuries ago, but are very pertinent to this place and these times.

“True evangelical faith is of such a nature that it cannot lie dormant, but spreads itself out in all kinds of

righteousness and fruits of love: It dies to flesh and blood; it destroys all lusts and forbidden desires; it seeks, serves, and fears God in its inmost soul; it clothes the naked; it feeds the hungry; it comforts the sorrowful; it shelters the destitute; it aids and consoles the sad; it does good to those who do it harm; it serves those that harm it; it prays for those who persecute it; it teaches, admonishes and judges us with the Word of the Lord; it seeks those who are lost; it binds up what is wounded; it heals the sick; it saves what is strong; it becomes all things to all people. The persecution, suffering, and anguish that come to it for the sake of the Lord’s truth have become a glorious joy and comfort to it.”



An SUV driven by an 18-year-old with four teenage passengers experienced a single-vehicle rollover accident early one morning this summer in Idaho. It was reported that one of the passengers lightheartedly ignited some of the driver’s armpit hair. While operating the vehicle at an unsafe speed, the driver reflexively moved his arms in response to the unexpected fire and lost control of the vehicle. Not all the occupants were wearing seat belts and two were thrown out. Thankfully, there were no life-threatening injuries and all involved survived with a chance to learn from this regrettable turn of events.

A number of things come to mind that could have prevented this incident, but I'll let you enumerate them. I wonder how often I've made an unwise or distracted decision while operating or riding in a vehicle. So far, my lapses haven't had the consequences that played out on that early summer morning in Idaho. Rather than offering a pharisaical rush to judgment, a more helpful thought for me is, "But for the grace of God, there go I."

Many of us know families and lives that have been permanently reshaped by someone's momentary lapse of judgment or attention, or even by factors the driver had no control over. These are poignant reminders that good stewardship means we try to drive carefully and eliminate as many distractions as possible. Portable electronic gadgets, including cell phones, add to the smorgasbord of potential distractions. However, let's also remember that someone responsible for an accident carries a heavy burden and would love to have those last few seconds back immediately prior to the accident so he/she could respond differently. As forgiven children of our Heavenly Father, the Lord offers grace to extend grace, empathy, and forgiveness where applicable. My spirit has been encouraged by observing brethren who have been deeply touched by

such a loss, who display the spirit of Christ in the midst of it all.

• • • • •

Recently Qantas, an Australian-based airline, began operating the world's longest non-stop, commercial airline route with the world's largest passenger aircraft. Here are a few interesting facts about this development:

- This Airbus A380 is equipped with 484 passenger seats.
- The fuel capacity is 82,000 gallons.
- This aircraft is 240 feet long, 80 feet tall, with a wingspan of 260 feet.
- The empty weight of this "big bird" is 610,000 pounds and maximum take off weight is about double that at 1.2 million pounds!
- The non-stop route between Dallas-Fort Worth and Sydney, Australia, covers 8,577 miles in each direction with a flight time of 15-16 hours.

Air travel is one of those things in our society that has reached a saturation point. We look at it as more normal than remarkable. But looking at some of these figures reinforces for me that this mode of travel is truly a marvel. The precision needed to make something like this work—and work well—is in itself surprising. Statistically speaking, air travel is safer per mile traveled than is road vehicle travel. That's amazing!

—RJM 

“When You File Past My Casket....”

Dale Stoltzfus, Lewisburg, PA

He was an older gentleman. He could be serious and insightful. When I planned to teach at a city mission church's school, he was the board chairman who interviewed me. I felt a certain amount of fear and respect when he asked me about my relationship with God. I told him my relationship with God was really affected by how faithful I was in my devotional time. He asked how that was going. Did I have a good, consistent devotional time, or did I sometimes struggle with that? As I awkwardly tried to be honest without giving too bad an impression, he smiled and acknowledged that he, too, struggled to be consistent in having his time with the Lord.

As I got to know brother Roy better, I learned to appreciate his sense of humor, his friendliness, his wisdom, his godliness, and his commitment. In our conversations, I remember him expressing dismay at people who had once known the Lord, and who were now not faithful to Him. One memory that stands out clearly was when he was teaching at an evening church service. He spoke

with feeling as he said, “When you file past my casket, I want you to be able to say, ‘There is a man who was faithful.’”

In Psalm 12:1, David cries out, “Help, LORD, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.” Jesus said that the way to life is narrow, and those who travel it are few. Today, as in David's day, faithfulness is a scarcity.

Moses was a man God described in Numbers 12:7 as, “faithful in all mine house.” Though he was rash as a young man and zealously killed an Egyptian who was fighting an Israelite, God refined him through his years on the back side of the desert. Numbers 12:3 tells us that he learned humility and became the meekest man on earth.

When Daniel had a position of power, the envious presidents and princes tried to find something they could accuse him of, but they couldn't because he was faithful. He demonstrated his faithfulness by openly, boldly continuing to pray even though he knew it could cost him dearly. (Daniel 6:4-10)

Proverbs connects faithfulness to good control of the tongue. According to Proverbs 14, “A faithful witness will not lie.” Proverbs 11:13 says, “A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.” Also, according to Proverbs 27:6, a “faithful man” may sometimes say things that may hurt the feelings of a friend to help him see the wrong in his life. “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” So good control of the tongue doesn’t always mean just keeping quiet. It also means having courage to gently say what needs to be said. When others are wounded by what we say, faithfulness binds up their wounds. Faithfulness heals.

What about us? Will we be faithful to control our anger? Is God’s grace strong enough in our hearts to guard our spirits when we are tired and others are irritating? Will we have a servant’s heart when those who have no authority tell us what to do? Will we refuse to join others in slander or gossip? Will we refrain from laughing at that off-color joke? Will we go the speed limit even if we’re a little late for work? Can our employers count on us to give a good day’s

work for our wages? Psalm 31:23 says, “O love the LORD, all ye His saints; for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.” When we stand before Him at the end of our lives, will He say? “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Several years after I moved away from the city where I met Roy, I and others filed past Roy’s casket. He had had a close, protecting, loving relationship with his wife. He had spent his last years with her enjoying life, visiting others, and memorizing Scripture. As I viewed his body, I remembered his words. I could say with assurance, “Yes, Roy, you were faithful till death.” A few years later, his wife, also faithful, passed on to her reward. Their lone son and grandchildren now carry on their legacy. As the song writer says so well, “Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful. May the fire of our devotion light the way, May the footprints that we leave, lead them to believe, and the lives we live inspire them to obey. Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful.”

[From the Mid-Atlantic Informer, August, 2014. Used by permission.] 

A favorite attitude is gratitude.

The Two Views on Life

An Atheist's View on Life

I will live my life according to these beliefs
God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings healing to the pain in the world
is a comforting thought, however
It
is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that
I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
“The more you have, the happier you will be”
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is a freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving.

A Christian's View on Life

(Read this bottom to top)

(From *Midwest Mennonite Focus*, Sept-Oct, 2014. Source unknown.

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Ministers' Meeting Messages – 2014

The following message is the third one given at the annual ministers' meetings, held on April 8-10, 2014, at Journey Mennonite Church, Yoder, KS. These meetings were hosted by the three Amish Mennonite churches of Reno County, Kansas. Recordings are available from Victory Music Services, P.O. Box 1498, North Highlands, CA, 95660, for \$50, postpaid. Telephone: 443-480-1489, Email: victorymusicservices@gmail.com

Preparing and Presenting the Message

Elmer Glick

Slanesville, WV

We are all different. Our preparations are all different. Our presentations are different. In the ministry it's not, "One size fits all." God did not create us as robots. We are a group of individuals and that's a blessing. God has given our churches the power and beauty of a plural ministry. That is a strength. We are to complement each other.

This message may not seem inspiring. It's rather mechanical, it's "the nuts and bolts of preaching." But I trust it will still be practical.

We sometimes learn things through embarrassment. Years ago, I heard a preacher who spoke loudly and paced the platform. I decided that's me. The next time I preached, I endeavored to do just that. It flopped. The embarrassing thing was that the entire congregation probably knew what was happening.

I'm also concerned that even while I'm preaching, you will be tempted to critique me on the very techniques that I'm telling you about to see if I truly practice what I preach. I'm OK with that. The greater concern is that you will go home and critique each other. I want each of us as we leave here to think, "How can I present the Word of God in a more effective manner?"

Some of us preach without notes and some use extensive notes. I'm not critiquing either of those. God has also called us into the ministry for different purposes. In Ephesians 4:11 and 12, differing categories of ministry gifts are listed. Why did God do that? He did it for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry and for edification in the body of Christ. Some of us in this group are evangelists; some are prophets; some are the exhorters and teachers.

I preach like a teacher. I probably always will. I don't expect you to preach like I do. Remember, you are you. Even our callings and charges

are different, whether we're given the work of a minister, a deacon, or a bishop.

Several books I suggest you buy are *Plain Speaking: How to Teach and Preach Effectively*, by David Bercot; *A Good Minister*, by Howard Bean; and *How to Preach, and Pastor and Serve Effectively*. Here's one if you like heavier reading: *Methodical Bible Study*, by Robert A. Traina.

Even though we are men, let us ask for directions and learn to follow instructions.

Preparing the Message

Sometimes I fear we have a false humility about preaching. That's actually an inverted form of pride. I fear that we don't do as well as we could, because we don't want to appear prideful. We must depend on the Holy Spirit, but we must also do our part. We are, after all, raw material. Paul was highly trained, but he counted all that as dung, so that the Holy Spirit could use his training effectively, both in preaching and in writing. Many of our early Anabaptist leaders were also well-trained men, who were trained in both speaking and writing. David Bercot notes that we are known for excellence in farming, cabinet making, and other manual skills. Why then, he asks, do we often settle for mediocrity in preaching and writing? Where are our priorities?

The first thing to consider is, What

shall I preach? Jacob K. Stoltzfus told me when I was newly-ordained, "Brother Elmer, if you ever don't know what to preach, preach Jesus." Sometimes knowing what to preach is not a problem. We know and are eager to share, but it doesn't always happen that way.

Howard Bean gives us the following list:

The general needs of the congregation.

Suggestions from members.

Stay away from subjects recently addressed.

Keep a balance; avoid hobby horses.

Keep a back-burner file.

Note the type of service and make it appropriate.

Note impressions of the Holy Spirit.

Use current issues and events.

Consider the audience—youth, family, what is happening?

Consider the time available.

This struggle to know what to preach is part of the package. My main suggestion is: Let's establish the theme early. Then we can collect our thoughts better and find better supporting material. Let's keep a note pad on our desk or in our vehicle to jot down ideas.

Howard Bean lists seven different sermon types: Expository, Topical, Textual, Biographical, Apologetic, Allegorical, and Evangelistic. We might ask, Which do we use the

most? I think we may come up strongest on the textual or topical. I believe we would do well to look at more expository preaching. Exposition is simply to expose the content and meaning of the text by teaching. Here's one thing in favor of expository preaching: It does not allow us to skip a subject we'd rather not deal with.

Bible study is hard work. It takes discipline. The key word in 2 Timothy 2:15 is "study." To prepare a sermon we need to study. I like to begin with an outline. It prevents rambling. It also helps those in the audience who are taking notes. As I study and prepare, I pray. Some of us use word studies. Here are few cautions: Most of us are not Greek and Hebrew scholars, so the best we can do is use a dictionary of some kind. Simply using a word can fail us. Take this English word: *trunk*. If you happen to be a hunter, you might think of a tree stand. When you want to travel, you may pack a trunk then put it in the trunk of your car. This shows the weakness of using a definition of a Greek or Hebrew word, with only a beginner's knowledge. If we know what we want a word to mean, we may use the reference book wrongly by taking a certain definition that supports our idea.

When we study the Bible and arrive at a conclusion by using the *deductive method*, we begin with a

number of general statements and move to the particulars. This is usually subjective and prejudiced. We decide ahead of time what the result shall be. On the other hand, using the *inductive method*, we begin with the particulars and the Scriptures, and make conclusions based on those particulars, which is much more objective and impartial. An example of this is how we might study the mode of baptism. Do we use only those Scriptures that support our understandings?

Aaron Glick, to those asking, "What is God trying to tell us?" would sometimes say, "God is telling us. We are the ones who are trying to understand what He is telling us."

Traina's four steps of Bible study methods: Observation. Interpretation. Evaluation. Application.

Things to avoid:

- Overuse of commentaries.
- Overuse of internet sources.
- Saturday night and Sunday morning preparation

Before taking your notes into the pulpit, check your references.

Presenting the Message

A well-prepared message is usually a lot easier to preach.

Lecturing is probably the most efficient way of presenting the most material in the least amount of time, but the interest of the audience must be sparked in order to follow you through. I use visual aids. Generally

we can learn better by what we see than by what we hear. If we put those two together, retention rises dramatically. If you're doing overheads, keep them simple.

Use illustrations and object lessons. If we do not do this easily, we can learn. When the preacher takes a brown bag into the pulpit, not just the children watch. Everyone wonders, *What's he got up his sleeve this time?* However, squash the idea that having found a good illustration, you ask, "What can I preach to use that illustration?"

Introductions and conclusions: Your opening introduction is a time to get your audience's interest. Therefore, we need to capture their attention. Use a personal story, an illustration, a bold statement or a question, if you're prepared to follow through on it.

If we use too much current news, the content gets "a bit fluffy." Sometimes, there is a news event that will work.

Occasionally, have something just for the children.

David Bercot says that what you say last is often the first thing people remember about your sermon. Your conclusion should accomplish two things: Provide a brief summary and stir your listeners to action. If there's nothing for them to take along home, what will they have? Never use the words, "In conclusion," until

you're ready to conclude.

In the case of Apollos, he was a mighty speaker. But he had a teachable spirit. What practical skills can be developed? Listen to the recordings of others. Even though you don't try to preach like they do, you will find it helpful to listen to others' sermons. And listen to your own recordings. Maybe that sounds egotistical, but in my case, by doing that, I caught something I was doing that I had picked up unknowingly. I've been working on it ever since.

To what extent does the Spirit control effectiveness? This is tight-rope walk. Do we rely on the Spirit and "just wing it"? Or do we so prepare that we don't need the Spirit? We can do all we can, but it's God that gives the increase. It is not of us. But that is no excuse for sloppy or poor presentation.

On the pulpit at the Bowery Mission, I noted this, "The Holy Spirit is a gentleman. He does not rob time from others."

Know the listeners' comprehension skills. The language must be common to the teacher and the learner. The vocabulary needs to be understood by both, however there is room to stretch the vocabulary of the audience, if it's done in context. Remember, the greater the number of unfamiliar words in your message, the less effective your preaching will be.

Read distinctly, like Ezra. The

people in his time went away changed because they had understood the words declared unto them. They stood one-fourth of the day and listened to the word of God being read, and in another fourth of the day, they confessed and worshiped God. I think Ezra read and explained the word of God. When you're reading, be cautious about missing words. When we miss the word, "not," it turns a whole passage on its head.

I use Boyd's Bible Dictionary, by James Boyd, for correct pronunciation. It's a small paperback full of words used in the Bible. When you get information, write it down in your notes so that when you read in public, you don't stumble. Names and places give us a hard time. Don't just skip over them and don't apologize for not knowing them. Dictionaries and word books don't always agree, so don't judge your brother for how he pronounces something. Examples of words that are given differing pronunciations are "Philistines" and "Amalekites." We tend to stumble over words like, victuals (vittles), draught (draft), privy (with a short i), chafe (rhymes with safe), chasm (kazm), trow (as in snow), and Deuteronomy has only one M.


David Bercot is concerned about "word whiskers." "OK?" "You see?" "Ahhh," "Now listen to me," are all things we may repeat without

meaning to but it reaches the point that it gets distracting. These usually come from not turning off our voices while we think.

Simon Schrock tells me that when he was a boy in school, he was very shy. Today, he has learned a poise and a manner in speaking that we appreciate. Many "natural" speakers have worked hard for effectiveness.

Here are some oddities. We grab our nose or our ears. We adjust our glasses, even though they're not sliding down. Inappropriate dress. Going overtime. Fidgeting with keys or coins in one's pocket.

What is the expression on your face? Are you keeping eye contact? Are you preaching to the ceiling or to the floor? If you're preaching to a segregated audience, are you preaching just to the men? Look your audience in the eyes. Look them in the face. Move your eyes around, so that everyone feels included. Smile, be pleasant, so that your audience does not get tense. Develop confidence.

Many of our fears about public speaking are of our own making. If you think you might collapse, take a deep breath. Slow down. Talk slowly, because if you start racing, your fears will race faster than you. Confidence comes with practice. What works best for you. Find your niche. Finally, be yourself. Above all, do all that you do to the honor and glory of God! 

A Life of Thanksgiving

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

After the Civil War, President Lincoln officially set aside the fourth Thursday of November as a day of giving thanks. The origin of Thanksgiving Day goes back to 1620. The Pilgrims left the Old World in a ship filled with one hundred people and crossed the Atlantic Ocean because of religious conflicts with the Church of England. They arrived in the New World too late to grow crops and without fresh food. Many of the group died. The following spring the Iroquois Indians taught them how to grow corn along with other new crops and how to hunt and fish. By the autumn of 1621, bountiful crops were harvested. The colonists prepared a feast and invited the Indians to join in a time of thanksgiving. Such a day of Thanksgiving was celebrated by the colonists for many years.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving day in 2014, I wonder, will we experience the same gratitude and thankfulness those early settlers did? Have we become so accustomed to a table spread with bounty that we take these blessings

for granted? How can we, in a land of prosperity, recapture the thankful spirit? Does thankfulness depend on the things we possess or is it an attitude of the heart? Someone has said, "If you want to find gratitude, look for it in the dictionary." I trust it is also found in my heart.

Gratitude, according to the dictionary, is the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. The Thesaurus gives us other words, such as, *thankfulness, appreciation, indebtedness, acknowledgment, and credit*. According to definitions, thankfulness is much more than words. As I mentioned before, it is an attitude. However, it is even much more than an attitude. It is a way of life; it is words lived out in "shoe leather." I can express gratitude with my words and even my attitude, but true gratitude feels an indebtedness to give and share with others. Even as Jesus said, "Freely ye have received; freely give."

A thankful spirit is developed. Thankfulness should become a habit

in a believer's life. As we practice saying, "Thank you," in our homes to our children and husbands, our children pick up on our attitude. Our grateful spirit will cause our children to be happy and contented. A thankful heart dwells on positive thoughts. Negative thoughts tend to make us critical and are joy robbers. Express your thankfulness for 31 days and watch it become a habit. Your home will be a happier place.

A thankful spirit will appreciate and value other people. Instead of noticing the bad in others, a grateful woman will choose to see the good and give credit for it. Words of appreciation and affirmation can change the atmosphere in our home or in a church setting. Everyone needs to feel needed and appreciated.

A thankful spirit brings contentment. A contented woman

accepts her life and the people whom God has placed in her life. She does not try to change them. Instead, she prays, "God, change me." She finds joy and satisfaction in the things that are a part of her life. She creates tranquility and peace for her family, using the resources within her budget and stewardship.

A thankful spirit takes action. We need more than feelings or words of compassion; we must take action. How can I express my thankfulness to God this Thanksgiving season? It may mean giving of our finances or other resources to the local food bank, serving food at a homeless shelter, inviting your neighbors to your dinner. These are just a few suggestions as you look for ways to express your gratefulness.

Joy is a by-product of thankfulness.



junior messages

The Best Christmas Ever –Part One

Mary Ellen Beachy, Kisumu, Kenya

Why did Jesus come to earth? He came because God loves each one of us. He came to die and give His life

to save our souls.

Why do we celebrate Christmas? Do we celebrate to remember the best gift of all—the gift that

offers to us eternal salvation? Is our celebration only about family gatherings, favorite foods and fun times?

They were ten thousand miles away from parents and home. How could they spend Christmas Day? Here is what one missionary family and one teacher in Africa did on Christmas Day. It was their best Christmas ever!

Benter is a nearly-deaf African lady who worked hard to help her husband put enough food on the table for their five children. She hoed and weeded their “shamba” (garden); she sold extra vegetables they raised. She sold “omena,” a tiny dried whole fish the people loved to cook and put in a soup.

Her husband, Wellington, was a tailor. He had to rent a sewing machine and it was not always available. Wellington’s close-cropped, black, curly hair had flecks of gray. His mind, at times, was no longer clear.

Benter was worried; her head often ached. Yet the only place she had to cook was over a smoky little fire she would light. Carefully, she would place a kettle on the simple

fire hearth, which consisted of three rocks. She was thankful as she dumped the cornmeal in the hot water and stirred their “ugali,” thankful that they had food to eat. Still, her head ached worse today as the smoke swirled up from her cooking fire as she stirred the bubbling ugali.

What could she do? Kenyans love special food—especially chicken—at Christmastime. Yet, chicken was so expensive and she knew that at Christmastime it often doubled in price.

She often thought of a dream God had sent to her. One night as she slept, she dreamed she had looked up toward heaven. She was standing and stretched out her hands to God, saying, “Ayie,” (I accept). Food came down to her—food from God’s loving hands. Yes, it was just like God had sent food from the skies by ravens to feed Elijah many years ago.

She awoke and pondered that dream. It was all so clear. Somehow she was no longer worried about special food for Christmas. But just how would God make Benter’s dream come true on Christmas Day?



(To be concluded next month)

Dear Youth,

The last few years, I have worked with Christian Aid Ministries (CAM) in Billboard Evangelism. Sometimes my work is answering questions that come from readers at the GospelBillboards.org website. Recently a believer was reading some articles about our beliefs on war and wrote this:

“I was reading your article on War with my husband. One sentence caught our attention: ‘We should pray for our country’s leaders, respect our government, obey its laws, and pay our taxes, but we never can carry arms against another human being.’ What about situations of self-defense? If we cannot raise arms against another human, what should we do? Does the Bible state anything about that? If someone knocked down your door and wanted to kill your wife, do you stand by and watch, or do you fight? It is hard to say that God would be alright with you doing nothing, but He would also not want you to kill. We’re very confused. Can you help us out?”

Some day you may be asked this question, if you haven’t been asked it already. Maybe you have had

similar questions on this topic. If so, I’m submitting a response to this question that seemed to clear away some confusion. Perhaps the following response will be of some help to you as well.

—EE

Those who take a “non-resistant” position do so out of obedience to Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:39, when He says, “But I say to you, do not resist an evil person;” (NASB).

A few years later, when Jesus was in a situation in which it would have been very tempting to resist someone who intended to do Him harm (or allow someone else to resist evil on his behalf), Jesus said to Peter, “Put up thy sword into his place: all that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matthew 26:52).

Not long after this, Jesus told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My Kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm” (John 18:36 NASB).

In Romans 12:20, the Apostle Paul instructs us this way, “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he

thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.”

These are just a few references showing us that “not resisting evil” is a very other-world concept that can only be understood and practiced as we take on the mind of Christ. When we understand that God’s Kingdom is in total opposition to the way earthly kingdoms function, these instructions of Jesus begin to make sense. When we realize that God’s kingdom is most powerful when its citizens lay down their lives for others in order to show the love of Christ, we are no longer far from the Kingdom but actually in the Kingdom. God’s Spirit can communicate with our spirit and help us understand the spiritual nature of His kingdom.

The question of whether or not we should ever resist others is not an easy one to answer in light of all the varied situations in which we might find ourselves. Even those of us who believe it is wrong to fight would still attempt to physically restrain the mentally handicapped or a person who was not in his right mind. Jesus does not give really clear distinction on exactly who to resist and who not to resist. He just says, “Do not resist an evil doer.” So if we find ourselves in a situation where someone intends to harm us, we can rely on the Holy Spirit to give

us wisdom in the moment as to how we should respond.

Over the centuries, there are many things that non-resistant Christians have done when someone intended to harm them or their families. Often non-resistant Christians have started praying for the people who intended to do them harm. Sometimes men have placed themselves between the violent person and their family and begged for mercy and consideration. On other occasions, Christians have claimed the authority of the believer and in the name of Jesus have commanded the violent person to stop his evil deeds and intentions. Others with eyes full of compassion, have looked evildoers in the eye and begun witnessing to them about the love of Jesus, how Jesus changes lives, and the need to give themselves over to Christ. Some have offered people food or other gifts in the name of Christ.

Often these acts of faith and love have stopped evildoers in their tracks. Many evildoers have testified (either at the time of the incident or later) that for one reason or another they were unable to accomplish the evil that they intended to do. Many evil people have been won to Christ when they saw the faith and love of Christians who did not resist evil.

We could share hundreds of stories of Christians who have done these types

of things throughout the centuries, all the way back to the Garden of Gethsemane. Few of these stories are known to most of the people who profess Christianity. We love to tell these stories of what God can do when His people follow Christ's example of suffering love.

Are non-resistant people always spared from violence? No, not always. Sometimes God allows evil men to do wicked things to Christians. However, if we could compare statistics on Christians who do resist evil vs. Christians who do not resist evil, I think we would find that, overall, those who do not resist evil, experience fewer violent acts committed against them compared with those who would be willing to harm others in self-defense.

This topic is a huge one with many tentacles and hard questions. Those who have been inclined toward self-protection all their lives, and come to embrace a non-resistant way of life, do

not typically arrive at this persuasion quickly. Believing that evil is best overcome by love often comes through a walk of faith and trust in God.

After reading this the couple responded:

"My husband and I very very excited to see your response. It is a tough subject to discuss, but after reading what you had to say, things are becoming more clear to us. This world is temporary, and God's Kingdom works on a whole other set of rules that sometimes we can't even begin to understand.

We were blinded with the idea of fighting fire with fire. In the society of "I want it now," patience fails us. We did not think first of fighting evil with love.

God has helped us understand His laws a little better. We thank you very much for answering our email, not only with your opinion, but with the church's teachings and the Word of God.



Express gratitude generously and sincerely; receive gratitude humbly and graciously; expect gratitude rarely.

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Calvary Messenger
2673 Township Rd. 421
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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

If we think we have nothing to be thankful for, we had better think again.

• • • • •

A person may not realize how much he has to be thankful for until he has to pay taxes on it.

• • • • •

He who is not happy with what he has, would not be happy with what he wishes for.

• • • • •

In order to climb, grab the branches, not the blossoms.

• • • • •

No musical talent is required in order to harp on something.

• • • • •

A hair on the head is worth two in the brush.

• • • • •

Happiness is like potato salad; when it's shared with others, it's a picnic.

• • • • •

Hardening of the heart ages us more than does hardening of the arteries.

• • • • •

Helping others up the hill gives you more altitude, too.

• • • • •

Crown wearers in heaven were cross bearers on earth.