



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

MAY 2020

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Calvary Messenger

May 2020

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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I Trust You, Father

Rosie Miller, Kisumu, Kenya

Dear Lord, You gave me life, my every breath I take.
For me you have a plan, You gave me worth.
The world may fall apart, this place with evil may prevail.
But I don't need to fear, I trust You, Father!

I place my trust in You, my only hope is You.
You are the Rock that's sure, my soul can stand on.
When I don't understand, I place it in Your knowing hands,
In You I stand secure, I trust You, Father.

Lord, do You look down on us, in tears You turn away?
You see the mess that sinful man has made.
You send the plagues of death; through storms You show to man Your pow'r.
Until we seek Your face and trust You, Father.

Tomorrow may bring sickness, death, or tears of pain.
But I need not to fear the clouds of rain.
You know the reason why; You bring assurance from on high.
I know You're in control, I trust You, Father! 



If...

If it wasn't for that little word *if*...

We have many questions in this time of uncertainty. There are many predictions made that include this important word *if*. Of course, we have always used this word when we were unsure about the future. Weather often bring surprises, and it would be nice *if* we knew that it would not rain when we poured a slab of concrete or tore off the shingles on a house. Farmers are preparing to plant crops and they are hoping for more favorable weather conditions than they had last year. These *if* statements refer to the future.

If I knew what cattle prices will be this fall, I could make a better decision today. *If* I knew it will rain, I wouldn't cut the hay. *If* I knew what the housing market will be in six months, I might build a house to sell. *If* I knew my job was secure, I could purchase a house.

There also are times when we look into the past with regret. During these times we also use the word *if*. *If* only I had not purchased that

car. *If* only I had not said that word. *If* only I had not taken that second helping of food. *If* only I had stopped to help that person in need. *If* only I had encouraged him to be faithful to the Lord. *If* only I had smiled at her. *If* only I had looked twice before pulling out into the roadway.

These statements of regret may reflect our inability to foresee the future or the consequences of words or actions. Sometimes it is because we made unwise decisions in a rash moment that didn't reflect our natural inability to foresee the future.

The word *if* is used 1420 times in the King James version of the Bible. It reflects in part the ability God has given mankind to choose his own way. The first time we find it in scripture is when God challenged Cain's anger after God didn't respect his offering. "*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door*" (Genesis 4:7). This is yet another way the word *if* is used, when God gives mankind an option. The choice is almost

always followed with a consequence. It is good to remember that our God knows definitively what the outcome will be of our choices.

At times we give others several options and change our responses based on their choices. Abram gave Lot a choice when he recommended that they separate their families and herds. *“And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left”* (Genesis 13:8). While Abram may not have seen the consequences of Lot’s choices as clearly as God could see them, I suspect he was aware of the dangers of the well-watered plain of Jordan. Greed for gain often clouds our decisions.

In the book of Deuteronomy Moses tells the children of Israel about the importance of loving and serving God. God promised them many rich blessings in the *land of promise*, but the promises came with conditions. Here are a few promises containing the word *if*.

Deuteronomy 11:13-14 *“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken*

diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.”

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 *“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.”*

Deuteronomy 28:9 *“The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.”*

Deuteronomy 28:15 *“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:”*

After King Solomon had completed the temple at Jerusalem

and God had sanctified it, God came to him by night. God followed with promises to His people that depended on their commitment to Him. In II Chronicles 7:12-22 we find the word *if* used six times, referring to conditions of God's blessing or curse. God even put a condition on His covenant that King David would always have "a man to be ruler in Israel." That promise depended on Solomon's faithfulness to God.

In this passage we find a very familiar verse that is often given as a call to the nation we live in to repent. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14). While the promises in the Old Testament often promised physical blessings to the whole group, the promises to God's spiritual children today, I believe, are mostly spiritual and personal. God desires that we build and restore the land on a personal level, beginning in our own hearts.

We can spend much time and energy when we use the word *if* in trying to change the past or to discern the future, but it is mostly wasted. While we can learn from

the past to affect the present and the future, we can neither change the past, nor can we know the future. But we do well to live our lives by God's statements that contain the word *if*. Here are several *if* references that will affect our life on earth and our eternal destiny.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:15-16).

John 15:9-14 *"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."*

Let's trust the One Who knows the future and live faithful lives!

—AY 

Jesus Through the Generations

James D. Hershberger

Stuarts Draft, VA

Will people look back and say we tended to lose the oncoming younger generation while we were on Sunday service vacation? While we enjoyed listening to other speakers, was our local church being cared for? Is there a better way?

It may be well to consider some Bible thoughts or phrases:

“Shepherds of the flock” (I Peter 2:5). *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”* (Hebrews 10:25). *“The church.”* *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with His own blood”* (Acts 20:28).

Perhaps it is very important to provide for the local church by having the local ministers preach each Sunday morning for the local congregation while we listen simultaneously on the phone line or some similar method. Church announcements can also be given. This procedure provides for the local church body, young as well as older, in having a strong emphasis on church body and unity as we worship God together. We can benefit in having a sense of belonging and church responsibility.

May we weather this health situation well with a spiritually healthy church brotherhood outcome that welcomes others to listen in.

God’s blessings to you.



Announcement

2020 Youth Fellowship Meetings Schedule

July 24-26, 2020

Locations for the five regions are as follows:

Northwest — Sharon Bethel in Kalona, IA

Southeast — Clearview Fellowship in Montezuma, GA

Southwest — Calvary Fellowship in Paris, TN

North central — Bethesda Fellowship in Plain City, OH

Northeast — Nothing scheduled in this district for 2020



Announcement

Single Ladies Seminar

August 7–9, 2020

T.H.R.I.V.E.

The Will of God—Sharon Bange, Narvon, PA

Handling Finances—Karla Good, Logan, OH

Relating to the Church—Amy Byler, Seymour, MO

Indignities with Dignity—Kelly Kauffman, Thomaston, GA

Victorious Amidst Desires—Vicki Kauffman, Thomaston, GA

Excellent in Spirit—Naomi Diller, Summersville, KY

To register, or for questions about the seminar, please call 614-873-1199 or email info@dlmohio.org.

This seminar is sponsored and hosted by:

Deeper Life Ministries

5123 Converse Huff Rd

Plain City, OH 43064

www.dlmohio.org 

the bottom line

For the Fear of Those Things

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

My world is upset. My son, Gerald, has cancer on his tongue and some on the floor of his mouth. The symptoms were first discomfort, then eventual pain when talking and eating. The operation was set for Monday, March 16.

That was the very day that, due to the coronavirus, schools and all non-essential services, businesses, and stores were told to close. Roads gradually had notably fewer cars and trucks. Production was being shut down, curtailing the movement of goods by ship, planes, and trucks.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike had gas-pumping and porta-potty services only.

Only one person was allowed in the waiting room for the people in surgery. The next day and following, only Gerald's wife was allowed to visit him in his private room, which extended to seven days.

The hospital restrictions brought to me a new fear. It did not help for me as Gerald's father to not be allowed to see my son! There was no consideration whatever; they could lock us out, and we could not convince, bargain, negotiate, or plead to any bit of avail. What else? They had absolutely no verbal or facial expression of sadness, pity, or sympathy! Gerald's pastor requested to be allowed to go in; there was not a bit of any consideration. It brought thoughts to me of what God experienced at the time of the death of His only Son, and of Jesus to be forsaken by His heavenly Father.

Their word was much too firm for me, too arbitrary, and too final. I can usually somehow humor people, have a bit of negotiation, or at least a little concession of deserving a small consideration of some kind. Not this time—this was serious stuff.

By this strict rebuff, all at once I realized that my wrong fear of man was greater than my right fear of

God. My prayers and daily requests, I assumed, had at least some favored consideration for His ear and will. My special requests surely warranted some special favors somewhere, somehow.

In that time of deep despair and grief, the motto at my daughter's house, where we stayed for ten days, kept insisting that "Prayer Changes Things." I recently had accumulated a little list of things that I had prayed for, none of which changed those things at all. I became bitter whenever I saw that motto, or thought about it. Satan was mocking me! And I felt powerless to denounce him by the name and blood of Jesus Christ. I felt defeated. My weakness was revealed, my lack of trust, and what else? My most certain lack of fearing God! God showed it to me. I repented, but rather weakly, I confess. Oh, Lord, help my unbelief.

For the next seven days, God gave me something each day I could, no, *had* to do. That was to intentionally thank God in this whole matter. Sometimes it was more than one thing per day until I was ashamed and embarrassed before the Almighty Lord God. God is good, and God is here!

Satan has been rebuked by the Holy Lord Jehovah when I was too carnal or selfish or frail to do it myself. How

often God might do this for His own, largely unknown by us! God helped me in that valley of crisis and in my time of grief.

When I poured out my grief and complaint to myself, I kept going in repetitious circles. That did nothing for me, and less yet for others. When the godly are chastised, will they never again be rewarded? As a preacher, I have been supposedly eloquent to lay it on how people should trust God and then wait on Him. Now I must confess again, all that good preaching is easier said than done. I had failed and now have returned to my Father.

The Bottom Line is that God has done more for my son, Gerald, than

we had asked or thought possible as per the doctor's assessment. We are renewed in the three-word statement, "Prayer Changes Things," and in the gracious promise of God, "*that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*" (Ephesians 3:20). We are renewed in our faith toward God, and in tandem with that, in our admiration and fear before Him.

"Thank you, Lord, in teaching me again how frail I am, so that I might see anew how powerful you are. Amen."



God is Good

Dave Nisly, Catlett, VA

We are truly in an uncharted wilderness. Picture a desert with no roads and no trails. There is no sign of what direction to go because there is nothing but an endless sea of sand dunes in every direction. What do we do?

Thirty days ago, I don't believe any of us would have believed what could happen within a

few short weeks. It was beyond anyone's imagination. Because of the COVID-19 virus, things have changed—not just a little, but they have changed drastically. Who would have thought the Democratic primaries and upcoming presidential election would be largely silenced with no more boisterous political rallies and debates? I would never have considered the possibility of all

sporting and entertainment events in the US would be cancelled within days. In some states, businesses have been told to shut down indefinitely with exceptions only for essentials such as food, gas, and healthcare. As of now, more than 25% of the US population of roughly 350,000,000 in five states are being told to stay at home as much as possible for the next several weeks or indefinitely. If this could all happen within the last two to three weeks, what will we be facing in the next thirty days? We literally have no idea.

I don't fault anyone about feeling anxious as we wait to see how COVID-19 impacts our personal lives, our communities, this country, and the world at large. Admitting when we are anxious and afraid is helpful. We need to be honest with ourselves and God about what is really going on in our hearts. At the same time, we don't want to stay there—we don't want to stay anxious and fearful about something over which we have no control. We need to surrender our anxious hearts to God and allow Him to carry those concerns for us.

During challenging times like this, what we truly believe about God is revealed in our responses. Do we respond in fear? Anger? Trust?

Anxiety? Faith? Paranoia? Peace?

The fact is we live in a fallen world. Sin is a far more deadly virus than COVID-19. Since the fall of Adam and Eve, we have lived in a physical world marred and deeply flawed by sin. As a result, most human endeavors are rooted in mankind following their pride and putting others down in order to get the desires of their own hearts. Sin is rooted in selfishness. It is fueled by greed. Until Jesus returns and destroys Satan, the power of sin and darkness and despair will continue to reign on planet Earth.

Because of the brokenness of the world we live in, there are and will continue to be natural disasters, tragic accidents, sickness, and disease. There is pain. There is suffering. As long as we live in time and space, these realities will continue all around us, and Christians are not exempt. This COVID-19 virus is just one example of this. It is equally contagious to believers and unbelievers. It is equally threatening our earthly lives and affecting our very way of life. The virus is inanimate. It is non-discriminatory. It is an equal opportunity virus. This microscopic virus is creating upheaval around the globe—economically, socially, and

medically—it is bringing the most powerful countries and economies to their knees.

Even though we live in a fallen world, God is good. In Psalm 119:68 the psalmist writes “*You (God) are good and do good; teach me your statutes.*” God is good. God does good. What does He have to teach us about Himself?

God is as good today as He was three weeks ago...three decades ago...three centuries ago...or three millennia ago. God is as good today as He was when He created sinless Adam and Eve and placed them in the perfect garden called Eden. He is the same today as He was in eternity past. And He is the same today as He will be in eternity to come. He is as good today as He was on the day He delivered the children of Israel from Egypt...when He miraculously parted the Red Sea...when He ultimately led them into the promised land.

God’s goodness doesn’t fluctuate based on what is happening on planet Earth at any given time. God was good during the most horrible genocides throughout history. He was good during the deadly plagues that killed millions. God was good when early Anabaptists were hunted like wild animals and cruelly put

to death. He was good whenever Christians have been tortured and killed for their beliefs.

Our definition and perception of *good* is flawed by sin. The goodness of God is far superior to what we can grasp with our feeble and finite minds. It describes the character and heart of God.

The REALITY is **God is good**—regardless of our feelings. Let’s believe it. Let’s declare it. Let’s remember it. Let’s remind ourselves and others—GOD IS GOOD!

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have hope. This is something no unbeliever can truly understand. We believers have changed our allegiance from the kingdom of sin and Satan to God’s eternal kingdom. Our sins have been forgiven because of Jesus’s ultimate sacrifice—His cruel death on the cross and bodily resurrection from the dead. We have peace with God because we have been adopted into His family. We have hope—not fear and anxiety.

Titus 2:11–14 (ESV) “*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great*

God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Notice how Titus instructs us to live our lives in the present age. We are to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives. This admonition is pertinent for today’s present realities. Why do we live our lives like that? Because we are waiting for our blessed hope—the appearing of Jesus Christ. We have something far greater to look forward to and for which to live.

We live in this sinful and unredeemed world like an ambassador in a hostile country. Our citizenship, our identity, and our purpose is not just here and now. It is for something far greater. We have the promise and hope of life eternal which is given to us with our salvation.

1 John 5:11–13 (ESV) *“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.”*

Death for the believer is simply a transition from living in time and

space into eternity—we keep right on living.

What is God trying to teach us? Why is He allowing this virus to cause so much disruption? We don’t know the why and probably never will fully know on this side of eternity.

What is He trying to teach us? We don’t fully know presently, and we may not know for some time. While we could speculate from multiple angles, I would like for us to consider one possibility. Remember the tower of Babel in Genesis 11?

Genesis 11:1, 4 (ESV) *“Now the whole earth had one language and the same words... Then they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.’”*

At that point in history, civilization had advanced to a point where they had learned to accomplish significant endeavors. Because of their successes, their confidence and their arrogance soared. They believed they were invincible.

Genesis 11:6–8 (ESV) *“And the LORD said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they*

propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.' So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city."

God understood their potential for evil and destruction. He acknowledged their competence when He stated that what they set their hearts to do they would accomplish. In fact, God says nothing was impossible for them to do. So, He intervened. God, in His goodness, created a disruption.

The people's arrogance, their power, their self-confidence, their aspirations, their goals—they were in control and they were invincible (or so they thought).

God acknowledged the possibility for misusing their potential, and He recognized that it was not healthy and would not lead to good outcomes. So, God intervened by causing a disruption that caused them to see that they weren't as powerful or invincible as they thought they were. It brought these people to their knees—it abruptly halted their massive construction project.

Perhaps God is calling our

attention and focus back to Him rather than everything man has accomplished, and that includes what we have accomplished. We don't know why God is allowing the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we do have a responsibility to respond in a manner that positively reflects the character of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What is an appropriate response?

Suddenly having our calendars cleared, fewer activities, and less busyness, let's cultivate habits that can intentionally deepen our spiritual lives in several ways.

Let's cultivate a heart of **humility and devout prayer**. This virus has brought the world to a relative standstill (in comparison to several months ago). It has literally brought our prosperous economy to its knees, to a place of humiliation. Being on one's knees is a vulnerable position. It's not a comfortable position. It is not a posture we naturally choose.

But God calls us to the posture of humility willingly. We are to do so out of recognition for who God is and our own unworthiness before God.

One of the ways we demonstrate our humility lies in our desire and willingness to spend time in prayer, especially for each other in the body

of Christ. In our church, we have prepared a daily prayer reminder list of members and regular attendees. Let's fervently pray for each other regularly and systematically. We should also be praying for our government, business, and church leaders as they have many difficult decisions to make. As we humbly pray, we are acknowledging our own inadequacy, frailty, and inability to do anything in our own strength. It is recognizing that ultimately only God is in control.

This is also a time **to carefully examine ourselves, make confession of sin, and walk in repentance.** Use this time in which our pace has been slowed to humbly ask God to scrutinize our own lives for areas of selfishness, pride, or wrong desires. When the Holy Spirit illuminates those dark places in our lives, we have a choice: we can disregard the revelation, or we can call it the sin it is and confess it to God as such. After we confess our sin, we must turn away from (repent) and purposely move closer to God.

With a less hectic lifestyle and more free time, this is also an excellent time to **immerse ourselves in Scripture.** Take this time to carefully read and contemplate God's Word. Read it slowly. Think about what you are

reading. Re-read it. Digest it. Meditate on it. Intentionally memorizing Scripture is one of the best ways to fill our hearts with God's truth.

It is fascinating how many of the Psalms seem especially relevant at times like this. The Psalms express deep and honest emotions that connect with us when we are going through difficult and challenging times. Read and meditate on the Psalms.

Let's not forget that this is a time when people around us are truly seeking truth. They are coming to the realization of their own helplessness and their lack of hope. This is the time to humbly share the hope, the peace, and the confidence we have in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Let's watch for opportunities to express these realities to those who are searching for something more during this time.

We all have our anxious moments, but let's help encourage each other to surrender those fears to God and instead intentionally choose to embrace with joy the hope, peace, and confidence in Almighty God, the Ruler of the universe.

[From a message preached on March 22, 2020, and submitted by Simon Schrock]



marriages

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

Barnhart-Martin

Bro. Titus, son of Earl and Hettie (Heatwole) Barnhart, Waynesboro, GA, and Sis. Rhoda, daughter of David and Christine (Schrock) Martin, Rochelle, VA, were married outdoors on March 21, 2020, for Oak Grove Mennonite Church by Lamar Hochstetler. Wedding plans were changed due to the present regulations limiting group size to ten persons.

Hershberger-Miller

Bro. Matthew, son of Michael and Gloria Hershberger, Newcomerstown, OH, and Sis. Violet, daughter of Paul and Irma Miller, Newcomerstown, OH, on March 21, 2020, at Maranatha Fellowship for Salem Amish Mennonite by Bobby Miller.

Lehman-Hershberger

Bro. Lerado, son of Dale and Miriam Lehman, Hutchinson, KS, and Sis. Heidi, daughter of Joseph and Leanna Hershberger, Nickerson, KS, on February 29, 2020, at Plainview Mennonite Church for Center Amish Mennonite Church by Ken Schrock.

Lehman-Shank

Bro. Andrew, son of Clyde and Brenda

(Diller) Lehman, Chambersburg, PA, and Sis. Katie, daughter of Ray and Marietta (Schrock) Shank, Rochelle, VA, on March 14, 2020, at Oak Grove Mennonite Church by Lamar Hochstetler.

Miller-Beachy

Bro. Myron, son of David and Katie Miller, Wellman, IA, and Sis. Gena, daughter of Gabriel and Sheila Beachy, Wellman, IA, on October 5, 2019, at Fairview Mennonite Church for New Hope Mennonite Church by Delmar Bontrager.

Miller-Derstine

Bro. Lyndon, son of Joe and Regina Miller, Eden Valley, MN, and Sis. Lynette, daughter of Allen and Loretta Derstine, Thorp, WI, on January 25, 2020, at E. Free Church, Paynesville, MN, for Believer's Fellowship by Melvin Beiler.

Miller-Troyer

Bro. Benji, son of Dale and Sue Miller, Newcomerstown, OH, and Sis. Kolene, daughter of Ruben and Esther Troyer, Newcomerstown, OH, on February 22, 2020, at First Baptist Church for Salem Amish Mennonite by Bobby Miller.

Stoltzfoos-Yoder

Bro. Bradley, son of Elam and Loretta Stoltzfoos, Kalona, IA, and Sis. Debra, daughter of Delmar and Dorothy Yoder, Wellman, IA, on December 14, 2019, at Fairview Mennonite Church for Sharon Bethel Mennonite Church by Delmar Bontrager.



cradle roll

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

Correction: Beiler, Larry and Karla (Mullet), Gap, PA, *fourth* child, *second* daughter, Hailey Joelle, February 19, 2020.

Burkholder, Philip and Eleanor (Schrock), Jackson, OH, seventh child, fifth son, Grant Cordell, January 31, 2020.

Eicher, Arlin and Janette (Miller), Hutchinson, KS, second child and son, Corbin Blaze, February 29, 2020.

Fisher, Donny and Leanna (Wengerd), Chuckey, TN, first child and daughter, Amiyah Rose, January 7, 2020.

Fisher, Ryan and Jenny (Petersheim), Limestone, TN, first child and son, Jackson Jay, January 11, 2020.

Ical, Calvin and Zenya (Ysaguirre), Isabella Bank, Belize, third child, second son, Jediah Nathaniel, March 6, 2020.

King, Chet and Rhoda (Stoltzfus), Port Royal, PA, fourth child, third daughter, Alayna Joy, March 22, 2020.

Lengacher, Sheldon and Alisa (Miller), Lexington, IN, fifth child and daughter, Larita Jade, February 9, 2020.

Martin, Abner and Luella (Martin), Atwood, ON, eighth child, sixth daughter, Abigail, January 31, 2020.

Mast, Ricky and Kendra (Gingerich), Provo, UT, first child and daughter, Taylor Adalyn, January 13, 2020.

Miller, Merlin and Kimberly (Miller), Washington, IA, second child, first son, Lance Jaxton, January 8, 2020.

Miller, Philip and Sherilyn (Beachy), Summersville, KY, first child and daughter, Abigail Grace, March 8, 2020.

Miller, Randy and Sharon (Zook), Lyndhurst, VA, third child, second son, Grayson Earl, March 6, 2020.

Ropp, Michael and Connie (Bontrager), Liberia, Africa, third child, second daughter, Amanda Marie, January 21, 2020.

Schrock, Jeremy and Susan (Yoder), Leesburg, OH, third child and son, Kamden Jon, January 17, 2020.

Schrock, Matt and Ella (Peight), Salem, IN, second child and son, Tyler Erick, March 13, 2020.

Stauffer, Lawrence and Julia (Weaver), Jackson, OH, sixth child and son, Jamison Lane, February 6, 2020.

Yoder, Aaron and Karla (Miller), Jackson, OH, eleventh child, sixth daughter, Jemima, February 9, 2020.

Yoder, Jonathon and Donita (Ropp), Jackson, OH, second child, first daughter, Kyleah Brooke, January 5, 2020.

Yoder, Luke and Esther (Smoker), Free Union, VA, third child and son, James Adrian, March 13, 2020. 



ordination

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

Bro. Ken Kanagy, 38, (wife, Susanna Stoltzfus), Blackville, SC, was called through the voice of the church and ordained to the office of bishop for Calvary Fellowship Mennonite Church on March 8, 2020. The charge was given by Virgil Kanagy, assisted by Tim Weaver and Noah Yoder. 

obituaries

Miller, Curtis Lee, infant son of Christopher Lee and Hannah Janell Miller, passed away on January 28, 2020, at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana, IL.

Curtis was born on December 20, 2019, in Urbana, IL.

He is survived by his parents, Christopher and Hannah Miller, Arthur; paternal grandparents, Elva and Katie (Otto) Miller, Arthur; maternal grandparents, Harold and Mary Fern (Herschberger) Miller, Arthur; paternal great-grandmother, Ada Miller, Arthur; maternal great-grandparents, Raymond and Marlene Miller, Arcola; Menno and Barbara Herschberger of Arthur; and maternal great-great-grandmother, Mary Hochstetler, Arcola.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandmother, Carol Jean (Kemp) Miller, paternal great-grandparents, Harvey S. Miller, and Elmer and Ella Kemp, and maternal great-great-grandfather, Levi Hochstetler.

Stoltzfoos, Wilmer S., 87, of Leola, PA, passed from this life to his heavenly reward on February 7, 2020, at home after a brief illness.

He was born on January 21, 1933, to Elam B. and Hannah (Stoltzfus) Stoltzfoos on the Leola farm where he and three previous generations lived, labored, and died.

On November 18, 1954, he married Lydia Fisher, who survives.

He was first ordained as a minister

at Melita Christian Fellowship in 1973, where he served for 22 years. He also served as a missionary pastor in Kisumu, Kenya, for several years. He was a faithful member of Weavertown Amish Mennonite Church in Bird-in-Hand.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his children: Hannah (Joseph) Miller, Melvern, KS; Sarah (Jerry) Miller, Partridge, KS; Esther (Daniel) Beiler, Hillsdale; Mahlon (Esther), Leola; Elam (Loretta), Kalona, IA; Adin (Heidi), Burgettstown; David (Regina), Gordonville; Elmina (Ernest) Beiler, Lancaster; Freida (Erin) Hostetler, Mount Vernon, OH; 52 grandchildren, and 38 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers: Levi and Mose; sister, Rachel, and son, Wilmer, Jr.

Funeral services were held on February 10, at Ridgeview Mennonite Church for Weavertown Amish Mennonite Church with Jason Miller and Nathan Bange serving. Interment was at Weavertown Church Cemetery.

Wagler, Timothy, 42, of Milverton, ON, passed away suddenly as a result of a farm accident on Saturday, February 8, 2020.

Tim was born January 31, 1978, and was the beloved husband of Christine (Zehr) Wagler, whom he married

September 16, 2000.

He was the cherished father of Shawn, Erick, and Joshua, all at home; the loving son of Harold and Nancy (Erb) Wagler, Millbank; and grandson of Ella Mae Schmidt, Brunner. He was the dear brother of Donna (Steve) Adams, Millbank; Richard (Barb), Millbank; and Karen (Roger) Good, Aylmer.

Tim is lovingly remembered by his parents-in-law, Joe and Deborah Zehr, Milverton; in-laws Paul and Karen Zehr, Bayfield; David and Barb Zehr, Millbank; Peter and Janice Zehr, Pictou, NS; Tim and Charlotte Zehr, Millbank; Yvonne and Lowell Biehn, Milverton; Barb and Richard Wagler, Millbank; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his grandparents: John and Barbara (Gascho) Wagler, Elmer Schmidt, Dan W. and Christina (Gerber) Erb, Ira Nafziger; and nieces, Charlene Good and Melissa Zehr.

Tim was a co-owner of Wagler Electric in Milverton and was a faithful member of Fairhaven A.M. Church.

The funeral was held on February 13, 2020, at Faith Mennonite Church with Derek Jantzi and Arnold Jantzi serving. Arnold Jantzi conducted the committal service at the Mornington Amish Mennonite Cemetery, Poole, ON.



GOD IS OUR HELP IN TROUBLE;

if you worry, you are on your own.

In 1960 the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was formed with the idea of working together on the production of petroleum in a way that provides a stable, beneficial price for the countries exporting petroleum. This most common measure that OPEC uses for influencing price is agreeing together to limit sales of petroleum. The USA is not part of OPEC. The organization last met on March 5 of the current year. At that meeting Russia and Saudi Arabia, two of the largest producers of petroleum among OPEC members, were unable to find enough common ground to move forward with production cuts in order to bolster lagging prices. They left the meeting seemingly determined to carry out a price war in order to secure petroleum market share. Saudi Arabia promptly flooded the market with oil priced lower than the competition. This was about the same time that oil usage worldwide ran into some serious headwinds due to reduced economic activity related to the COVID-19 outbreak. The combination of a flooded, global petroleum market and reduced demand constituted a major double-whammy that sent prices lower than they have been for a number of years. The economic sector of the USA that is related to petroleum and the local economies

that are dependent on the same are experiencing major difficulties. The bright spot is that it costs less to fuel up our vehicles than it has for a number of years. Now if we only had somewhere to go to instead of staying at home...

The many, varied measures that have been implemented to curb the spread of COVID-19 are unprecedented in my memory, and I might add, the memory of many older than I. Those of us who've lived our lives in this country are not accustomed to having our freedoms curtailed this way. While we don't welcome these changes, there are benefits.

Schedules are less cluttered to the extent that our activities have been canceled. It's a good time to fill those new and unusual gaps in our schedule with constructive things we would not normally have time for. This is the stuff that has the potential to make some really good memories for those who are adept at making lemonade when circumstances give us lemons. Somebody said it feels sort of like a long string of snow days.

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Statistically speaking, those who are older than 60 develop more complications with COVID-19 than those who are younger. The younger the person, the better the outcomes. And the older the

patient, the greater possibility of complications, generally speaking. Positive COVID-19 diagnosis among those under 12 years of age are very rare. However, statistics don't tell the story of all individuals as illustrated by these accounts.

In 1918 and 1919 the Spanish flu pandemic killed millions of people worldwide. Estimates of the casualties range from 30 to 50 million people, which is a number I have difficulty grasping. An Italian man, "Mr. P," was born during that crisis, but he survived. He survived World War II as a relatively young man and lived to the age of 101. Recently, he was diagnosed with COVID-19 and was hospitalized in Italy. But he recovered and walked out of the hospital to rejoin his family! Healthcare workers are amazed by his remarkable recovery.

Bill Lapschies was born in 1916 and resides at Edward C. Allworth Veterans' Home in Lebanon, Oregon. He too tested positive for the virus and recovered in time to celebrate his 104th birthday on April 1. His family gathered while wearing protective masks and had a "social distance" birthday party for him with a cake and signs wishing him a happy birthday.

On the other end of the age spectrum, a 6-week old infant in Connecticut was admitted to the hospital during the COVID-19 outbreak. The child became unresponsive and efforts to revive the

child were not successful. The infant tested positive for COVID-19. What a heartbreaking development for those close to this newborn infant.

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In early March I traveled with others to the Texas panhandle. The topography of the region can be described as quite flat. The vegetation of that region was wearing its winter garb. One gentleman from neighboring New Mexico, who was traveling through the area, marveled at the descriptive names of some of the area towns, noting Brownfield and Levelland as apt descriptors of the region. He commented, "You couldn't get a marble to roll anywhere around here."

Having grown up in central Kansas, I didn't mind the scenery at all. I found it attractive and familiar. God sure has graced His creation with some remarkable variety. The variety and the contrast are most of why we find this earth so interesting. If it all was created the same way, regardless which way that would be, our interest would tend to wane. I appreciate that our good God thought to include so much diversity in His creation.

• • • • •

One of the interesting ways that the current pandemic affected us was with the plans surrounding the marriage of our daughter and our now son-in-law (Randall Wagler and Melissa Miller) on Saturday, March 28. Originally we had expected about 475 persons to attend

the wedding. But the authorities limited mass gatherings to 50 persons a couple of weeks prior. This meant some serious re-calibration of the original plans. Then before the wedding happened, the number limitations on mass gatherings changed again. But in the state of Kansas, mass gatherings were defined as being in an enclosed area. So, we changed plans again and held the wedding outdoors at the future residence of the couple with about 20 family members present. One of the bride's brothers and his wife and son were not able to attend because they are living abroad and were unable to travel. The final event looked quite different than when we began making plans, but it was a very good experience. We had a big thunderstorm about daybreak on the morning of the wedding, so the yard was quite soft which wasn't preferred. It was also very windy, but the sun came out, and the temperature was pleasant. In the afternoon the newlyweds waited at the end of the driveway at an appointed time, and many of the church people lined up in their vehicles and participated in a "drive-through" receiving line. In spite of the many changes, it was a very good day!

It served as a good reminder that we sometimes need to reevaluate what we consider as essential in times like these. Even though the event was much smaller than I idealize, the people that most needed to attend

were present. Most of all, God did what He does and joined them in marriage. So it was a successful day. If the couple adjusts to life's unexpected developments as well as they did to the changing wedding plans, they should have a very successful marriage—not just a successful wedding.

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Some vendors who sell garden seeds have reported an impressive uptick in sales this spring. Jere Gettle, the owner of Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds from Mansfield, Missouri, reports that the normal late-spring drop-off in seed sales hadn't materialized for them as of late March. The busiest time for seed orders from his company is from January through March. But in late March orders increased. Staff was trying to fulfill about 4,500 orders per day which is about double what they expect during the busiest times. There is particular interest in seeds that yield nutrient-dense food, like kale, spinach and beans.

Currently the populace is encouraged to engage in outdoor activities that involve exercise and fresh air without needing to be close to other people. Many people have more time at home than they are accustomed to, due to losing their jobs or needing to work from home. Furthermore, there is a bit of uncertainty regarding our food supply. It's no wonder that many people have a heightened interest in gardening.

-RJM 

The Purpose and History of Anabaptist/Christian Education

Peter Zucconi

Part II. The History of Anabaptist/Christian Education Primarily in Pennsylvania

From the time of their first settlements in the early 1700s, Pennsylvania Mennonites, like other immigrant groups, endorsed practical education. In the Skippack area of eastern Pennsylvania, colonial Mennonite schoolmaster Christopher Dock taught in a one-room subscription school. Hired by local parents, Dock's foundation for teaching was the Bible. Dock knew this was paramount in Christian education. In his classroom, the Bible and hymnbook were preeminent among other texts.

Dock also knew that a Christian education is marked by love. Those involved in the educational process teach in love. He knew this principle was best taught through his own daily life and example. Christopher Dock died on his knees in prayer after a school day in 1771.

Mennonite concerns for biblically-

based education led them to establish some of the first schools in Lancaster County. Mennonite meetinghouses, like those of other denominations, often served as the first "school buildings." Sometimes, schoolhouses stood adjacent to meetinghouses. Mennonite minister Henry Garber, in recalling the educational atmosphere of the early 1800s, stated, "The church and the schoolhouse stood side-by-side; Christianity and education went hand-in-hand."¹

Educational practices among Pennsylvania Mennonites continued generally un-rippled until 1834 when the Pennsylvania legislature passed the "Free School Law," establishing the state's first public schools, making every township a school district. Many realized the new law meant the breakup of their church schools. Opposition was strong in Lancaster County, especially along the upper Conestoga Creek.

Some Pennsylvania Mennonites became involved in the new, free, public school system. Some were elected school directors while

others taught in small, rural schools. Educator Noah Good reported that through the later 1800s and the early 1900s at least 250 Lancaster County Mennonites served as school directors and over 200 as teachers. School directors had authority to hire teachers, build schools and purchase textbooks. Eventually, they would gain further authority to enforce attendance laws and establish high schools.

An 1899 decision by Lancaster Conference bishops asked all school directors to resign their positions because of having to legally enforce compulsory school attendance, particularly among the Amish. A strong protest resulted in the bishops reversing their decision a year later.

A new school code passed by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1895 included the “Garb Law,” which prohibited teachers from wearing any distinctive religious clothing while teaching. For Mennonite teachers who wore the typical white prayer covering, this was a problem. Sociologist Donald Kraybill writes, “Many school directors, sympathetic to the Mennonite practice, looked the other way. In some districts Mennonite women wore a black veiling to appease school directors. In other townships teachers were dismissed.”² The state brought a lawsuit against several Mennonite school directors for allowing

Mennonite teachers to wear the traditional white covering.

Despite such problems, most Pennsylvania Mennonites were generally satisfied with the educational system of the day. However, by the late 1800s, the world beyond was rapidly changing. Improvements in transportation and communication made for a shrinking sphere. Mennonites were becoming aware of a world beyond. Evangelical influences emphasized Sunday Schools and missions. Increasing numbers of Mennonites saw involvement in missions and service as essential in the Christian life.

To increase the effectiveness of their involvement, many sought training. However, no Anabaptist, higher educational institutions existed. That soon changed as Mennonite-related schools began. These included Bethel College (Kansas, 1893), Goshen College (Indiana, 1903), Bluffton College (Ohio, 1914) and Eastern Mennonite College (Virginia, 1917). These schools started as academies or high schools before becoming full-fledged colleges.

The first Mennonite elementary school began in Greenwood, Delaware, not as a call to service but in response to a state law. In 1928, the State of Delaware began requiring all public school students to pledge allegiance to the US flag. Mennonite

families, not wanting to disobey the dictates of their conscience, started the Greenwood Mennonite School. The school has the distinction of being the oldest Mennonite school in continuous operation.

In the 1930s, Pennsylvania Mennonites began to question their involvement in public education. Evangelist A. D. Wenger in an article in the *Gospel Herald*, an important Mennonite periodical of the day, asked the question, “Who should educate our children?” Wenger asked further, “Shall we let the state with fairytales, entertainments, militarism, and evolution, crush out the simple faith implanted by loving fathers and mothers?”⁴

Responding to such writings and to growing concerns with public schools, stirrings for Mennonite elementary schools in the Lancaster area grew through the 1930s. Near Smoketown, Beachy Amish and Lancaster Mennonite Conference families found an unused one-room schoolhouse along Old Philadelphia Pike and began a school in 1939 with 32 scholars. This was the beginning of Locust Grove Mennonite School. A year later, efforts west of Lancaster city led to a Mennonite school starting at New Danville. West Fallowfield Christian Day School got its start in 1941, south of Atglen, by families from the Maple Grove congregation.

Growing numbers of Lancaster Conference Mennonites spoke favorably of starting a high school. The threat of cultural assimilation was rising as increasing numbers of Mennonite youth were attending public high schools. But resistance was equally strong by those who were distrustful of the worldly effects of “higher” education.

The pressures of World War II increasingly affected most areas of American life, including education, and Mennonites were not exempt. Children in nonresistant families attending public schools faced varying degrees of pressure. Patriotic speech and song-filled assemblies, drives for war stamps and scrap-iron, sometimes supervised by classroom teachers, affected nonresistant students and teachers alike.

Concerns over the intensifying patriotism of the day, school consolidation, increasing emphasis on sports, gym classes, evolutionary theories, and the steady assimilation of Mennonite youth into American society all fueled the growing support for Mennonite high schools.

In 1942, Lancaster Mennonite School started along the Lincoln Highway east of Lancaster in a former Episcopalian boarding school. Historian John Ruth comments that Lancaster Conference was “pushed over the threshold less by a sense of worth of developing the gifts of

mind and culture than by fear; school would be accepted as a means of defense against worldly culture.”⁵

By 1956, historian Ira D. Landis reported 22 schools, 53 teachers, and 1434 pupils from 646 families within Lancaster Conference. These included Linville Hill (1944), Ephrata (1946), Kraybill (1949) and Gehmans (1952). In neighboring Franconia Conference, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School started in 1954. The Christian day school movement among Mennonites had taken hold.

By the 1970s and 1980s, responding to perceived deteriorating conditions, both morally and educationally, within US public schools, a nationwide interest in Christian education sprang up among US evangelicals and trickled down to effect Mennonites. Numerous Mennonite schools started, including high schools at Maranatha in north-central Pennsylvania (1972), Faith (1975), and Terre Hill (1985). Lititz Area Mennonite began in 1978 as did the Weaverland Conference School at Farmersville, Lancaster County, for grades one through nine.

Many of these new schools became members of the Middle Atlantic Christian School Association (MACSA) and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Such organizations held annual teacher conventions. Among

the hundreds of teachers attending were those from both mainstream and conservative Mennonite schools. It might be of interest to note that at some point during this time period, Lancaster Mennonite High School (LMHS) stopped attending the MACSA conventions. Though located approximately one mile from the convention site, LMHS deemed the convention and its activities overly patriotic.

The 1980s saw the beginnings of the home-schooling movement. What some first thought would be a passing fad grew and became entrenched as a viable option for Christian education nationwide, including Mennonites of all persuasions.

As perceived conditions in public schools deteriorated, Mennonite families choosing home education increased. At the same time, Mennonite school options, particularly in Pennsylvania, grew correspondingly with the mushrooming number of new Anabaptist groups, including Eastern, Keystone, Mid-Atlantic, Pilgrim, and others. Mennonite-based education through twelfth grade also became available at Reading (Fairview) and York (Tidings of Peace), using the individualized, self-paced ACE curriculum. Other more recent changes include the start of a high school at Schaefferstown, Lebanon County, and the first high

school graduations at both Ephrata Mennonite (2010) and Mennonite-rooted Linville Hill (2018).

As Anabaptist choices for education increase and the number of families choosing those options increase as well, it is wisdom for us to take to heart the counsel of an earlier Anabaptist educator. “The Christian disciple who is undergoing Christian education is not so much learning a lesson, as he is learning to live a life.”⁷

Quotes/Sources

1. *Passing on the Faith, The Story of a Mennonite High School*, Donald Kraybill, Good Books, C. 1991, p. 9.
2. Kraybill, p. 11.
3. GAMEO, Mennonite Online Encyclopedia, La Junta Mennonite

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4. Kraybill, p. 11.
5. *The Earth is the Lords, A Narrative History of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference*, John L. Ruth, Herald Press, C. 2001, p. 806.
6. GAMEO, Mennonite Online Encyclopedia, “Iowa Mennonite School”
7. Paul Mininger, from a Conrad Grebel lecture on “Christian Education” at Eastern Mennonite College, November 21-22, 1952; notes taken from an unpublished transcription of the lectures, p.28.

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For Mothers

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX



Mothers, love your children, but please do not:

Always rely on food to comfort them,
or they may grow up to struggle with obesity.

Do everything for them, or they will become
bossy adults who take other people for granted.

Let your daughters hear you speak evil about their father,
or they will become women who despise men.

Allow your sons to belittle and smack their sisters,
or they will become men who hate and abuse women.

Contradict your husband's decisions in their presence,
or they will learn to be defiant toward authority.

Blindly take their side against the teacher and preacher,
or they will never take responsibility for their actions.

Withhold your affectionate touch from your sons,
or they will seek female caresses elsewhere.

Avoid straight talk about sexuality with your daughters,
or they will learn a tainted version through naive peers.

Seek to appease them to avoid conflict,
or they will grow up to become manipulative adults.

Indulge their every wish and demand, or they
will become men and women without self-respect.

Excessively brag about them and their antics,
or they will think the universe revolves around them.

Use them as a buffer between you and your husband,
or they will resent being deprived of childhood innocence.

Attempt to protect them from every possible injury,
or they will not be prepared to face the harshness of life.

Pit siblings against each other,
or you may have to face your old age all alone. 



The Beginnings of the AMA Mission in El Salvador

John U. Glick, Kinzers, PA

History is an account of narratives, happenings, and stories of the past. God considered history extremely valuable. In the Scriptures repeatedly we discover recordings of Israel's history. The beginnings of AMA's missions were days of excitement, energy, and establishment both in the home churches and abroad. Read more. -FS

In 1961 Amish Mennonite Aid committee (AMA) members went on an investigation trip to Belize and El Salvador with the interest of opening mission work in those two countries. While in El Salvador they met with officials of "Instituto de Colonizacion Rural," ICR, a government agency instrumental in having rural families become owners of small plots of land. They were graciously received and were given a welcome and invitation to send workers familiar with an agriculture lifestyle to assist them in attaining their goals. Soon thereafter, when AMA had tentatively decided to respond positively to the invitation, a two-year agreement was arranged between ICR and AMA.

A clause included in the agreement limited AMA workers from using the living quarters provided by ICR for evangelization purposes.

By April 1962, AMA was prepared to begin missions in El Salvador and Belize. On May 2, 1962, Jacob Hershberger and Elam Kauffman, AMA board members, arrived in El Salvador aboard a two-motor, 60-passenger plane. Harvey and Kathryn Kaufman, the first unit leader couple for the El Salvador mission, and their six-month-old daughter, Lydia Mae, went on the same flight. Three days later, Ben Stoltzfus, Wayne Schrock, and I arrived after ten days travel overland in the new Ford Econoline van purchased for unit use. At Motel

Nuevo Mundo in San Salvador we joined the committee men and Harveys where we stayed until the house at Sitio del Niño owned by ICR was prepared for us to occupy.

At the motel we met James Portman who was a Peace Corp worker assigned by the U. S. government to El Salvador. In our conversation he mentioned that he regularly reads the Lynnhaven Gleanings article in the Budget with hopes to meet the writer. We told him that the writer, Jacob J. Hershberger, is presently in the motel and had the privilege of arranging for his hope to be fulfilled.

It became our opportunity to pioneer an Anabaptist Christian witness in El Salvador under the umbrella of AMA. Within a week we could move into the house owned by ICR at Sitio del Niño located in a fertile valley twenty miles from San Salvador. Elmer Hershberger and his sister, Malinda, arrived a month later. "Don Alejandro" was ICR's agronomist at Sitio del Niño, and the understanding was that we consult with him. A small tract of land adjoining our living quarters was available for experimental purposes. Some of the experiments became amusing to colony residents. Cutting corn on shock, we thought, could be a viable option versus bending each stalk over below the ear. Colony

boys suggested the shocks look like wigwams and they could play Indians in the field. Needless to say, the ears of corn spoiled, proving that bending the stalks over preserves the ear during the six months of heavy rainfall. Experimenting with 24 varieties of peanuts considered adaptable to sub-tropical climate was educational for us and the nationals. Some of the varieties were successful while others failed. When harvested, the peanuts were dried on the roof of the unit house. In the course of time we put a fifty-gallon drum as an improvised water heater on the house roof. Warm-water showers became a welcomed option.

Other projects engaged in were: 1) Teaching and helping colony resident men and boys advance their carpentry skills in making items for use in their homes. 2) Animal husbandry was introduced to the nationals primarily with goats, placing offspring in the care of families with the agreement that the first female offspring is returned and placed with another family. 3) Poultry: laying hens housed in pens in place of free roaming. 4) Bakery and sewing classes were started with colony women. The bakery grew to 2000 loaves of bread weekly under the supervision of Malinda Hershberger with a delivery route

to San Salvador. 5) Custom land preparation with a small tractor provided by AMA was interesting. 6) Transportation to hospitals for cases unfavorable for public bus travel was an ideal way of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Interaction with area residents, whether through projects or otherwise, including ICR personnel, was with the goal of establishing trustworthy relationships. Also, keeping in mind the clause included in the agreement with ICR: "That the service would be in the name of Christ and the way of life the workers demonstrate will include the gospel in action."

Ben Stoltzfus, who had previously served two years VS in Honduras and in response to AMA's request, committed himself to a short term of service in the El Salvador mission. His experience in Latin culture and being fluent in the Spanish language was very valuable in the beginning months of the mission. During the five months Ben stayed, he taught us the language in class sessions using a book with basic grammar rules for vocabulary increase.

As we adjusted to the culture and became conversant in the Spanish language, the projects mentioned above grew. We soon had continual contact with the Antonio Pacheco family. Rosa, one of the daughters

(who presently lives in Indiana with her daughter and husband) was hired as a maid for the unit house. Of the various chicken projects, the first one was undertaken by Saúl, the oldest son in the Pacheco family. At age 13 he started with 30 two-day-old chicks, very diligently caring for them and losing only one. Within six months after his flock was on good production level and the investment paid off, including the chicken pen, he was saving money from egg sales. I continued overseeing his chicken project and stopped regularly on checkup visits. Soon on one such visit, he appeared from behind the open entrance door snickering, wearing the first pair of shoes of his lifetime which he bought with profit from his chicken project. During the intervening years his egg business has grown to 5,000 laying hens. He and his wife also have dairy cows on their farm and use milking machines. Saúl was ordained minister in 1979 and bishop in 1981. This was nineteen years after the early contacts with the Pacheco family. He continues faithfully serving the Lord as senior bishop of the El Salvador Mennonite churches. Rosa and Saúl's mother, Eva, now at age 97, is the oldest church member.

Church life for us El Salvador AMA pioneers was different from

what we were accustomed to in the States. Although not totally ideal, attendance at Evangelical Church services afforded opportunities for fellowship and collective worship with other “creyentes” (believers). Ninety-seven per cent of the population professed to be Catholic. Generally, we attended services at small countryside churches. Not infrequently at such services they requested several songs by our quartet. AMA board members’ bi-annual visits were very special church services for us, especially the communion service they officiated during the days of such visits.

After the initial two years at Sitio del Niño, the work expanded to other areas owned by ICR. However, by 1969, the AMA mission in El Salvador became independent of ICR. Mission outreaches expanded, churches were born, national men were ordained as ministers, and schools operating under church umbrella were started. El Resbaladero Clinic was founded, sowing seeds for the kingdom of God

while ministering to health needs. Although the clinic was primarily staffed by AMA personnel, nationals were also employed in this service to the community. Presently there are twelve congregations in the country including one in San Salvador and one in Santa Ana, the two largest cities.

Fifty-eight years have passed since the AMA El Salvador mission started. God has added souls to His kingdom for His glory through transformed lives resulting from the vision and purpose of the mission. Moreover, the united witness of established congregations gives testimony in word and lifestyle to God’s standard of holiness. Youth group activities are well organized and recently they went on a chorus tour to Costa Rica. Though AMA continues to supply the personnel for staff needs at the children’s home, the school in Aguilares, and the El Resbaladero Clinic, the El Salvador Mennonite Church is primarily indigenous. 



Worry is fear-thought,
not fore-thought.

**IT IS CURED BY
PRAYER-THOUGHT.**

Who Am I and Why Does it Matter? (Part III)

Susan Schlabach, Ripley, OH



(In the past two months in A Woman After God's Heart we talked about the desperation of living with an identity crisis. First, we described the identity that wants to cripple us, and next, our new identity in Christ. This final installment discusses the process of moving from old to new.)

Along our old paths we had worn deep ruts. Too vividly we remember those ruts we couldn't steer out of. Some of those ruts still snag us in unwary moments.

The spiritual battle going on for our hearts is a reality. Whether we realized it or not, when we became Christians, we signed up in this battle. What are some of the tools with which to fight? How do I live in the awareness of my new Identity?

1. Lasting change will come as we pursue God privately.

2. It will come from each other as we step into each other's lives to bring healing.

Pursue God like my life depends on it. Because it does. Talk to God all the time. I was far older than I should have been when I began to

realize that my thought patterns are my *chosen* thought patterns. I am not a victim of my thoughts. I can steer my thoughts through the influence of the Holy Spirit. (Philippians 4:8). What we feed – grows. What we don't feed – dies.

We can find a print-out of "My Identity in Christ" on the internet. *I am a child of God. I am holy through Christ. I am not forsaken. I am accepted. I am chosen.* The list goes on for a long time and each is reinforced by a Scripture. We can post it on our refrigerator to glance at a hundred times a day. But the words ring hollow on our heart if we haven't internalized them. Better than finding it somewhere is to compose our own! Let's feverishly devour Scripture in an effort to find

who we are in Christ. Highlight the references, journal them, and come back to them over and over.

A second tool: **We begin to heal in identity issues when we receive and give to each other.**

When we don't have the identity thing right about ourselves, we also don't have it right about others. The things by which we form our identity are often the things by which we judge others.

Is it possible for us to look beneath others' appearance, performance, and their need for your approval? Probably not, if we find our own identity in these things. But if our identity is in the love of Christ, then it's possible to be free enough to love and accept others. In Christ we choose to befriend the last, the least, and the lost.

Remember that we're all different. **Being able to receive deeply from another person is probably one of the greatest gifts we can give to them.** It is saying to that person: "You have something to contribute and you have value." Have you ever heard, said, or felt, "I'm not good

enough to talk to that person?" I don't have to tell you which identity that comes from.

Our culture would have us believe that we should capitalize on our strengths and that's what God wants us to give other people. But God values weakness. God wants to work through our weakness. He is more concerned about our strengths than about our weakness. Perhaps my childhood authorities had this right after all: *too much self-esteem*.

Do we use the accuser's words about others as we interact: insufficient, unkempt, tactless, unkind, careless? His vocabulary doesn't need our lips. Rather, do we use the Redeemer's descriptions: forgiven, loved, precious, unique?

Can we see others as God does when they cannot? Only as we are free to receive love are we able to give love. Receiving and giving are fully related. We cannot only have one.

I am persuaded that within our church communities, we hold much healing and purpose for ministry. As I grapple with an issue, I can

God's words...

"I came to give sight to the blind."

Luke 4:18. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."*

find another sister who's been there before and can walk me safely to the other side. Another sister flounders, and God may ask me to be the one to coach her toward wholeness. It's a beautiful picture of God's family, ministering grace to each other.

We see with new eyes and we hear with new ears. Two realities. There

is an enemy. There is a Redeemer. **But God...**and that makes all the difference.

Recommended resources:

Oasis Ladies' Retreat 2009, Teresa Beachy, (smbi@smbi.org)

The Search for Significance by Robert S. McGee



junior messages

From Indian Boy to Christian Apologist (Part II)

Margretta Yoder, Hutchinson, KS

Ravi was passionate about his studies but was even more passionate about preaching the Gospel. Inspired by American teens who came to India on a preaching tour, Ravi and his friends raised money to take a trip across India. They called themselves "First Indian Teen Team." Ravi was very new at preaching which caused him to feel insecure, but he was very sure about his message.

When Ravi was nineteen, his father decided to move his family to Canada to give his children a better future. Ravi continued his work in the food

industry doing his practicum at a top-tier restaurant called Westbury where he worked with a nationally famous chef. The future looked promising with a career that would bring him prosperity.

He became unhappy pursuing that career because his biggest passion was to be a preacher for Jesus and study theology. Ravi's father was extremely disappointed about his son's decision to go into full-time ministry.

The pastor at Ravi's church made a lasting impact on his life because of the faith he showed in Ravi. He

filled an important role in Ravi's life providing affirmation and encouragement which he did not receive from his father. He saw something promising in Ravi and asked him to join the church board after only two years of attending his church. He also gave him repeated opportunities to preach. After one service where Ravi preached, he met Margie Reynolds, his future wife.

Although Ravi was attending Bible college, he did not know exactly what he was going to do with his education. God used a preaching trip to Vietnam to show Ravi his call as an evangelist. Ruth Jeffreys, a retired missionary to Vietnam, heard Ravi preach and wanted to send him to preach in Vietnam where there was only a handful of known Christians. It was the late 1970s, and the war was raging, but Mrs. Jeffreys knew the people needed to hear the Gospel. Just before Ravi left for his trip, his father gave him a letter in which he expressed a change of heart sharing how thrilled he was that God had called one of his children into the ministry.

Ravi traveled to Vietnam in spite of great danger. He was able to share the Gospel with American troops, saw awful sights of the plunder of war, heard many terrible stories, and was almost ambushed. He came

home a changed man. Now he knew his calling in life. He said, "I am an evangelist. I am called to do this—to be in places of risk, places where people are willing to hear."

Ravi married Margie after he graduated from Bible college and then entered his seminary training where he mastered Greek and Hebrew and spent nearly every waking hour studying. Attending seminary opened many more opportunities for preaching, including a 48-week trip of speaking around the world. Margie and two-year-old Sarah went along. The trip was not a vacation but one of the toughest years of their lives. Not only did Ravi preach 576 times, but their lives were also in danger at times.

Ravi's vision grew and focused on communicating the gospel effectively, targeting educated audiences. In 1984, the Ravi Zacharias International Ministries began in Toronto, Canada. The ministry's goal is to make the believer think and the thinker believe. Ravi says having a large successful organization is not what brings him satisfaction, rather, being right where God wants him to be and doing what He wants him to do.

Source: Walking From East to West by Ravi Zacharias



Back in Time

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

Take a moment and consider something with me. If you could go back in time as far as ten years and change one thing, what would it be? Since I'm older than some of you, I'll think back a bit further. For myself, I wish I had been more respectful and honoring of my parents. Don't get me wrong, I loved my parents immensely (and still do), but there seems to come a time in the lives of youth when we think that we have all the answers and our parents are totally clueless. Mark Twain once said, *"When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."* Although we may find this to be humorous, this rings true for more of us than we would like to admit.

I'll be the first to admit that my attitude toward my parents was not always as it should have been. I wasn't the type to be openly rebellious; I knew better than to vocalize my displeasure at my parents' obvious

lack of intelligence. My friends and I rolled our eyes at our parents and their "dumb" rules. Texting wasn't as prevalent then as it is now (yes, I remember the days before smart phones and texting), so our communication was mostly limited to phone calls and hanging out after church. Looking back, being inwardly and quietly rebellious was probably worse than being openly defiant or vocal about my view of my parents' decisions and the guidelines in place for my siblings and me.

My parents would probably tell you I was a model son, yet there were things I did and said that brought them heartache and disappointment. Whether it was my choice to develop relationships with people my parents didn't know and wouldn't approve, or my decision to resell "harmless" illegal fireworks that I had obtained. Perhaps it was listening to music my parents (and church) would never approve, or texting and playing games on my cellphone when I was "running" the sound booth at church. These things may not

seem that bad, but they were in direct conflict with what I knew was right, and I still chose to do them. Outwardly, everything looked good, and I was very careful to maintain that aspect of my life, but inwardly I was disappointing God and myself.

One day, I concluded that I wasn't being 100% honest with myself or my parents. I decided to do something about it after I attended CBS and endured a personal interview. As much as my parents may have appreciated my phone call to apologize and "clear the air," I'm sure they were perturbed by the fact that I was far away, and they were suddenly finding out that I had been a hypocrite. Like Mark Twain, the older I became the more I realized that my parents were right. The things that they taught and the guidelines that our family lived by were for my good—socially, emotionally, and spiritually. As life goes on I continue to recognize the wisdom and experience that they were drawing from in raising my siblings and me.

My hope for you is to avoid making the mistake of thinking that my parents didn't understand what I was going through or what was best for me. How can you avoid these mistakes? One thing you can do is talk to your parents. Be open with

them about your struggles. This may be difficult for you to do. Don't be surprised if your parents struggle to discuss the disagreements that they had with their parents and how they worked through them. Your parents know how it feels to be at odds with their parents. As we age we tend to downplay the disagreements and differences that we had with our parents. If you can't be open with your parents, speak with a trusted brother or sister in the church (preferably an adult) who can help you work through things. Sometimes parents don't want to admit the struggles they had as youth. They are probably ashamed or fear how you might view them if you knew. If they aren't forthcoming, ask someone who knew them growing up (your aunts or uncles perhaps). You might hear a story that will help you broach the subject with your parents.

Let's look at how God views our relationship with our parents. Exodus 20:12 says, "*Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*" "*For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him*" (Leviticus 20:9). Also, in Leviticus 9:3, "*Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and*

keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God." The word *fear* has the idea of revering or respecting. Knowing how seriously God looks at our attitude and response to our parents should cause us to think twice about our responses and actions.

Take stock of your relationship with your parents. Try your best to focus on the positives in your relationship. Consider the decisions and choices you make now and the impact they will have on you in the years to come. When you look back, will you have any regrets?

It is important to understand that your parents made decisions and choices in how they raised you that are a reaction to how their parents raised them. Their parents made choices and decisions on how to raise them in reaction to how their parents raised them...and so on. Someday, your children will make decisions in reaction to positives and negatives that they see in your parenting style and the values that you choose to teach them. As I inferred earlier, your parents didn't grow up with the technology that we have today, and many of them will never have the grasp on technology that you will (or do). Many parents are uncertain how to handle the level of technology we have today and fear the effects it will have on this generation.

Finally, take every opportunity to spend time with your parents, whether it's working with Dad on a project or helping Mom with canning or sewing. Take the time to be with them. Ask questions about when they were growing up and their interests and activities. Spend time as a family. Be a good example to your siblings and help your parents by supporting and helping them with younger siblings. Youth is a wonderful time of growing socially, emotionally, and spiritually. Make sure to spend a portion of that time with family. Youth functions, Bible schools, reunions, and spending time with friends are all wonderful things, but don't sacrifice your relationship with your parents on the altar of youth.

Unfortunately, you can't go back in time and change things. You can't take back things you shouldn't have said. You only have today, and the only things you can change are the things you haven't done.

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it."
(Deuteronomy 30:15-16). 

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THOUGHT GEMS

If God attends the funeral of a sparrow, do you think He does not care for you?

• • • • •

A successful mother sets her children free and
becomes more free herself in the process.

• • • • •

A community or nation can be no stronger than its mothers.

• • • • •

Mother's Day is when everybody waits on mother and
she pretends she doesn't mind the extra work.

• • • • •

Mothers write on the hearts of their children
what the world's rough hand cannot erase.

• • • • •

Hope and fear keep life in balance.

• • • • •

Imagination, much more than reality, promotes fear.

• • • • •

Home is where you go when other places close. -Joseph Laurie

• • • • •

The relative value and importance of health and
wealth always depends on which you have lost.

• • • • •

When there is nothing for sure, everything is possible.

• • • • •

If you're having trouble coping, try hoping in God.

• • • • •

Worry looks around. Faith looks up.

• • • • •

God is not our last hope. He is our only Hope.