



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

Galatians 6:14

JULY 2009

Meditation	
<i>Lump of Clay</i>	1
Editorial	
<i>Don't Forget to Remember</i>	2
Sports Feedback.....	4
Marriages.....	14
Cradle Roll.....	14
Ordinations.....	15
Obituaries.....	16
Observations.....	16
Minister's Meeting Messages — 2009	
<i>Faithful to the Call</i>	20
Taking Hold of God's Truth.....	23
Let Brotherly Love Continue.....	24
A Trap for Children.....	26
Mission Awareness	
<i>The Story of Cameron Townsend (1896-1982)</i>	27
Helpers at Home	
<i>The Blessing of Hospitality</i>	29
Junior Messages	
<i>In God's Hands - Part Two of Two</i>	31
The Strongest Force in the World.....	33
Youth Messages	
<i>Dear Youth</i>	35
Thought Gems.....	back cover

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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Lump of Clay

Verna Mast, Greensburg, KY

On the potter's wheel of time,
I'm just a lump of clay.
Create of me a work sublime
With Thy tender hand today.

Make of me a vessel clean,
Fit for Thy courts above.
Let my heart reflect always
Thy radiance and Thy love.

Through the firing kiln, Lord,
Take me by the hand.
And lead me ever onward
Help me to understand.

Just to be of use to Thee,
A vessel in Thy hand,
Lord, let me live for Thee,
Till in glory I shall stand. 

Don't Forget to Remember

Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old" (Psalm 25:6). Is the psalmist David reminding the Lord not to forget the help He promised to man? God certainly doesn't need that nudge.

For me it's much different. At the three-quarter century mark, I note how things change. I seem to forget more and more. I guess it happens to most of us, at least my peers tell me it happens to them, too. In fact, younger folks tell me they're also good at forgetting, in spite of their best efforts.

Aging Brings Changes

When it comes to a day's work, I try to allow my body more consideration than formerly. Actually, I've never set any records for human accomplishment or endurance and I'm definitely losing out. I can do even less than I once could: I cannot walk as far, work as long or run as fast (if at all).

As my aging body slows down, my thoughts also process more slowly. I suppose others notice it, too. But that's alright. If we lost none of our

abilities as we age, we would probably find it that much harder to pass on the baton—or off the scene. We might think we're indispensable.

I try to accept with grace the increasing limitations of aging. Here are some ways I cope:

- I enjoy those days when I find time in my recliner to lean back and drop off to sleep.

- I ask for help when lifting more than fifty pounds or when I need a ladder.

(My hip replacements and doctor's orders help me remember these precautions.)

- I use a day timer to keep track of commitments.

- I use lists to go shopping or run errands.

- I write down important phone calls to make, lest I forget them. I even jot down notes of what to say on those calls.

- I make prayer lists.

- I make sermon notes more detailed than ever.

God makes no apologies for giving us memory aids. He moved men to write down His Word so we could go back and check to see again what

it says. I'm glad He's patient with us when we seem to need too many reminders.

Slow down—How much?

None of these decreased functions of body and mind should be used as an excuse to “put the gear shift into Park.” Poet Henry W. Longfellow said it so well when he said,

“Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.”
(from “A Psalm of Life”)

What is there to do?

The different age groups in the body of Christ bring different contributions to the larger body. If all of us accept our roles and gifts, it can produce a richer experience than if one age group's perspectives are held in far greater esteem than that of others.

It is wonderful to live in a land that lets older people set their own pace in many things. I am grateful that I am part of a church fellowship that has allowed me to slow down without stopping completely or making me feel neglectful for slowing down.

I ask others to scrutinize and edit what I write, because I am not very objective about my writing. If others criticize it, I could think they don't like me. I know that doesn't make sense nor does it fix my writing, but it

is tempting to be that self-centered.

Remembering is an increasingly hard battle. We cannot force our minds to remember. We cannot stop forgetting just because we dislike forgetting.

Here's good advice for the problem of forgetting from a wise man (whose name I've also forgotten), who said: “Let us be kind to one another, for most of us are fighting a hard battle.”

Forgetting can be costly, but we can do something about it. We can ask God to help us remember the important things. We can *remember* to thank God for His constant love. We can ask Him to make us fruitful by leading us to the treasures of life with Him—forever. Maybe that's what Peter meant when he said, “He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins” (2 Peter 1:9).


God Remembers and Forgets

In Psalm 25:7, David expressed his fervent wish that God would not remember the sins of his youth. Regardless of our sinning, we have God's good word that He wipes out the record of those sins we are sincerely sorry for and have confessed to God. In Psalm 103:3, David seemed to realize that. He praised God, “Who forgiveth all

thine iniquities” and in verse 12, he rejoiced that “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

In God’s faithfulness, He clears the record of our offenses when we by penitence and faith claim the blood of Jesus for forgiveness. God is able to remember our needs on the one hand and to forget the sins we are sorry for and repent of, on the other. I don’t know how He does it, but that’s okay.

It is comforting that He remembers our sins against us no more.

My spirit comes to grateful confidence when I claim God’s forgetting and remembering. To be linked to an all-knowing God is very reassuring. Since God remembers what He promised His children and since He cannot lie, we don’t need to try to remember all His promises. He knows the promises He gave us **much better** than we do! —PLM 

Sports Feedback

I finally got significant response to “Good Sports” (March, 2009, page 2). Since some of it is fairly comprehensive, I shortened it to avoid repetition of what others wrote. I take this opportunity to thank everyone who participated.

Here’s a personal experience: Last week I watched a ball game. It was fun! I really enjoyed it. The oldest grade school students played against their fathers. Even though they didn’t win, they showed good sportsmanship. In the second game, interested youth presented themselves for a game then played their best. We saw some very energetic and skilled playing by young people in their prime. It was all mostly about having a good time. No one seemed too concerned about winning, but naturally, they offered each other encouragement and

apparently winning was preferred over losing.

Back to my own experience: Apparently, I do not handle sports without intense feeling. I got quite excited and plenty noisy. I find it hard to curb my natural enjoyment of a well-played game. Does that make me a sports fan(atic)? I hope not!

Here again are the four questions I raised in March:

- How is participating in local, low-competition, non-professional sports different from involvement in professional sports?
- Does support for church youth

recreation contribute to an obsession with professional sports?

- What constitutes a wholesome level of interest in sports of Christian youth?

- How should deeply-committed Christian youth balance sports with outreach activities?

Let us pray that this discussion will strengthen our resolve to do all we do for God's glory. Now the feedback: -PLM

• • • • •

Recently I attended the end-of-year picnic at a Christian school. After the very adequate potluck lunch of grilled hamburgers, salads, and desserts, the fathers and sons faced off against each other in a softball game. Two of the dads also were ordained ministers in the church. I viewed this interaction as a healthy way to build rapport and friendship between fathers and sons. I observed nothing in this wholesome, recreational activity that should inherently contribute to an obsession with sports.

The most obvious difference recreational and professional sports is the matter of money. The outrageous salaries paid to professional players does not contribute to a godly lifestyle. Another obvious difference ought to be scheduling. In my opinion competitive sports/activities should not be played on Sunday. I think competitive sports/

activities on Sunday are a violation of the fourth commandment. If we would “fast” from competitive sports on Sunday, neither playing nor watching nor listening nor discussing, it would go a long way in the battle against obsession. Also, attending professional games tends to raise the obsession scale. This is not intended to condemn family table games or perhaps a family volleyball game on a Sunday afternoon or evening, but I’m not sure where it leaves a volleyball game on a Sunday afternoon after the church picnic. Perhaps that’s just a larger family, and it’s non-competitive—or is it? If the activity in paragraph one were held on a Sunday, would it still be acceptable?

Recreational activities should take a back seat to outreach and ministry activities. That is, recreational activities should be scheduled around outreach, ministry, and church activities and not vice versa. When this is reversed, it indicates a serious misplacement of priorities. When unexpected scheduling conflicts occur, the recreational activity should usually be what is cancelled or rescheduled.

It seems to me that fathers and church leaders carry a major responsibility in this area of sports activities. If they are over-involved,

their children will almost certainly be. Even if they are not involved but they permit their children to follow professional games and statistics closely, that will contribute to over-involvement for them. If our young people know more and talk more about sports than they do about the Bible and spiritual things, we may already be past the point of no return. “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34 NKJV).

*Marvin E. Yoder, Homestead, FL
(Formerly Meyersdale, PA)*

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Question #1:

When neighborhood boys get together on some Saturday afternoon to play a game of round tip softball, not much harm is done. Teams are not pitted against each other. No teams win. The boys are basically together to have a good time with each other. Few if any spectators are there to see who wins.

The danger lies in that such low-key playing may, like so many other things that begin in a small way, lead to more organized, crowd-gathering types of sports involvement.

Question #3:

The way this question is stated troubles me. The question demands an answer like, on a scale of 1 to 10, what constitutes a wholesome level of

sports for Christian youth? Rather, we should go to the Scriptures to inquire if any level of sports is pleasing to our Lord. The world *highly esteems* sports. Deeply committed youth *highly esteem* the pursuit of finding God’s will for them in all of life, including how to most profitably redeem any leisure time.

There is a vast difference between sports and recreation. Some level of recreation is needed and good for youth as well as older folk. Reading a good book is a good diversion from the toil of the day. An educational game played with other family members or friends is a good way to spend time. Going on a nature hike is both educational and rewarding in exploring the wonder of God’s handiwork.

Sports are about me and my team. It is extremely doubtful that anyone ever thinks like: “Wow, how God has given John the gift of really hitting the ball in a way that almost always assures him of a home run.” Or: “God has really given Jack the skill to never miss with his bow and arrow or his high-powered rifle when he goes after the big buck.” Wouldn’t it seem strange to say? “God has really blessed Brother Jeremy with water skiing skill. Just look at how he whips up that wall of water when he navigates the ski course.” We sing,

“A full surrender I have made, I’ve given all to Jesus;

My all is on the altar laid, I’ve given all to Jesus.”

Have we?

Sincerely,

Eli Kauffman, Montezuma, GA

• • • • •

Courtship With Death

I was talking with a friend yesterday. He mentioned that someone had recently asked him if he can write anything that is not controversial. He had simply written about sports and its conflict with Christianity. How can that subject be so controversial?

Some conservative Anabaptists see little problem with sports. They ask the question, “What is wrong with sports?” They seem to have no concept of what they are doing with that question. They do not see that by asking a question like that they have a running courtship with death. Unfortunately, they enjoy this courtship. How can an enjoyable courtship be deadly?

This courtship began with and is surrounded by the words, “**What’s wrong with...?**”

What’s wrong with Contemporary Christian Music? What’s wrong with sky-diving? What’s wrong with a good camera? What’s wrong with water skiing? What’s wrong with sports tournaments? What’s wrong with mall-walking? What’s wrong with

home entertainment movies? What’s wrong with casual dress? What’s wrong with being “cool”? What’s wrong with seat-slouching? What’s wrong with chewing gum in church? What’s wrong with holding hands in courtship? What’s wrong with being turned loose at sixteen? What’s wrong with mixed bathing? What’s wrong with lip gloss? What’s wrong with wanting to get out of school at the earliest opportunity? What’s wrong with being ignorant of Anabaptist history? What’s wrong with clear fingernail polish? What’s wrong with Country Music? What’s wrong with tight skirts? What’s wrong with bushy haircuts? What’s wrong with cell-phone texting? What’s wrong with painted toenails? What’s wrong with shrinking coverings? What’s wrong with golf? What’s wrong with keeping up with professional sports? What’s wrong with...?

These questions illustrate a courtship with death. The fact that these questions are constantly raised is terrifying. They may be raised in immaturity. They may be raised in ignorance. Nevertheless these words illustrate impatience with obstacles in the race to the bottom—to death.

Christianity is not about a list of do’s and don’ts. These questions indicate that the questioner thinks it is. Lists of do’s and don’ts and their

enforcement belong to the realm of legalism. Jesus Christ is not about legalism; He is life!

Christianity is about a Living Person. Christianity focuses on a relationship with that Living Person and the results of that relationship. Relationship with Jesus Christ provokes a different question in response to an imposing hostile culture. **“What’s right with...?”** What’s valuable about that book? How can I help with this project? How can I channel my money into worthwhile projects? What can I do to contribute to the Kingdom of God? Where can we start another outreach? Who needs help today? Why am I becoming spiritually lax? Why do I even consider buying a new pickup when I don’t really need one? What do these people have to teach us? Where can I find that book? How can I minister to homeless people? What can we learn about this issue from history? What can be done about the children who have no Christian teaching? What makes that church so attractive? Why is my prayer life lagging? How does that church go about street ministry? Can we form an accountability relationship with each other? What can we learn from a well-ordered family? Who needs a birthday card? a sympathy card? How can I teach

this Sunday school class better? How can I be fearless when sharing my faith? How can I be righteous without being self-righteous? What is it about that music that encourages me to do right? How can Bible school make a contribution to my life? How can my covering better cover the glory of my hair? What is right about...?

Each of us is asking one or the other of these questions. The first questions relate to how I can love the world and the same time love Christ. They are questions of a courtship with death. The answers are obvious. The second are questions of life. They are questions of working out a relationship with Jesus Christ. Relationship with Him means life, eternal LIFE.

I want life, not death. What about you?

Chester Weaver, Lagrange, IN

• • • • •

The assumption is that sports have always been an integral part of church, especially youth life, and that it is important to strike a correct balance. This assumption is wrong. The involvement of competitive sports in the “plain churches” is not long, at the most 65 years.

Questions such as these four, asked 80 years ago, would have been met with alarm that the church could possibly be involved in these activities. Therefore, I will try to

answer these questions from the “80 year ago” standpoint that possibly is relevant today.

#1 There is very little difference, the spirit of winning over one’s opponent is the same. as one observer who was previously involved in professional sports stated—the same spirit that is “out there” is here, in your volleyball and softball games.

#2 If church youth recreation includes regular, organized ball games, my opinion is that it would contribute to an obsession with professional sports.

#3 A wholesome level of interest in sports for Christian youth should not go beyond an occasional father, youth, little boy, [loosely] organized ball game. Where the big (youth) brother even has to help hold the bat for little brother. And maybe not even keeping score.

#4 If youth are truly “deeply committed,” would they not also be so aware of the many service-oriented outreach activities that competitive sports wouldn’t even enter the picture?

Elmer M. Yoder, Montezuma, GA



To the question of sports, is it asking too much to take the example of Jesus, who at 12 years old asked, “Wist ye not that I must be about my

Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49).

The need to socialize and interact with friends should not be overlooked, but can that need not be met with directives from God’s Word? 2 Corinthians 8:4 tells us that the Macedonian Christians earnestly desired to have a part or fellowship in helping the saints in Judea.

Competitive sports are addictive, time-consuming and really quite unfulfilling. Addiction is a good thing, if it is God-ward, as 1 Corinthians 16:15 states about the house of Stephanas having addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

In a time when the world population is increasing by one billion souls every 13 years, who wants to be found playing ball when Christ returns?

My wife and I, now in our early 60’s, recently enjoyed an evening with the young people gathering rocks to landscape a lady’s pond. Afterward, the lady gave a generous donation toward the purchase of canes for the blind in Liberia.

Opportunities in the church community abound. One young boy in Sacramento read from the Scriptures to his aging grandfather. There are widows and widowers to help and families to aid. Take time to play with the children and let us

endeavor to keep it on that level. Note the words of Christ in John 9:9, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.”

Clayton Weaver, Bastrop, TX



One difference between the big leagues and local church sports is that the one is primarily for recreation, while professionals get paid a ludicrous salary.

Church youth recreation will not necessarily contribute to an obsession with professional sports, but an obsession with professional sports is very likely to impact church-sponsored recreation.

Since “bodily exercise profiteth little,” it would seem that interest in sports should be minimal. But we are well aware that this is not the way it is, generally speaking. So, what is amiss? The benefits of physical sports in children are well-known: release of pent-up energies, promoting physical, mental, and social development, to mention a few. However, as we grow to adulthood, we learn to channel our energies into more productive roles. Since youth generally find themselves in between these two stages, an occasional sports activity is appropriate.

Deeply committed youth will recognize that God is calling them

to Kingdom work, and will thus become less interested in sports and more involved in outreach activities. We should not, however, expect our youth to develop proper convictions in such areas totally on their own. It is our responsibility as parents and church leaders to teach and guide them with Bible-based directives.

Allen Beiler, Stuarts Draft, VA



Both Chester Weaver and Nathan Kreider recommended a recent article by Tim Myers, editor of *Life Lines*:

Sports vs. Recreation—Discerning the Difference

Sports are about winning; recreation is about physical and mental refreshment.

Sports have spectators; recreation has participants.

Sports are costly; recreation is inexpensive.

Sports require a lot of specialized equipment; recreation requires little.

Sports make heroes of the most talented; recreation honors the meek and kind.

Sports involve travel; recreation happens close to home.

Sports create select teams and logos and fans; in recreation the teams continually change.

Sports want only the best players;

recreation gladly includes everyone.

Sports have special, attention-grabbing uniforms; recreation uses regular clothing.

Sports often have the potential for physical harm; recreation is relatively safe.

Sports require time for practiced perfection; recreation requires no outside activity.

Sports are highly-esteemed among men; recreation is little-known outside its participants.

Sports have officials and organizers; recreation is cheerfully managed by the participants.

Bro. Nathan adds this note: *Many types of service and witnessing can fill the place of recreation, if we have a service mentality.*



Joy in the Christian Life

Henry M. Morris (1918-2006)

Founder of Creation Research Society

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).

The word “fun” is never mentioned in the Bible, and “entertain” is used only in reference to being hospitable. Such activities as “reveling” and “playing” receive nothing except condemnation in the Scriptures (with the exception of little children at play).

Yet there is growing emphasis today in many churches and parachurch organizations on providing “entertainment” and “fun times” for their members—especially for their teenagers and young adults. This is the way to reach them and keep them for the Lord, so they say. Perhaps so, but one wonders why neither the Lord nor the apostles nor the prophets ever told us so. Is this a program kept in reserve by the Lord for the young people of *this* generation?

Actually, Christians can have something far better, more effective, and more lasting than fun and entertainment...We must remind ourselves continually that the Lord Jesus daily, through His words, shares His joy with us....



As I view the tenor of thinking and doing, I am concerned about the play mentality among some of our supposed conservative churches.

I have no trouble with families getting together and young people spending some time in games, but when time is set aside and announced solely to play, I feel we are going too far....

In no place in Scripture are we commanded or encouraged to play. May the Lord grant church leaders and faithful fathers and mothers

wisdom and grace to lead the rising generation in the way of separation and holiness...

May we keep our interest in the church and the things that pertain to the furtherance of God's Kingdom.

Harry Baer, Dunstan, BC



How we answer these questions will affect our future as these issues continue to face the church.

First, is an interest in professional sports acceptable for Christian youth? No...

But what about joining local teams to witness to them? Who are we trying to convince? The world does not need "buddies;" (See James 4:4). They need the Gospel. When will we realize that we have everything and they have nothing? When will we realize that close association of this sort brings nothing but a distorted view of the two kingdoms?...

Do mixed gender recreational activities promote the social reserve that builds pure, godly lives? Does competition encourage brotherly love? The purpose of competition is to prove my superiority....

Barron Rau, Newport, ME



One would hope that the local sports, especially within the church, would be focused on fellowship and exercise....

What constitutes a wholesome level of interest in sports? (Notice 1 Corinthians 6: 12, 15, 19-20.) It is important not to be brought under the power of anything, including sports. When sports consume parts of our time and focus that belong to God, our families, our church, our studies, etc., they become detrimental....

Sports must not become a god, a primary focus, or a distraction from more important responsibilities and relationships...

How should deeply-committed Christian youth balance sports with outreach activities? About the same balance that they maintain between eating and going to the library. One is rather mandatory, and should be done frequently and regularly. The other can be helpful at times, especially when one is in school, but there are other means by which those needs can be met, just as needs for bodily exercise and fellowship can be met in different ways.

Sieg and Lois Snyder, Wichita, KS



The Bottom Line

Participating in one or two seasonal sports/games can seem modest and appropriate. Practice and playing throughout all the seasons of the year seems like an obsession to be avoided. Professional sports are for pay to play and then where people pay to watch

these same sporting events. That, at least, would be a place to stop, if not before it gets that far.

Yes and no. Yes, when only the best players may play. Yes, when we cheer and applaud the best. We promote what we applaud.

No, when all have the privilege to play. No, when Father can at times join in the fun with Son(s). As not all men who go into business become obsessed with business, so not all who play ball become obsessed with sports.

Ministers who can enter into playing with the church youth can be better heard when problems need to be addressed. Playing is not wrong because of where it might lead you any more than to say all business is wrong because of where it could lead you.

Church activities should come first. Selfish Dads raise sons and daughters

who tend to do the same, meaning: If my interests come first, the church is second.

These days, some time for the family to be together at home comes up more urgent than ever. Curbing all sports to be at home more will not necessarily make it happen. Social events, business pursuits, and church activity can fill every evening of the week for adults. Cutting out all sports participation for our youth in order for more quality time at home with the family is bordering on the hypocritical if our schedule as adults is usually full of the things we like to do.

The Bottom Line: Whatever provides a sense of fulfillment and happiness usually wins out, regardless of our age and station in life.

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA 

*Enthusiasm provides a good engine,
but it needs a thoughtful driver.*

marriages

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

Horst-Peachey

Bro. Duane Edwin, son of Edward and Fern Horst, Chambersburg, PA, and Sis. Malisa Dawn, daughter of Jonas and Karen Peachey, Arthur, IL, at Sunnyside Mennonite Church for Pleasant View Church on May 2, 2009, by Howard Kuhns.

Riegsecker-Petersheim

Bro. James Michael, son of Randall and Sharon Riegsecker, Middlebury, IN, and Sis. Glenda Ellen, daughter of Edgar and Marianna Petersheim, Humboldt, IL, at Sunnyside Mennonite Church for Pleasant View Church on May 16, 2009, by Randall Riegsecker, the groom's father.

Zook-Miller

Bro. Matthew, son of Wilmer and Esther Zook, Rural Retreat, VA, (presently serving at Faith Mission Home), and Sis. Sheryl, daughter of Roy J. and Lavina Miller, Fairland, OK, at First Christian Church for Grand Lake Mennonite Church on May 1, 2009, by Steve Strite.

cradle roll

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

Beachy, Alfred and Juanita (Helmuth), Belvidere, TN, third child and dau., Kaylene Nicole, May 19, 2009.

Gingerich, Kendall and Diane (Miller), Plain City, OH, third child, first dau., Makenna Rose, April 24, 2009.

Good, Benjamin and Ann (Fisher), Perry, NY, first child and dau., Gloria Cadence, April 19, 2009.

Huston, Eli and Ruth (Miller), Cottage Grove, TN, seventh child, fourth son, Wesley Devon, April 19, 2009.

King, Eldon and Monica (Beachy), Harrison, AR, first child and dau., Makayla Monica, April 16, 2007.

Knepp, Adin and Miriam (Stoll), Loogootee, IN, fourth child, second son, Quinton Eli, April 23, 2009.

Lapp, Nathan and Fern (Stoltzfus), Cedar Creek, TX, sixth child, third son, Laramie Jerrell, May 6, 2009.

Miller, Brian and Rosie (Gingerich), Eden Valley, MN, first child and son, Carlin Jay, May 8, 2009.

*A man who wants to go nowhere
will still reach a destination.*

Miller, Evangel and Joanne (Brenneman), Honey Grove, PA, first child and dau., Annette Marie, May 5, 2009.

Miller, Titus and JoAnn (Beachy), Suceava, Romania, fourth child, third son, Benjamin Andrew, Feb. 24, 2009.

Overholt, James and LaDonna (Baer), Suburn, KY, third child, second son, Richard Douglas, Jan. 20, 2009.

Overholt, Michael and Darlene (Mullet), Franklin, KY, fourth child, third dau, Geraldine LuAnne, April 2, 2009.

Peachey, Mike and Regina (Miller), Centerville, PA, fourth child, third son, Vincent Lane, April 13, 2009.

Peachy, Raymond and Michelle (Miller), Lewisburg, PA, fourth child, second dau., Jennifer Irene, April 19, 2009.

Ropp, Eugene and Dorcas (Lapp), Atwood, ON, first child and dau., Ashlan Pearl, May 5, 2009.

Stoltzfus, Lavon and Melissa (Troyer), Dundee, OH, first child and dau., Nicole Joy, April 15, 2009.

Stoltzfus, Mahlon and Ruth (Bender), Rural Retreat, VA, sixth child, fourth dau., Keisha Danae, May 3, 2009.

Stoltzfus, Steve and Linda (Fisher), Bridgeton, NJ, seventh child, fifth son, (one deceased), Jerome Andre', Feb. 19, 2009.

Wagler, Marlin and Orpha (Troyer), Cottage Grove, TN, fourth child, second son, James Dale, May 12, 2009.

Wagler, Nathan and Connie (Schrock), Cross Hill, SC, seventh child, fifth son, Logan Glen, April 9, 2009.

Yoder, Jonathan and Brenda Sue (Stauffer), Centreville, MI, fourth child, third dau., Kaylee Ann, Feb. 19, 2009. (Earlier reported wrong. Sorry!)

Yoder, Verlynn and Laurel (Martin), Grove City, MN, fifth child, fourth son, Landon Alvin, May 16, 2009.

ordinations

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

Bro. Orlando Matute, 48, was ordained bishop at Cayo Christian Fellowship, Esperanza Village, Cayo, Belize, on May 10, 2009. Preordination messages were given by Virgil Kanagy and Hughdelle Ysaguirre. The charge was given by Lester Gingerich, assisted by Virgil Kanagy and Ivan Beachy.

Bro. Jonathan Yoder, 34, was chosen by lot and ordained to the ministry at Pilgrim Fellowship Church, Nottawa, MI, on April 12, 2009. Preordination messages were given by Paul Leroy Miller, of Sugarcreek, OH. The charge was given by John Miller, assisted by Paul Leroy Miller and Wilbur Yoder. Jonathan Schrock was also in the lot.

obituaries

Mullet, Sarah S., 83, of Ragersville, OH, died April 24, 2009 at Walnut Hills Nursing Home. She was born June 26, 1925, daughter of the late Sam and Amanda (Keim) Yoder.

She was a member of Maranatha Fellowship Church at Sugarcreek.

On Dec. 6, 1945, she was married to Earl A. Mullet, who died October, 1998. Surviving are nine children: Freeman E. (Sara Ann) Mullet, FL; Daniel Allen Mullet, Denver, CO; Owen E. (Lonja) Mullet, CA; Esther (Mervin) Eash, Martinsburg; Clara Mullet (Jeff Gerber), Sugarcreek; Earl Mullet, Jr., Bakersville; Miriam (Chuck) Brewster, KY; Marion (Tena) Mullet, Sugarcreek; Sam Mullet and friend Gail, Fresno; 22 grandchildren; 15 great grandchildren; two sisters, Anna Mullet, Sugarcreek; Ada (Simon) Hershberger, Mt. Hope; and a brother, Dan S. Yoder, Fredericksburg.

She was preceded in death by a sister, Esther and two grandchildren, Dustin Hostetler and Tammy Sue Hostetler.

The funeral was held on April 27 at Maranatha Fellowship Church with Paul Leroy Miller serving. Burial was in the church cemetery.

observations

A local brother, Menno Nisly, has provided a thrift store at a convenient location where people can leave things they no longer need. Shoppers are welcome to browse and take things they can use. They are expected to leave a donation which is used to help support the local Christian schools.

Thrift stores may be becoming more important because of the present economic climate. They provide an opportunity to make contributions to charitable causes while buying items for a reasonable price and also alleviating a little of the landfill surplus.

MCC thrift stores generate significant funding for their ministry. New Horizons at Canoñ City, Colorado, operates a thrift store out of a building that was formerly used by the Salvation Army. The community welcomed this development. Besides generating some needed income, the venture has been helpful to make the community aware of the New Horizons ministry to prison babies and their mothers. A second thrift store is operated at Pueblo, some 35 miles away.

Amy Hardin Turosok writes in

Mennonite Weekly Review (3-30-09): “I am amazed that most consumers view thrift stores as the dregs of the market...I shop thrift stores and find high quality brands...The stuff people toss amazes me.”

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John Williams, Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches in the Central Region reflects on diversity among those whom Jesus chose to follow Him:

“There was Peter, impulsive and brash, James and John, those judgmental and quick-tempered Sons of Thunder (‘Shall we call down fire?’). Matthew had been a tax collector, a sell-out to the Roman government, Simon, a member of the anti-Roman insurgency, known as the Zealots, Thomas whose skepticism and ‘show me’ attitude could have qualified him for Missouri citizenship and Andrew, the winsome fellow with a come-and-see spirit.” He mentions also Judas and Nathanael.

“How different they all were. All had responded to the call of Jesus Christ. All were called to serve God. All were called to serve one another. In Christ, there can be unity in diversity.” (Heart Ministries, 4-09)

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The Mennonite Encyclopedia was published as four volumes in the 1950’s. In 1990 a supplement came

out. The series contains 14,160 articles. After 12 years of work by Canadian and American volunteers, these articles are now all available online.

Our Faith Digest, which had been distributed three times a year, is now going paperless. (MWR, 3-23-09). This trend is making it increasingly difficult to compete and survive. Whatever is wrong in our day cannot be blamed on lack of information. It is important, however, to remember that there is an important difference between knowledge and wisdom.

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Fifty percent of bankruptcies result from medical bills. (MWR, 3-23-09) This is a reminder of how groups of Christian believers need to support each other, especially when there are unforeseen needs.

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President Obama was invited to speak in a graduation commencement at Notre Dame in May where he is expected to receive an honorary degree. Notre Dame at South Bend, Indiana, is a Catholic university and is seen as having high standing in the academic community.

An irony exists in that the official position of the Catholic Church has been strongly against abortion and stem cell research that involves the use of human embryos. The president

has been a vocal proponent in the opposite direction on both issues.

This is causing considerable stir in the larger Catholic community. The Notre Dame administration knew it was entering a political minefield. Indeed, the intensity of the reaction in the week after Obama accepted underscores a deep division within Catholic circles.

To me it seems like a classic example of an educational institution having outgrown its sense of loyalty to its religious founders as well as its present constituency. History suggests that institutions of higher learning have this innate potential.

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Cal Thomas and Kathleen Parker recently addressed the issue of Christian influence in politics. The Christian right that influenced the outcome of several elections is seen as having run its course.

The bigger question being raised is whether Christians belong in the political arena in the first place. Compromise may be the lubrication of politics, but will very often undermine Christian orthodoxy. It is wrong to assume that the church should be a branch of the Republican Party.

Cal Thomas, who has been outspoken against Christian involvement in politics for several years, believes

the political right is “in left field.” Thomas reminds us that Christians who are concerned about the gay-rights movement should be equally concerned about divorce and the increasing number of children who are born to unmarried women, now about 40%. The prospects that this will change through political action is not bright. It can change as people are serious about following the Lord and His Word of Truth.

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Greedy lawyers and corrupt judges from Nicaragua concocted an elaborate scheme hoping to win billions from U. S. food giant Dole. They recruited men who claimed that they were rendered sterile by a pesticide that was used in the 1970’s when they worked for Dole.

It turns out that in most cases they had not worked there, nor were they sterile.

A California judge who heard three days of testimony said: “This is a very sad day for me to be presiding over such a horrific situation.” The lawsuits were dismissed. (*The Hutchinson News*, 4-25)

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The cover of the May issue of *Christianity Today* pictures a New Order Amish sister from Holmes County, Ohio, who is shown with two young girls from Bangladesh. It is appar-

ent that the young girls feel a strong attraction to the pale-faced person from the U. S. The scene is from a Muslim region that is fairly isolated from the larger world community.

The larger article is about non-profit charities at this time when national unemployment is 8.1 % and one in ten home mortgages are in default. A survey by CT shows that 34% of committed givers expect to give more in 2009 than they gave in 2008 and with 44% expecting to give equal to what they gave in 2008.

The article compares average per donor annual giving to five other charities. Christian Aid Ministries, at \$830, is well above the other four listed.

CAM has averaged a 9.5% annual growth rate for the past 20 years. In just over a quarter century, CAM has become an organization with an annual budget of 187 million. This is not only cash, but gifts in kind. They are legally required to place a wholesale value on all donated goods.

David N. Troyer, Director, says that 98% of their support comes in their mail. Their method is a monthly newsletter that is in one respect low-key, but very informative, offering opportunities to support many different aspects of the ministry. Troyer says, "We don't feel comfortable pressuring donors."

It seems to me that their method of keeping in touch with their donor base is both diligent and creative.

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"...Christians must forsake hopes of winning cultural acceptance if they want to affect the culture for the Lord's sake." This quote is from a grandson of Billy Graham, Tullian Tchividjian. (Don't ask me to pronounce it.) His mother is the oldest child of Billy and the late Ruth Graham.

This pastor/author is intentional about not being culturally mainstream. He says, "The attempt to be cool is a sure sign that you are not. Younger generations don't want trendy engagement from the church. In fact, they're suspicious of it. Instead, they want truthful engagement with historical and theological solidity.... They desperately want to invest their life in something worth dying for, not some 'here today, gone tomorrow' fad."

The article mentions that Coral Ridge once led by the late D. James Kennedy, once had Sunday morning attendance of as many 7,000. After Kennedy's attention turned to national politics, weekly attendance shrank to between 1,400 and 1,500. (CT, 5-09)


It is noteworthy that this time this ideal is not that of a conservative

Anabaptist, the ideal of being a sub-culture, non-conformed to the world, conformed to Christ and His Word. But his conclusion is based on the same Word that we want to live by.

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Family Life (5-09) mentions that three independent European studies indicate possible harmful effects of prolonged cell phone use. A study in Sweden indicates that those who have regularly used cell phones have five times as many brain tumors as non-users. These tumors consistently occur on the side where the phone is held to the ear.

Children and young people are thought to be especially at risk because their skulls are softer and more vulnerable to penetration of the harmful rays. It does not take special studies to realize that over-use and addiction to all that cell phones may offer can do more serious damage than a brain tumor.

The present generation is faced with an unprecedented variety of technological inventions. There is urgent need that the body of believers provides guidance to keep us from becoming slaves to things that are useful in their place. —DLM 

Minister’s Meeting Messages — 2009

This is a condensation of a message preached at the annual ministers’ meetings, held on March 24-26, 2009, at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Florida. The complete set of cassette tapes or discs is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$45, postpaid.

2. Faithful to the Call

Ernest Hochstetler, Abbeville, SC

If there is a need for a topic about being faithful, it follows reasonably that there is also the possibility of being unfaithful. This morning we want to consider the challenges of being faithful: Doing what God has called us to do in such a way that it blesses His name.

Revelation 1:1-6 ends with “Amen,” which gives us the indication that it something firm and trustworthy. Verse three gives us what I consider an index of faithfulness. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” We are to build on those three things:

Reading, hearing, and keeping the Word of God. The word “Amen” is used in verse six, seven and 18. He calls us to faithfulness by thus affirming and heeding His Word.

It is important that we recognize what the call brings with it. It is not a call to an exalted position. It is like the call upon Christ who was a servant to servants. If we are faithful, it will be humbling to us. If we are to be faithful to that call, we will use His example as a guide. We want the outcome of our life to be an emulation of Christ.

It is really a call to stewardship. We give to others and make wise investments of our time in our own life and the lives of people around us.

In Matthew 16:18, after Peter had confessed that Jesus is the Son of God, Jesus said, “I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” This adds another point of stability. It is clearly and absolutely trustworthy. Being faithful means that we want to be involved in that which brings about trustworthiness in our lives.

We are in a changing environment. I do not speak of global warming or other environmental issues. I refer to the spiritual climate in which we labor in our time. We must be

careful of what we do and say. Are we sure that what we say is rooted and based on God’s Word? In 2 Timothy 2:4, we read, “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” We are to understand where this call comes from and what the call brings with it. We must feel at home with our call.

The word “warreth” conveys valor and being committed to conquering. When David faced Goliath, he did not back off. We are not to be overcome with what is around us. If we get entangled with the affairs of this life, we will not be valiant. I notice that those times in which I gave less to the ministry than I should have, it has always been preceded by slacking off in Bible reading and study, where I have had competing things in my life. These things were also important, but I had to see that if I let them become too prominent, it short-changed a more important area of my life. If we become neglectful, the consequence is actually unfaithfulness. We must fight valiantly to the very end.

In 1 Timothy 1:11, Paul writes, “According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” This Gospel brings honor with it. There is something dignified about that

Word. It is sovereign and holy and I am supposed to be in charge of sharing that. This is the blessed Gospel of the supreme God and it is committed to your and my trust. Why are we called to faithfulness? These Gospel messages have been entrusted to you and now you are responsible for them.

What will you do with what is entrusted to you? Will you be faithful unto the very end in proclaiming it? Paul admonishes Timothy; “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 6:14). That is to be our church: blameless, pure, holy, washed in the blood of Christ. In faithfulness to our call, we should be looking for those things that cause imperfections, blemishes and distractions. How long are we to do this? Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our call to faithfulness faces new challenges. We have been reminded of Protestant teaching. Its influence is probably our next-door neighbor. Let us think beyond them. There is also an influence that influences them. Perhaps they are hearing: “Jesus is not the only way to God.” For example, a lady called me and said, “I want you to understand, I’m a believer. I believe that Jesus Christ is my way to God and my hope

for heaven.” But she said, “I don’t understand a billboard that says, ‘Jesus is the only way to God.’ My Buddhist friend will spend eternity with me in heaven, but he will not get there through Jesus Christ who takes me there, but he’ll get there through the work of Buddha. And so will my Muslim friends and Hindu friends get to heaven and we’ll share heaven together.” We hear that from the Protestant influence. We hear that from people who profess belief in Jesus. We must be very careful lest that warp our thinking.

We have important freedoms here in America. We have always had the freedom to have Bibles here. Oh, we may have had a street meeting or passed out Gospel tracts where someone challenged that freedom. That freedom in North America gives us the image in other lands of being a Christian nation.


Not long before he became president, Barack Obama said, “Whatever we once were, we are no longer just a Christian nation. We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, a Hindu nation, and a nation of unbelievers.” This statement, made by President Obama before he was president, describes the climate your discipleship will be exercised in. But that exercise is still to bring us to this word: Faithful.

That's what we hear. I read the Bible to say that the only way I can hope to spend eternity in heaven with Jesus Christ is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way! "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He said. Once you think like that, you will find that you are part of a minority. It is no longer a majority thought; it is now a minority thought.

We have recognized ourselves as a minority people. Someone supposedly even started doing paperwork to get us on an endangered species list. Let us remind ourselves that we are a minority people. Let us also remember that it took only a couple of loaves and fish to feed thousands. It went contrary to anything anyone had heard of before. When the need arose, the disciples were concerned as to where one could buy enough food for such a large crowd. Jesus defied the laws of natural science. He fed them

all and had more left over than they started with. That's God's faithfulness. That is what you as servants to servants are entrusted with.

Even though these things challenge us, they should not cause us to despair. As I look off to the horizon, there are clouds. Are we going to be intimidated by the clouds? Some of them are probably the size of a man's fist. I'm not concerned about those clouds, because Where I'm at, the sun (Son) is still shining. The work of the Son of God will go against those odds. It will take your efforts and your faithfulness and multiply them.

I do not suggest that we will move out of being a minority if we are faithful. Don't let the clouds distract you. Let us keep our minds on God's Word. He who has called us to faithfulness will also be there to faithfully bless us. 

Taking Hold of God's Truth

A. W. Tozer

It is not Jesus plus a lot of other religions and philosophies. Jesus will never qualify or compromise anything He has said.

The honest heart that comes to Him and does not understand may need a day or a month or a year or ten

years to help him prove and help him understand. But that heart will be assured that Jesus will never change His stance.


He will never, never say anything but what He said. Never will he put in a footnote to explain, "I didn't mean

it quite like that.” He said what He meant—He meant what He said. He is the Eternal Word. And so we must listen to Him!

Now what I always want to know is: why did He say it and what did He mean. A generation that knows only *what* God said will be followed by a generation that doesn’t believe what

God said.

I am in favor of a generation of Christian thinkers—Christian philosophers, if you please--and by that, I mean that the children of God should have hold of the truth of God.

[Excerpted from *The Tozer Pulpit*, Christian Publications, Harrisburg, PA, 1967, p. 37, 38.] 

Let Brotherly Love Continue

Henry Tice, Grantsville, MD

Hebrews 13:1-6 relates to general Christian obligations. I will focus on verse one: “Let brotherly love continue.”

This command is sandwiched between an appeal for endurance and a warning against apostasy. Brotherly love, therefore, is essential to faithfulness in the Christian life. The lack of it is on the path to apostasy.

Before we can continue with something, we must first have it. Here is how important it is to God: In Matthew 22:37-40, it says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; soul and mind, this is the first and great commandment. The second is like unto it; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

In Galatians 5:13-15, “For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the

flesh; but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” (destroyed relationships)

From Romans 13:8-10, “Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law, for this thou shalt not commit adultery, steal; kill; bear false witness and covet. It is all summed up in loving your neighbor as yourself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.”

What other Bible doctrine has this description that it fulfills the law? Agape or divine love will not make light of other doctrines. It seems like brotherly love is rather weak when we have marred relationships over lesser things.

1 Corinthians 13 reveals to us the way of love. If we do everything good and right and have not love, it doesn't do us a bit of good. Love suffers long, and is kind; does not envy; does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely; does not seek its own; is not easily provoked; thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity; but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things; hopes all things; endures all things; love never fails.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, the human body is used to illustrate Christ's body, the Church, with its many members all working together for the cause of Christ. In this passage we have the word "one" used 14 times and "body" used 17 times. Verse 12 says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body; so also is Christ." Verse 27: "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." Verse 25 states: "That there should be no schism (division) in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another."

In Ephesians 5:21-33, we have an analogy of marriage and the church. Verse 32, "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Our human tendency is to evaluate others by our own set of values. We must value each other in the price of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

James 2:5,6 (NIV): "If you really keep the royal law found in the scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself' you are doing right, but if you have favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law breakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."

Romans 12:9,10 (NIV) "Love must be sincere; hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourself."

1 John 3:16, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

1 John 4:20,21, "If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother whom he hath seen; how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him that he who loves God love his brother also."

Where does love stop and hatred set in? Love blesses others; hatred does not. The person we love the least indicates how much or little we love God. My experience is that we don't produce the divine love of God on our own. God gives it to the humble and contrite heart and spirit. By God's grace, let us exercise brotherly love and let it continue. By this shall all men know that we are His disciples when we have love for one another.



A Trap for Children

Howard Bean, Tavistock, ON

Here's an idea for schools in the process of hiring teachers: get the students to interview and assess the prospective teachers. In north London, England, students as young as ten were invited to take part in the hiring of new teachers. Teaching candidates were subjected to quick interviews with the pupils who then rated them. The teachers' union was not favorably impressed.

Presumably, such involvement in the hiring process would boost the students' self-esteem. But some secular experts are warning against an over-emphasis on self-esteem.

For example, in a book, *The Self-Esteem Trap*, Polly Young-Eisendrath observes that the "Gen-Me-ers," (those born between 1970 and 2000) tend to be discontented because a sense of entitlement has been cultivated in them by parents and teachers. This psychologist labels their problem the self-esteem trap. She views it as a cultural problem that began about 1980 when there was a strong emphasis on self-esteem in which parents offered much approval and enthusiasm to make their children feel extraordinary, instead of helping children realize and accept their strengths and weaknesses; in other words, that they are highly valued but ordinary.

When children develop a sense

of entitlement, they tend to become restless, dissatisfied, feel pressure to be exceptional, have trouble accepting responsibilities, and struggle with feelings of superiority or inferiority. Instead of feeling happy, positive, and capable, such children feel disappointed and frustrated.

Wise parents teach a child "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly" (Romans 12:3). Communicate to children that each one is loved and valued by God and appreciated-plus treasured and respected by you. Thank God for them in their hearing. Praise them judiciously and generously. Don't flatter or exaggerate their abilities or importance. Help them see their faults, weaknesses, and sins. Correct them. Be an example of humility, courtesy, self-respect, and godliness. Direct the child to the majesty and magnificence of God. A mountain compares favorably with a molehill until both are humbled by the stars.

Don't develop in children a sense of being entitled but rather of being unworthy. As Jacob said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant" (Genesis 32:10).

[From *Midwest Mennonite Focus*, May-June, 2009. Used by permission.]



The Story of Cameron Townsend (1896-1982)

Floyd Stoltzfus, New Holland, PA

I write this account as an encouragement to embrace God's holy Word—to love its precepts, to read it from cover to cover, to meditate therein, and to preach it. Just maybe, God will raise up young men to translate the Bible into unknown languages through an Anabaptist organization. May we do some serious planning and take courage like “Uncle Cam” (as he was known) to invest our lives in those things that count for eternity.

Cameron Townsend was born in 1896 on a farm near Downey, California. Because he grew up in poverty, he developed many good habits that he kept throughout life, for example: a siesta on a hard floor, oatmeal for breakfast, and daily Bible reading.

Because he lacked money to continue college, he decided to sign up to sell Bibles for one year in Central America. He traveled by steam boat to Guatemala with a supply of Spanish Bibles. When a veteran missionary saw this skinny fellow, he said, “He’ll never last two months.”

But Cam Townsend did well. He tramped the dense, dangerous jungles on foot and by mule. He was deeply impressed with these hard-working

Mayan Indian people. They carried 100-pound loads on their backs strapped to their foreheads. He was burdened with their enslavement to drunkenness.

Townsend was also fascinated with the ancient language of the people called Cakchiquel, which had never been reduced to writing. It was threatened with extinction because government authorities required that all education be in Spanish.

Cam felt his efforts in selling Bibles were futile because 60% of the Guatemalans spoke only an Indian language and could not read. One day a native asked a striking question that changed Townsend's life mission, “Why doesn't your God speak my language?” He decided to stay in Guatemala, learn the language, devise an alphabet, and put the language into writing.

In the meantime, Cam gained additional motivation to remain in Guatemala because he was attracted to a young missionary lady there. Later, they were married and moved to a small Cakchiquel village, where they built a house of logs and cornstalks for \$70.

Even though Cam lacked linguistic training, his goal was to translate the New Testament into Cakchiquel.

This was a monumental task! The language was so complex. One verb could take on many different tones. It took twelve years of hard work with some Indian helpers. It is said that in his spare time Cam founded five schools, a clinic, a printing shop and an orphanage. During these busy days, Cam was forced to rest in bed with tuberculosis.

But, "All things work together for good to them that love God." His time in bed gave him time to dream and pray about the future, especially when he saw the transformation that resulted in the lives of the Cakchiquels who believed the Word of God. There were hundreds of tribes in Central and South America with no written language. Could he spearhead an organization to bring the Bible to every one of these people groups? They'll kill you," said one old, experienced missionary. "Those jungle tribes are dying out anyway. They will kill each other as well as outsiders with their spears. If they don't kill you, malaria will get you or your canoe will upset in the rapids and you'll be without supplies and a month away from the last jumping off place. Forget the other tribes and stay with the Cakchiquels."

But Cam could not forget these lost tribes. One day God gave him two verses that settled the matter: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Matthew 18:11,12).

In 1934, the Townsends returned

to the United States to start the first course in what became known as the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Classes were held at an Arkansas farm house rented for \$5 a month with only two students enrolled.

Cam also founded Wycliffe Bible Translators as a base to train people in the field of linguistics and to raise support to send missionaries into various parts of the world.

Later the Townsends moved to Mexico. That country was chosen in spite of their government's crackdown on religion. "Uncle Cam" with his gentle, easygoing, patient manner convinced Mexican authorities that their missionaries were committed to literacy and linguistic training that would help the peasant Indians.

A year later the president of Mexico visited the backward Aztec town where the Townsends lived. He found a compound planted with fruit trees, a food cooperative, and a community dairy. "This is just what my country needs;" President Cardenas said, "bring all the translators you can get." It has been said that Cardenas became one of Cam's closest friends. One day he told Cam, "Townsend, you're the only person who ever talks to me about my soul."

Stories abound of the amazing grace of God in transforming headhunters into sanctified saints who gave up their murderous traditions, superstitions, and fears. They too were filled with the love of Jesus and became dynamic witnesses of the Gospel.


In 1982, at the age of 85, Cam's body was ravaged with leukemia. When

he died, he was known by presidents and kings. He was mourned by the barefoot tribes in Papua, New Guinea; by the Auca Indians in Ecuador, and by Pygmies in Africa.

It is said that Cam Townsend spoke in a slow, calm, even voice. He was single-minded with a Spirit-filled vision of reaching forgotten people

with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Only a person's mother tongue," he would say, "truly speaks to the heart."

(Sources: "Unforgettable Uncle Cam," *Reader's Digest*, 1986, thanks to Aaron Lapp.

(Excerpts of an article by Wm. Cameron Townsend, "Perspectives of the World Christian Movement.") 

helpers at home

The Blessing of Hospitality

Mary June Glick, Seneca, SC

Hospitality is not merely a suggestion in Scripture, but a command. We are to "Be given to hospitality" (1 Timothy 3:2), to "Use hospitality without grudging" (1 Peter 4:9), and to "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2).

The Bible gives many examples of hospitality. I suppose in Bible times most people stayed in homes overnight or freely stopped in at someone's house for a meal.

Our Anabaptist heritage has also given us a legacy of hospitality. We have shared our goods, our time, and our friendship. We have given to those of like faith or even to strangers in need. However, our legacy from the past will not be enough. We need to rise to the challenge of bringing hospitality to our generation. We

must carry that torch. We must teach our children and grandchildren to be hospitable, to reach out in love to others.

The dictionary gives us this definition of hospitality: *a generous and cordial welcoming of guests, offering a pleasant or sustaining environment, readily receptive, open to others.*

Hospitality is a subject dear to my heart, probably because we have so many times been the recipients of hospitality. We continue to appreciate this gift as members of a congregation who generously practices hospitality. We have had many opportunities through the years to extend hospitality to people who came through our doors. When I grudgingly extended the gift, I missed a blessing. Maybe they were angels unawares. Nevertheless, I do

know that most times I was blessed as we shared our home with others.

I believe our family must come first, also our church family, our friends, and neighbors. We should also reach out to strangers, even those of other ethnic and social groups. I am constrained, however, also to give a word of caution: we must not put our own family at risk by putting them in harm's way of physical or sexual abuse.

Hospitality is one aspect of servanthood. It means giving up my own desires and comforts to make someone else comfortable. There are many ways of extending hospitality. I realize that there are times when we are not physically able to invite people into our homes. God understands our limitations. He will give us other opportunities to bless people. The important thing is to be available for God to use us.

We all desire to be good hosts. We will look at five hints to help make it easier to welcome our guests:

- Provide a relaxed atmosphere by keeping your house clean and inviting. Try to be ready before the guests arrive. Set your heart in order; ask God to help you relax and enjoy your guests.

- If you are serving a meal, use recipes you have tried and are comfortable with. Prepare as much of the food ahead as you can. Set an attractive table; use flowers or candles

to make your guests feel special. *Do not* apologize for the food or the house—you only make your guests feel uncomfortable.

- For overnight guests, use clean sheets on your beds and clean towels in the bathroom. Put a comfortable chair and lamp in their bedroom. Books and magazines add a comfortable touch. A note or small gift on the chest will make your guests feel welcome.

- Meet the guests at the door with a smile, even if you are frustrated. They may be feeling a bit nervous, too. Show them to their room where they can be refreshed after traveling or invite them to join you in the kitchen or living room.

- Remember, the purpose of hospitality is to touch others with God's love. You will "bless" your guests as you "serve" them with a gracious and caring attitude.

We have probably all been overnight guests in someone else's home. Let us look at six practical ways to be welcome guests:

- Call in advance to give your host time to prepare. Ask if that date will be convenient. Tell your host: when you will be there, how many are coming, if you plan to arrive at mealtime and if you have any special needs.

- If you share a bathroom with others, be sure to clean up after yourself and keep your personal items in your bedroom.


- Ask permission before you use the washer, computer or telephone. Remember you are a guest in someone else's home.

- Go to bed at a reasonable time. You may be on vacation but your host may need to rise early.

- Offer to help with the work or play with the children. If you are staying a few days, your host may appreciate if you find a way to entertain yourself. If you take children along, teach them to be respectful, not to run in the house or leave toys lying around and

not to complain about the food.

- If you are visiting a mission, remember missionaries are busy people. Do not expect them to take you sightseeing, unless you are family or close friends. Take an interest in the people to whom your hosts are ministering. Never ridicule the people or the country your hosts have learned to love. Leave a small gift or a note of appreciation with your host.

God bless you with an "open heart and an open home." 

junior messages

In God's Hands – (Part Two of Two)

Brenda Friesen, Shiphewana, IN

Karen could not believe her eyes as she stood in the kitchen doorway. An earthquake had rocked the Costa Rican mountains and her faith as well. Everything on the walls had fallen except a plaque her husband, Miguel, had put up just the night before. Its bold black letters proclaimed: **WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS, BUT WE KNOW WHO HOLDS THE FUTURE.** She bent to pick up a box of cereal and some crushed crackers. Where, oh where was Miguel?

After spending a sleepless night by the side of the road, Karen and her

two children along with their friends and neighbors were evacuated by bus to be taken to a refugee camp.

Tears trickled down Karen's cheeks as she gazed once more at the pile of rubble that she had called home just 24 hours before. Then, squaring her shoulders, she picked up Ivania and reached for Ariel's hand. They slowly boarded the bus together.

Everyone either sat numbly in their seats or else talked in hushed tones as the countryside whizzed past. Devastation was everywhere.

Karen was very thankful that at least the road was intact and cleared.

When she had asked around to see if anyone knew anything about Miguel, she had heard some pretty awful things. One man told her that the road from their community farther down the mountain was impassable. He said that in places the road had simply slid down the mountainside taking with it any vehicles that happened to be on it at that moment. Landslides blocked other places.

Another man who actually worked with Miguel said that the factory they worked in had slid down the side of the mountain on which it had been perched. The last he had seen of Miguel, he was helping an older man get out of a building. A landslide now blocked the road to the factory.

As Karen bounced along in the bus questions and fears kept rearing their ugly heads in her mind. *Was Miguel buried under tons of rock and mud? Would she ever see him again? What would she and the children do without him? Why, oh why, did an earthquake have to interrupt their peaceful lives?*

Karen fought for control of her emotions. She must stay strong for the sake of the children. Somehow God would work everything out. She must trust that He indeed DID hold the future.

When they arrived at the refugee camp, Karen was told that if she was missing a family member she could

go to the ball field where helicopters were bringing in evacuees from areas inaccessible by bus. She joined the growing crowd as four helicopters came in to land.

Hope flickered in Karen's heart as she watched the first one unload. She recognized some of the people as Miguel's co-workers.

"Oh, God," she prayed, "please bring him here safely."

The next two helicopters held no one she recognized. The fourth one had just landed and Karen's eyes were riveted to it as the door swung open and two men jumped out. They were handed a stretcher and they slowly started making their way toward the crowd.

Karen's heart did a flip and she didn't wait to make sure, but started running to meet the men.

"O Dios mio, no puede ser! (Oh, my God, it cannot be!) Miguel! Miguel!"


At the sound of her voice, the second man's head snapped up and he almost dropped his end of the stretcher. Another man quickly took Miguel's place and Karen felt herself lifted off the ground in Miguel's strong embrace. Then he set her down and knelt to hug Ariel and Ivania who had followed their mother. Tears of joy streamed down Karen's face.

"Thank-you, thank-you so much Lord, for bringing us all together." Kar-

en's heart overflowed with gratitude.



That evening in their tent Miguel and his family praised God for holding them in His hands through the earthquake. Their happiness was tinged with sorrow, however, for they realized that many were still missing loved ones.

No one knew what the future held for them, but Miguel and Karen rejoiced that they DID know who held their future. And the God, whose hand had rocked the Costa Rican mountains and forever changed their lives, would provide for their needs. Had He not promised never to forsake them? 

The Strongest Force in the World

Michael Yoder, Virginia Beach, VA

The word *love*, used so flippantly today, often presents confusion and leaves the true concept of love ambiguous and distorted. In American culture, love is so twisted that it has brought shame to the name of Christ.

What is true love? Are there different kinds of love? To help answer these questions and clarify the matter, I here give some definitions as well as characteristics of several types of love, with the greatest attention given to *agape* love.

Eros

- Creative, often sexual yearning, love, or desire. (*Dictionary.com definition*)

- Characteristics:

Of the three types of love identified, *eros* is the one type not used in the Scriptures. *Eros* is the basis of the English word *erotic*, and brings with

it the idea of a love based on emotion or sexual desire. Cupid, a common figure seen during Valentine's Day is an example of *eros*. In western Christianity, shamefully, *eros* is the type of love that would be most often associated with the word *love* today. The entertainment industry has played a huge part in presenting this image. It has done major damage to the word *love* in its truest meaning.

Phileo

- To be a friend to (fond of an individual or an object), i.e., have affection for (denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling; embracing especially the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty, and propriety; specially, to kiss (as a mark of tenderness). (*Strong's Concordance*)

- Characteristics:

Phileo presents the concept of love for a friend or family member. It does not present the sexual aspect of love, as *eros* does. Jesus said in Matthew 23:6, in speaking of the scribes and Pharisees, they “love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues.” The word used here is *phileo*. It’s easy to see here the surface level of this love and how it could easily be affected by circumstances. It has been said that *phileo* is “the deepest affection that an unsaved person can ever know.”

Agape

• “The love of Christians for other persons, corresponding to the love of God for humankind.” (*Dictionary.com definition*)

• Characteristics:

Jesus, while preaching the Sermon on the Mount, said, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). This concept of love presents a new and powerful approach to relationships with others. In *eros* and *phileo* we see a love that is based on our circumstances and on the responses of others. But, in *agape*, we see something completely contrary to the concept of love presented in Western culture today. This idea of love has no “strings

attached.” It’s a love that says, “I will still love you, regardless of what you do to me.”

This is the word used in 1 Corinthians 13, translated *charity* in King James English. This kind of love is described as follows:

“suffereth long”

• a love that is willing to suffer for the cause of Truth

“is kind”

• treats others with respect; is never unkind

“envieth not”

• does not covet others’ possessions
“vaunteth not itself”
• does not have too high an opinion of itself

“is not puffed up”

• is not proud
“doth not behave itself unseemly”
• acts in a way that is right and good

“seeketh not her own”

• is not looking out for itself
“is not easily provoked”
• does not easily become angry.

“thinketh no evil”

• does not wish evil towards anyone
“rejoiceth not in iniquity”
• does not take pleasure in sinful acts

“rejoices in the truth”

• takes pleasure in doing good
“beareth all things”

• is able to endure any circumstance

“believeth all things”

• is accepting of God’s revelation

“hopeth all things”

• always has hope for the future

“endureth all things”

• is able to suffer without blaming

“never faileth”

• never gives up on pursuing us

In this chapter the idea of true love is presented in a powerful way. It has been said that love is the strongest force in the world. How true that is! There is no other answer to the problems mankind faces today, whether it is wars, family conflict, or any other type of relationship struggle. Violence produces violence, and love produces love. It is a simple concept, yet many people miss it.

The crowning example of agape love is seen in Jesus’ love for humankind. Romans 5:8 says,

“But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Christ loves the unlovely. Christ loved His tormentors.

Christ lived His life based on principle rather than circumstance. It is only through allowing Jesus to live within us that we can show this love to others, because outside of Him, it is impossible. Through His example, Jesus has shown us how to love truly, and He has given us the power to do this.

As a follower of Jesus, I want to live out my love for Jesus and through that be a true testimony to the world of the powerful love that only His love can bring.

[This essay was written as a class assignment for a Bible institute class in 1 Corinthians at IGo Institute, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, November, 2008.]



youth messages

Dear Youth,

Have you ever wondered why some of life’s most significant decisions are made in the first third of a person’s life span? Wouldn’t it be better if major decisions could be postponed until a person is wiser? While some

decisions such as marriage and life work are probably best made after a person has had time to develop emotionally and spiritually, choices concerning what we pursue are largely formed in our teens and early twenties. The types of friendships we

cultivate, the activities we pursue in our leisure time, and the things we try to accumulate are all pursuits that place our feet on a particular path. Those paths that we choose in our youth are difficult to leave later in life. Statistics show that the majority of dedicated Christians commit themselves to the work and will of God early in life.

If we pursue God and the things He tells us to pursue, we can know that our path through life will lead us into a rich relationship with Christ that will culminate in pleasures for

evermore. If however, our life pursuits are centered on self-gratification and self-protection we can know that we are on a path that will lead us further and further away from Christ and at the end of life, eternal separation. Not all paths lead to the same destination. Youth is the time for establishing the best pursuits. *“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.”*

Thanks to the youth who continue to develop this theme in the following paragraphs. —EE

This Month’s
QUESTION

How can people know whether the path they are taking through life is leading them where they hope to arrive?

r e s p o n s e f r o m o u r r e a d e r s ...

The answer to this question hinges on where a person hopes to arrive. As Christians, we should seek to become who God wants us to become and do what he wants us to do. If that is our goal, the way to arrive there is by walking with God one step at a time. As we develop our relationship with Him and seek His direction, He will guide us to where He wants us to be.

Kerwin Yoder, Salisbury, PA

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A friend told me recently that we

should be living now the way we want our children to live and I think the same thing applies here. If we know where we want to arrive then we should live our lives in anticipation of that. We can know we are on the right path, if we are always measuring what we do now with where we want to be in the future.

Nate Zook, Burgettstown, PA

• • • • •

God is not a God of confusion but a God of peace. He is faithful in giving

me peace if I am living according to His will. He also faithfully reveals sin in my life as I am open to His leading. I can know I am on the right path if I am experiencing His peace. I believe the Bible is my road map to Heaven. If I am living my life according to the Bible, it will guide me to Heaven. Because it is God's written Word, I will be pleasing God and my path will take me where I hope to arrive.

Another way to check my path is examining my fruit. I cannot bear good fruit unless I abide in the true Vine, Jesus Christ. If I'm bearing good fruit, God will be glorified and my path will take me to heaven. See ya'll there!

Arlene Zook, Virginia Beach, VA



Why do we need to know? Where should our focus be? Should it be on the reward we will receive? Or should it be on following Jesus? If our main focus is on our reward, we are being selfish. We should seek to follow the way of Jesus. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus—The Way—can be trusted.

Sarah Yoder, Leon, IA



How do I know the path that I am on is leading me where I want to go? I would say it is very important to know for sure where we want to end up. One way to tell where I am headed is to notice good and bad examples around me. If the goal in the end is to be with God, who is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, then we need to make sure the path we are on is a path that is according to the path of Jesus and that lines up with the Word of God.

It takes faith too. I have found already that from time to time there are instances that pop up that really show us where we are. It seems then that through the times when we cannot feel God so close or maybe not at all, we have to remember and believe that what God said is true. Believe, Believe, and Believe. Only what motivates us to action is what we truly believe.

Josiah Zook, Georgetown, OH



We've got to know the way to where we want to go. Jesus said, "I am the Way." How simple is that?!

But what does that really mean? Jesus also said, "Follow Me." Study His guidebook and learn to walk like He did. You'll get to where He is.

Hosanna Yoder, Bluffton, IN



THOUGHT GEMS

Can't sleep? Don't count sheep—talk to the Shepherd.



What men need most is not that which money can buy.



What we do when we have nothing to do reveals what we value.



Dignity can be a mask for ignorance.



Today's inflated food prices are hard to swallow.



Don't drive as if you owned the road; drive as if you owned the car.



It may help you appreciate your job if you imagine yourself without it.



You can tell a man by the company he keeps and by the jokes he tells.



Be kind to unkind people; they need it the most.



Heads full of knowledge and wisdom have little space left for conceit.

(USPS 767-160)
Calvary Messenger
2673 Township Rd. 421
Sugarcreek, OH 44681

Periodicals