

The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

May/June 2010
Volume 16 Number 3



Ye Olde Fox Yeast



Serving Bakers Since 4 B.C.

Sift
saw mill
Yeast
mix:
1/2 C. warm water
2 T. honey
Add:
2 eggs
1/2

Beware of the Leaven of Herod!

See page 11

The Remnant

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From the Editor

I don't like it when Christianity makes the news. When it does, it's usually embarrassing. This month was no different. Major news network CNN recently ran a story showcasing a dispute between two professing Christians. On one side of the argument was the politically conservative Glenn Beck, and on the other side was liberal political writer and editor Jim Wallis. The scandal that CNN thought newsworthy was that the conservative talk show host Glenn Beck had recently spouted off a denunciation of all churches involved in programs that help the poor using the title "social justice." Beck said: "I beg you, look for the words 'social justice' or 'economic justice' on your church's web site. If you find it, run as fast as you can. 'Social justice' and 'economic justice'—they are code words. Now, am I advising people to leave their church? Yes!"

Firing back from the left, Jim Wallis challenged Beck, stating that social justice was actually the very heart of the Gospel ... "But in any case, what he has said attacks the very heart of our Christian faith, and Christians should no longer watch his show."

After CNN showcased the spat between these two, they sat back and watched as "Christian" Republicans and "Christian" Democrats all over the country duked it out. Now, it is not my intent to add to this dispute by taking sides in this magazine. However, it is my intent to challenge this entire expression of what they call Christianity. Turns out that the conservative Republican, Glenn Beck, is actually a Mormon. Jim Wallis, who has claimed political neutrality for a long time, unfortunately falls way too closely in line with the Democratic agenda. And while I agree that the Gospel preaches a redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor, I think there is a reason that Pentecost doesn't hit on April 15th. I just don't think the federal income tax was what the Apostles were talking about in Acts 2 and 4 when they said they were "of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

This was a powerful, voluntary response to a spiritual endowment—not forced politics. What the church needs is power—not politics; unction—not political functions; anointing—not amendments; Bible—not bureaucracy; the Spirit—not Socialism; the Gospel—not the GOP. All these misguided allegiances, confused agendas, misplaced loyalties, and futile activisms will only end in unkept promises and public humili-

ation. The Kingdom of God still works, and it is still the cure for a dying, sinful world. Anything less is a waste of time.

Oh, that we might be of those of whom it was prophesied long ago—that we would give this testimony: "They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power!" Ps. 145:11 And also in the verse that follows, that we might "make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His Kingdom!" Today the church suffers greatly from divided loyalties. As long as Christians attempt to be of both kingdoms, there will be confusion and every evil thing. We cannot propagate both the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of God—the two simply do not mix. In light of all this, it would be our hope that we might help bring some clarity in this day of such confusion. Just where does our allegiance lie as followers of Christ? We need to keep our eye single, for the Deceiver is at work to water us down and sift us like wheat. In the article "Beware of the Leaven of Herod," we have attempted to review the way the church has dealt with politics throughout her history. It is our hope that by examining the past, we might avoid some of the same pitfalls in the future. May the Lord give us an understanding mind, that we might persevere steadfast to the end!

Also in this issue we take a look at little Samuel's boldness in telling Eli his sins. This needed article helps us discern our motives in speaking up, and in being quiet. Don't miss the collection of quotes from historic Anabaptism concerning the new birth. They're meaty reading, but worth the effort it takes to chew them well.

We doubled up on The Sisters' Corner section and have two articles this issue dealing with areas that relate especially to ladies. See the article about "Wading Ducks" to find out what women and ducks ought to have in common. We also include, in the second *Sisters' Corner*, some guidelines concerning the touchy subject of boy/girl relationships, written by a young sister who has made her own mistakes in the past and desires to help others not make the same missteps. Our Seed-sower award goes to a sister in a local congregation here in Lancaster County. And, amid other shorter articles, we have pulled Anabaptist missionary Ambrosius Spittelmayer out of obscurity and looked at his life and evangelization methods.

May this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* inspire you to follow hard after Jesus!

~Brother Dean

AFRAID

TO TELL ELI

Michael McDaniel



To refresh your memory of the story of the child Samuel and Eli (which is not printed here for the sake of space), please read 1 Samuel 3:1-19. In our text, young Samuel had every right to be afraid to tell Eli about the Lord's judgment. Eli's wicked sons profaned the temple and were not restrained by Eli. Because of this lack of restraint, God made an oath to bring calamity upon his house. These were certainly harsh words for young Samuel to relate. Notice the wording in verse 15: "And Samuel *lay until the morning*, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel *feared* to shew Eli the vision." I tend to think he didn't sleep very much—if at all—that night, after receiving this revelation from God. Perhaps he tossed and turned, worrying about what God told him to do. I began to ponder that a bit, as it relates to our telling one another the "hard things." Are we afraid to tell our brother or sister things which the Lord has revealed to us about them? It may not be from a dream or a vision, but it is definitely something that God has revealed through the Word, experience, or observation.

Many times things are very clear to us ... we know we should say something to others, but we "**fear telling Eli**" about ... a character flaw that could hinder their growth; mannerisms or sinful habits that distance them from their brethren, their children, or their wife; sayings that are not becoming of a Christian (e.g., slang, soft curse words); actions that do not show forth Christ in the community and that damage the witness of the church; words that have hurt and have "separated very friends" (e.g., critical, judgmental remarks); foolish jesting; lack of parental guidance of their

children; worldliness, materialism, covetousness, and debt; dishonesty; lack of submission by a wife or daughter; immodesty of dress and tendency toward the world's fashions; improper music; lack of zeal for the Lord ...

Sometimes we see these things, and we are rightly concerned, but we don't say anything to the brother or sister ... because we are "afraid to tell Eli." Sometimes we have trepidation when it comes to confronting a brother or sister with sins, or even just to clear up a misconception. We fear it. We may even lay awake at night worrying about it. Maybe we don't mention it. Often we don't bring these things forth because we are timid and don't want to confront someone. Many, like me, are just *non-confrontational*. We'd just as soon not bloody our nose in a matter, so we just avoid the issue. Maybe we know that we have a beam in our own eye, and don't bother with the mote in other's eyes. Perhaps we want to "protect" them from hurt feelings or angry feelings, and in so-doing, we *enable* them to continue in their transgressions. Maybe we feel so insecure about our relationship that we fear they may not want to fellowship with us anymore. Or, could it be that we don't want to appear as if we have all the answers, and are holier in some way than they are?

Sometimes, we are like the man described in Proverbs 22:13: "The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets." The spiritually slothful man avoids "telling Eli" because of fear. After all, there are lions just waiting to slay us! *He will bite my head off! He'll put me in my place! He will point out greater sins in my own life! He will question my motives and expose my own wick-*

edness. Because of these ferocious “lions,” we find ourselves “afraid to tell Eli.” Whatever the reason, if we don’t go to a brother or sister, we don’t help them. That should be the main goal—to help someone be closer to Christ. But, we find ourselves paralyzed by fear.

Fearful people in Scripture

Friends, if this describes you, rest assured that you are not alone in this debilitating fear. Scripture tells of others who have walked in your shoes. At least nine months had passed since David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and he was not inclined to repent of his sin, but chose to conceal



**If I confront him with his sin,
he will bite my head off!**

it. Nathan could have lost his head for confronting David with this rebuke, but masterfully presented a word picture to David that brought him to full repentance. Certainly Nathan could have “feared to tell David,” but he boldly told him, “Thou art the man!”

Elijah could have *feared* to confront Ahab and Jezebel with their sinful ways, but instead, he called down fire from heaven upon the offering of bullocks. The results of that confrontation were not readily apparent to Elijah, but all things were revealed in God’s timing.

Young Daniel could have *feared* the King and agreed to eat the King’s meat and drink his wine, but he made a clever appeal to authority, worked within that authority structure, and God gave him the desire of his heart. The main thing is that Daniel did not fear his master to the point of doing something that violated his conscience and his religion.

Namaan’s servants could have *feared* to confront their master with the good advice to dip seven times in the muddy Jordan, but did what was best for their master and for them. They could have been slain for such boldness, but this did not deter them. “And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, *My father*, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?” 2 Ki. 5:13 Notice their reverence and honor in saying “*My father*,” but then they skillfully reasoned with him.

In Jesus’ parable of the talents, we see how the unprofitable servant *feared* his master as a man who was “hard” and who reaped where he had not sowed. He saw him as unapproachable. With this perception, he stayed clear of confrontation and did what he thought was the safest thing. In so doing, he did not profit or benefit the master and he lost any reward he might have realized! Why? Because he was “afraid to tell Eli”!

In these examples, we see that we can either be frozen by fear, and not confront sin—or be bold, and expose it.

Genuine love demands confrontation

If I truly love my brother, I will put aside all of my “fears” and go to him in love, for his benefit. This love will outweigh all fears or reservations that I might have. Agape love is a self-sacrificing love; it is a love that loves without expecting anything in return. If we love with agape love, we will want to see that others are right with God. “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: *thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*” Le. 19:17 Clearly, then, my love demands that I do not “suffer sin upon him.” The writer of Proverbs tells us that we are being faithful when we bring the tough words of rebuke: “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” Pr. 27:6

Faithful rebukes and admonitions stem from agape love. They are genuine, not pretentious, and never malicious or judgmental. Their only purpose is to reconcile our brother back to a holy God. On the other hand, if we are “*afraid to tell Eli*,” we will be deceitful and be no friend at all. Godly confrontation is born of self-denial; we must die to our selfish desire to avoid confrontation and to have others feel badly about us. Let’s be honest—when we choose to avoid godly confrontation, we are thinking about *our* situation, not *theirs*. When we avoid the unpleasantness of confrontation, our brother is denied life-changing admonition; and that is not love, but selfishness. We must deny self. “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” Pr. 27:17 Self-denial will allow us to overcome being “*afraid to tell Eli*,” because we want to sharpen one another ... not leave the other spiritually dull.

Danger in holding back

In 1 Samuel 3:17, Eli said, “What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide anything from me of all the things that he said unto thee.” Eli had good reason to believe that Samuel had bad news for him, because God chose to speak to young Samuel rather than to him—God’s priest. He knew he had neglected to heed the admonition, and he expected the worst. Obediently, and boldly, “Samuel told him every whit, and *hid nothing from him.*” 1 Sa. 3:18a

Eli threatened Samuel with a curse if he held anything back from him, so he shared the revelation. That’s how we need to be with each other. We should not harbor wrong ideas and let them color our perceptions of others. We should not “overlook” other’s faults or sins in the guise of love. When we “hold back every whit” we get into trouble; relations degrade and become shallow. This only weakens the body.

There is a great danger in hiding things from one another. If the Lord has revealed something to you, and you keep it from your brother, his blood is on your hands. The apostle Paul said in Acts 20:26-27: “Wherefore I take

you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you *all the counsel of God.*” When we hold things back, we are guilty of feigned fellowship. Our fellowship is pretentious and hypocritical. 1 Pe. 1:22 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit *unto unfeigned love of the brethren*, see that ye love one another with a *pure heart fervently.*” When we feign fellowship by holding back needed admonition, we are guilty of the three D’s:

Dishonesty: Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things *honest in the sight of all men.* Ro. 12:17

Deceitfulness: A true witness delivereth souls: but a *deceitful* witness speaketh lies. Pr. 14:25

The heart is *deceitful* above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Je. 17:9

Defrauding: That no man go beyond and *defraud his brother in any matter:* because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 1 Th. 4:6

If I have anything against a brother, or see something amiss in his life, or have a wrong perception of something he did, and yet act as if all is fine, it is *dishonest, deceitful, and defrauding.* We cannot hide behind the excuse that we are “afraid to tell Eli.” “*Bread of deceit* is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.” Pr. 20:17

Biblical correction

Clearly, we do not want to have the motive of exposing a brother or placing evil motives on him. In Scripture, this is a shown to be a form of reviling. Regarding “correction,” there are three ways to properly correct—*reprove, rebuke, and exhort*; and there are two ways that are not proper—*reviling and railing.*

In 2 Timothy 4:2, we see the three acceptable types of correction: “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; *reprove, rebuke, exhort* with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Let’s examine these a bit closer:

Reprove (*elegcho*) to tell someone of his fault, to admonish, to convince someone of his error; to give evidence; to convict.

Rebuke (*epitimao*) to command, to charge, to order; to admonish

Exhort (*parakaleo*) to beg, to urge; to encourage, to request, to ask, to appeal to; to console, to comfort, to cheer up; to call to one side and urge to pursue a course of action.

The basic motive for reproofing must be to restore the offending brother, not to expose him. If our motive is to expose, it is reviling. If it is to belittle and ridicule, it is

The basic motive for reproofing must be to restore the offending brother, not to expose him.

railing. Let’s look at these terms:

Revile (*oneidizo*) to reproach, to denounce, to insult, to taunt, to chide, to reproach, to speak evil of, be abusive

Rail (*blasphemeo*) to vilify; to speak impiously; to defame; to speak evil

Because it is imperative that we know how to properly “tell Eli,” let’s examine the concept of reproofing versus reviling.

1) Be redemptive. The basic motive behind a loving reproof or rebuke is that of restoring a brother by our admonition. We must first and foremost seek to be redemptive.

“Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering.” 2 Ti. 4:2

“Wherefore rebuke them sharply, *that they may be sound in the faith.*” Ti. 1:13

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” Ga. 6:1

On the other hand, the motive behind reviling and railing is to expose a brother whom we have already judged. This brings shame and disgrace and, most likely, will turn a brother away from God or cause him to harden his heart. This is certainly not redemptive. Let’s look two examples of this. “And one of the malefactors which were hanged *railed on him*, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and

us. But the other answering *rebuked him*, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" Lu. 23:39-40 "And they that passed by *railed on him*, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." Mr. 15:29-30

Brothers, while it is vital that we "*tell Eli*," let us be sure to search our hearts and motives beforehand. Our purpose must only be to restore a brother, and to be redemptive, not to expose or ridicule. If we are "afraid to tell Eli" as it were, perhaps it's because we have the wrong motive at heart. If our motive is to expose or revile, we will most likely do this in a public setting, with the intention of exposing him before other brothers. That is sin. If we have a pure heart that sees reproof as *redemptive*, then we will go to that brother or sister privately and share our concerns. This is all borne out of love for his soul. Here are some questions to ponder:

- Do we desire to expose a brother, or to expose sin?
- Do we secretly desire to bring them down a peg, or to build them up in the faith?
- Do we want to "exact a pound of flesh," or to "provide a pound of cure"?
- Do we seek to condemn, or to encourage?
- Do we purpose to lecture, or to counsel?

If we have the wrong motives, the Lord may still "do what seemeth Him good" ... but more than likely our efforts will fail utterly! Misplaced motives are iniquity. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will *bring to light the hidden things of darkness*, and will *make manifest the counsels of the hearts*: and then shall every man have praise of God." 1 Co. 4:5 If we have the proper motives, which are born of love and godly concern, it will be *redemptive* in love.

2) Employ both truth and love. One who reproveth or rebukes must be sure to combine both love and truth when correcting a brother. Truth without love is harshness. Love without truth is compromise. "As many as I *love*, I *rebuke* and *chasten*: be zealous therefore, and repent." Re. 3:19 Paul reveals one key reason for upholding *truth with love* in 1 Timothy 5:20: "Them that sin *rebuke before all*, that others also may fear."

One who reviles or rails—sanctimoniously judges others—does his deed and then washes his hands of the matter. He is definitely not redemptive in motive! "Then they *reviled him*, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." Jo. 9:28-29

Friends, redemptive admonition will demand that we rebuke with both truth and love!

We must love enough to deliver truth to others. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Ep. 4:15 "Wherefore putting away lying, *speak every man truth with his neighbor*: for we are members one of another." Ep. 4:25 Charity is the key. It will help us overcome the "fear of telling Eli." When we realize that their soul suffers because of our inability to open our mouth and speak truth, then we realize the need to let charity have its perfect work.

3) Know the limitations. One who reproveth or rebukes must be aware of certain limitations. Consider these passages:

"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." 1 Ti. 5:19-20 There may arise occasions when a minister must be rebuked, but there are clear

guidelines that must be followed. Depending on the severity of the matter, it might be permissible to "tell Eli" of a simple concern. More serious matters would dictate "telling Eli" in the presence of two or three witnesses.

This parameter of two or three witnesses was established in Deuteronomy 17:6.

"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren." 1 Ti. 5:1 Here, Paul speaks about the aged, not the ministry. Robertson's *Word Pictures in the New Testament* says this word is *presbuteros* and is "used in the usual sense of an older man, not a minister, as is shown by *as a father*." Paul advised Timothy that if aged persons transgressed, they must be rebuked fraternally, with humility and gentleness, giving deference to their years.

Another limitation is found in Jude 8-9: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, *durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee*." We learn here that even though dignitaries may be evil and deserve rebuke, they should never be the subject of reviling or railing. Jude says that the archangel Michael himself did not rail against Satan—the chief of wickedness—but said, "*the Lord rebuke thee*." Again, we need to know the Scriptural boundaries and bring a godly and Scriptural reproof.

Abigail and Nabal

Let's look at an example that shows the points we have brought thus far, but where less than ideal actions were tak-

Do we secretly desire to bring them down a peg, or to build them up in the faith?

en. In 1 Samuel 25 we read of an evil man named Nabal, who had many sheep. Nabal's shepherds had traveled with David's men, when David was fleeing from Saul, and David's men provided a wall of safety for them, and "hurt them not." When it came shearing time, David sent ten men to Nabal, seeking a reward of food for their efforts. But, Nabal railed against them saying "Who is this David, and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?"

David's men related that Nabal railed against them, so David made ready for war. Then, one of Nabal's servants who had been with David, appealed to Abigail. 1 Sa. 25:14-17 The servant was "afraid to tell Nabal." Then Abigail, rather than going to her husband, prepared 200 loaves of bread, two bottles of wine, five sheep, five measures of parched corn, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of figs, and took them to David. Abigail too, was "afraid to tell Nabal."

We read of her appeal to David in 1 Samuel 25:23-26.

Because of Abigail's intervention, David's wrath is averted and all seems well. When Nabal sobered up from his feasting, Abigail shared what she had done. The Bible says that when he heard it, "his heart died within him and he became as a stone." The Lord smote him ten days later and he died. Then David took Abigail to wife. What lessons do we learn from this account?

1. **Nabal was not approachable.** Proper appeals should have been made to him by the servant and also by Abigail, but he had a reputation for being a churlish man and a "son of Belial." Things may have gone much differently for him if he had been kind and open to reproof.
2. **Not redemptive to Nabal.** The results of the servant and of Abigail were not redemptive in nature toward Nabal. They wanted to preserve their lives and prevent destruction at the hands of David and his men, but they did not seek to achieve this through Nabal. And, neither party sought to preserve Nabal's reputation, but exposed him and reviled him.
3. **Nabal was not appealed to.**

- i. David sent ten men to Nabal rather than make the appeal himself in person
- ii. The servant made his appeal to Abigail rather than to Nabal
- iii. Abigail made her appeal directly to David, rather than to her husband Nabal

4. **Nabal was judged.** Nabal was not given the opportunity to explain himself. Both the servant and Abigail judged him for being a "son of Belial" and never went to him.

The fact is that Saul had the priests killed just for giving a few loaves of bread to David. What more would Saul do to him if he were to provide as much food as Abigail gave to them? Saul was still King, and Nabal was still under him. No wonder his heart died within him when he heard what had been done!

5. **Not under authority.** Abigail stepped out from under her husband's authority by making this gesture to David without her husband's approval; all because she was afraid to tell Nabal. The result was that David's men were fed, and no harm came to Nabal's household. We will never know whether this

could have been accomplished by Nabal, had he listened to godly appeals and saw the wisdom in their pleas. If the appeals had been presented in the right spirit, they might have changed Nabal's mind. We gain some valuable lessons on 1) being open to reproof, 2) being approachable, and 3) being redemptive in motives.

Unheeded admonition

In 1 Samuel 2:22-25, we read that Eli had already been warned by the people that his sons were wicked and that they profaned the temple; yet he heeded not that warning.

"Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the



**Had Nabal been more approachable,
Abigail may have felt more like appealing
to him, rather than stepping out from
under his authority and appealing to David.**

voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.” 1 Sa. 2:22-25

The people were not afraid to “tell Eli” what his sons were doing. And Eli was not afraid to tell his sons that they were doing wrong. But he did nothing more to stop them, and he allowed them to continue sinning. Hophni and Phinehas, Eli’s sons, did not heed their father’s admonition, but continued in sin. “And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men,” 1 Sa. 2:26 We conclude that the evil practices of Hophni and Phinehas continued for some time, as Samuel grew. Clearly, we see that they rejected admonition.

This brings up an interesting question—what do we do when advice, admonition, or rebuke is not heeded? Sadly, that is going to happen in some instances. Advice falls on deaf ears for various reasons:

- brothers are preoccupied with other problems or have more pressing matters
- perhaps they are too proud to hear from one younger, or one of lesser “stature” in terms of spiritual knowledge or leadership
- maybe they will justify their present actions or characteristics
- perhaps they just don’t see the matter as being sinful, unproductive, a bad example, etc.

First, just because brethren may discount what we say does not relieve us of the duty to say it. “When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” Ez. 33:8-9 People who are “afraid to tell Eli” have blood on their hands, and they will be held accountable. Do we need any greater incentive? It must first be born of love for their souls, and second, out of concern for ours! Any rebuke or reproof must be first and foremost *redemptive* in nature. Our primary purpose is to redeem that brother, not to expose or condemn him. We are concerned with his spiritual welfare.

Second, we must discern the nature of what is to be “told.” If it is a matter of him conforming to our personal preferences, then we should let it lie. If it is a matter that affects their soul’s salvation, or it brings reproach upon God’s name and the body of Christ, then we must do much more than simply admonish in word. We cannot be like Pilate and simply wash our hands of the matter. We cannot just say “the blood is off my hands.”

In this case, Eli—as the priest—had the obligation to physically remove these sinful men who profaned the temple. He could have had them brought before the elders and stoned. Instead, he whined at them, “Oh, why do you do this?” That was not good enough. He should have restrained them.

In 1 Samuel 2:27-36, a man of God pronounces doom upon the house of Eli. “And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.” What could Eli do? Punishment sounded certain. Recall how the fervent prayers of Abraham caused God to spare Lot and his family. Recall how the fervent prayerful intercession of Mo-

ses spared the children of Israel from destruction more than once. We have no such record where Eli fasted and prayed and implored God to change His mind and give his sons a space to repent. Was the blood off Eli’s hands, simply because he “told” them their sins? No.

Let’s apply this to ourselves. If we have discerned the matter to be one of a sinful nature, simple admonition will not suffice to rid the blood from our hands. Please read Matthew 18:15-17 for a discussion of our further duties to deal with issues of sin. Are we through, after following the Matthew 18 steps? No! Fervent prayer should still be made that their eyes will be opened, and that God will soften their heart to repentance, and that they have time and space to repent.

Seven characteristics to develop

Let us consider some character qualities that we need to develop in order to not be “afraid to tell Eli”:

1. **The ability to discern a brother or sister’s heart.** We achieve this through prayer, discernment, spiritual ma-

Instead of actually doing something about his son's sins, Eli only whined at them, "Oh, why do you do this?"

turity, and help from the Spirit (e.g., *Is there malice, or just simple ignorance?*). We don't want to be guilty of placing motives on people and surmising what is behind their actions. That is sin on our part. Let's be discerning.

2. We need to learn tact and skill at bringing the admonition to others. We don't want to shut doors before we can provide the assistance. "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." Pr. 2:11 We need a calm head, pure heart, and a controlled tongue that ministers grace to the hearers.

3. We need to possess the close relationship of a "friend" to be able to inflict the wounds of a friend. We must cultivate friendships and build the relational bridges required to administer both the *soft* and *hard* sides of love. If we have a close relationship with others, then we can more easily bring reproofs and correction; it will be accepted more readily.

4. We need to know what approach to take. We must know one another well enough to know whether the straightforward approach works best or whether we need the Prophet Nathan's approach. Sometimes we need to be creative and use a word picture or some other avenue. "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out." Pr. 20:5

5. Approachability depends on timing. When someone has just suffered a traumatic event or tragedy has befallen them, or other evident problems exist ... maybe this advice can wait till a more suitable time to achieve the desired results. It has been said that "the heated mind resists the chilled, relentless touch of scrutiny."

6. We need to cultivate the characteristic of "approachability" within ourselves. Rather than say, "I didn't ask for this advice," we should say, "please give me any admonition/rebuke that I need." It is a matter of spiritual growth and wanting to change. "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility ..." 1 Pe. 5:5 "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." Pr. 12:15 "*Only by pride cometh contention:* but with the well advised is wisdom." Pr. 13:10

7. We must love the one who brings the message of admonition to us. We must never have animosity, anger, or disgust, but love and appreciation. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." He. 12:11

Are you still afraid to tell Eli?

I realize that even after this discussion, I still may not have convinced the "non-confrontational" brothers and sis-

ters of the need to confront sin in others. Please consider the following ramifications of not doing so:

- You foster enmity between God's children.
- The body is weakened.
- Satan is allowed to erect fortresses of bitterness in your heart, upon foundations of misconceptions.
- Your fellowship is feigned.
- You are defrauding your brother with smiles of hypocrisy.
- You don't help your brother.
- This brother's influence on the community may bring reproach on the church.
- He may lose his soul.
- His blood will be on your hands, and
- You may lose your soul.

One thing is for certain. If we get in the habit of "telling Eli" when the admonition is needed, or the perception needs clarifying, then it's much easier the next time, and the next time, and the next time. It's like detecting a cancerous cell in the early stages. If we will not overcome this "fear to tell Eli," then these concerns will mount up. The cancer will spread and consume the entire body. The choice is up to us. But, how can I muster the courage to approach a brother or a sister in this manner? Is this too hard a thing to ask? Philip-

pians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Or, through Christ, the One who gives me strength.) Christ will give you the strength, the courage, and the ability to overcome your "fear to tell Eli," because it is something that honors His name, blesses and strengthens His body, and glorifies His Father.~



We need to possess the close relationship of a "friend" to be able to inflict the "wounds of a friend."



Beware of the Leaven of Herod!

Mark 8:15

By Dean Taylor



I was at work one day last month when I heard a news report over the radio, announcing a historic change. The announcer reported that Goshen College had just broken with 116 years of tradition by beginning this year's series of basketball and baseball games with the playing of the national anthem. Standing to their feet, with bowed heads and reverent gestures, the "Anabaptist" college sang—for the first time in their 116-year history—their devotion to a flag. Apparently there was quite a stir, as news reporters and onlookers came out to witness this historic event. I had to wonder what the rival team, a Catholic university called "The Saints," must have thought about it all.

As the radio announcer continued to report on the dispute that arose over this incident, I remember feeling somewhat embarrassed. Most of my coworkers know where I stand on these issues, so I felt as though someone was publicly exposing the sins of one of my family members.

It reminded me of another humiliation I had a few years earlier during one of the presidential elections. This time one of my supervisors, a Jewish man, was asking me who I was going to vote for in the upcoming election. I used the opportunity to explain to him the Christian concept of the two kingdoms. I explained to him that—simply put—Anabaptists don't vote. He disagreed. An Amish man was right in front of us, so he challenged me, "Are you saying that this Amish man doesn't vote?"

Being painfully new in Lancaster County, I smugly answered, "That's right, just ask him yourself!" I stood there,

confident of my Amish brother and his response to this Jewish man. Then he leaned over and asked the Amish man, "Are you going to vote in this election?" To which the Amish man enthusiastically replied, "You bet I am! I voted in the last election, I certainly am going to vote in this one!"

I was speechless and disappointed. Interestingly, not long after the incident I was back in the break room with a Baptist man that I worked with, and he asked me, "Isn't it rather inconsistent to be both a conscientious objector and also to cast your vote for the Commander in Chief of the Army?" Surprised, I replied, "You mean you see that contradiction?"



Goshen College, 1898

It's funny that you would see that so clearly, when so many of our own people are losing this concept so rapidly."

Subtleties

The issue is a subtle one. On the one hand, it seems so innocent. We might ask, "So what's wrong with just telling someone who our choice would be for President?" That may seem innocent enough, but perhaps it is just this type of subtlety that warranted Jesus casting this rebuke: "Beware of the leaven of Herod." Akin to the insidious pathos of pharisaical thinking, Jesus warned that the infection of '**worldly political thinking**' can grow in us, leading to our eventual spiritual destruction. Jesus' use of the metaphor "leaven" in this context is sobering. This word picture brings to mind the way we use leaven (today called yeast) in cooking. The small amount of yeast necessary to make a loaf of bread starts out seemingly innocuous and insignificant. However, once added to the dough, it is not long before that small bit of yeast affects the entire loaf, often swelling it to two or three times its original size.

How is it with us today—in what way do we apply Jesus' warning to "beware of the leaven of Herod?" Throughout history, when the politicians have vied for our attention, their issues have appeared so justifiable—so important. The political activists have made it seem un-American, unconcerned, and yes, even un-Christian to **not** get involved. However, when the records of history are reviewed, it is amazing how the church's entanglement with these seemingly 'good causes' has littered a trail of casualties, often leading entire communities off course. One lesson we must learn from history is that the world has never come up with an ultimate solution to their problems. Their short-sighted cures will always lack the clarity to see the root causes of their disease. As Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

History of the 'Political Christian'

Around the year 312 A.D., during the reign of Constantine, we find the church's first major compromise with a political leader who was trying to do his best for the church. The political platform in those days sounded pretty good:

- End the persecution of the Christians

- Legalize Christianity
- Outlaw many of the pagan religions
- Grant tax deductions to Christian ministers
- Allow Christians to own property
- Promise national peace and stability

Who would not have supported the legalization of Christianity? Who would not have voted to end the persecution? All over the empire, Christians began to throw their lot in with this new political agenda. Revealing the spirit of the leading Christians at the time of Constantine, the church historian Eusebius wrote:

"Surely it must seem to all who duly regard these facts that a new and fresh era of existence had begun to appear, and a light heretofore unknown suddenly to dawn from the midst of darkness on the human race: and all must confess that these things were entirely the work of God, who raised up this pious emperor to withstand the multitude of the ungodly."



Catholic icon depicting "Saint" Constantine handing over the Nicene Creed to the bishops.

History, however, sadly reveals what a detrimental effect the leaven of this well-intended emperor had on the entire Christian world. If Eusebius could have seen what unprecedented damage resulted from the church partaking of this political leaven, I wonder if he would have been so elated.

History, however, sadly reveals what a detrimental effect the leaven of this well-intended emperor had on the entire Christian world. If Eusebius could have seen what unprecedented damage resulted from the church partaking of this political leaven, I wonder if he would have been so elated.

Just War

Later, the man whom history calls "St. Augustine" turned to political help when he could not control the post-Constantine church with his reasoning power alone. In the fatal words spoken from the Council of Carthage in 404, Augustine said, "It is now full time for the emperor to provide for the safety of the Catholic church, and prevent those rash men from terrifying the people, whom they cannot seduce." After these words the church more and more adapted the 'Just War' theology, and ever increasingly used the state to accomplish her end. Once, when Augustine was challenged if it was right to use the violence of the state to accomplish spiritual ends, he responded:

"It is indeed better that men should be brought to serve God by instruction than by fear of punishment or by pain. But because

the former means are better, the latter must not therefore be neglected Many must often be brought back to their Lord, like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering, before they attain the highest grade of religious development The Lord himself orders that the guests be first invited, then compelled, to his great supper.”¹

The suffering that proceeded from these words is incalculable. Still to this day, men and churches use this reasoning to justify their killing and persecution of others.

Middle Ages

Likewise throughout the middle ages, when the evils of the day surfaced in the church, the church again and again fell to the temptation to resort to political advantage to solve their problems. Each time, it seemed like such a good idea. What self-respecting potato farmer wouldn't support the protection of the Holy Lands against the Muslim bandits in the 1200s? In much the same way, many church leaders of that day reasoned: "If God is truly punishing the earth with disease and plagues because of the witches and heretics, then wouldn't it be a good idea to get rid of them?"

Leading a call for a crusade against the Muslims in the Holy Land, Pope Urban II issued this decree:

"On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. I say this to those who are present; it is meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it. All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested."

History records that the leaven of this battle cry threw the common people present into some kind of charismatic frenzy. It is reported that in a shout of triumph the crowd roared and chanted with one voice, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" as they rushed into their murderous slaughter.

¹ Augustine of Hippo, *De Correct. Donatist*, c. 6, § 24

Prohibition and WWI

Bringing it closer to home, an interesting lesson can be learned by the political involvement of the Church of the Brethren in the early 1900s. Toward the end of the 1890s, public opinion against the sale of alcohol became increasingly hostile. In particular, pietistic and revival groups such as the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and even Congregationalists really took up the issue. Preachers like Billy Sunday scorched city after city with strong messages, calling for an end of the consumption and, particularly, the sale of alcohol. This passionate appeal culminated in a monumental victory when on December 18, 1917, Congress actually passed the 18th Amendment, outlawing the sale of alcohol.

During this time, zealous bands of convinced evangelical Christians formed small groups of activists called "temperance leagues." These activists literally went door-to-door, asking people to sign their petitions and calling for the government to pass laws to stop this evil. "Surely any true Christian would be against the sale of alcohol" they would say. Originally, when they first encountered the Anabaptists, the Anabaptists told them that they did not think the answer to the sins of the world could be fixed by politics. However, in time many groups—especially those who were already united with the Evangelicals in some of the prohibition/revival meetings—joined with "the cause." Soon after, voting followed; and not long after that, men even began to run for different political offices. The Church of the Brethren, which was heavily involved in the revival/prohibition meetings, was hit particularly hard.

The "Anabaptist" Governor

It was then that the inevitable happened. The increased political involvement and agenda of the Church of the Brethren culminated in one of their own men, Martin Grove Brumbaugh, being elected as Governor of Pennsylvania. Soon after his election, a riot broke out in Pittsburg, which put his Anabaptist convictions to the test. Inescapably, Brumbaugh turned to the sword and called in the militia to quiet the rebels. Sadly, when WWI broke out, Brumbaugh saw the conflict as a "holy war," and even ordered all executive branch employees to take a loyalty oath or face dismissal.

Many of the conservative Brethren wanted Brumbaugh to be disciplined by the church. However, the decision was

Pope Urban II calling for a crusade against the Muslims.





Billy Sunday on a star-spangled pulpit

made by the general conference to let the Philadelphia congregation decide how to deal with the problem. Unfortunately, this decision ultimately meant that in the end nothing would be done.

Before they knew it, the entire Church of the Brethren was adversely affected by the politics of Brumbaugh. How could the world believe that the Brethren were a nonresistant church, when their most famous member was calling in a militia and requiring his own cabinet to swear oaths? Later, to

the great disappointment of many of the conservative Brethren, Brumbaugh even attempted to run for President against Woodrow Wilson. It was not surprising then, when WWI broke out and the country initiated the draft, many young Brethren men were rejected from their conscientious objector status, requiring them to take up arms and fight.

Collateral Damage

The effectiveness of the temperance movement was short lived. On March 23, 1933, after President Franklin Roosevelt signed a bill allowing for the sale of alcohol, he publically commented, "I think this would be a good time for a beer." Tragically, all three of Billy Sunday's sons ended up living scandalous lives. Unfortunately, they were involved in the very sins that their father so zealously preached against. The effect of politics on the church, however, would be longer felt. In her book *Vera's Journey*, Judy Yoder describes the attitude and public opinion facing the Brethren church during this time.

"This was to be a war that ended all wars. All hands were needed to make it so. If they could be involved in politics the previous year to vote against alcohol, why should they not respond to a cause much greater than Prohibition? Those who had gone so far as to vote for a President had better be willing to fight for him now."

Judy Yoder continues:

"The brethren who for some time had been moving in step with believers in other Protestant churches suddenly found themselves in

Liberal Left

We support:
 Abortion
 Gay marriage
 Feminism
 No prayers in school
 Government Public Education

Conservative Right

We support:
 Capital punishment
 Anti-immigration
 Increase military spending
 Preemptive strikes on other countries
 War and building up of national arsenal
 Increase rights for big business
 Decrease aid for the poor, sick, and aged

WWJD?



the crosscurrent of their nonresistant background and the position of those they had been working with in the outreach of the church. A specially-called conference of elders issued a statement against military involvement, but it was quickly withdrawn under government pressure. Many Brethren felt confused about where their church stood. Hadn't they worked hand-in-hand with other church groups in social reform? Hadn't they joined forces with them on the mission field?"

Hmmm ...

WWII

During WWII, there were many heroic stories of Anabaptist churches who stood strong against the political pressures and tides that surrounded them. However, the American church in general continued to run headlong into compromise, chasing after worldly solutions to their problems. Once again, the age-old call went forth, that certainly *this* war was justifiable. What decent, red-blooded American would not want to support a strong stance against Hitler? Furthermore, the American

"Some of the worst atrocities ever inflicted upon mankind have been wrought at the hand of men who thought they were doing God a service."

church greatly feared the evil consequences if Hitler was not stopped.

But once again, association with the world would yield its bitter consequences. In seeking to fortify herself by the state, the American church would end up making deadly compromises and adulterated alliances, being unequally yoked with the world. You see, in order to come against the evils of Hitler, America—including American Christians—was required to throw in their lot in with Marxist Russia, under the leadership of Joseph Stalin. The tragic consequences of this compromise are only now fully coming to light. Historians now claim that the crimes committed by Stalin and the Communist Party during this time far exceeded that of Nazi Germany. Some historians claim that Stalin was responsible for three times as many murders as Hitler.

These are just a few examples. It appears that this is a lesson that the church finds very difficult to learn. The tricky part about this continual failure is that each time the *cause* seems so right. Often, it is not until years later that the fruit of the subtle lies are made manifest. Scripture tells us "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Pr. 14:12 Even after a casual look through history, it would be an understatement to say that

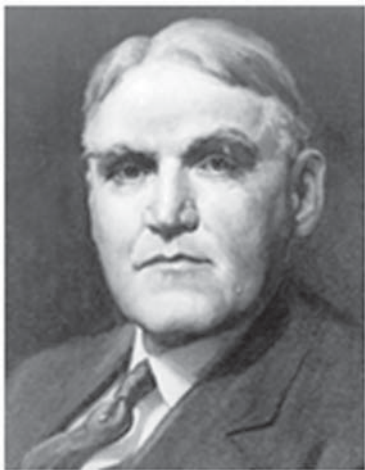


WWII propaganda poster.
Notice the Russian flag alongside the British and American flags.

some of the worst atrocities ever inflicted upon mankind have been wrought at the hand of men who thought they were doing God a service. There will always be another crisis. The point is that Jesus has left us a beautiful plan ... it is called the Kingdom of God. We have the confidence that Jesus has overcome the world. Trusting in Him, we need never fear the agendas of earthly men.

"That Fox"

There is a passage in Luke 13:30-31 that can be quite instructive for us if we will take heed. In this passage, a Pharisee tries to scare Jesus by warning him about the evil intention of Herod against His life: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee." In answer to this crisis, Jesus used some of the strongest language he ever spoke to describe his feeling about a man. "And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell **that fox**, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do



Martin G. Brumbaugh

cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.” Lu. 13:31-32

“That fox ...” Those are strong words. They imply deceit and cunning. Is it any different today? What about us? Are we getting pulled into the crossfire of politics? Are we looking to the agendas of ungodly men to fix the problems of the world? More specifically, let’s get practical and look at some

of the potentially “just” political causes of our day. Is it okay for a Christian, out of compassion for the poor, to align himself with the liberal agenda of the Democratic party, and vote to support paying for the health care of the poor children? This sounds like a good cause. However, ironically, the same agenda that supports helping children that are alive also supports the killing of children that are unborn—obviously a deadly compromise. Likewise, on the other side of the political fence, abortion certainly is an evil of our day, and it would seem that throwing in our lot with the conservative politics of the Republicans would be a good idea. However, just like the deadly compromise with the Democrats, throwing in your lot with the Republicans to support the protection of unborn children in this country will also require your support to blow them up in Iraq and Afghanistan.

How long will the church give its allegiances to the agendas of the prince of this world? Are we being deceived again? Perhaps the phrase “that fox” should ring in our ears again. Church, please wake up ... If the politics of Jesus are ever going to change the world, they are going to have to at least start with the church. I wonder, does the church even believe we have the cure anymore? The Kingdom of God is the timeless answer to the political problems of every age. More than just a quaint meditation, the Bible has a design that will turn this world upside down—or rather, from God’s perspective, right side up. If we “seek first the kingdom of God” and pray that His kingdom would come “on earth as it is in Heaven,” then the great ideas and subtle lies of earthly leaders will be seen for what they truly are.

Oh, brethren ... “Beware the leaven of Herod!”~



VOICES FROM THE EARLY CHURCH

Origen (A.D. 185-254)

Writing against Celsus, a Greek Philosopher, concerning political involvement

Celsus urges us “to help the king with all our might, and to work with him in the preservation of justice, to fight for him; and if he requires it, to fight under him, or lead an army along with him.” We reply to this saying that we *do* give help to kings. We give, so to speak, a divine help by “putting on the whole armor of God.” Ep. 6:11 We do this in obedience to the command of the apostle Paul, “I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority.” 1 Ti. 2:1-2 The more someone excels in piety, the more effective help he provides to kings. Yes, it is even more help than that which is given by soldiers, who go forth to fight and kill as many of the enemy as they can.

And since we by our prayers conquer all demons who stir up war, lead to the violation of oaths, and disturb the peace, we in this way are much more helpful to the kings than those who go into the field to fight for them. In this way we *do* take our part in public affairs, when along with righteous prayers we practice self-denial and meditations, which teach us to despise pleasures and not to be led away by them. And none fight better for the king than we do. We do not indeed fight *under* him, although he require it; but we fight *on his behalf*, forming a special army—an army of piety—by offering our prayers to God.

Celsus also urges us to “take office in the government of the country, if that is required for the maintenance of the laws and the support of religion.” But we recognize in each kingdom the existence of another kingdom, founded by the Word of God, and we exhort those who are mighty in word and of blameless life to guide churches [instead of a civil office—ed.]. We reject those who are ambitious of ruling; rather in the church of God we constrain those who because of much modesty have little desire to take a public office. And those who rule over us well are under the constraining influence of the great King, whom we believe to be the Son of God, God the Word. And if those who govern in the church and are called rulers of the divine nation—that is, the church—rule well, they rule in accordance with the divine commands, and never allow themselves to be led astray by worldly politics.

It is not for the purpose of escaping public duties that Christians decline public offices, but that they may reserve themselves for a diviner and more necessary service in the church of God—for the salvation of men. And this service is both necessary and right.~



That they may teach the young women ...



Of Wading Ducks and Emotional Women

Sarah Raber

So what do wading ducks and emotional women have in common? Unfortunately, often very little!

We've all heard the phrase "Like water off a duck's back." We've all seen how ducks can merrily wade through puddles or go for a swim without it affecting their protective coat of oiled feathers.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could apply some of that oil to ourselves for life's situations?! But it seems many times, instead of deflecting things, we sisters can be quick to "absorb" the comments and situations we encounter rather than seeing them from their proper perspective.

It's the men who are often the example of letting the words, stinging comments, or tricky situations just fade to the background without allowing it to take them for a ride. I often look at them and wonder, "How do they do it?"

A few Sundays ago, I came home from the service with my emotions taking me for a little spin. It had nothing to do with the service ... it had been a wonderful meeting. But at the closing, a courtship was announced. I was thrilled! Courtship announcements are always exciting! No sooner was it announced, than my sister got a call from one of my nieces from another church letting us know that she also had also just started a courtship with a young man. I was thrilled about that, too!

As I headed home soon afterward though, I became aware of some strange things going on inside. I was puzzled. Wasn't I excited about the announcements? Yes! Wasn't I content being single? Wasn't God bringing fulfillment into my life in many ways through the gift of freeness and availability to be in His service in a special way, through the opportunities that singlehood offers? *"Absolutely, Lord! I'm happy with where you have me in life ... I sense your presence, your guiding hand, your love. You bring rich fulfillment and satisfaction. I am content with where you have me in life. Truly I am! I'm surrendered to whatever your desire and plan is for my life."*

And then—to my own bewilderment—I promptly lay down and had a little cry!

What had happened was that in one month's time two different sisters in the church, whom I had lived with temporarily in the past, both happened to get engaged. Then my first niece got engaged; then one of my best friends since I was fifteen years old started a courtship; and now the second niece had just announced hers.

Five people that I had had close connections to ... all within a month's time. I was thrilled for each one of them, and yet confused at the conflicting emotions it brought. There was a fresh awareness of other people's lives changing and taking different courses, ... and it made me feel strange, in a different world from theirs ... tempted to feel lonely.

But I *thought* I was content, where did these funny emotions come from? I didn't know!

So I cried it out for a few minutes. Then I got up and emailed a married friend of mine and just dumped out the silly emotions that had gotten the better of me; and then ... promptly felt better!

I was happy once again being single. Wait a minute! Hadn't I been fine with being single all along? (Chuckle!)

Are any of you sisters relating to this "typical women's technique" of working through confusing emotions? Relieving some pressure through tears ... being able to share with someone, and finding that talking about it—just being heard, having someone listen—seems to fix the problem without any fixing having been done?

We women are certainly complicated creatures sometimes. Yes, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Sometimes the *fearfully* seems more true to me than the *wonderfully* part! But I know that God has created us in His infinite wisdom. And also that he has an instruction manual for us as well. Now that's a comforting thought!

While we tend to be emotional creatures, I am discovering that we are certainly not as entirely at the mercy of all those emotional impulses and tendencies as I used to believe. Sure, there are times when it brings a natural release to be able to let some emotional stress or pressure out through tears and by sharing our hearts. I fully believe that has its place.

Continued on page 32

Introduction to Part 2

The previous issue carried a sermon by Menno Simons on the new birth. Originally, the plan was to use a short excerpt of that sermon, but it was such a thorough article that we went ahead and published the whole thing. Now, in Part 2, we want to continue the original aim of providing an overview of the Anabaptist teaching on being born again.

We are surrounded by voices claiming to be born again. As mentioned in the last issue, over 40% of the USA claims to be born again. But ... where are the fruits?

The sad part is that many people claiming a new birth are accepting something less than the real thing—a counterfeit. As you read these small excerpts, notice words like “character,” “nature,” and “creature” ... all connected with another very important word—“NEW”!

Compare what these men said with what is being said today about a new birth experience. Who is right? Check it with your Bible, and look at the fruit of those who are teaching the new birth as something less than a thorough remanufacturing of the spirit of man by the Holy Ghost.

These excerpts are in general chronological order, along with the man-given name (i.e. “Hutterian”) of the group they would have associated with most closely, to show the unity of this teaching across time and space. Although various expressions of the Anabaptist movement did arise, at the very core of each expression was a common view of the new birth as the entrance into the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, some descendents of the Anabaptists have now lost the essence of the new birth. They have swallowed the teachings of modern Evangelicalism, or have almost rejected entirely the truth about being born again.

Take the time needed to contemplate well what these men are saying. Especially so if you would like to experience a total renovation of your character and be changed into the very image of God Himself! ~

Leonhard Dax

“Hutterian” Anabaptist, mid 1500s

One does not need to cross the ocean to see heathenism, because whoever forsakes God’s demands and orders is already in heathenism. Heathenism has covered all the earth.

But whoever wants to forsake heathenism can do so easily, only through true repentance and through the new birth, and the renewing accomplished through the Spirit. This is how one “comes out of heathenism.” In other words, this is the beginning and entrance into Christianity, when:

- * one forsakes all unrighteousness
- * forsakes the devil and his company
- * surrenders to God
- * builds a covenant with Him
- * in all diligence guards himself from all unrighteousness

The Spiritual

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead

Part



* surrenders to making himself common with all the children of God, where one can serve God in a right way.

That is how the Holy Spirit has appointed it to be in His church.¹

Dirk Philips

Dutch Anabaptist, mid 1500s

Therefore, I was compelled out of Christian love to warn you of all such false Christians and messengers of Satan, and through God’s grace to write you a little about the new birth and the new creature, and then to show how not everyone who boasts of the new birth and chatters much about the new creature is therefore a new person who is born out of God.

But whoever has become a partaker of:

- * the divine character
- * the being of Jesus Christ
- * the power and character of the Holy Spirit

Resurrection

lead, and Christ shall give thee light. Ep. 5:14

Part 2



... and, who conforming himself to the image of Jesus Christ in all submission, obedience, and righteousness serves God—in summary, one who is a right-believing Christian—is a new person and a new creature in Christ Jesus. 2 Pe. 1:4; He. 3:14; 1 Jn. 4:13 Therefore, it is necessary to consider how the new birth takes place, where it comes from, through what it happens, how powerful it is, and what fruit it produces

I say thus in conclusion: The born-again children of God and new creatures in Christ Jesus are those who are born the second time out of God the heavenly Father through Christ Jesus, and are made new and holy through the Holy Spirit. They have become participants of God's nature, of the being of Jesus Christ, and of the character of the Holy Spirit. Jn. 1:12; 1 Pe. 1:23; 2 Pe. 1:4; He. 3:14

They are those who have died to sin and still daily die more and more, and experience righteous living. They never boast in themselves, but only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to them and

they to the world. Ga. 6:14 They walk, in true faith, according to the teachings of Christ and follow in his footsteps. 1 Pe. 2:21 They know no one according to the flesh. 2 Co. 5:16 Neither do they have an appetite for what is human, but for what is divine. Ma. 16:23.

In summary, these are righteous and do righteousness just as God out of whom they are born is righteous; these are minded like Christ Jesus and are motivated by the Holy Spirit. 1 Jn. 2:29; Ph. 2:5 Ro. 8:14

Where this takes place, there one sees the kingdom of God; (Jn. 3:3) there one comes into the kingdom of heaven; there is a new creature in Christ Jesus. Ga. 6:15²

Peter Riedemann

“Hutterian” Anabaptist, mid 1500s

Since we are born of God in the spiritual way of Christ—and not in the human way of Adam—we must carefully consider how the birth of Christ took place. It occurred, as already noted, in faith and through the working of the Holy Spirit. Lu. 1:26-38 Whoever wishes to have Christ's nature and character must also be born of God. 1 Pe. 1:3-5 That person must, with Christ, be God's child. Ro. 8:14-16 This is what Peter says with the words, “You have been born anew, not of mortal but of immortal seed, and this seed is the word of truth.” 1 Pe. 1:3-5

Here is how this birth takes place:

If the Word is heard and believed, then faith is sealed with the power of God, with his Holy Spirit. Ep. 1:12-14 The Spirit immediately makes the person new (Ro. 12:2) since that person has been dead in sin, (Ep. 2:1-10) restoring to life the one who stands before God in righteousness. That person has been made into a new creature, (2 Co. 5:17) a new person after God's likeness, (Ge. 1:27) and has become renewed in this likeness. Ep. 4:20-32; Co. 3:1-11 Whoever is born in this way should receive baptism as a bath of rebirth. Ti. 3:1-7 This signifies being inscribed in the covenant of the grace and knowledge of God. Je. 31:33-34³

Thomas von Imbroich

“Swiss Brethren,” mid 1500s

Yes, they must be reborn, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, namely, the living Word of God (which remains eternally). 1 Pe. 1, Jn. 3

Those who are thus born of this spiritual “seed of Abraham” will bring forth spiritual fruits; that is, all kinds of kindness, righteous deeds, and truth. They are obedient to their Father; they keep the commandments and follow His precepts. Ep. 5; Jn. 10, 14, 15; Is. 55 They abandon ungodly living (Ro. 12) and are not conformed to the world. They seek the things that are above, where Christ is, and not those things that are on the earth. They kill and crucify the sinful

“I wants” of their flesh (Co. 3) and follow in the footsteps of Jesus (their predecessor) in grief, needs, and persecution, and are obedient to Him unto death. Ga. 3; 1 Pe. 2; He. 11 We therefore say that those who are thus driven by the Spirit of God are the spiritual descendents of Abraham and are children of God. Ro. 4, 8

Thus, all the Scriptures cited above testify that no one is born of God who does not have such faith and has not received the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our inheritance. Ep. 1⁴

Hans de Ries

Dutch “Mennonite,” early 1600s

The new birth is an act of God effected in the soul of the truly repentant, a restoring of the image of God in man, a renewing of the mind and heart, an enlightening of reason through an acknowledgment of the truth. This new birth brings with it a transformation of the will, of the fleshly desires and lust. It is a sincere putting to death of all evil within, a killing of the old man with his desires and life of sin and rebellion.

At the same time, the new birth brings an awakening of new life in God, in true goodness, righteousness, and holiness. Being born again is a taking away of the heart of stone with its pride, ignorance, blindness, sin, and sinful lusts. It is truly an unmerited granting of the promised fleshly heart filled with the law of God, light, wisdom, understanding, virtue, and holy desires. This new birth comes from God through Christ. It is worked in us by the Holy Spirit with his fire and power, not by something we creatures do by natural means. This is how the regenerate person testifies whether he is born the second time or not.

By means of the new birth, we become children of God, spiritual-minded, righteous, and holy. We believe and teach that this new birth is necessary for salvation according to the words of Christ: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” and again, “unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”⁵

Henry Funck

“Mennonite” immigrant to US, mid-1700s

When a sinner becomes alarmed at the awful and threatening sound of the gospel—so that his hard heart begins to break, and melt into contrition—then the word of the Spirit

is ready to enter into the heart and give instructions how the sinner must amend his life, abstain from sin, and repent like those of Ninevah in Jonah 3. He must come with true repentance and humbleness of mind, in fasting and prayer, and with the prodigal son return, saying, “I have sinned against heaven and before thee!” Lu. 15:18 With Peter, he must acknowledge his sins ... go out and weep bitterly. Mt. 26:75 And with those who were pricked in their heart at Jerusalem, cry, “Men and Brethren, what shall we do?” To these Peter answered, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Ac. 2:37-38

Now when man is brought to see and acknowledge his natural evil state by the word of God—which is spirit and life!—he is then rightly drawn to God, by God.

He will then find in himself a living faith, newness of life, and regeneration. Jn. 3:8 So is every one that is born of the Spirit. And as the Apostle Peter writes in his first Epistle (1:3): Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Also, James 1:18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

When man, by the word of the Spirit, is remanufactured—born again—then will be fulfilled in him what the Lord spoke by the prophet Ezekiel (36:25-27), as mentioned above. For man will then be cleansed from all his filthiness and idols, by the sprinkling of clean water upon him, in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For the word of the Spirit teaches him that all impurity and unholiness must be done away and renounced. A new heart and a new spirit is now given him, and the heart of stone is removed by the Spirit, and a heart of flesh given him. And by the Spirit, such men will be made that will walk in the commandments of the Lord and keep his judgments. And when man is thus renewed by the Spirit, he is a partaker of spiritual baptism. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Ti. 3:5-6

Thus is man remanufactured and born again of God, by the sowing of His word; and by the sprinkling and pouring out the Word, and water of the Spirit, he will be washed and cleansed from all uncleanness; and by faith in Jesus Christ be made a child of God, and a partaker of His spiritual gifts!⁶

The new birth is a restoring of the image of God in man.

David Beiler

“Amish” bishop, mid 1800s

According to the witness of the prophets, the new birth is a work of God within man; man is illuminated and anointed from above through God’s grace; so that he can recognize his great poverty, sinful manner, nature, and character; so that he comes to be spiritually poor. Mt. 5:3 This continues until he confesses that nothing good dwells in his flesh (Ro. 7:18) and he very much deserves the eternal punishment and pain due to his fleshly living.

When a person is stirred and broken in his heart in this way, an earnest and true repentance will undoubtedly follow. He will be completely shaken and moved, so that he speaks from an overflowing heart and mouth: “Lord have patience with me and I will pay Thee all;” (Mt. 18:26) or have patience with me a poor sinner, I want to mend my ways. Then it may happen as Christ teaches us: “The master of the servant had compassion and released him and also forgave him his debt.” Mt. 18:27; Lk. 18:13 When we observe carefully how merciful God is towards us poor sinners and we turn to Him with a heart of faith, then God

The Parable of the Pig and the Puddle

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a farmer’s son who was raising a pig for a 4-H project. Fair time was approaching fast, and Pete (the boy) was having a hard time keeping his pet clean. As all pigs are wont to do, it would instinctively investigate every mud puddle that it happened upon—even immediately after Pete had given him a good scrubbing with firm instructions to stay clean!

Pete knew that he stood no chance of winning the blue ribbon if he took a dirty pig to the show. But try as he might, he could not get his pig to keep himself clean once he had been given a thorough scrubbing. Pete’s only place to keep his pig was in a pen in which one corner stayed dry, but 90% of the pen was a mud hole—much to the pig’s great delight!

Pete schemed for days about his dilemma. How could he save his pig from his own natural instincts? He could put his pig in a strait jacket, but what would the judges think when he arrived at the fair with his pig in a strait jacket? And how could he walk his pig to town in a strait jacket? Oodles of puddles lay in the path to town, and he knew, he just knew, that his pet could never detour a mud puddle!

Finally, the great idea came upon Pete. He noticed that Skimps the kitty hated mud puddles! It would cost the life of his only kitty, but if only ...

So he tried it. With a deft operation, Pete managed to take the soul out of the cat and put it into his pig.

How changed the pig was! He still weighed 220 pounds. He still had a snout and a curly tail. He still ate breakfast. But how he hated mud puddles with a passion!

The day of the show came, and Pete walked his pig to the fair. People stared in wonder at the boy and his pig walking down the puddle-filled road. The pig detoured or jumped over every mud puddle, with the amazing agility of a cat!

And so the pig, which had been given a thorough scrubbing some days previously, arrived at the show shining clean. What few spots he had received on the way to the show were promptly licked clean ... you know, just like Skimps used to clean himself! By this means, Pete won the blue ribbon. The soul of the kitty in the body of the pig had saved the day!

This parable is by no means perfect. Yet it explains how man can avoid the “mud puddles” of fleshly delights which fill this world we live in. Not by strait jackets, but by a change of character. If we box ourselves out of society by moving to some remote island, we may avoid many temptations. But that is not true freedom. The real freedom comes from having the character of Jesus placed into our hearts by a new birth. When this happens, we will hate sin just like the pig with a kitty heart hated those mud puddles.

Have you been born again? Has the nature of God been restored in you? Although we know that Pete could never put a kitty soul into a pig, we know that God can put Christ within us, thus saving us from our sin.

Hallelujah, what a salvation! ~Mike Atnip

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Pe. 1:4



for Christ's sake will forgive everything and release us (we might well say) from the bands in which Satan has bound us for a long time. Lu. 13:16; 8:27

The new birth is to be understood as Paul says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Co. 5:17 James says: "Of His own will He has begotten us through the Word of Truth, so that we become first fruits of His creatures." Ja. 1:18 And Peter: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Pe. 1:3

I believe Paul speaks here in the same manner as Christ spoke to Nicodemus. We must be born of God if we want to overcome the world and ourselves through the grace of God, because we are too weak without God's help and support. When we are born of God, we receive the greatest and most precious promise of obtaining a godly nature.

When we have a godly manner and nature, we have the same inclination as He who said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Jn. 6:38 Therefore all newborn Christians must be so inclined that they follow the command of Jesus Christ with full obedience—not only saying that we accept His teachings, but believing with the whole heart that Jesus Christ is the eternal wisdom of God in whom dwells all the fullness of the deity bodily (Co. 2:9) and He is the likeness of the invisible God. We have to receive Him in faith, relying on the fact that God made Him to be our wisdom, righteousness, healing, and redemption"

We must acknowledge Him and that all good accomplished in and through us is of God's grace. In the same way, the new birth or rebirth within man is a work of God. Through illumination from above, we come to recognize our fallen nature and that in our natural state we are alienated from the life which is of God (Ep. 4:18) and the natural man comprehends nothing of the Spirit of God. To him it is foolishness and he cannot understand it because it must be spiritually discerned. 1 Co. 2:14

... Whatever is born within us of the Spirit is godly or heavenly; for as the seed is, so is the fruit. The naturally good seed produces, with God's blessing, good fruit. That which comes from God leads to God.

When we are renewed and converted through the power of the Spirit—from Adam into Christ, from the fleshly into the spiritual, from the earthly into the heavenly, so that we

overcome all fleshly desires which rage within us and tempt us to sin—then we have experienced the work of the new birth. The old Adamic man of sin must be brought into obedience to Christ, through the Spirit of His power. 2 Co. 10:5 This is the denying of which Christ speaks, "If any man will follow after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever loves his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for my sake and the sake of the Gospel, shall find it." Mk. 8:34-35

We must understand from the words of Christ that there is no promise of salvation outside of the new birth, because He says, "Ye must be born again."

When we look at our condition from our youth, what was the first fruit we produced? Was it not the first fruits of disobedience against the command and will of our parents? Self-will shows up early in youth. We can see this is true in our children. And disobedience is often the beginning of many more sins and leads to destruction

I believe there are people who put much trust into outward ceremonies, like baptism and the Lord's supper; but these do not bring salvation according to the words of Christ, apart from change of heart and belief that Jesus Christ came to save sinners: not those who continue in sin, but the burdened who are concerned about their salvation. He is the wellspring of life! Ps. 36:9 Pr. 13:14

... We cannot speak or teach others with spiritual power about the new birth, its function and fruit, without first having experienced it ourselves and thereby reached a true conversion and change of heart. We must have buried the old man of sin and **be resurrected with Christ to a new life**; so that we truly can say with Paul, "*I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.*" Ga. 2:20⁷ ~

Note that some of the above quotations have been adapted into modern English and may not therefore represent a word-for-word quotation from the sources listed below.

¹ Leonhard Dax, *Instructions* (Elk, Wa: Old Hutterian Publishing Company, 1996).

² Cornelius J. Dyck, ed., *Spiritual Life in Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, Pa: Herald Press, 1995), 57-59.

³ Peter Riedemann and John J. Friesen, *Peter Riedemann's Hutterite Confession of Faith: Translation of the 1565 German Edition of Confession of Our Religion, Teaching, and Faith, by the Brothers ...* (Herald Press, 1999), 110.

⁴ Leonard Gross, trans., *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls* (Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 1999), 98.

⁵ Taken from a "Confession of Faith" written by Hans in 1618

⁶ Henry Funck, *A Mirror of Baptism, with the Spirit, with Water, and with Blood* (Lancaster, Pa: John Baer's Sons, 1890), 29-31.

⁷ David Beiler, *True Christianity, A Christian Meditation on the Teachings of the Holy Scripture, translated from Das Wahre Christenthum*, trans. Adelheide Schutler and Issac J. Lowry (Parkesburg, Pa: Benueel S. Blank Family, 2009), 223+.

When we
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That they may teach the young women ...

To Christian Young Ladies

What should the relationship between a young lady and a young man be like?

What are the boundaries, and what can they talk about? Can they talk about emotional, personal, or spiritual things and questions; or should they stick to surface topics like the weather or social observations?

These questions were asked by a friend, which inspired me to share some things that God has graciously taught me in my own life.

I cannot answer these questions inside and out, but I will share what I have learned over the years. I pray that what I share will inspire and stir young ladies on to higher ground.

In relation to young men, in my own life I have experienced both extremes:

- Being extremely quiet, shy, and fearful, so much so that I could hardly get a word out if a young man did speak to me.
- Thinking I was simply having wonderful emotional freedom in relating with young men, so much so that I became indiscreet.

You probably have struggled in one of these two areas, depending on what your personality is like. I'll share more on these two extremes a little later.

I thank God for delivering me from both extremes, and that I am now free through Jesus' precious blood! I'm not saying that I'm perfect, but that I have been able to find victory in this area. Satan still likes to throw temptations, and sometimes I fall, but my Shepherd quickly helps me get back up.

One of the things I discovered was that the only way I could relate with a young man properly was to first be free emotionally. This meant a continual laying down of my

emotions toward young men, and dying to self. It is natural to be attracted to young men; God made us that way. But, in these years of waiting, it is needful to lay these desires and emotions on the "shelf" ... and save our hearts for the man that God is saving for us. Emotional freedom comes when we are in love with Jesus ... loving Him with all our hearts! It is not just relaxing around young men, but resting in Christ with our guard on.

I have discovered that *it is totally possible*, through the power of the Holy Spirit, *to be free* in this area of relating with young men; as long as I desire it with all my heart, and desire God's will to be done in my life. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other *Ye cannot serve God and mammon (the flesh).*" Mt. 6:24

The question arises then, "Just what should the relationship between a young lady and a young man be like?" One simple way to put it might be like this: A relationship between a young lady and a young man (outside of courtship) should be so "light" that it can scarcely be called a "relationship."

If we as ladies are discreet and shamefaced like God wants us to be, and are keeping our minds and hearts, we will not generally *approach* a young man first with a greeting. A discreet young lady will not be wishing the young men would talk to her. If a young man does speak to her, she will politely respond, but will not intentionally make more conversation to try to keep him as long as she can. Just because a young man may greet us on Sunday morning does not mean he has any special interest in us. We would do well at those times to not be too quick to assume that he has a special interest toward us, when in reality he is just being

respectful and friendly. We do need to be on guard when a young man greets us, because not all the young men in our life are discreet. If *we* are discreet however, we won't need to worry ... the froward won't hang around very long.

There are some exceptions for approaching a young man. Perhaps for a trifle question such as, "Did my little sister just run by?" or "Do you know where (an object) is?" Another exception would be to resolve a conflict between the two of you or to apologize for an error on your part. If we need to ask him a more important question, we can usually use our dad or brother as a channel through which to ask him. The men usually do a better job at figuring things out than we do anyway!

The most important thing is to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us in these areas. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Ro. 8:6

In the day that we live in, there are many available ways to communicate besides speaking to someone in person. Electronics are rampant, and communication is also ... communication that is no longer proper or upright. We have email, chat boxes, Facebook, buzz, texting, and the list goes on. Even though these are available ways to communicate, and some can be very useful, it doesn't mean that these ways are all right. Communicating through electronics should be off limits with any young man (outside of courtship) who is not your brother, even if he seems like a brother to you. This way of communicating can many times lead you into situations or areas of sin where you never intended to go. "Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you far more than you want to pay!" "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Ga. 5:16

Another question put forward was what a young man and a young lady *should* talk about.

Generally speaking, it's best to stay with surface subjects. It's good to bring the Lord into a conversation, and maybe briefly of what He has done for us personally, but we should refrain from sharing too deeply of our personal life. I don't mean our family's life, but our *own* life. If the conversation is on the spiritual side, allow the young man to initiate it. As discreet young ladies, we do not want to be the ones to start spiritual conversations. Remember our *life* speaks louder than our words.

Also, asking a young man questions concerning spiritual or personal convictions should be off limits. God's Word speaks to wives telling them that if they have questions at church, they should ask their husbands at home. I apply this

to myself between my Daddy and me. If the wives are to do this, how much more should we as young ladies go to our fathers for answers!

When we start relating with others on things pertaining to personal convictions or opinions, it automatically begins to draw hearts together. When a relationship is started like that with a young man, it usually has to break apart sometime, and then there will be hurting hearts, even if the relationship has not gone very far. We may fool ourselves into thinking it will not be that way for *us*, but that is not according to reality. It simply does not work, even with the godliest young man.

We may think we're very mature, and certainly not silly like some other young people, but the same thing can and does happen ... hearts get hurt. It is because this way is not God's design for bringing a young man and a young lady together.

Maybe by now you're thinking, "But, if I don't ever get to know a young man, how will I know if he might be the one for me?" Surely we can trust God in this! He knows exactly who that special someone is. If it is His will for us to get married, He *will* surely bring the right one to us in *His* time no matter how far out in the boonies we may live. We do not need to find our husband. God already knows where he is. We see just a few pieces of the puzzle, but God looks down from above and sees the big picture. *That one*, when God brings him, is the one we *should* have a relationship with, and that relationship can then be without any of these boundaries we are referring to here.

It is good to be able to get to know a young man's family, without even necessarily talking to him personally. Getting to know each other as families usually gives us a good idea of what he is like, and what his spirit is like. Being together as families is God's way! We must be very careful though, as to what our motives are in beginning relationships in his family. Is our motive pure, or are we thinking in the back of our mind that "maybe if I get to know his sisters or mother ... maybe I'll see if this is the one God has for me"? If this is our motive, we must flee this youthful lust! There exists a great potential for hurt if we are the ones trying to initiate the relationship by "making points" with his mother or sisters.

I am not sharing these principles as inflexible rules, but as guidelines. As I said, I am not perfect in all of this and I am sure there is much that could be added. Wise parents can help so much in this area of relating with young men. Let them speak into your life, asking them questions in this area, and then gladly give them a listening ear and heart!

When a relationship is started like that with a young man, it usually has to break apart sometime, and then there will be hurting hearts, even if the relationship has not gone very far.

If you do not have parents like this in your life, seek out a wise, older sister in your life to share with.

The two extremes

If you are a young lady that struggles a lot with fear, shyness, or self-consciousness, just speaking a few words to a young man may be very difficult for you, and you may even dread it. Each of the things mentioned above—fear, shyness, and self-consciousness—can all be summed up in a three-letter word: sin. God’s word says, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.” Pr. 29:25 Fear here means: quaking, trembling, (extreme) anxiety, anxious care.

1 John 4:18 says: “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” I have experienced this kind of fear, and it truly is bondage! It can just tie you up in knots. With this fear, it causes us to look at young men as if they are the temptation or the enemy we should avoid. They are not enemies, and we do them wrong when we act in fear towards them. It can cause thoughts to arise in their mind like, “What’s wrong with this girl? Does she like me or what?” We should love and treat them, for the most part, like everyone else.

Self-consciousness and fear of man go hand in hand. We experience this fear when we do not fear the LORD, and are not secure in Him. The root problem is often in our thought life. On what are the majority of our thoughts? Do the following thoughts often stir in our mind: “What will *they* think of me if I do this, or act this way, or wear this? Do *they* think I’m godly? I need to show *them* that I am.” These types of thoughts are focused on self.

How then can we be free from this fear? First, we must confess our sin to our Heavenly Father, and be willing to forsake it. Then, believing, ask His forgiveness, and He will wash us whiter than snow! Also, the verse above says “... perfect love casteth out fear.” We find this perfect love nowhere but in *God Himself*. He *is* love! We must seek Him, and His love with *all* our heart, and He will reveal His true love to us. We will learn to fear *Him*, and trust *Him*. The epistles of John are full of the love of God. Psalms and Proverbs speak much about fearing the Lord and trusting Him. Proverbs 14:26-27 says, “In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” Fear of man is a snare of death.

We can have strong confidence in our God, and we can rest in the hollow of His hand!

The fear of the LORD is different than the fear of man. The fear of the LORD means: respect, reverence, piety, or awesome thing.

A few key verses on trusting that I have been blessed by as I have meditated on them over and over are:

- “**Trust** in the LORD with all thine heart; and **lean not** unto thine own understanding. In **all thy ways** acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Pr. 3:5-6 In these verses, He first gives us commands, and following these, a promise.



Discretion is a treasure, hold it close!

- As for God, his way is **perfect**: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that **trust** in him.” Ps. 18:30
- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.” Is. 26:3-4

We must find and place our security in Christ *alone*. We will never find true security and rest anywhere else. So, may we seek the LORD; cry unto Him, and He

will deliver us! It may not all happen at once, but if we turn your eyes on Jesus in every situation, He will so fill us with His abundant grace, that we will be amazed at how well the situation turns out. Let us keep fighting the good fight of faith; laying hold on the promises of God, and He will *never* let us down.

At one point I doubted whether I really could have victory. But I had to first *believe* God’s promises and *obey* Him, and then I got the victory. We *can* walk in victory through His grace! “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” And, “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” Ro. 8:15,37

On the other hand, if you are a young lady that often struggles with holding your tongue, laughing too loud, trying to get attention (maybe even subconsciously), not guarding your eyes, etc., speaking to a young man may simply be a delight to you. These things are also sin and originate from the same root as fear: *pride*. Self is proud. It thinks that it is right and “has its rights.” Of ourselves, we are no more than filthy rags or worms. Why do we so often think we are something when we are nothing? “For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” Ga. 6:3

Just like the young lady that struggles with fear, so also must the one that struggles with boldness desire with all her heart to be free from indiscretion, and confess her sin to God and ask His forgiveness ... which He will gladly do!

But first, she must see her sin for what it is. This is an area that is so common to us women: getting out of our place from where God wants us to be. We can be quickly and easily deceived, just like Eve was. This is true especially in our youth, when our passions can be so strong; we don't have much wisdom yet, and Satan is hitting us hard. We must especially be careful in this area of relationships with young men!

We should love discretion and hold it close like a treasure; for it *is* a treasure! It can protect us from so much evil and harm. "Discretion shall preserve (keep or save from injury or destruction; to defend from evil; uphold; sustain) thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man" Pr. 2:11-12. In Webster's 1828 Dictionary, "discreet" means: prudent; wise in avoiding errors or evil, and in selecting the best means to accomplish a purpose; cautious; wary; not rash.

"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is **without** discretion." Pr. 11:22 I will share a good explanation I heard once on this verse:

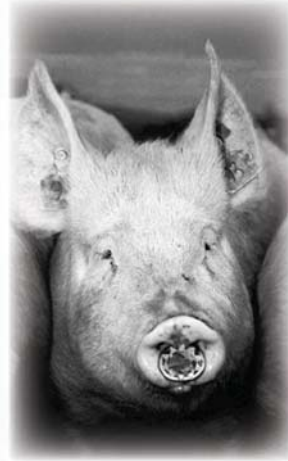
Do you like pigs or fools? If we are indiscreet, we will attract pigs (ungodly or foolish men). And if we keep it up, we will get married to a "pig." And then we will be "stuck in his nose" for as long as we both shall live! And we know what pigs do with their noses, right? ... root around in the mud (sin). Get the picture? We think, "Yuck! I'd never do that!" But let's be careful! It all starts out looking real good. It's amazing sometimes what a young man will do to get a young lady's heart!

On the young lady's part; God forbid that *we* would be the cause of a godly young man's stumbling! "That they (older women and our mothers) may teach the young women to be sober ... To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands (authority), that the word of God be not blasphemed." Ti. 2:4-5

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness, and sobriety ..." 1Ti. 2:9 Shamefacedness means: (through the idea of downcast eyes) bashfulness, uncompromised and passionate modesty. Sobriety means: seriousness; gravity without sadness or melancholy.

Shamefacedness ties right in with discretion. Problems can also be avoided when we learn to have "downcast" eyes. This doesn't mean that we are constantly looking at the floor, but rather that we are guarding our eyes and

not just looking everywhere we please. Frequent eye contact with a young man can start a wrong relationship also, which is merely infatuation! If I am having trouble with knowing where to turn my eyes in certain situations or my eyes simply need a refuge at the moment, I simply drop them to the ground. It brings a relief, and gives me time to regroup my thoughts to Jesus. (Just looking off to the side or at the ceiling doesn't really work!) But dropping our eyes is one way that God has provided for an escape from temptations for us young ladies!



Care to be a jewel in a pig snout?

A young lady that often tries to get attention or flirts is—just like the young lady with fear—not secure in Christ. Did you know that the LORD gives each one of us more attention than any person on earth can? He does! He is very jealous over us. As we seek Christ our Heavenly Bridegroom, and love Him with all our heart, we will find security and rest in Him, for He is our Fortress. He invites us to feast on His love ... it is His banner over us!

Remember and *believe* this: "**Favour is deceitful**, and beauty is vain: but a woman that **fareth the LORD**, she **shall** be praised." Pr. 31:30 God's word stands true *forever*.

I look at these two extremes as two ditches that are on either side of the strait and narrow way. Let's stay in the way that Christ has laid out before us, which is to be emotionally free, and discreet. We can easily be deceived into thinking that we are "just being free," when really we have slipped off into the other ditch of indiscretion. As I write these things, God has spoken to me about some areas in my life where I need to have more discretion! We are all still growing.

I pray that you will be encouraged by what I have shared with you, which is what God and my parents have taught me. I give special thanks to them for their watchfulness over me as their daughter.

I pray that we can all wait upon God; that we may soar like the eagles—and run, not being weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

Take heart, even if it may seem there are not many around you who are following these principles. May we focus on pleasing God, not man; doing all heartily as unto Him, and we will have our reward in due time!

Press on dear sister! Don't give up! "But **seek ye first** the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Mt. 6:33.

"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." Ps. 45:10-11; So. 5:16

Your sister in Christ, A. B.

Ambrosius Spittelmayr

The life and methods of a 7/20 Missionary

By Mike Atnip



“Does the priest of this town preach the gospel?” Ambrosius Spittelmayr asked the man next to him. They were both seated on the hearth of the large fireplace of a 16th-century tavern—we might call it a “Bed and Breakfast” in our day—warming up after a day’s travel in bone-chilling rain in a quaint little village of southeastern Germany.

The question was loaded, which Ambrosius knew very well. His whole point was, after all, to see if his new friend was open to discussing the underlying important topic—just what is “the gospel”? The gospel was a good piece of “news,” but just exactly what was that news?

In short, the news was the announcement that the promised Messiah—the Anointed—had come, the man whom God anointed as the Prophet, High Priest, and King for lost humanity. As Prophet, he would speak the Father’s word. As High Priest, he would stand as a Union-maker between a holy God and an unholy people ... by making them holy by His own holy life infused into them. And as King, he would re-conquer and liberate the hearts which had been sold as a slave to Satan; yes, he would rescue His people from their sin!

Although his new friend was not aware of it, Ambrosius’ probing inquiry was only the first of a series; question number one. Ambrosius had several more questions lined up for the man he chatted with.

After the conversation had ended concerning what “the gospel” was, Ambrosius threw the next question out: “Are you yourself a disciple of Jesus? A true Christian?” Since most people in 16th-century Germany would answer that in the affirmative, Ambrosius was waiting with his next question, to refine just exactly what he meant by “disciple.”

“How do you relate to your Christian brothers?” Ouch! Mystics and spiritualists, who held that being a Christian consisted basically of a vertical relationship between oneself and God, felt the noose drawing tight. Lutherans, who

felt that “accepting Jesus’ work on the cross” was the sum total of following Christ, would begin to get edgy. This stranger was getting a bit radical with his Christianity! Did he intend to mean that “believing the gospel” and “being a disciple” had anything to do with how one relates on a horizontal scale with his fellow humans?

Yes, that is exactly what Ambrosius was getting at. He was, after all, a so-called “Anabaptist.” His understanding of “salvation” went deeper than merely “receiving Christ’s forgiveness,” be that by means of saying “Hail, Mary” a dozen times on his knees in the sharp gravel, or be that by means of partaking of the sacraments and “believing on the finished work of Christ” as any nice Lutheran would readily do.

Being a disciple was a commitment: a covenant with God to walk in the footsteps of Jesus ... to imitate Jesus’ example and to apply His words to one’s own life. Being a disciple meant to make the kingdom of God a reality on earth, to make tangible the righteous character of God within humanity, in the here and now. This “fleshing out” of the Gospel was primarily realized by taking up the cross: killing one’s natural desires so that God’s will could be accomplished in men and women. After all, it is only natural that if Jesus was on the throne on the inside, that which happened on the outside would reflect the character of Jesus. Ambrosius would say towards the end of his life, “... therefore we must also live, suffer, and die [to our selfish inclinations], just like He—the Head—died for us. Because whoever will not suffer with Him, will not conquer [sin] with Him, will not inherit with Him.”

In this way, Ambrosius could divide the sheep from the goats with his simple question: “How is your relationship with your brothers in Christ?” Anyone who would claim a beautiful vertical relationship with God but had to admit to a failing horizontal relationship with his brother, was an

imposter. After all, Jesus came to the earth to plant righteous and holy living here once again! Away with self-centeredness! The promised King had now come, who would dethrone Self and reign in men's hearts!

Probing deeper

But the questions became even more penetrating. If the man he was conversing with—and warming their cold bones by the fire together—could say in all honesty that his relationship with his brothers was well, Ambrosius became very direct and open ... no “beating around the bush”: “That means then that you share all things—both spiritual and temporal—with your brothers, without reserve?”

Well, that question was hitting quite at home! Like, right in the pocketbook! Did being a Christian really involve getting that practical? For the Anabaptists of the 1500s, the answer was a resounding yes. Some would even be so bold as to say that you cannot go to heaven unless you take your brother with you! None of this going to heaven all by myself! None of this “I have my relationship with God here, and he has his over there; but we don't have any practical, horizontal relationship between us.” Indeed, to the Anabaptists, being a disciple had as much of a horizontal aspect as a vertical one.

If the person chatting with him still had the courage to go deeper yet, Ambrosius had the fifth and final question for him: “Do you practice brotherly discipline with your brothers? When they err, do you admonish them to repentance, and they to you?”

I suppose that if the answer was “yes,” Ambrosius would tell him that he was indeed a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, a follower of the Lamb: his brother indeed! If the person “failed” the test, the option of becoming a disciple of Jesus would be laid before him. The Gospel message was then presented: by taking up the cross of self-denial and following the example of Jesus in faith, one could be freed from the sins in which he lay tied like a hog for market! As his fellow Anabaptist missionary Peter Reidemann would write a few years later:

We believe that in Christ we have releasing, or we could say that Christ has loosened us from the authority and ropes with which the devil had held us (He. 2). He has subdued and overcame the devil and taken his authority from him. The cords with which the devil held us are the sins in which we lay bound.

If the new friend was willing to surrender his will to Christ, Ambrosius was willing to baptize him with water into the

fellowship of the redeemed, as a sign that he had died to his own will and had accepted the Lordship of Christ.

When Ambrosius had finished his questions and baptisms, he moved on to the next village. He felt in his heart the call to offer peace—both vertically towards God, and horizontally towards fellow men—to each home he entered. Thus he travelled through upper Austria and southern Germany, preaching the cross of Christ. He testified towards the end of his life, “It is my desire to preach and baptize and lead men into the Christian faith; God instituted this [missionary] work by His Son after the resurrection.”

Ambrosius hailed from Linz, Austria. Born somewhere around 1497, he appears to have grown up there and entered the local University to study. He studied enough to become conversant in Latin ... but then the Anabaptist preachers came to town.

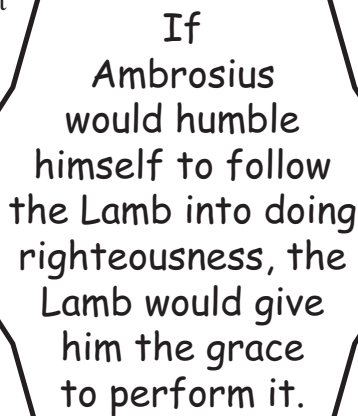
Telling their listeners that a baptism without any faith and repentance was null and void, these men raised the ire of both the Catholics and the Protestants. After all, telling someone that their baptism was a worthless sprinkling and that they needed to be baptized upon a personal faith and repentance was the same as telling them you are NOT saved, and “you need to do something about it: repent, take up your cross in personal faith, and be baptized as a believer.” This was an outward sign that from henceforth you are going to kill all selfish living that tries to arise within you, so that the life of Christ—which He would plant within—could manifest itself in your daily actions.

Such teaching is quite uncomfortable to have around. Suddenly the rug is pulled out from under a comfortable people. Suddenly, a decision must be made—to believe the preaching, or not believe it. Some did believe; most didn't.

Ambrosius believed ...

Acknowledging the reality of his cross-less life, Ambrosius decided to be a follower of Jesus. It is not known exactly when he made that decision, but Hans Hut, the rambunctious Anabaptist preacher, baptized him on July 25, 1527. Of Hut, it has been written:

Very quietly, but indefatigably, he went from place to place in Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia, and Austria, a popular preacher of deepest effectiveness, everywhere proclaiming Anabaptist doctrine, immediately baptizing those he convinced, and sending out individuals as apostles. Especially in the ranks of the artisans he found many adherents.



If
Ambrosius
would humble
himself to follow
the Lamb into doing
righteousness, the
Lamb would give
him the grace
to perform it.

And was baptized

For Ambrosius, baptism meant a commitment, both horizontal and vertical. Vertically, it meant submitting himself to the righteousness that Jesus had laid out in His teachings. It meant, quite practically, aligning his actions and values to the values that the Teacher had given in the Gospels, and in particular, the Sermon on the Mount. The covenant was a two-way street: If Ambrosius would humble himself to follow the Lamb into doing righteousness, the Lamb would give him the grace to perform it. Yes, if Ambrosius would



submit in faith, the grace of Jesus would rescue him from the captivity of his natural impulses!

Horizontally, baptism meant a commitment to serve his brothers and sisters. It meant ... well, I shall let Ambrosius himself speak:

“In summary, a Christian should not consider anything to be his own, but should have all things common with his brother. That is, he should not let his brother suffer need. In other words, I will not work that *my* house be filled, that *my* larder be supplied with meat; but rather I will see that *my brother* has enough, because a Christian looks more to his neighbor than to himself.”

Concerning material goods, Ambrosius also summed it up this way: “[A disciple should not say] this house is mine, this field is mine, this money is mine. Rather he should say it is ours, just like we say when we pray ‘**Our** Father ...’”

Thus bound—and blessed!—vertically and horizontally by his covenant, Ambrosius was commissioned as a missionary. He ended up being a 7/20 missionary.

What is a 7/20 missionary?

A 7/20 missionary is one who spends seven weeks as a traveling evangelist, going from restaurant to house to marketplace and village, asking searching questions to any who would give a few moments of their time. The 20 part comes afterward.

Ambrosius began his travels. Arriving at Erlangen, Germany on September 9, 1527, he asked around for a Hans Nadler, saying that he had a letter for him. This aroused suspicion; needle-maker Hans had just recently been forced to flee the area since it became known that he was an Anabaptist. So Ambrosius was detained and questioned: had he been rebaptized?

Ambrosius bravely admitted that he had, and declared that “he had come because of the Word of God, and to declare the truth, regardless of consequences, decapitation, or burning.”

The 20 part

Thus began the second part of his 7/20 missionary status: 20 weeks in jail, suffering torture and examination.

Finally a verdict was reached. Ambrosius was declared guilty of inciting revolution and engaging in sedition against the established government. More specifically he was found guilty of:

1. Saying the revolutionary peasants were right, and they would succeed in another overthrow of the government.
2. Saying God would raise up a people that would annihilate 10,000 men.
3. Saying no Christian can hold a government office.
4. Saying no Christian should own any temporal goods.
5. Saying all castles and fortresses are to be destroyed.
6. Saying Christ was born in original sin and God is His enemy.
7. Saying infant baptism is meaningless, since baptism follows after faith.
8. Saying the Lord’s Supper was symbolic, and not a real partaking of Christ’s literal body and blood.

Ambrosius denied saying the first six items (although he may have agreed with number three). And although he acknowledged the last two, they had nothing to do with overthrowing the government! While he was interested in expanding the kingdom of God on earth, this kingdom was not political, looking to overthrow civil governments. Rather, it was letting Christ overthrow the rule of Satan, self, and the flesh in the hearts of men ... yes, right in 16th-century Europe!

The reward of his labors

It really didn’t matter what Ambrosius said, so it appears. With a serious uprising of the peasantry having just been put down, the government—and legitimately so—had a serious suspicion of anyone preaching another kingdom. And besides that, being rebaptized meant a rejection of the official State Church, which was wed to the civil government.

On February 6, 1528, Ambrosius Spittelmayer was unceremoniously beheaded at Cadolzburg, Germany, somewhere close to 30 years of age. He defended himself so ably that his accusers mistook him for a former priest. But he was just a common man; in fact, he had only been re-baptized

—Continued on p. 34

SEEDS OF THE KINGDOM

Seed Sower Award



*The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. Matthew 13:24
And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Hebrews 10:24*

In this series, we intend to highlight the work of those who are currently busy introducing the seeds of righteousness, peace, and joy into this sin-filled earth, with the hopes that at least a few lives will receive the Word and be eternally changed. The purpose in turning the spotlight on these works is not to glorify those men and women who are actively advancing the kingdom of God, but rather to stimulate YOU, the reader, into doing YOUR part in YOUR corner. Neither is the purpose meant to be that of asking the readers to donate financially or personally participate in these projects, although that is certainly an option in some cases. Take these ideas, tweak them to fit your situation, and begin to plant the kingdom of God in your environs. The inclusion of any person or church in these articles is not an endorsement by *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* of every doctrine and practice that the spotlighted individuals or churches may represent in other areas of their life. As well, the spotlighted person/group may not endorse all aspects of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*.

This issue focuses on Mary Hursh, a single sister who lives near Ephrata, Pa. Mary has recently taken in two foster children.

(THR) First, let's start with an introduction. What are the names and ages of your family here?

(MH) My name is Mary, and I am 42 years old, and the two children I am currently providing care for are Brendan, who is 16 months old, and Jeanna, who is three years old.

(THR) So Mary, just what was the inspiration for you, as a single lady, to begin foster care?

(MH) Well, there were basically two things. First, I have experienced some difficult things in my personal life that have given me a heart for children whose parents are not able to adequately meet their needs. And, my family loves children, and I have two sisters, also unmarried, who do foster care. That encouraged me to try it also.

(THR) And how long have you been fostering?

(MH) I started about ten years ago doing respite care for mentally handicapped ladies and children, which I did for

about six years. Then I moved into respite care for normal children for about three years. And now I have had these foster children for about six months. I moved away from respite care partly because I had some other single sisters living with me at times, and they preferred something not quite so "in and out" as respite care.

(THR) Have you had any major hurdles in this ministry?

(MH) I would say that my own feelings of insufficiency probably sums up my biggest battle.

(THR) In connection with the hurdles, have you felt the hand of God in this anywhere, Him working a miracle or opening seemingly closed doors?

(MH) Absolutely! A few years ago when I checked into doing foster care, I was struggling with some bondages in my life. I was pretty open with the agency on this, and they felt it would be best for me to stick with only respite. Later, a friend told me the same thing.

But last Spring God moved someone to share a book with me on God's fatherhood. His work in my heart brought me

freedom. Then, at the end of a summer of deep heart searching, a worker from the agency called me one day. “Would you be willing to take Jeanna and Brendan as a placement?” she asked. I could hardly believe my ears! I called a friend and told her, “This can’t be happening!” She replied, “Yes it can!” It was an affirmation, a special blessing from God at that point. The timing could not have been planned by anyone other than my Father!

(THR) So do you have an outstanding lesson that fostering as a single lady has taught you?

(MH) I would say it has helped me understand God, and how He wants a relationship with us. Children need someone to value them, just like we as adults want to be valued by God. It is like I can now see myself as under God’s foster care, valuing me and taking a personal interest in me.

(THR) Let’s suppose there is another single sister out there who feels led to begin singlehood foster care. What would be your main advice for them?

(MH) Well, I suppose I would encourage them to study into the special needs of foster children, as they usually are dealing with relationship problems in their past. But on the other hand, not taking things to the point of seeing them as a “need,” rather than a “child.” In other words, understanding their special needs, but not taking it overboard and expecting them to be abnormal and watching them closely just waiting to see them fail.

(THR) Mary, have you experienced many problems in relating to the State in regards to the difference in values

and child-training views that we as Christians would hold, compared to what a secular State would hold?

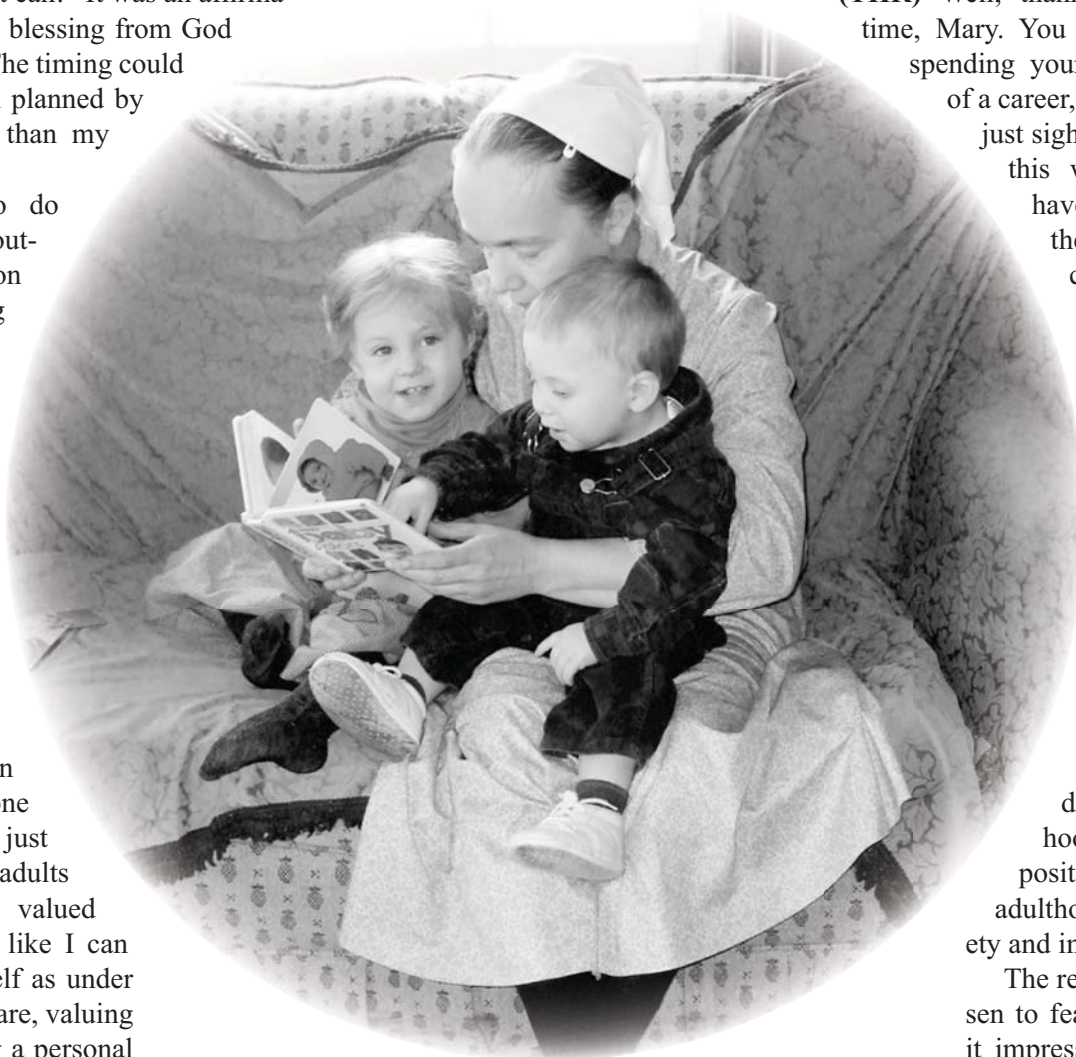
(MH) Not in a major way, but of course there are things I cannot do because of the rules. Many times I wish we could just promptly resolve an issue and then move on.

(THR) Well, thank you for your time, Mary. You could easily be spending your life in pursuit of a career, a gold medal, or just sight-seeing through this world. But you have chosen to serve these two precious children. From my short time in your home, I would say Brendan and Jeanna appear happy and loved. You may never see the fruits of your labors, but I think we can all agree that a happy, secure, disciplined childhood bears many positive results in adulthood, both in society and in the church.

The reason I have chosen to feature you is that it impresses me to see a single lady take on foster care. I am sure fostering in a home with both a father and a mother involved would be a lot easier (and

it is more ideal). I am not referring to singlehood as “less than ideal,” but we know that the ideal is for children to be raised in a home with both a father and a mother. So to see you and other single sisters move ahead and do what they can is a blessing. Doing less than the perfect ideal is better than wasting one’s life on frivolities. May the Lord bless your labors, as you serve Brendan and Jeanna.~

The Heartbeat of the Remnant wishes to bless everyone, single or married, who is sharing God’s love to the children of this world who are passing through turbulent waters in their days of innocence.



Happy moments with Jeanna and Brendan

But I've also recently begun to discover a secret about guarding my emotions from some of those unnecessary conflicts, which is something I wish I had learned years ago!

Recently I made a phone call, and over the course of conversation asked what I thought were caring questions meant to express love and interest in someone. The response, however, ended up leaving me feeling rather "blah," and well, to be honest, a little hurt too. The person had refrained from answering, in a way that seemed to me to indicate that she felt I was being nosy or that it was none of my business. I say "seemed," because it's very possible that she just was not free to answer the question.

But I was tempted to look at the things that she could have said differently. If she really had understood that I was expressing care, couldn't she just have graciously shared that she appreciates my heart for the situation, but regrets being unable to give any information? Feeling slighted and misunderstood, I found myself thinking, "I would be fine with her not being able to communicate about the situation, if she would have just done it in a more sensitive way, instead of making me feel that I was wrong to care, that I was being a busybody ... when that was the farthest thing from my mind!"

I hung up the phone, trying to push away the thoughts and the "blah" feeling. "Lord, why does it seem that life throws so many difficult, unpleasant little things? Why are there so many hurtful situations?"

I happened to be walking through the hallway as I was praying, and even now recall the exact spot where I was when the Lord suddenly spoke to my heart so clearly that it completely arrested my attention. "You tend to *absorb* everything in life, Sarah. You need to learn to *deflect* things more." I stopped in mid-step. He couldn't have described it better! That was *exactly* what I did! I absorbed everything! I never recognized it before.

"But Lord, how do I not absorb these things? How do I just ignore it and keep things from hurting?"

"By stopping to see whether what has been said or done is actually according to truth, according to reality. The truth is, you were not being nosy or a busybody. You were genuinely caring about that person. If the other person did not think accurately of you, the problem lies with them. Perhaps she was not even thinking in the way you perceived her to be. If so, then the issue doesn't even exist. But *if it does*, you can leave it with her. Why then are you allowing it to cause sadness for you? Is your body not the temple of the Holy Spirit? Why then do you allow thoughts that are not according to truth and reality? It will only drain needless emotional and spiritual energy.

Profane not my temple with things that are not according to truth and light. Deflect those things ... release those situations to me. Allow yourself to rest in truth."

Oh, the wise and gentle guidance of the Lord! The truth of it all seemed to just beautifully unfold before me. I did not *have* to be at the mercy of life's situations; I did not need to be under the control of the actions of people around me, nor my imaginations! As He ministered that truth to my heart, I found myself completely free from the temptation to feel slighted and hurt by the sister's response! If the Lord was telling me that it was wrong to even let it cause me hurt or sadness, how much more reassurance did I need that I was indeed *free*! I saw too that I could apply this principle to all of life's difficult little—and *not so little*—situations.

If there was truth in the matter, I needed to humbly receive it. If it was not according to reality, I could simply let it go. I shouldn't even let it rent space in my brain! It was none of my business! How liberating that was, how stress relieving! To know that I didn't have to *absorb* everything anymore! Like the ducks merrily splashing along through the water puddles and even going for a swim, they can still get out, shake themselves off and go along their merry way. The water just rolls off their backs.

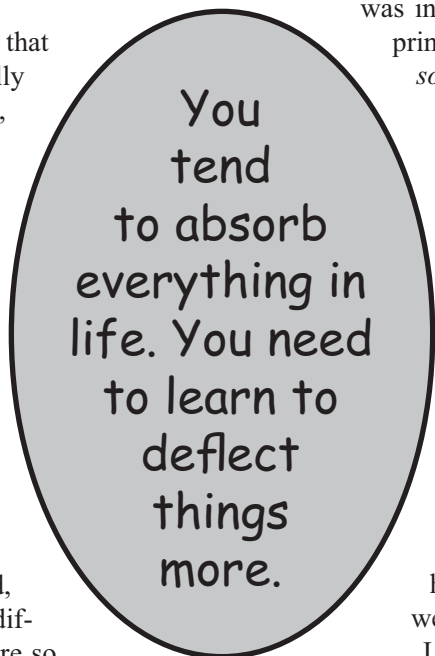
And now, marvelously, I found that God had provided a type of oil for *my* feathers as well!

I have been so delighted to begin to walk in this truth; to know that God has provided such an *oil* for our life to protect us as well, and has given us many promises that, if claimed, are able to deliver us from the temptation of giving in to the troubling emotions of care, stress, worry, etc.

Earlier, on the same morning that I had made that phone call, as I was preparing for the day, a burden that I had been carrying pressed down so heavily that I found myself feeling completely overwhelmed. I stopped whatever I was doing and just sat down. "Lord, I know that I've said again and again that I believe you have answers for *everything* we face in life, no matter how difficult. But I admit I'm losing hope that you have answers for *this problem*. It has seemed to hang around for so long with *no visible solution*. Do you have an answer for this too? Why do you not resolve this problem?"

As I sat there in quiet meditation, a scripture from Psalm 121 came to mind: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help; my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth."

My attention was drawn to, "My help cometh *from the Lord*." and then suddenly it narrowed down to "My *help cometh!*"



“My help cometh, Lord! I do not see an answer *right now*, but it does not mean you are not aware of it! You have told us to wait upon you ... and now I see that you have also told us that “Our help cometh! Yes, Lord! I will rest in the fact that my help cometh!”

The burden lifted and I got back up suddenly infused with new energy. If help was on the way, then things were going to be okay! And what was *really* exciting was to realize that not only did that promise apply for this particular situation, but it was something that I could claim anytime I needed to in the future. If I could believe at any time that my help cometh *from the Lord*, then it was equally true that I could trust the fact that “*my help cometh!*” What a delightful promise!

Several more such promises that have become very precious to me are found in Mark 9 and 10. When the father brought his son with the dumb and deaf spirit, the disciples were unable to deal with the difficult issue. The extreme desperation of the man’s heart is reflected in the simple and few words he utters before the Master after relating his son’s condition. “But if thou canst do *anything*, have compassion on us and help us!”

I can’t think of any words that would more reflect the heart of desperate mankind when they are at the end of their rope. A helpless casting of one’s self upon *one last hope*. And Christ does not disappoint him. He responds with words equally simple, yet profound. “If thou canst believe; *all things* are possible to him that believeth.”

Don’t those words just make your heart leap with expectation! Is Jesus not the same yesterday, today, and forever?

In the very next chapter, the ministering heart of Christ finds yet another troubled soul in dire need: the blind beggar that everyone was trying to quiet and hush up. But Jesus, hearing his pitiful cries, calls him to Himself and utters what to me are some of the most incredible words in all of Scripture. The supreme and all-powerful God of the universe *humbles* himself, calls the beggar, and with great love and compassion proceeds to ask him a stunning question: “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?”

He is, in a sense, giving Himself and all of his resources completely to this man of low degree.

Most of us probably have heard about the fabled genie lamp. If by some chance a person gets into their possession an oil lamp inhabited by a genie and “rubs” this lamp, the genie comes out and grants them three wishes. This, we all know, is nothing but a fairytale.

But here in Luke we suddenly encounter the real thing. “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” What need is

there in your life? What is too big for you to handle? What do you need help with? What situation looks impossible?

Is Jesus still the same yesterday, today, and forever? Are we not allowed to take the words spoken to the blind beggar to be our own?

I had come across this verse at yet another time in my life when I was faced with a difficult situation. I had always taken that portion of Scripture simply to be the personal words of Christ to the beggar. But this time it seemed the message leaped right off the page. It was as if the Lord were saying, “These words are for *you, too*; if you dare to claim them. It is my heart toward *all* of mankind. No, I am not some

kind of genie to grant all your wishes, but I will meet your needs ... I am your heavenly Father and you have the right to come to me any time you have a need. My heart toward you at all times is “What wilt thou that I should do unto you? Tell me. I will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. I am available to you at all times. I am approachable. But there *is* one requirement. Faith ... expectation. You must expect to receive, or it will not happen.”

Jesus’ response to the blind man’s request of “Lord, that I may receive my sight!” was simply, “Go thy way, *thy faith* hath made thee whole!”

And so I am discovering that we are permitted at *any time* to come to the Father and make our needs known to Him and then rest in the anticipation that “Our help cometh.”

So why should I be fretting? Walking in that, and also learning that I no longer need to absorb everything that transpires around me, has simplified my life tremendously. To absorb *only truth*; everything else I am given the liberty and the instruction to simply deflect, to release them. What a freedom that brings!

May we learn from the splashing, diving, carefree ducks to cast all our cares upon Him, for “He careth for us.” Yes, for *each one of us, who are so fearfully and wonderfully made!* Lord willing, in the future we sisters and the ducks may have more in common, right?

I’ll end here with two notes of interest. God orchestrated things in such a way that I later discovered that the aforementioned sister had not been thinking at all that I was being a busybody. She simply was not free to answer the questions. So the issue hadn’t even existed. It had been my own imagination and sensitivity.

Secondly, a week after God ministered to me the truth of “My help cometh,” He also brought the answer and resolved that whole particular issue, for which I am still rejoicing!!

Truly my help cometh, for it cometh from the Lord!~

And now,
marvelously,
I found
that God had
provided a
type of oil
for my
feathers as
well!

—Continued from p.29 *Ambrosius Spittelmayr*

for about seven months. It appears that an intense reading of the Bible was his only preparation for his lengthy court trials, of which he passed through several. The following are a few insights pulled from the records of his court hearings:

The true, real Christians who are Christians in Spirit and in truth ... do not require a government, sword, or authority, because they willingly do righteousness. ... But those "Christians" who are "Christians" only with the words "Lord, Lord" need to have the government to move them to piety, otherwise they would put out each other's eyes. A piety that must be enforced does not please God. God wants a voluntary spirit

It is certainly not our intent to betray or surrender country and people or to make an insurrection. May that be far from us! The turmoil that will soon come over all people will come from God because of the sin which is daily piled against God. I say to you, awake! Awake! Rise up from your sins and Christ will become your illuminator. People carry a dead soul in a living body, they should carry a living soul in a dead body.

If we, His members, would occupy the kingdom of heaven on the day of judgment, we will also have to live accordingly—to suffer and die, just like He the Head died for us. For whoever does not suffer with Him will not inherit with Him. We must drink the cup that He drank. Whoever does not want to suffer here, however, will have to suffer there in the lake of fire.

Let everyone look to himself and present his account books so that he can stand before his Lord. Because everyone must give account for all his words, works, and steps of his feet; for every day and hour, how he has spent them; for every penny, how he has spent it; how he has related to all creation; and how he has eaten his bread.

A true Christian can have no rest here. Righteousness can have no peace here in this kingdom.

We partake of Christ when He is spiritually conceived, born, circumcised, baptized, and preached ... in us!

In the great resurrection, the ungodly will arise to death, for they have lived and lusted here, and the godly will arise to life, because they have been dead here. Some have enjoyed their "kingdom of heaven" here, because they lived in "peace," enjoying the lusts of this world.

Seven weeks on the mission trail. Twenty weeks in prison. Decapitated. A 7/20 missionary. Three days in prison for every one day of preaching. How does that strike you for a ratio?

Thus goes the story of Ambrosius Spittelmayr. As one person has said of him, "He was tried, tortured, and executed far from his home, a silent martyr of the cause of nonresistant discipleship, a voluntary church, and religious liberty." He had been offered a release, but with conditions:

- Change his ways
- Agree to be quiet about rebaptism
- Never come again within 30 miles of Cadolzburg

Since Ambrosius could not agree to these conditions, he suffered the consequences. First it was torture, under which it is recorded that he never complained, but only prayed for grace to remain faithful and praised God for the opportunity of suffering for His Word's sake. After the torture, the decree for execution was issued on February 6, 1528.

At the end of his written defense that he presented to the judges, Ambrosius included the

following admonition:

Tear your hearts and not your clothes! Learn from the king of Nineveh, who because of one sermon of the prophet Jonah repented, and the whole city with him! If you [referring to the civil authorities] repent, then the people of your land will also be moved. See to it that you do not give offense! Settle your accounts here. If you wait to settle them until over yonder, things will go hard for you! Watch what you do and with whom you deal! Whoever has eyes to see, let them see; whoever has ears to hear, let them hear. Stop doing evil; learn to do good.

Like his Teacher, Ambrosius died trying to extend the reign of God on earth. Well done, Ambrosius! Welcome home to your reward!



It may have been within the walls of this old castle (Cadolzburg, Germany) that the blood of Ambrosius was spilled for preaching "righteousness, peace, and joy in this present world."

The scene at the beginning of the article is the author's imagination, but the five questions that Ambrosius asked are historical fact, taken from Ambrosius' testimony at his court hearings as to how he evangelized among the people.

The following is a list of the primary sources for this article.

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Greetings in Jesus Name! He is the One who supplies all our needs!

We at Charity Ministries and *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* publication office have been extremely blessed by the provisions that God has provided. We now have needs that we feel led to let you know about. We are humbly asking for your consideration as you give financially unto the Lord. We, as the Tape Ministry and Remnant Board, have met and agreed to make this public. We believe in operating by faith, trusting God to provide. We do not in any way desire to place a hardship on anyone, but due to low contributions, our financial balance is nearing the bottom.

We currently send out approximately 23,000 Remnant Magazines annually. In 2009 we sent out approximately 185,000 messages to many different peoples, states, and nations around the world. We believe the Word is going out and people are responding in appreciation to it. We have been continually searching for ways to cut our costs and increase production throughout the previous months. We have used the media available to us through the Internet, e-mail, cassettes, CDs, and transcriptions. We have tried to be very diligent to buy our products at the lowest costs, yet still provide you with a product that was acceptable. We have encouraged those who are sending out our messages through a ministry of their own to help with production costs, which by and large they have done. We use voluntary help as much as possible, both to provide an avenue of ministry for as many as possible and to cut our costs. However, due to the highly technical electronic world we live in and use to provide this ministry, we have needed to maintain a consistent and skilled labor force to keep the process running smoothly. Our workers are willing to work at a minimum level of income in order to keep our expenses low.

So, we thank you for what you have given to support the work, and may God bless you for it. Your love and support through cards, letters, prayers, and finances are very much appreciated. What you have offered in the past has allowed us to offer our materials free of charge to those who could not otherwise receive them. Again, thank you and God bless you!

Bro. Mark Brubaker
Administrator and Treasurer

1st Quarter 2010 Financial Report

Thank you for your support!



01/01/10 Beginning Balance	\$35,301.84
Receipts	
Tape Ministry Donations	\$18,801.37
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$5,593.50
Total Receipts	\$24,394.87
Disbursements	
UPS & Postage	\$3,692.88
Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$1,277.33
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$282.89
Equipment Maint & Repairs	\$869.42
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$1,259.93
Rent	\$2,250.00
Telephone	\$756.29
Website Development & Maintenance	\$270.02
Building Improvements	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$785.89
Payroll Expense	\$22,990.03
Books & Catalogs	\$1,125.00
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$15,288.45
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03/31/10 Ending Balance	\$8,848.58
Difference	-\$26,453.26

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“AN UNMERITED GRANTING OF

THE PROMISED FLESHLY HEART,

FILLED WITH THE LAW OF GOD,

LIGHT, WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING,

VIRTUE, AND HOLY DESIRES.”

Hans de Ries, Dutch Anabaptist (1553-1638)

1. A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears re - lieved; How
3. 'Tho' man - y dang - ers, toils and snares, I have al - read - y come; 'Tis
4. The word that gave me life and hope, That kept me from the foe; But now
5. And when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease; I
6. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright shin - ing as the sun, We've
once was lost, but now am found—Was blind, but now I see.
pre - cious did that grace ap - pear, The hour I first be - lieved!
grace has brought me home, And grace will keep me from the foe.
will my shield and life, As long as life shall en - dure.
shall pos - sess with - in the veil, A life of joy and peace.
I will praise Thee, O my God, While I shall live, My God, I will
praise Thee, O my God, Than when we first be - gun.