



Be ye doers of
the Word and
not hearers
only...

James 1:22

Anabaptist Voice

Championing A Faith That Works

IN THIS ISSUE:

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" - *RODNEY WITMER*

"EAGER BIBLE READERS" - *DALE BURKHOLDER*

"WHEN JESUS CAME" - *JAMES G. LANDIS*

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"ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY: JOHANNES GUTENBERG" - *TERRY BAUMAN*

Letter from the Editor

I am excited by the number of people who have no Anabaptist background but are enthused with what they read in *Anabaptist Voice*. In this issue you will hear from some of these adherents to *“the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3)*.

Our two articles on observing the Lord’s Day in Issue 2 of *Anabaptist Voice* provoked some strong responses from both readers and councilors. In an effort to address some of the faults found in the articles, I have offered all the AV Councilors the opportunity to answer this question: **“Should 21st Century Anabaptists observe a literal day of rest once each week?”** I qualified that all answers must begin with a “Yes” or “No”, must give a Scriptural basis for their answer, must avoid direct attacks on what has been written in *Anabaptist Voice* by others, and must be limited to 700 words.

Five AV Councilors have stepped up to the plate for their turn at bat. Read three of their defenses under “Our Councilors Speak”; additional questions and comments are welcome. In fielding the whole discussion on the observance of the Lord’s Day, one thing is clear to me: Observing a day of rest one day a week is not a sin. Rather it is a testimony to the world that we believe in certain eternal truths.

One AV Councilor wrote, “We should observe a day of rest because the world expects it of us.” I thought that was a terrible weak argument and took it out. But I was wrong. On reflection, I think it is a powerful argument stating that the seven-day week is inscribed in our very beings ever since the creation, and I refer to Romans 1:18.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

In Issue 3, we continue our dual thrust to correctly divide the word of truth (councilors speaking, a sermon), and to carry on the simple Anabaptist tradition, if the Word of God teaches it, **DO IT** (helps on witnessing, using technology, and several other practical issues).

We hope that other inspirational type stories, and a rolling poem set in thoughtful artwork, will also inspire you to continue the good fight with fresh vigor and holy zeal.

Don’t lay AV03 down!

Peace,

James G. Landis

QUICK BIO: James G. Landis



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About *Anabaptist Voice*

Our Mission Statement:

Anabaptist Voice is meant to be a servant to the churches of Jesus Christ. We believe the name “Anabaptist” is a fitting term to describe an obedient “People of God” in our generation. We follow the practice of the historic Anabaptists who sought to obey the teachings of Christ and the apostles, but we do not idolize the Anabaptists nor historic Anabaptism. We follow Christ.

Our Purpose:

To interpret Bible truth in a simple, childlike way, and to apply Bible teaching to the lives of living saints in a practical manner.

Our Goal:

To reinforce Christ’s call to forsake the world and be a loyal citizen of Christ’s heavenly kingdom. We want *Anabaptist Voice* to stimulate brotherly discussion on Bible interpretation and application, to help generate preaching in our churches on practical discipleship issues and to be useful in one-on-one evangelism.

Our Tone:

The tone of the magazine shall be positive in that:

- it presents the right way when it decries the wrong way.
- it presents the truth when it warns of the untruth.

Our motto shall be the words taken from Isaiah 30:21.

Whenever you turn to the right hand
Or whenever you turn to the left,
You shall hear a voice behind you, saying,
“This is the way, walk in it.”

Our Audience:

Our primary target audience is anyone associated with an Anabaptist church. We define an Anabaptist church as one that practices a believer’s baptism, maintains literal applications of Bible truths, and where a close-knit, disciplined brotherhood exists among the believers.

Our secondary target audience is those not familiar with Anabaptist churches but are searching the Scriptures for truth.

Our Organization:

A council of 6-10 brethren from various Anabaptist churches directs the production team and the editor in the publication of *Anabaptist Voice*.

The **AV Editor** is responsible for assuring that we adhere to the stated purpose, securing writers, and proper copy editing. The **AV Production Team** is responsible for design, layout, printing, subscriptions, and all financial matters.

At present, *Anabaptist Voice* is choosing to be free of government regulations and control as much as possible. We are not registered with any federal or state government body. We are not a 501(c)3 organization; contributions are not tax deductible under present law. If you wish to help us with a significant donation, please contact us.

Our Finances:

Since there is no set price for a subscription, donations will be accepted from those who wish to support the work. A few brethren have committed to support *Anabaptist Voice* by providing the extra financial backing needed to get this project started; their support is listed as “Local Support” in financial reports.

To assure an informed supporter base, each issue will contain a statement giving the number of copies printed and distributed, the total costs for the previous issue, and the amount of donations that have been received.

Our Distribution:

All *Anabaptist Voice* issues are free of charge to any individual who requests them. Press numbers will be determined by the Anabaptist Voice Council.

Our Supporters and Contributors:

In order to promote the free exchange of ideas and to prevent unwarranted judgments of people, we have chosen not to publish the names of all the people who support us. The names of the editor and most of the writers are published with their articles and we invite your response to what is written. AV wants people to critically examine the material in the magazine and hold us accountable for any false teaching.

For those seriously interested in supporting this work, we can make the names of writers, editors, producers, councilors, and donors available.

Our Statement of Beliefs:

For the purpose of publishing *Anabaptist Voice*, we are in agreement on the following points. We believe:

1. In the 23 articles listed in the Christian Aid Ministries Statement of Faith (available from CAM at www.christianaidministries.org/about-us or by writing to AV).
2. The Kingdom of God is now in effect on the earth (Matthew 5-7), and will be more fully experienced in a future state in the presence of God (Revelation 4).
3. The whole world outside the Kingdom of God lies under the sway of Satan (1 John 5:19).
4. God’s “New Covenant” with the people of God (the church) changes God’s “Old Covenant” with the Israelites (Hebrews 8).
5. The Bible can and should be understood and put into practice (Matthew 7:24).
6. The church is to be a holy people who call all the ungodly to repentance, self-surrender, and obedience to King Jesus. (1 Peter 2:9)

Our Use Of Scripture:

We believe the word of God is authoritative and that it is our final rule of faith and practice.

Our desire is always to give the true meaning of the Word of God in simple language that all can understand. If we ever give the wrong meaning through an inaccurate rendering of the Scripture, we ask that you enlighten us with a correct rendering of the passage in question.



Our Readers Respond

Policy Note: Email letters to *Anabaptist Voice* are encouraged. All letters must be accompanied by the writer's full name and physical address (not a PO Box). If the letter is printed in the magazine, only the writer's initials and the name of their state will be attached to the comments. If you send AV a letter, we assume the right to use any part of the letter we deem of interest to our readers. AV will try to be courteous in acknowledging all letters. - AV Ed.

A Strong Voice Inside

I recently was sent two issues (1 & 2) of your publication. I am an incarcerated seeker who grew up among the Beachy Amish and Mennonites. It has been a real blessing to have gotten your issues inside the Dept. of Corrections, (DOC) as Anabaptists did not have a loud nor a strong voice within these walls. The direction your magazine has given to men in just two issues should serve to edify your mission. Men here are being pointed to Jesus Christ as my copy grows more and more worn. Smile.

May God bless you and your labors.

N. S.; Pennsylvania

Thomas saith unto him, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

- John 14:5



A Better Creation By Learning

A brother recently passed along to me your wonderful *Anabaptist Voice* magazine. I very much am interested in learning much more of the Anabaptist way.

I am originally from Massachusetts, but at this time in my life, I am in a federal prison. By my very poor choice, I sat on the fence when it came to our Heavenly Father. Since being here, away from many things, and especially TV programs and the media, I've found a peace that is wonderful, through Jesus. I have a long way to go, but I will never give up, or give in! As long as I listen to God, I will be a better creation, for Him and all. Amen.

L. H.; Virginia

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

- I Peter 3:15

A Quiet Boldness?

I am responding to, "Who Is an Anabaptist?" in AV Issue 1. Near the end of the article it was stated that today, due to the fear of persecution, we back off when society or the government passes out some of its ungodly decrees.

While it is true that if these ungodly government decrees were being forced upon us, then, "yes", we would need to take our stand, boldly, if needed. But should we not also live as the quiet in the land, a quiet boldness, letting our lights shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

However, we also know these things could quickly change, especially if we become too vocal in regard to some of these ungodly decrees which really aren't forced upon us as plain people.

While we should always be willing to testify for the Kingdom of God and not be fearful to explain our position in regard to some of these ungodly decrees, if questioned, but do it in a respectable way that does not show an anti-government spirit.

D. M., Kentucky

Anabaptist Voice: You have explained the choice well. Do we wish to be the unmolested quiet in the land? Or do we wish to call men to repentance and turn the world upside down for Christ? We do not seek persecution, we want to be a peaceable people. But aggressively calling men to repentance often stirs up trouble and persecution; just what Christ warned His disciples could happen.



Joy When Truth Is Proclaimed

I just received issue 2 and it brought tears to my eyes. I live in the world unsupported by any church and when a voice such as yours proclaims God's truth so clearly and courageously, I cannot help feeling such joy. I am reading this issue continuously while I look forward to the next one! God bless you all!

K. B.. New York

Ten Commandments, Still Binding?

While I am writing I did think to comment briefly on the articles about the Lord's Day. You mentioned that the Sabbath observance was to be forever, and used Ex. 31:15-16 as evidence. This seemed strange to me, since Col. 2:15, 16 include the Sabbath Days along with other O.T. shadows that are no longer binding. Your paraphrase of Ex. 31:14-17, while emphasizing the "all time to come", seemed to minimize the fact that it was given to the Israelites "throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant." It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever". As a Bible scholar you will be aware of many things throughout the books of Moses that were to be for ever, that were only temporary as long as Israel as a nation continued as God's special people.

Also you seemed to assume that the Early Church changed the Sabbath Day from Saturday to Sunday, but there was no proof given. Obviously, they did observe the first day of the week, but did they change the Sabbath, or did they observe a new day? Your assumption that the fourth commandment is still binding (in fact, you infer that the Ten Commandments as a whole are still binding), sounds very strange for an Anabaptist. Anabaptists believe that the Old Law, "written and engraven in stones" (2 Corinthians 3:7), has been "done away". Protestants believe that the Ten Commandments, as well as many other Old Testament commands, still stand. The fourth commandment clearly required that the "seventh day" be kept, and if it is still binding, then we had better take heed. In Matthew 5:17-19 was Jesus really saying that the old law would continue till heaven and earth pass, or that it would continue until it was fulfilled; which we know He came to do.

So much for now. May the Lord watch between us, and may we meet in heaven.

P. H.; Kentucky

But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away,

- 2 Corinthians 3:7

Anabaptist Voice: If we look at this passage we can find nothing about the "Old Law" being done away with. Rather the emphasis is that the "Old Law" was glorious. But the glory of the ministry of righteousness far surpasses the glory of the "Old Law" which was a ministry of death.

Now as to the separation of the Mosaic laws (for example: priesthood, sacrifices, Jewish civil laws,

circumcision, kings, and all the man-made Jewish laws), we understand they were abolished when the Old Covenant with the Jews faded away and God made a New Covenant with a new people (1 Peter 2:10).

But the eternal laws that God established (for example- the Ten Commandments, not eating blood, the seven-day week, sexual purity) have never been abolished. In every case God calls his new people to a higher standard that never violates the eternal law. A Christian will not murder, worship idols, take the Lord's name in vain, eat blood, covet, abuse father or mother or children, or do any of the other of the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

And what do we do with these passages from Romans?

Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

- Romans 7:12, 14 & 16

It seems plain to me that God's fourth commandment that is spelled out so carefully in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 is no different than any of the other nine commandments. I believe God's eternal law is still in effect.

And I believe God is pleased when his children honor him by observing a day of rest in spirit and in deed. Observing a literal day of rest one day a week is just as much an act of worship and praise as singing, praying, and preaching.

Let's look closer at Matthew 5:17-19.

Don't think that I have come to destroy the law of Moses or the teaching of the prophets. I have not come to destroy their teachings but to do what they said. I tell you the truth. Nothing will disappear from the law until heaven and earth are gone. The law will not lose even the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter until all has happened. Whoever refuses to obey any command and teaches other people not to obey that command will be the least important in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys the law and teaches other people to obey the law will be great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-19

A simple reading of this passage sounds like the law will never pass away. But let us assume for a moment that Jesus did fulfill God's eternal law and now it is abolished. Does that mean that now everyone is free to worship idols, disobey their parents, murder, covet, and disregard the day of rest? I think not.

And in light of the ending of the verse, I would like to be diligent in obeying the law and teaching others to obey it as well.

Day Of Rest Predates The Law

I'm enjoying your new magazine. I believe there's a place for a magazine that can represent a broad spectrum of Anabaptists. While I do believe there are definite benefits to personal denominational identity, it's good to have a forum for inter-group discussion and challenge.

The Sabbath articles in Issue 2 were interesting. I found it fascinating to read in Ex. 31:16 that the Sabbath was to be a perpetual covenant. Is Col. 2:16 a contrast to this? Here Paul places the Sabbath in the category of Old Testament ritual that is abolished. We clearly are not to judge each other on Sabbath observance.

I do believe that there is clear New Testament and historical basis for worshiping on the first day of the week. I also believe that our current Sunday observances (including church attendance, abstaining from business, etc.) help us spiritually. There is no good reason to get careless because we are in the New Testament. No, God holds us more accountable.

It is interesting to ponder that the precedence for this day of rest (Creation Week) predates the Law. But then, we still are left to wonder what Paul was meaning in Colossians...

G. G.; Pennsylvania

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

- Colossians 2:16.

Anabaptist Voice: One possible explanation for this verse is that "sabbaths" is in the plural and thus refers to "special" sabbath holidays" designated by Jewish law and does not refer to the weekly Sabbath Day. An example of one such holy day is found at the crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:31). This special Sabbath did not fall on the weekly Sabbath or Jesus could not have been in the tomb three days and three nights.

Here is a Wikipedia quote that tells more about these holy days:

"High Sabbaths," in most Christian and Messianic Jewish usage, are seven annual Biblical festivals and rest days, recorded in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. This is an extension of the term "high day" found in the KJV at John 19:31-42.



Simple Scripture

I have received two issues of Anabaptist Voice and I thought I would give you some feedback. There are many things I appreciate about your periodical.

I sense that the main intent of the publication is to help us understand ourselves so that we can launch a powerful offensive against Satan and his spiritual kingdom, I support this and would really like to contribute to the effort. We can either become a quiet ethnic people or we can illustrate to the populous the power and glory of God!! Forward for the King!

One thing that really stood out to me is the emphasis of seeking to make scripture simple and understandable for everyone! I cannot support this more. [I feel] directed to be a simple preacher of a simple gospel! Let's maintain this vision!

C. Z.; Tennessee



Sin or Sin Offering?

I have some questions about your comments on 2 Corinthians 5:21 in Issue 2 of *Anabaptist Voice*. I understand that the Calvinists misconstrue the meaning of this verse. But if Paul, who was well educated in the law and understood the meanings in the various sacrifices better than any of us, why didn't he write "sin offering" if that is what he meant?

In Galatians 3:13 Paul writes, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." So Christ was "made to be sin," or "made a curse." How would you explain "made a curse"?

No, Christ was not a sinner, nor was he sinful, but was treated as such. Hebrews 9:28 says, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." What does "without sin" mean in this verse?

It seems to me that "made to be sin" has a deeper meaning than "sin offering."

Sincerely in Christ,

D. H.; Ohio

Anabaptist Voice: One of our AV Councilors answers your questions about 2 Corinthians 5:21 on the following page (8).



Our Councilors Speak

Policy Note: This section is dedicated to the input of our Councilors. They provide direction to this project as well as correction and suggestions on the content. This is their platform. - AV Ed.

Sin or Sin Offering?

To refresh our memory, II Corinthians 5:21 reads:

“For he hath made him to be sin [Greek: hamartia] for us, who knew no sin [Greek: hamartia]; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

The man who penned these words, Paul the apostle, read and preached from the Septuagint (LXX). In that Greek rendering of the OT Scriptures there are 108 times that *hamartia* means “sin offering” --and is so translated by our KJV translators. (*The first two are Ex. 29:14, 26. There are about 80 in Leviticus, and the rest are scattered all the way from Numbers to Ezekiel. You can find the full list in Adam Clarke’s Commentary notes on II Corinthians 5:21.*) The KJV translators were translating from Hebrew when they gave us “sin” twice in the same verse. That does not invalidate the point. Because Paul read both Hebrew and Greek, he understood perfectly that *hamartia* often means “sin offering.”

You may be saying, “That doesn’t make sense. If *hamartia* means ‘sin offering’ one place in the verse, why doesn’t it mean ‘sin offering’ the other place in the same verse? It’s the same word. How could it mean two things?”

That’s the nature of human languages. Many words have a wide range of meanings. Context helps us determine the intended meaning. For example, in English we say, “Hold *fast* while I run as *fast* as I can for help.” Or, “You *dust* the furniture and I’ll go *dust* the cabbage plants.” The italicized words have entirely different meanings.

And it is the same way in the meaning of II Corinthians 5:21. The same word in the original Hebrew has two

different meanings. The whole Bible provides a context that shows us that Jesus Christ is the perfect sin offering. As an offering we may say that He took our sin upon himself, but he did not become sinful for us or suffer the condemnation of our sin. God appointed him to be the perfect “lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.”

P.S. One reason I wrote the above is to give readers an example of how language works and the judgment required in translations. So many people are monolingual and have the idea that translating is running words through a mathematical function: put in a Greek word and out comes the same English word every time. But it doesn’t work that way. Often times the same word in one language can have several different meanings in another language.

- Ernest Strubhar | Perkins, Oklahoma

QUICK BIO: Ernest Strubhar



Excellent scholar with a longtime service in writing and editing church literature.

Served time in Guatemala and is bilingual.

A minister of the Gospel living in Perkins, Oklahoma.



On the next three pages, you can read the responses of three AV Councilors to the question, **“Should 21st century Anabaptists observe a literal day of rest once each week?”**

In these answers, as in all writing for *Anabaptist Voice*, I have insisted that writers take a stand and make their position clear. This does not mean that they are always right or that they are not open to further light. But AV wants to avoid the “halting between two opinions” that is typical of preachers and teachers of our day.

Therefore, we admonish all readers to be like the Bereans — search the Scripture for yourselves and see if these things are so.

- AV Ed.

Should 21st century Anabaptists observe a literal day of rest once each week?

Yes. - Joseph Van Loon

*“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.”
- Psalm 119:89*

It doesn't matter what translation you use, the outcome is the same! A day of rest is a day of rest!

1. God decreed a day of rest, one out of seven, the seventh day specifically, Genesis 2:2.
2. It is referred to by Moses speaking on God's behalf in Leviticus 16:23.
3. God codified it into law, Exodus 20:8-11, and it is called sabbath in the Hebrew.
4. God also decreed other times of rest and commemoration also called sabbaths, Leviticus 23:38-39, Leviticus 25:8, 26:2,34-35, 43, it is instructive to study the further use of this word sabbath/sabbaths in the Old Testament to understand it's applications, observance and to whom it applies.
5. Many will point to the fact that God said that the Sabbath would be a perpetual covenant which would last through their generations. (Exodus 31:16). Does this mean that the Sabbath would last forever? The Sabbath was never intended for the Gentiles. It was given to the Jews. Exodus 31:17 Nowhere is there a command for the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath. The key is the phrase “through their generations.” In other words, it would continue as long as the Jewish system existed.
6. Jewish religious leaders added rule after rule to God's law. For example, God's law said the Sabbath is a day of rest (Exodus 20:10-11). But they added to that law one that said, “you cannot heal on the Sabbath” because that is “work.” They perverted the Sabbath by their traditions. Our Lord rescued it from their perversions, and recalled to them its true nature and intent (Matthew 12:10-13; Mark 2:27; Luke 13:10-17). Seven times Jesus healed people on the Sabbath. Read Mark 1:21-28, Mark 1:29-31, John 5:1-18, Mark 3:1-6, Luke 13:10-17, Luke 14:1-6, John 9:1-16. In doing this, Jesus challenged the religious leaders to look beneath their rules to their true purpose to honor God by helping those in need. Would God have been pleased if Jesus had ignored these people?
7. The change of the day. At creation the seventh day of the week was set apart and consecrated as the

Sabbath. The first day of the week is now observed as the Sabbath. Has God authorized this change? If any change of the day has been made, it must have been by Christ or by his authority. Christ has a right to make such a change (Mark 2:23-28). As Creator, Christ was the original Lord of the Sabbath (John 1:3; Hebrews 1:10). It was originally a memorial of creation. A work vastly greater than that of creation has now been accomplished by Him, the work of redemption.

8. Christ rose on the first day of the week, John 20:1, 19, and appeared to the disciples who were assembled and the early Christians kept that day as a memorial of His resurrection.
9. Christians were already meeting on the Lord's Day (Sunday) from the first century. See Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.
10. Many are adamant about keeping traditions, mainly of men, so why not this one of the Lord's Day? We must neither be too concerned with formal rules and details, or legalistic, that is adhering to the letter of the law. In both cases we would most likely turn out to be like the Pharisees and we know how Jesus spoke of and to them! But rather heed Colossians 2:15-17! Keep the Day of Rest.

- Joseph Van Loon | Deloraine, Tasmania, Australia



QUICK BIO: Joseph Van Loon



Has written and published the *Australian Anabaptist* for many years.

Has also compiled a broad collection of sermons and hymns from present day Anabaptists that he makes available on the Internet at www.anabaptistmennonites.net.

Worships in Anabaptist house churches and lives in the Australian state of Tasmania.



May 21st century Anabaptists observe a literal day of rest once each week?

Yes. - J. Anthony Hertzler

According to Romans 14:1–12, the answer is yes. Believers who experience a blessing in abstaining from physical labor and business one day each week are at liberty to do so to the glory of God, and no one should seek to discourage their practice. Likewise, the same Scripture forbids judging those who *“esteem all days alike.”*

The New Testament and other early Christian writings make it clear that the church met for worship, to celebrate Christ’s resurrection, for exhortation, and for the breaking of bread *“on the first day of the week”* (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). This practice is a tradition of the apostles, and all believers should observe it. As much as possible, we should arrange our lifestyles and occupations to allow us to give at least a significant part of this day to worship and fellowship.

However, the clear teaching of the apostles, the entire Christian church until Constantine, and the early Anabaptists, affirms that the observance of the Lord’s day as a day of celebration and worship has no connection or continuity with the Old Covenant Sabbath; thus it cannot be subject to Sabbath regulations. The weekly Sabbath given by God to the Jews under Moses is Saturday, not Sunday, and it is a shadow, fulfilled by the coming of the living Sabbath, Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:16–23). He welcomes us, not to pause from our works for one day before taking them up for another week, as his people did under Moses, but to cease from our works forever, as God did from his (Hebrews 3–4). One early Christian writer, emphasizing this break from the old weekly cycle, describes our new way of life as “the eighth day, the beginning of another world.”

This lifestyle of perpetual holiness and rest in Christ is the Sabbath required of the New Covenant believer. Under the New Covenant, the one who devotes Sunday or Saturday to God, but puts material pursuits ahead of the kingdom of God the rest of the week, desecrates the Sabbath. The one who tithes ten or twenty percent of his income, but feels at liberty to spend the rest on fleshly indulgence, desecrates the Sabbath. The one who counterattacks when slandered and lies awake at night plotting against his opponents desecrates the Sabbath. The one who finds more pleasure in contemplating business, cars, food, or politics than the things of God desecrates the Sabbath. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:4; Hebrews 4:11–13; Hebrews 12:18–29)

In contrast, a believer who keeps the New Covenant Sabbath has relinquished all personal claim to himself

and his own life. He seeks to make every penny he possesses count for the glory of Christ and the success of the kingdom. He seeks to live and work wherever his resources and talents can best promote the kingdom, even at the risk of his own security. He speaks hard truths in love, without fear or self-regard, and he is calm under fire. When he lies down at night, he sleeps the sleep of the just, committing his reputation and his assets to the trustworthy care of God. When he gathers with the saints on the Lord’s Day, it is not to recharge a heart depleted by carnal pursuits, but to share the overflow of the communion he has enjoyed with God all week. For him, all of life is sacred, and Monday morning has been abolished forever. (Hebrews 8:6–13; 1 Peter 4:7–11)

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 8:12-13

With sabbaths, as with any custom where differences of practice exist among brothers, love and forbearance must prevail (Colossians 3:12–17; 1 Corinthians 10:23–33). Humble submission to Christ and love for the brothers are at the heart of the Sabbath principle, and to violate these is to violate the Sabbath, no matter what weekly observance one may espouse. May none of the sons of God fail to enter his rest.

- J. Anthony Hertzler | Tahlequah, Oklahoma



QUICK BIO: J. Anthony Hertzler



Freelance editor and author

Served on the staff of Loaves & Fishes magazine for 12 years as writer, advisor, and copy editor.

Lives near Tahlequah, Oklahoma and worships with area Anabaptist churches.



Should 21st century Anabaptists observe a literal day of rest once each week?

Yes. - Andrew V. Ste. Marie

Meeting for worship and fellowship on Sunday is a practice almost certainly established by the Apostles, and we should continue it – but it should not be observed as, or considered to be, a Sabbath.

Rest, away from everyday concerns and pressures, is beneficial. Meeting for worship and fellowship on Sunday helps to meet this need.

Since there is no New Testament commandment to keep a once-weekly day of rest, Anabaptists should not feel that God has commanded, in the New Testament, a rest of one day in seven.

Sunday is not the Old Testament Sabbath, which was the seventh day of the week. God never decreed that the Sabbath be moved from Saturday to Sunday.

The OT Sabbath was abolished with other ceremonies which have received spiritual fulfillments. The Jerusalem Council did not instruct Gentiles to keep the Sabbath (Acts 15:20, 29). Paul taught;

“Let no man therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” - Colossians 2:16-17

“One man honors one day above another: another honors every day alike...He who regards the day, regards it to the Lord; and he who does not regard the day, to the Lord he does not regard it” - Romans 14:5a, 6a

In the New Covenant, worship is “in spirit and in truth” (see John 4:21-24), no longer bound to a place, like Jerusalem, or a time, like the Sabbath.

The Sabbath has received a spiritual fulfillment:

“For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this manner, And God rested the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, They will not enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter in because of unbelief...There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he who enters into his rest has ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” - Hebrews 4:4-6, 9-11

There is a rest – a Sabbath – for the people of God, but it is not a weekly observance. The person who keeps this Sabbath is one who “has ceased from his own works, as God did from his.” To cease from the wicked works of the flesh is to keep the spiritual, New Covenant Sabbath – which is worth laboring to enter.¹

Justin Martyr, addressing a Jewish audience (c. 160 A.D.), said:

The new law requires you to keep perpetual sabbath, and you, because you are idle for one day, suppose you are pious...The Lord our God does not take pleasure in such observances: if there is any perjured person or a thief among you, let him cease to be so; if any adulterer, let him repent; then he has kept the sweet and true Sabbaths of God.²

While we observe Sunday worship, we must never confuse this with the OT Sabbath or think that God requires us to abstain from working on Sunday. This must never blur the lines between the Old and New Covenants. The New Covenant of Christ which we follow is higher and better than the Old Covenant, which it has replaced.

- Andrew V. Ste. Marie | Manchester, Michigan



QUICK BIO: Andrew V. Ste. Marie



Has written, edited, and published *The Witness* for more than 12 years.

His “Sermon on the Mount” publishing offers many books of interest to Anabaptists.

Lives with his family in Manchester, Michigan and attends church in Indiana.



1. Compare with Jesus' words: “Strive to enter in at the narrow gate: for many, I say to you, will try to enter in and will not be able” (Luke 13:24).

2. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 11-12; translation from Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 2012 (reprint), Hendrickson Publishers, volume 1, p. 200.

Of Such Is The Kingdom Of Heaven

by Rodney Witmer

Emilio was our little four-year-old foster son who was born with dwarfism. Because of abuse and neglect in his first year, his lungs were badly damaged, causing him to need oxygen all the time. He also had a shunt to drain the fluid on his brain. He was in and out of the hospital a lot the first year that we had him. He also had problems with reflux, so eating was a big issue. He could eat food that we ground up for him, but he mostly depended on Pediasure in his bottle for nourishment. This spring he had surgery on his spine to straighten his back in hopes that he could breathe better and be able to walk. This summer his speech really improved and he became a lot more mobile.

His physical therapist had a little scooter made special for him to fit his little legs. He loved to ride his scooter all around the house. He loved his brothers and sisters, calling them all by name, and even knew how to tattletale on them, much to their delight! He lay on the floor a lot, playing with his trucks, backhoes, and dump trucks, because his daddy was an excavator. Going on walks in his stroller every day to Grandma's porch swing was the highlight of each day. And at night when he said his prayers, he wanted to be sure and pray for the doctors. He was a cheerful, happy, sunshiny little fellow, in spite of his many limitations.

--Janice Byler



Sermon Text:

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

- Mark 10:13-16

The following is a condensation of the funeral sermon for Emilio shared by Rodney Witmer in Farmington, New Mexico. Used by permission upon our request.

-AV Ed.

So, now we know. For Emilio it was a matter of when, not if. We knew all along that Emilio was very vulnerable. The ever present oxygen tube reminded us of that. Emilio's "when" was September 6, 2016. But really, barring the Lord's return, it is the same for us all. A matter of when, not if.

As we know with the fresh reminder given by Emilio's passing, heaven's population is in part, a large part, children.

Jesus himself emphasized this truth. The kingdom of heaven, he taught, is not solely humble, contrite adults. It's also little children. He said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The children's place in the kingdom of heaven is an intriguing thought. Consider the words of I Thessalonians 4:16-17:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

When this event happens, what will be the makeup of the crowd that rises to be with Jesus?

- All the children in the graves will rise to be with Jesus. But not all adults will rise, just the ones that were like children.
- All the children then living will rise to be with Jesus. But not all the adults will rise. Just the ones that are like children.

I think the majority of that coming resurrection will be children.

Emilio's death captivates the attention of the children. It focuses the attention of us all on children and on vitally important related matters. Let's ponder the teachings of our text today found in Mark 10:13-16.

This little account with Jesus in the middle of it instructs us all. Let's mine it a bit.

The Child Accepted

In verse 13, we see the child accepted. *"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them."* The attitude/mindset this portrays is the way it ought to be. God built into his human creation the instinct to care about and love a child. It's unnatural not to. We nuzzle the soft hair and stroke the soft skin. We admire and applaud every indication of progress. We pain when the child suffers.

And we, like the adults portrayed in verse 13a, crave the help, the touch, the blessing of Jesus on our child. The child is so valuable, and we so inadequate. And we cry when they die.

While what I just described is instructive, it is also true that the godly possess these feelings in deeper, stronger ways. You can't love Jesus and not love a child. It's basic to Christianity.

What do you think the crowd of children by Jesus in this passage was like?

- Normal, healthy secure boys and girls from intact families brought by their parents?
- Bereaved children? Motherless? Fatherless? Orphans brought by a compassionate aunt, grandmother, or neighbor?
- Ill/handicapped children wracked with pain, cradled by caring adults with pain in their eyes?
- A few that nobody claimed ... except Jesus?

None of this is a stretch at all. But I like the feeling this passage gives of adults with acceptance, compassion, affection, and a compulsion to bless the child with the touch of Christ. And it is a great sin to lack such empathy.

The Child Rejected

This brings us to our second point, the child rejected found in verse 13b, *"And his disciples rebuked those that brought them."*

No, the disciples weren't physically abusive, but they had an abusive mindset. They wanted to "get these interferences out of the way." And they gave dark looks to, and made negative comments about, those who had invested themselves in these children.

Just like godliness, so godlessness heads to predictable places. One of these places is selfishness. And selfishness, when gone to seed, can become cruel.

- It's wrong for married couples to not want and to deliberately avoid having children.
- It's wrong to neglect bending a child's heart and life toward Christ.
- It's wrong to physically, emotionally, and spiritually abandon a child.
- It's a tragedy when the womb, rather than being the ideal safe environment God made it to be, becomes a vat of mind-altering, development-stunting chemical poisons.
- And it is beyond tragic when home becomes a place where one must hide and duck and run to survive.

Emilio, prior to being rescued by love suffered heart rending treatment. But even after he was rescued by loving hands and hearts, his death was still a huge deliverance and triumph for him. There's room in heaven for him.

Is there room in our hearts for children? Do we have a godly attitude toward them all? Do we sideline the sidelined? Do we resent or scorn those not so lovely little ones? Do we have time for the children or are we too busy for them?

The Child Invited and Protected

Jesus had time for the children. In verse 14 we see the child invited and protected by Jesus.

"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Nothing misses the eye of Jesus. Not the proper attitudes, nor the wrong ones. He saw the efforts to bring the children, and got His lap, His arms, and his Heart ready. And then he saw the interruptions. Attitudes, actions, and all—he was "much displeased." And he

was not silent. “Suffer the little children to come unto me.” “Suffer” here not only means, allow it, but cause it! Facilitate it! Make it happen!

How blind we are sometimes. Like the disciples, we’re so indignant about what others are doing and all their mistakes, that we fail to perceive divine indignation looking our way. We’re expert at tithes of mint and anise and cumin but fail in mercy, truth, and righteousness (Matthew 23:23).

Expect Divine chagrin when children are messed with, for *“lo children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3a).*

Jesus took them in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them (Verse 16). Invited. Protected. Valued. Claimed. Wanted, to say the least. Created for a purpose. Given for a reason.

But Jesus not only said, “Accept, value, protect children.” He not only said, “suffer them to come to me.” He looked the disciples right in the eye and said, “you’ve got to be like a child. You must become one.”

The Child Emulated

That brings us to point four found in verse 15, The Child Emulated (to imitate, to be like).

“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

We ought to use funerals to ponder life’s deepest issues. We ought to reflect on our own readiness to go. Entering the Kingdom of God, Jesus said, is about child-likeness, not my own sensibilities of right and wrong.

Child-likeness is about trust, not doubt. Teachableness, not the dispensing of answers. Crucifixion of self, not the promotion of self. Humility, not arrogance. Vulnerability not shells of isolation. Helplessness, not control.

When Jesus said, “Of such is the kingdom of God,” he was saying two things:

- Children have a welcome and a large place in my kingdom.
- Childlikeness characterizes all in the kingdom.

You and I can emulate Emilio. No, I’ll never be able to look at a book while holding it with my feet like he could. I won’t even try. But if I will, I can copy his total and complete dependency on another.

For us all, then, it’s a matter of when, not if. Let us all be diligent in maintaining the humble, contrite, dependent spirit that Emilio so ably demonstrated. “For of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

- Rodney Witmer | *Farmington, New Mexico*

Heathen Indians Granted Grace

This mission report shows how the Gospel affected children and adults in the Moravian mission village of Huts of Peace, 1770. - AV Ed.

The labor of the Spirit of God was likewise so evident in the children. The Lord perfected praise even out of the mouths of babes in such a manner that the missionaries were filled with astonishment.

Among the unbaptized and catechumens the awakening was solid and general, and their longing after grace and the remission of sins in the blood of Jesus appeared on all occasions. The missionaries particularly rejoiced to see that Captain Glikkikan and Chief Gendaskund were the most humble among all the unbaptized. These two confessed with great openness their sinful and abominable manner of living among the heathen, and prayed to God for mercy and forgiveness as the most undeserving prodigals, and earnestly requested to be baptized.

The glorious work of God in Huts of Peace flourished uninterruptedly throughout the year 1769. The believers grew evidently in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a great many of the heathen visitors were awakened from the sleep of sin. Several of these had been robbers and murderers who now appeared hungry and thirsty after grace in the blood of Jesus, and by their unaffected declarations gave the missionaries inexpressible satisfaction.

When such poor and needy sinners, weeping for mercy, were afterwards absolved in the name of Jesus, and baptized, their joy, and that of the congregation was inexpressibly great.



PHOTO: IRVING HALLOWELL, (1930's)

COURTESY: GARY BUTIKOFER

— Loskiel, pages 454, 476 (See AV03, page 42)

What Would Jesus Do?

by Matthew Bauman

What would Jesus do, if He were here today?
Don't you wonder what He'd think, or what He'd stop and say;
If He observed it all again, with just a little twist,
Of modern-day phylacteries, now worn around the wrist?
If ev'rywhere He looked, He saw; and ev'rywhere He heard
His name so lightly tossed about, as flighty as a bird –
On bumper stickers, picture shows, and billboards on a pole;
Attached to things like silly sports, or even rock 'n' roll;
It's now become an empty phrase, and overused cliché,
But don't you wonder what He'd do, if He were here today.
What would Jesus do, if He were here today,
When many praise Him with their lips, but very few obey?
Denominations in the thousands; theologians, more;
So many diff'rent doctrines, just like shopping at the store;
Confusion so severe creating apathy t'ward truth,
With pleasure-drunken masses and drug-infested youth.
Corruption in the government, and sanctioned, sensual sin,
And ominous horizons that the worst could soon begin;
Perplexities and great unknowns are paramount, and gray,
And so we muse what He would do, if He were here today.

What would Jesus do, if He were here today?
It's really not a mystery; we know what He would say...
Three witnesses recorded that which they observed firsthand;
Another, much the same, who did completely understand;
They plainly shared and testified of that which Jesus did;
It's not concealed within a box and locked beneath the lid;
Since hearts of men are still the same – deceitful and distressed,
And since, with man's accomplishments, He's never real impressed;
It's truly quite predictable, we even dare to say,
To understand what He would do, if He were here today.

Quintessence
This image not to be reproduced

Eager Bible Readers

by Dale Burkholder

The premier issue of *Anabaptist Voice* asks the question, “Is the Ability to Read Essential to Being a Good Follower of Jesus?”

Since I live in a literate society, I cannot answer this question by personal observation or experience. However, the first thing that came to my mind was a quote from a Mennonite bishop in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, who wrote in 1792.

The Power of the Word for Those Who Cannot Read

“God has placed in His Word a hidden power, so that it is a strong remedy for all hurts and infirmities which might come upon wretched, fallen mankind. Everything that is made is made through this Word. The Word, the Spirit, and life are most perfectly bound together so that they cannot be separated from the Word that is preached. The apostle [Peter] was the means by which three thousand souls came to faith in Christ Jesus, all in one day. Paul and the other apostles preached the Word of the Gospel to many heathen nations, in cities and country. Through this preaching, thousands came to saving faith in Jesus. Jesus had already prayed for these people, as well as for His own disciples, when He said, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John 17:20). God is an invisible, powerful Being, who through His Holy Spirit speaks to many a soul in his inner heart, to reprove and convict the conscience of sin and of the corruption of man; and after repentance, He gives comfort. He even does this for those who do not have the Scriptures or cannot read.”¹

In colonial Pennsylvania, the German immigrants did not put much emphasis on teaching their girls to read. So many women were illiterate that the common practice was for women to sign deeds and other legal documents with an “X.” Therefore Bishop Burkholder was writing from personal observation in his local church and neighborhood. We do not doubt the power of God to save and enable illiterate people for Christian service.

Reading the Word to Those Who Cannot Read

In the Early Church period it is recorded that in Syriac-speaking areas “The law and the prophets, and the Gospel from which ye read every day before the people, and the Epistles of Paul which Simon Cephas sent us from the city of Rome, and the Acts of the Twelve Apostles which John the son of Zebedee sent us from Ephesus, --from these writings shall ye read in the Churches of the Messiah and besides them nothing else shall ye read.”²

The above gives some insight into the practice of this early church. Handwritten copies of Scriptures would not have been available to nearly everyone, even if they could read it. Likely many were illiterate: “... the Gospel from which ye read every day before the people. . .” would indicate a daily gathering where the Scriptures were read. This is one solution for those who cannot read.

Encouraging Learning to Read

However, Christian people ought to put a high priority on learning to read, and on teaching their children to read, and to read well. The following quotes of letters from prison show the intense interest the early Dutch Mennonites placed on teaching their children to read:

If you have time and opportunity, use diligence to learn to read and write, that you may learn and know the better, what the Lord requires of you.

Beloved son, my heart's desire and prayer to the Lord for you is, that your soul may be protected from the deluge of God's wrath, that shall come upon all the ungodly who did not care for the Lord, and walked not in His commandments.

— Jorjaen Simons

And I also charge you, Barbertgen, my dear daughter, to be obedient to your mother, and to help care for all your little sisters, and for Pierken. Learn also to read, and be diligent in every good work, that you may spend your life in holiness and in all the fear of God. . . .

— Joris Wippe

1. Bishop Christian Burkholder in *Addresses to Young People*, in his “Second Address: to the oncoming youth concerning true saving faith and pure love to God and to his neighbor.” First published in German in 1804. Quoted from an unpublished new translation by John Dan Burkholder, with further work by James Nolt, Dale Burkholder and others.

2. *Early Christianity Outside the Roman Empire; Two Lectures Delivered at Trinity College, Dublin*. Francis Crawford Burkitt. General Books.

David, my dear child, I herewith commend you to the Lord. You are the oldest, learn wisdom, that you may set your sisters a good example; and beware of bad company, and of playing in the street with bad boys; but diligently learn to read and write, so that you may get understanding.
— Soetgen van den Houte

This is my last farewell, my dear lambs; always remember each other in love; diligently learn to read and write, and obey everyone in that which is good. When your brother David and Tanneken come to you, greet one another with a friendly kiss of peace, in my name.
— Soetgen van den Houte

Care for my young orphan children, as also all other orphans, as you would for myself; bring them up with reproof and correction, to piety; teach them to read, and when the time has come, keep them at work. Get Aelken cured, if you can; bequeath to him the three pieces of money, the silver piece and the two others; also a Testament, to each; this shall be their inheritance from their father.
— Matthias Servaes

And I pray you, my dear wife, to teach our children to read and write, if it be possible for you, in order that they may be able to search for themselves.
— Wouter Denijs

Following is one more excerpt from the Martyrs Mirror, the questioning of Jacob de Roore by Friar Cornelis:

Friar Cornelis: *Ah bah! what do you understand about St. John's Apocalypse? At what university did you study? At the loom, I suppose; for I understand that you were nothing but a poor weaver and chandler, before you went around preaching and rebaptizing out here in the Gruthuysbosch. I have attended the university at Louvain, and studied divinity so long, and yet I do not understand anything at all about St. John's Apocalypse; this is a fact.*

Jacob de Roore: *Therefore Christ thanked His heavenly Father, that He had revealed and made it known to babes, and hid it from the wise of this world, as is written, Matt. 11:25.*

Friar Cornelis: *Exactly; God has revealed it to the weavers at the loom, to the cobblers on their bench, and to bellows-menders, lantern-tinkers, scissors-grinders, broom makers, thatchers, and all sorts of riff-raff, and poor, filthy, and lousy beggars. And to us ecclesiastics who have studied from our youth, night and day, He has concealed it. Just see how we are tormented. You Anabaptists are certainly fine fellows to understand the Holy Scriptures; for before you*

are rebaptized, you can't tell A from B, but as soon as you are baptized, you can read and write. If the devil and his mother have not a hand in this, I do not understand any thing about you people.

Jacob de Roore: *I can well hear that you do not understand our way of doing; for you ascribe to Satan the grace which God grants our simple converts, when we with all diligence teach them to read.*

Friar Cornelis: *See here; once these heretics presume to have the grace of God. . . .*

From the above accounts it is not hard to see that the Anabaptists—at least those in the low countries in the 1500s—put a high priority on teaching their children to read. At the same time they held a correspondingly low view of the education received in the institutions of higher learning available in their day. God was able to bless their churches as long as they remained simple followers of Jesus and His Word.

Encouraging Daily Bible Reading

For those of us who can read, it ought to be our goal and desire to follow the pattern laid down for the Israelite kings, “to read the scroll every day.” And it certainly ought to be our goal whenever possible to teach our children and others to read so they can read God's Word for themselves.

- Dale Burkholder | *Denver, Pennsylvania*

The king must keep the scroll close to him at all times. He must read it all the days of his life. Then he can learn to have respect for the Lord his God. He can carefully obey all the words of this law and these rules.

- Deuteronomy 17:19



HANS BRET ENDURING A TONGUE SCREW.

ENGRAVING BY JAN LUIKEN, AD 1576

When Jesus Came

by James G. Landis

When Jesus came into the world as a babe, he came to a world filled with fear. Men were afraid. Men cringed in fear of darkness, hunger, oppression, judgment, and despair. The Jews longed for a Messiah to deliver them from this overpowering fear.

When Zacharias entered into the shadowy darkness of flickering candles and into the curtained muffled silence of the Holy Place, he entered with fear. Properly washed, and robed in priestly vestments that covered him from head to foot, he moved with measured tread toward the altar of incense so he might ignite the sweet-smelling incense to the God of Israel. He well knew that a man could die in this place if he fumbled the sacred fire.

Zacharias moved toward the altar of incense and when he had arranged things there according to the proper ritual, he lit the fire that sent the sweet smoke spiraling upward. Then he lifted his head and arms in prayer. Suddenly, Gabriel interrupted his solitude and stood at the right side of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled and he was afraid.

“Do not be afraid!” the angel said to Zacharias.

And it went the same way when Gabriel startled the peaceful virgin Mary while she entertained dreamy thoughts of marriage to her beloved Joseph. When she saw Gabriel, she was troubled at his strange greeting, and perhaps filled with fear as terrifying thoughts flashed through her mind. Then Gabriel said to her, “Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favor with God.”

Mary’s strong Joseph also trembled with righteous fear as he watched his beloved Mary show indisputable signs of being with child. And she could not explain to him anything believable. So out of fear, Joseph was minded to quietly break the engagement. Again, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid!”

No doubt Joseph also was fearful when the decree went out that he and Mary must leave their home in Nazareth and wend their way to Bethlehem to be registered and taxed by a Roman ruler. The Romans did not care if his wife was close to the time to be delivered. So it had to be, and the two plodded onward to an overfilled town in turmoil.. And then to hear the words, “Sorry, there is no room in the inn, but you can have the stable,” strained at Joseph’s manly instincts. And in the darkness, to hear Mary whisper, “Joseph, I think my time has come,” struck fear into the heart of young Joseph. He had never experienced this before.

Shepherds on the darkened hills around Bethlehem—as David had done on those same hills 1000 years earlier—guarded their sheep late into the night. They had no fold to put the sheep in, so in the stillness of the night they listened for the tread of wild wolves, bears, or the padding steps of a lion. The shepherds heard no stir among the sheep that would signal danger of an attack. All was calm and very still in the darkness that enveloped them. Suddenly, “the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.” And the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid.”

When Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to fulfill the requirements of the law, an old old white-bearded prophet, filled with

When Jesus came the angels and the prophets foretold:

He will be great, and will be the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.

- Luke 1:32-33

He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.

He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy,

As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

- Luke 1:53-55

To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,

Might serve Him without fear,

In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

- Luke 1:74-75

To give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins.

- Luke 1:77

To give light to those who sit in darkness and shadow of death,

To guide our feet into the way of peace.

- Luke 1:79



the Holy Spirit, took Jesus in his arms and blessed him. But Simeon did not stop with the blessing. While still holding Jesus in his arms, he prophesied to Mary and Joseph, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against. Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” Such ominous words could not have failed to strike a measure of fear into the hearts of Mary and Joseph.

Then there came a lordly procession of astrologers to Jerusalem; men who had studied the writings of Daniel. These wise men claimed they had seen the star of the King of the Jews two years earlier. “Where is he that is born King of the Jews?” they inquired, “for we have come to worship him.” When the Roman puppet King Herod heard this, he and all Jerusalem with him were greatly troubled. King Herod was afraid that a baby would overthrow him and usurp his kingdom. The people of Jerusalem were afraid this baby boy might disturb their place in the Jewish nation.

The Magi did not return to Jerusalem, but went home some other way.

Joseph and Mary, being warned in a dream by an angel, out of fear, took Jesus and fled to Egypt.

And the poor mothers of Bethlehem grappled with fear and bitterness and grief as Herod’s cruel soldiers slew their young male boys.

Such was the darkness and fear that permeated the world when Jesus came.

Despite the messages of hope the angels and prophets brought to the world at His birth, the real world was filled with darkness, trouble, grief, pain ... and fear. It could not have been otherwise.

The well-lit romanticized scenes of peaceful, happy people gathered around a manger depart from the reality of the darkness, fear, grime, and sorrow that surrounded the birth of Jesus. The tinsel, the trees, the selfish gifts, the reindeer, and jolly old Saint Nick have nothing to do with the birth of the Savior.

We ought to remove ourselves from every word and deed that even refers to these evil practices of the world. Our testimony to ourselves, to our children, and to the world must be clear: When Jesus came into the world, it was a costly sacrifice to those associated with his birth, and to His heavenly Father.

- James G. Landis | Waynesboro, Georgia

*Glory to God in the highest and
on earth peace, good will toward
men!*

- Luke 2:14

*For my eyes have seen Your
salvation*

*Which You have prepared before
the face of all peoples,*

*A light to bring revelation to the
Gentiles, and the glory of Your people
Israel.*

- Luke 2:32

*For out of you shall come a Ruler
Who will shepherd my people Israel.*

- Matthew 2:6



Character Sketch: Cornelius Jansen

by Chester Weaver



CORNELIUS JANSEN (1822-1894)

PHOTO TAKEN IN 1873

Cornelius Jansen is known as the “Moses” of the Russian Mennonite emigration of the 1870’s, in which some 18,000 Mennonites moved from Russia to settle in the United States and Canada. His selfless service, motivated by his personal faith in the living Christ, makes him deserving of recognition and respect, not only from the descendants of Russian Mennonite emigrants, but also from all Mennonites in this generation. Furthermore, he is a timeless example to anyone involved in transplanting thousands of people from one nation and culture to another.

In this article, I would like to present Cornelius Jansen as a real person by providing you with a few glimpses of his life.

Cornelius was born in West Prussia in 1822. His mother died when he was ten years old, after which he lived with his uncle Gerhard Penner, who trained him as a merchant. At 23 years old, he married Helena von Riesen, daughter of Peter von Riesen, a visionary whose influence seems to have left its mark on the Jansen family, although he died the year before the couple married.

In 1834, thirteen years before his death, Peter von Riesen had reprinted three thousand copies of Menno Simon’s *Fundamentbuch* [Foundation Book] especially for the *Kleine Gemeinde* in Russia, intending to sell some locally as well. After a local Lutheran objected to some of Menno’s language dealing with Lutheran and Reformed theology, the Prussian Mennonite church leaders, worried about offending local Lutheran sensibilities, threatened to excommunicate von Riesen unless he surrendered the entire printing.

He complied reluctantly, and the books were stashed in the church attic and left to the ravages of mice, moisture, and mold for the next twenty years. This event represented not only a serious financial loss for von Riesen, but also the quashing of a project that had been his life’s vision. However, many of the books did eventually reach their intended destination among the *Kleine Gemeinde* of Russia, and some were even brought to America.

By the time Cornelius married, most of his von Riesen in-laws had moved to Russia, and one of his mother-in-law’s conditions on the marriage was that Cornelius and his wife relocate there to be near them. Cornelius kept that agreement in 1856, relocating from Prussia to Berdyansk on the Sea of Azov. There he served as a grain broker, shipping the red wheat and other grains grown by the Mennonite farmers to England.

Cornelius preferred Russia to Prussia because of Russia’s greater economic and social freedom. However, he distrusted the Russian government and refused to entangle himself with Russian citizenship. In spite of his reservations about both governments, sometime during this period of his life the Prussian government appointed him as Prussian Consul in Berdyansk for three years, adding to his stature in the community. The nearby Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin employed him for the next nine years in the same capacity. Because of Cornelius’s position, the Jansen family spent time with the British Consul at Berdyansk, and Cornelius and his children began to learn English.

Cornelius’s unusual set of English/German/Mennonite connections placed him increasingly in demand from many quarters. For example, through some English connections, Cornelius was instrumental in helping introduce English reaping and threshing machinery to the Russian Mennonite colonies who were supplying grain to him. The diverse contacts Cornelius worked with gave the Jansen home an unusually cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Cornelius Jansen was prepared to adapt to changing times because he was willing to accept new ideas when they brought real benefits to his people. He also adapted readily to new people and situations. This adaptability qualified him for the great task that would be the culmination of his life work.

Though Cornelius was in complete harmony with traditional Mennonite beliefs, he noted that

the Mennonites' spiritual condition had room for improvement. He witnessed the Wust revival, which spawned the Mennonite Brethren denomination, but he was unimpressed with the excesses that accompanied it. However, he did embrace the growing burden among Mennonites for missionary activity. He became involved in distributing Bibles and Christian literature in several languages, even providing Hebrew Scriptures to the Jews living in South Russia. He also interceded with Russian judges for leniency toward native Russians who were being persecuted for breaking with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Cornelius had no time for the concept of an “invisible church,” believing it had no Biblical foundation. Rather, he thought the Mennonite Church had not been visible and active enough. He referred to his own people as “we so-called Mennonites” or “nonresistant Christians called Mennonites.” He said, “It is a mistake to say, that we were founded by Menno Simons . . . We claim to be only reformed and gathered by him and trace our history back to the Waldenses, getting near, through them, to the earliest Christian congregations of the first centuries.”

Like most Russian Mennonites, Cornelius was a moderate tobacco and alcohol user, but he became a teetotaler as a result of the influence of Christian friends. In this move he came closer to the *Kleine Gemeinde*, his wife's people.

In the matter of dress, the wealthy Danzig Mennonites expected clothing to be made of fine materials, but to be simple in appearance. In order to maintain simplicity, Mrs. Jansen made all the clothing for herself and her daughters. She believed the main purpose of clothing was to cover the body, not to beautify it. The family wore no jewelry or fashionable attire, and their quiet, subdued behavior matched their clothing.

After the evening meal, Cornelius conducted family worship with the family. Cornelius loved music, and in

addition to much family singing, Cornelius played the piano and flute and saw to it that each of his children learned to play a musical instrument.

The Jansen home was solid, simple, cordial, and welcoming of strangers. Into this atmosphere in 1867 came a pair of English Quakers who wished to visit the Russian Mennonite colonies. Cornelius guided them on a tour of the more progressive villages and churches, translating for them as they made presentations to the churches and discussed doctrine with Mennonite ministers.

After this visit, one of the Quakers wrote a letter of exhortation to the Mennonites. The letter included the following words: “Is it not His purpose that you should be instrumental in spreading the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel of Christ to those who are now sitting in darkness—sunk in ignorance and superstition? Are you prepared, dear friends! to give a good account of your stewardship? I do not forget the difficulties of your position nor the danger which might result from attempts to enlighten your more ignorant neighbors.”

Cornelius agreed with the burden of the letter and sent it to Odessa for printing, but it came back censored, banned from publication. This incident marked a turning point in Cornelius's life. In his words, “This refusal to reprint such a brotherly letter awakened in me and several others real suspicion . . . concerning our real position under the Russian government, as to how little our so-called religious liberty was worth.”

One of the Quaker visitors provided Cornelius with information about America. As Cornelius learned more about America and the many Mennonites already settled there, he began to seriously consider the possibility of relocating there with his family. Eventually, he became convinced that America represented the future for the Prussian and Russian Mennonites as a whole.



Silver wedding anniversary photo of Cornelius and Helena Jansen; standing left to right, Margaretha age 24, Peter age 21, John age 15, Anna age 17; sitting left to right, Cornelius Jr. age 9, Helena (von Riesen) age 51, (back) Cornelius Sr. age 51, (front) Helena age 14, Anna von Riesen (sister of Helena von Riesen Jansen)

Photo: May 4, 1873

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Most Prussian Mennonites of the time viewed the United States as a country “interesting for adventurers, an asylum for criminals”—suitable perhaps for the poor, but not for the more wealthy and established families. Between the Russian Mennonites and the American Mennonites there was no contact; however, some Prussian Mennonites had emigrated to America, and Cornelius Jansen exchanged letters with them.

Then a blow fell like lightning on the Russian Mennonite population: rumors said the privileges that had been promised the Mennonites forever would be ending soon. Military exemption was coming to an end, and the Mennonites would need to be Russianized by 1881. Seeking to verify the report, Cornelius put the question point-blank to the governor-general, who fully confirmed it.

This is when Cornelius Jansen’s life purpose unfolded into full flower. His work would be three-fold: to gather information on conditions in America; to influence the decisions of his Mennonite brothers in Prussia and Russia; and to contact government officials in Canada and the United States. Although he worked alone at first, his project would expand into one of the greatest Mennonite voluntary mass migrations in modern history.

It is important to note Jansen’s basic motive for the emigration: he was driven not by economic opportunity, but by the desire to preserve the freedom of conscience so vital to Mennonite faith and practice. The Russian reversal of their historic privileges offered Mennonites an opportunity to suffer for their convictions, exchanging their settled lives in Europe for a place where they could freely practice their faith.

Cornelius wrote, “The only testimony we can give, is to migrate like our fathers, and that I will do, my Lord

and my Savior helping me; and should I be deceived in my choice, and my children come into the same distress my testimony will make it easier for them to go on again. I did not teach them to strive after riches, but they also know well that nothing, nothing could press me to leave my good and comfortable position, except to preserve for me and for them the freedom of God’s children, the freedom of conscience.”

“ No one knows where he is going until he understands where he has come from.

~ *Chester Weaver*

Jansen had already begun to sell his property, preparing to leave for America in the spring of 1873, when another lightning bolt struck. On March 27, 1873 an officer in uniform accompanied by a soldier presented a letter to Cornelius Jansen. The letter stated that he and Wilhelm Loewens (another Prussian citizen) were spreading rumors and false ideas about Mennonite conditions in Russia and information about emigrating to America. They were to leave Russia and never return, and they had one week to comply. Because Cornelius was not a Russian citizen, the authorities did not dare exile him to Siberia, but he was required to accompany the officer to a photographer for pictures which would be duplicated at his own expense and publicly posted at the border crossings alongside other images of criminals banned from entering Russia. The influence of friends in the government earned Cornelius a two-month extension of the deadline to leave, allowing him time to wind up his business affairs and to dispose of the property that had not yet been sold. As word spread that Cornelius urgently needed to sell out, his remaining property values tumbled.

After completing the final arrangements, the Jansen family traveled back to Danzig in Prussia, where they stayed a month, fellowshipping with old acquaintances and family and then spending a few days in England before embarking by steamship for Canada, where Cornelius met other Mennonite delegations and threw himself into the task of scouting land and preparing for those who would follow him. Soon after his arrival in North America, Cornelius traveled to Washington, D.C. to seek an audience with President Grant. He acquired letters of introduction from several friends of the President, and was soon able to meet him in person to petition the US Government’s help on behalf of the Russian Mennonites.



**S/S CIRCASSIAN, THE STEAMSHIP THAT CARRIED
THE JANSENS FROM ENGLAND TO QUEBEC**

The letters of Cornelius's oldest son, Peter, who was 21 at the time, chronicle some of the many differences they observed between their homeland and the ways of North America. The American views on class and labor in particular required the Jansens to quickly adapt their European habits and expectations. For instance, Peter was puzzled by the lack of baggage carriers at the train station, where to his surprise the station master demanded his assistance to load the family's luggage from the platform into their vehicle. To Peter, the idea of an official doing manual labor, and furthermore expecting him to help, seemed very strange at first.

Later, when Peter and his father met President Grant at the White House, the President told them he could still hitch up and drive a team of horses as well as ever. The Minister of Agriculture told them he used to milk twenty cows by hand both morning and evening. Peter later commented, "You who never knew life in Europe, and especially Russia, can hardly imagine our surprise when these gentlemen gave us the impression that it was the usual thing for the highest officials of the United States and the Minister of Agriculture to do manual labor."

The two were also surprised at the way Americans went to church. In a letter to Amos Herr of Lancaster County, Cornelius wrote, "In the United States and Canada people enter the church buildings with their hats on and wear them until they sit down, sometimes keep them on even longer. And when friends meet they merely nod to each other with their head, only very seldom do they shake hands, and never remove their hats."

Referring to Lancaster County, he said, "Here like everywhere in America, the Mennonites have the best farms but do very little to educate their children." A Quaker had told Cornelius, "Your people in this land on the average have better farms than ours, but I think we do more for the education of our children."

Of all the land he considered in America, Cornelius Jansen liked Nebraska best. It was there that the family eventually purchased property and developed a prosperous sheep ranch.

Jansen died December 14, 1894, at 72 years old. C. B. Schmidt, the Kansas land agent for the Santa Fe Railroad, said of Jansen, "Was it not he who started the great emigration movement from Russia, and who in the interest and for the welfare of his people made the greatest sacrifices?" John F. Funk agreed: *"He lived not for himself."*

It is impossible to know the full extent of Cornelius Jansen's influence on the Russian Mennonite emigration, but it is clear that he played a key role, throwing his full energy into the search for a land where his people could

serve God according to their conscience. In the decade after he arrived in North America, approximately 18,000 Mennonites arrived and settled in the US and Canada, many of them aided by American Mennonites and Quakers who had been alerted to the need by Cornelius's tireless efforts.

Cornelius Jansen was an exceptional man. Although not a member of the learned societies, yet he studied and followed with intense interest all the spiritual movements, and out of it built his own Christian philosophy of life In him lived the old spirit found in members of the earlier Christian churches who were so severely persecuted."

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

- Hebrews 11:37-39

Space prevents us from telling here even one-fourth of the story of this remarkable life. The book *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874*, published in 1956, is unfortunately out of print, but is well worth reading for the full story if you can find a used copy.

- Chester Weaver | Grandview, Texas



QUICK BIO: Chester Weaver



Taught in various Christian Day schools and Bible Schools for decades and directs The Shepherd's Institute.

Enjoys Anabaptist history and theology.

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Advancing Technology: Johannes Gutenberg

by Terry Bauman

A&E TV Network lists Johannes Gutenberg as the number one most influential person in the Second Millennium (1001-2000 A.D.). Another ranking based on the book 1,000 Years, 1,000 People: Ranking the Men and Women Who Shaped the Millennium, published in 1998 by Kodansha International, again places Johannes Gutenberg at the top of their list.

In the following story, Brother Terry Bauman tells some of the details that made Gutenberg's invention and accomplishment such a stupendous achievement. And of special interest to us is that he used his wonderful technological advance to print Bibles. Cheaper Bibles and other literature made possible by Gutenberg's invention sparked the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Anabaptist movement. - AV Ed.



The 54-year-old man looked away from the hanging sheets of rag-cotton linen paper to gaze out in the distance at the hills north of Mainz, Germany. The year was 1452 and the rainy fall weather had raised the level of the Rhine River running in the foreground of his spectacular view.

His mind went back to the carefree times in his youth. While taking reprieves from being an apprentice to a goldsmith, he loved to paddle up the river in the family's row boat, or hike into the forested hills in the distance. He enjoyed overcoming the challenges posed by the natural terrain in the area, paddling further and further against the current and hiking to the highest peak in the area.

But now, his greatest challenge lay in the palm of his hand and his attention returned to the small block-like piece of alloy that he was holding. He leaned back against a wooden apparatus that resembled a wine press and picked up a magnifying glass to study the formation of the tiny block of alloy, which was a mix of tin, lead and antimony. From the face of the block protruded a shape that resembled the first letter in the Latin alphabet, the letter "A." After a few seconds, he quickly shifted his focus away from the letter to the adjustable mold on the workbench as he studied how precise the similarity was between the mold and the moveable type it had produced.

The concentration of Johannes Gutenberg was interrupted by a sharp knock at the door. He sighed inwardly while his apprentice Peter Schöffer stood up from the typeface he was designing and solemnly went to open the door of their private workshop. "Who would it be this time?" Gutenberg wondered.

"Good afternoon Peter!" Gutenberg tensed as he recognized the voice of Johann Fust, a rich goldsmith and lawyer.

"Soooo, how many of the 1,600 guilders which I loaned you, do you still have?" inquired Fust. "Oh, about 375" replied Gutenberg.

"Only three hundred and seventy-five! What have you been doing with all the money I've given you to pursue your dream of inventing a way to mass print books?" retorted Fust. "How could I have been so foolish as to loan you another 800 guilders this summer when I hadn't seen any progress from the first 800 guilders I loaned you two years ago? You are a true example of throwing good money after bad, just like my Dad warned me about when he was still here! May he rest in peace."

Gutenberg had become all too familiar with these visits by Fust, but tried to maintain his composure as he explained, "The oil base and other ingredients I bought to make the ink have cost more than we imagined they would, plus the handmade paper I have on order from Italy is the finest in the world and also very costly."

"That's what you always say," interrupted Fust.

"Why are you so worried about the money?" Gutenberg asked. "We are on the verge of perfecting a new style of printing. It is far superior to monks making hand copies

or laboriously carving wood blocks out for each page. In only three years we can print 180 copies of the Bible that will be worth far more than the 1600 guilders I owe you.”

“There you go dreaming again!” Fust exclaimed. It’s always the same story. You keep saying, ‘When I get it perfected.’ I want to see some results!”

Fust scrutinized the equipment and Gutenberg’s movements as he arranged various moveable-type letters into a tray like “type-case.” Then he inked a roller and rolled the ink onto the type-face before he carefully aligned the type-case in the printing press. Gutenberg then positioned a page of linen paper in the press and turned the handle to press the paper and typeface together.

The right amount of pressure was tricky so that the letters would come through crisp and clear with no ink markings between the letters or in the margins. Gutenberg released the pressure and Fust walked over so he could analyze the quality of the printed page. This copy was one of the best Gutenberg had pressed so far; the ink was evenly distributed and very little ink was on the margins. Fust grunted in approval and turned to leave; he gave Peter a short smile on the way to the door.

The following week, Gutenberg stepped into a bakery on his way home. The local priest cheerily greeted Johannes, “Well, whom do we have here? Are you here getting some of their delicious French bread?”

Gutenberg turned to answer Claus Berger, his childhood friend. “Yes, I’ve missed French bread ever since I moved back here from Strasbourg about 4 years ago. Then I found this bake shop operated by this family that moved here from France.”

“Well, they sure know how to use the sugar when they make it,” Claus stated. “but I like it that way. He patted his bulging tummy.

Gutenberg thought back to when they were boys and Claus would accompany him on his excursions up the Rhine and into the hills beyond. Claus was never a great asset on these trips, but he did bring good food and was decent at keeping track of the time. In other words, he made sure they had lunch and snacks on time (something Gutenberg had the tendency to forget in his world of imagination and exploration).

Else, Gutenberg’s mother, was his father’s second wife, and when Gutenberg reached adulthood he had adopted her maiden name as his surname. Else had always encouraged Johannes to take Claus along on his excursions because she knew he would get fed and would be home before dark.

Claus changed the topic from food to more pertinent issues. “By the way, what are you working on these days in your workshop? I heard tell you are trying to print a Bible with something that looks like a wine press.”

“True,” replied Gutenberg.

“Let me tell you something,” Claus continued, “you should stick with printing indulgences. That would be far more profitable than printing Bibles. People today are happy to part with their hard-earned money to indulge in a little sin. And I am happy to take their money and, uh, intercede for them.” The priest laughed dryly. “Besides, then you would have the full blessing of Nicolaus Cusanus, our prominent cardinal here in Germany. Cardinal Cusanus was really impressed with the indulgences you printed for him.”

Gutenberg felt a twinge of nausea at the thought of helping people sin. He had been privileged to have access to a Bible and had read large portions of the Old and New Testament and believed it would be better to provide the people the knowledge they need to avoid sin.

“I see the inventor is daydreaming again” said the priest. He fingered the gold chain hanging across his protruding belly. “Friend Gutenberg,” he continued, “I’ve warned you before that some in the parish, or even beyond, may interpret what you are doing as tampering with the Scriptures. I would sure hate to have to sit in court and testify in favor of the church against you.”

Gutenberg listened, but said nothing.

“I need to go home so I can enjoy my bread,” said the priest while he pulled on his gold chain tied to the crucifix. Gutenberg recognized the crucifix as custom made by his former employer.

During the next three years, Gutenberg made good technical progress with the printing press and the huge undertaking of printing the first 180 Bibles. To complete the first 42-line Bibles required 50,000 sheets of paper (each sheet made four pages), and the making and setting of around 2500 pieces of type for each of the 1286 pages. It is estimated that 25 workmen may have been needed to complete the Bibles in three years.

In 1455, as Gutenberg neared the completion of the mammoth printing of his 42-line Latin Bibles, Fust sued him for the immediate return of large sums of money. Since none of the Bibles could be sold before all the Bibles were completed and Gutenberg lacked the money to complete them, it seems likely that through his successful lawsuit Fust gained control of the business and the Bibles at a very opportune time. *[Is there anything new under the sun?]*

Using Gutenberg's inventions, Fust and Schöffer produced the Mainz Psalter (book of Psalms). Wikipedia says "The Psalter introduced several more innovations: it was the first book to feature a printed date of publication, a printed colophon, two sizes of type, printed decorative initials, and the first to be printed in three colors."

Gutenberg's dream was realized and his invention revolutionized the distribution of knowledge by making it possible to accurately produce many identical copies of a single work. Experts generally agree that this Bible displays a technical efficiency in printing that was not substantially improved upon until the 19th century.

In January 1465, Gutenberg's achievements were recognized and he was given the title Hofmann (gentleman of the court) by von Nassau. This honor included a salary, an annual court outfit, as well as 2,180 litres of grain and 2,000 litres of wine tax-free. Gutenberg died only three years later in 1468 and was buried in the Franciscan church at Mainz, his contributions largely unknown. This church and the cemetery were later destroyed, and Gutenberg's grave is now lost.

Gutenberg's invention eventually led to a rise in the number of people who could read because people had access to more books, especially the Bible in their native tongues. This played a key role in the success of the Protestant Reformation and the Anabaptist movement.

Paper

Gutenberg used fine, handmade paper imported from Italy. Each sheet has a watermark left by the paper maker, which can be seen when the paper is held up to the light. There are four different watermarks in this Bible: a bull's head, a trotting ox, and two variations of grape clusters. Gutenberg also devised an oil-based ink that would cling to type and was exceptionally dark.

Additions to the Text

Many features of the Gutenberg Bible were added by hand. These include rubrication—the addition of color to letters at the beginning of the sentences—and illuminations, large hand-painted initial letters with gold leaf at the beginning of each book of the Bible. These illuminations are found entirely in the first volume. Both volumes contain numerous marginalia, or handwritten additions to the text, such as directions as to which passages were to be used in church services on certain days.

In 2009, forty-nine copies of the 42-line Bible were known to exist, of which 21 are complete, some as close as New York City and Washington, D.C.

Gutenberg Bible Sales

Wikipedia says "The last sale of a complete Gutenberg Bible took place in 1978 (\$2.2 million). This copy is now in Stuttgart, Germany. The price of a complete copy today is estimated at \$25–35 million. Individual leaves now sell for \$20,000–\$100,000, depending upon condition and the desirability of the page. Eight leaves (the Book of Esther) from the fragment owned by the Collection of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York was sold in June 2015 by Sotheby's for \$970,000."

These sales are a tribute to the quality and beauty of the Gutenberg Bibles and to the revolutionary technology they represent. To us, they do not represent any special value in the Bible or its message.

- Terry Bauman | *Bethel, Pennsylvania*



GUTENBERG BIBLES FAST FACTS

- 1286: pages in a completed Bible
- 42: lines on most pages of each Bible
- 2,500: pieces of type per page
- 3: years wages for a clerk to purchase a Bible
- 50,000: sheets of paper used in the Bible project
- 3-5: years it took to print the Bible project
- 160-180: total Bibles printed in the project
- 49: copies in existence today; only 21 complete

GUTENBERG BIBLE PHOTO & FAST FACTS

HARRY RANSOM CENTER @ UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

Divine Plan: Die to Live

by Lester Troyer

I would like to respond to two questions taken from *Anabaptist Voice*, Issue 2. These two questions followed the article by Peter Hoover, “On Death and Dying”, page 32.

1. Should Anabaptists always pursue healing through advanced medical technology?
2. Should costs affect an Anabaptist’s medical decisions?

“And Asa ... was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.” - 2 Chronicles 16:12

Once I began looking for ways to answer the questions raised with Peter Hoover’s article, the search for answers spread into sundry areas.

I’ll begin with conclusions from personal experiences. Almost thirty-five years ago, I was facing serious heart-related issues that sidelined me from my normal work load. I made the choice not to pursue medical intervention. Instead, I had my co-minister do an anointing with oil in a Sunday morning service. I also went with a popular natural product that was touted as a cure all. This had more to do with gullibility than with faith, since I haven’t so much as heard of the product in many years. But over a period of weeks, I did regain normal health and strength.

Now fast forward to the present time of advancing age, and recurring evidence of heart / respiratory issues. Once more, I would refrain from common, but expensive procedures. I have also requested not to be resuscitated in case of a major medical emergency. The reasons are twain. The first has to do with finances. I don’t want my loved ones facing a gaping financial hole when I leave this earth. I’ve not seen fit to try to lay up reserves for retirement, or for expensive medical procedures because I haven’t found a biblical basis for doing so.

Neither can I expect others to shoulder responsibility for what I didn’t do for myself. In the case of aid from the brotherhood, one should also receive their counsel. Finally, I would want no part of a system of an unequal yoke with unbelievers, nor of government funding. As God-fearing people – with heaven as our goal, we would hardly be comfortable blurring the line separating church and government responsibility.



OH GRAVE, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?

I believe there are cost-effective measures where borrowing funds or arranging medical payments is legitimate. Medical emergencies like Caesarean sections, appendicitis, burns, and serious injuries come to mind. Things like hip and knee replacements could also come in this category. And because medical procedures are glaringly overpriced, I also believe that negotiating for discounts is legitimate.

The second, and greater reason for restraint, is the honor of God. God does have a divine plan for our lives – one that could be contrary to personal wishes. He is the authority on life and death, and would make his will known to us through prayer, anointing with oil, and godly counsel. When we are more concerned with the will of God than length of days, He can reward our faith and at the same time strengthen the faith of others. I pray that strengthening the faith of others will be a part of my legacy.

The following has been with me from younger days:

“Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”
- Psalm 71:18

- Lester Troyer | Stone Lake, Wisconsin



To win the battle;
We must surrender.

- seen on a gospel sign

Enslaving Information Technology

by Kyle Stoltzfus

Johannes Gutenberg's invention changed the world. People could use that technology for good or evil—to print Bibles and pamphlets or to print “The Communist Manifesto.”

Today we are faced with another great advance in technology. Will we recoil in fear of the evil of this advance or will we enslave the technology in order to advance the Kingdom of God? Kyle Stoltzfus has some thoughts on the matter. - AV Ed.

When I first attended Bible school in 2001 there were two digital cameras, a few laptops, and perhaps five cell phones among the student body. When I attended for a second term in 2005, most students had cell phones. Many of those phones pushed the cutting-edge with a recent innovation – the camera phone. I had joined the swelling ranks of laptop owners among the students by this time.

Jump forward to the present day. If the computing power of 210 of those ten-pound laptops were combined, they would be nearly as fast as Apple's most recent smartphone, the iPhone 7. In nine years 2100 pounds of computing power has been condensed into a 4.9-ounce device that allows the user to make phone calls, browse the internet, take pictures, and do other tasks unimaginable only years ago.

The rate at which information technology has matured is astonishing. Accompanying changes in the way we do business, communicate, and relax are no less staggering. Taken together, the pace and scale of these changes get the force they deserve with the term revolutionary. And indeed, this is exactly the title applied to the span of time I describe – the information revolution.

Revolutions are jarring times. Patterns of life are disrupted. Old ways of thinking are replaced by new ones. The information revolution has occurred quickly. But we quickly forget. In this turbulent time of revolution, we are easily jarred into an unreflective stupor as wave upon wave of innovation overwhelms long-held community and personal practices.

What Is Technology Doing to Me?

We must face it. No amount of hand-wringing about the impact of technology on us or our communities is particularly helpful. Granted, if we do not pay attention

to how technology will change us, we will be shaped by the world's values. It's up to us as Kingdom Christians to decide how the information revolution will affect us and how we will use it to build the Kingdom of God.

Appealing to the Scriptures

Let us look to the Scriptures to find some direction. We can then make conscious choices about how we will use the technology that is shaping the world around us.

The creation story in Genesis 2 gives some impression of God's intentions for man before the fall. God wanted man to voluntarily worship Him and fellowship with Him while extending His purposes in creation. In Luke 10:25-28 Jesus affirmed this as God's ultimate purpose for creating mankind while adding additional clarity. *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself”.*

Faithful use of technology, then, will be found within the purposes of these (and many other) Scriptures.

Enslaving Information Technology

These simple Scriptures, when expanded and applied, can offer a surprising amount of clarity to our use of technology. Here are some principles which I feel flow naturally from God's creation-intentions for mankind and Jesus' expansion and fulfillment of them.

1. Information technology must bring me closer to the full potential God has in mind for redeemed man.
 - a. It must nourish the will. It must lead to freedom of the will and not into the bondage of sin.
 - b. It must enlarge the ability to sustain attention on one task for extended periods of time.
 - c. It must enrich the ability to be moved emotionally and not numb the senses.
2. The use of information technology must increase my attachment to the brotherhood.
 - a. It should promote reliance on those present in my brotherhood who can be relied on to help sharpen a chainsaw, balance my checkbook, or understand an obscure passage of Scripture.
 - b. It should NOT extend my own opinions without submitting them to the brotherhood. Our

Christian brothers and sisters fill a vital role when they disrupt our biases.

- c. It should not allow me to develop far-flung relationships that displace those close to me.
3. The use of information technology must increase my delight in the things of God.
 - a. It should increase my time spent in Bible study and worship.
 - b. It should enhance my sensitivity to beauty, my awareness of God's providence, and my capacity to relish my relationship with God.
4. The use of information technology should increase my desire and ability to help others – near and far – with both physical and spiritual needs.
 - a. It must provide a setting in which children can grow and flourish. Technology is not an equal substitute for interaction with the physical world or for parental care.
 - b. It must not only be a window through which we gaze at the depravity of the world, but must offer a real way to call men to repentance and deliverance from a life of sin.

Ultimate Responses

We can deal with electronic books, telephones, computers, and the internet by using them with moderation. Be harsh with them. Be demanding of them. Force them into submission to the gospel. And where you can't do this, discard them. If internet access offends you, pluck it out, and cast it away. It is better to enter the Kingdom of Heaven without Facebook than to have 1,000 friends and be cast into hell.

We must use information technology only when it builds the Kingdom of God. If we do this, the internet, like Gutenberg's printing press, can be a powerful tool that enables us to reach out with the Good News in ways hitherto unavailable to mankind.

Romans 12:2 illuminates how this may come about. "Do not be conformed to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing, and perfect will."

God intends for us to be transformed, bearing again His image, thinking His thoughts after Him, loving His loves, desiring His goals, and chasing His purposes in His church. We are to be transformed.

When we make conscious choices about technology – what we should look at, for how long, or when considering the purchase of a new device – we must learn to ask with

consistency whether the choice we are entertaining will form our heart after the desires, impulses, allegiances, and commitments of God. We must learn to ask whether the choice we are considering will transform us to bear His image, think His thoughts after Him, love His loves, desire His goals, or pursue His purposes.

So, when you next make a decision about information technology, ask yourself with one eye and a single mind, "Can I enslave information technology to serve the purposes of the Gospel, or will I be enslaved by it?"

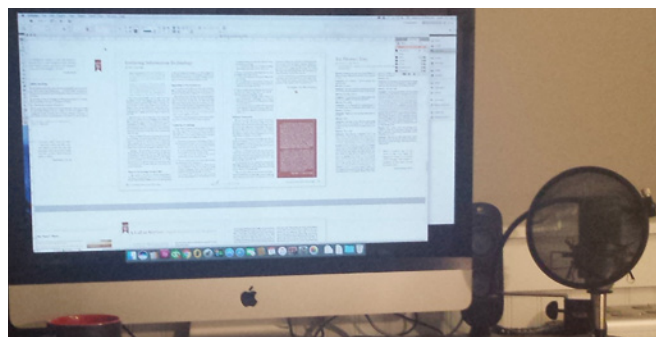
- Kyle Stoltzfus | *Guys Mills, Pennsylvania*



If we would chart the development of print technology from millennia prior to Gutenberg in the 15th century to the advent of digital layout and printing less than 50 years ago, we would see a graph that rockets upward at a faster and faster rate. The technology of today's "desktop publishing" tools and tomorrow's flexible display and 3d printing technologies may have a more significant impact on society than did Gutenberg's press. This possibility makes Kyle Stoltzfus' statement above; **"We must use information technology only when it builds the Kingdom of God."** of utmost importance.

Anabaptist Voice is a direct beneficiary of the increase in print/publishing technology. We use email to collect articles and collaborate with authors efficiently and quickly. We use simple word processing software like *Word* or *Pages* to edit the articles, photo editing software like *Photoshop* to clean up and resize pictures, and complex layout software like *Indesign* to design the magazine with color and text and pictures. By using technology and God-given talents, we will get the next issue of *Anabaptist Voice* on its way to you!

- Arlan Riehl | *AV Layout & Design*





A Call to Service: Plain Compassion Crisis Response

By request from PCCR we are printing this call to service. We recommend that each person considering serving with PCCR makes sure that he or she has the blessing of the elders in their congregation before going. -AV. Ed.

Plain Compassion Crisis Response (PCCR) was organized as a non-profit organization on September 29, 2014. The purpose is to provide international disaster response as a means of showing God's love and opening doors to spread the Gospel. The need that presents itself now is the refugee crisis in the Middle East, specifically in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq. The leadership of PCCR is a group of brothers from the plain communities of Lancaster, Franklin, and Blair counties of Pennsylvania and Cleveland, North Carolina.

It seems to us that the Lord had been preparing the way for this endeavor for a number of years. In 2003, one of the founding members, who was from the Mennonite community, sensed a call from God to recruit and train volunteers from the plain communities to go to the unreached areas of the 10/40 Window. This is an area 10 to 40 degrees north of the equator where some of the greatest spiritual darkness in the world remains. Unsure how to proceed, he began praying. In 2007, a door was opened to Kurdistan, Northern Iraq. In the summer of 2014 various parts and persons came together serving the Back to Jerusalem mission (the mission of Bro. Yun, 'The Heavenly Man') on an international disaster rebuilding project. This began the dialogue and team building which put the pieces in place to respond to the refugee crisis in Iraq that unfolded in the late summer of 2014. Since first helping in Iraq, Plain Compassion has tried to help others through responding to several crises.



Past Project: Iraq

In Iraq, PCCR originally partnered with Med-East to set up a camp to house refugees forced from their homes. We helped with regular food distributions. Volunteers worked with the refugees to seal the houses, which often had no windows or doors, to protect against the cold winters. This, along with kerosene distributions, helped the refugees make it through the cold winters. Operations at this refugee camp have been taken over by another nonprofit focused on long term help.



Past Project: Nepal

PCCR helped in Nepal after the devastating earthquake in 2015. Most of the aid was directed to remote villages in the Surtung and Lapu area. Volunteers traveled to villages, where they assisted in cleaning up, building shelter, and coordinating helicopter drops of food. The teams also distributed corrugated roofing material to prepare 190 homes for the rainy season.

Current Project: LA Flood Cleanup

Just a few months ago, a 500-1000 year flood swept over 110,000 houses in Louisiana. Most received 3-4 feet of water, causing a lot of damage to the ground floor. These houses need cleaned up, and we have a team that is helping in the region. Most people do not have insurance and have lost a lot. Our efforts here are dependent on volunteers and funds dedicated for this project.

Current Project: Houses of Hope

The biggest project of PCCR is rebuilding houses for the Yezidi people returning to their homes in Sinjar, Iraq. The town of Sinjar recently came under Kurdish control,

allowing some of the refugees to safely return to their homes. However, the town has been badly damaged, with many homes completely trashed and most of the industrial sections leveled. We have many requests for help and have just gotten started. The cleanup process starts by cleaning all of the debris out, then pressure washing the walls to clean off smoke residue and disinfect everything. Broken windows and doors, along with other minor problems, are repaired to make the finished houses ready for returning families. At this time, around 100 families have moved back with help from PCCR, and we plan on helping as many more as possible.



Volunteer Opportunity: Houses of Hope

“Currently Sinjar is in ruins, but we are busy cleaning up and repairing houses for those who have been living in camps on the mountain. We clean out the trash, ashes, scattered food products, half burnt doors, furniture and broken glass. Sometimes the houses are almost totally covered with black soot, then we wash all the walls and floors. The Project Coordinator has a good system going to clean out houses and get them repaired as we go. This brings a little bit of variety into our lives. Instead of constantly breathing in ashes and pushing wheel barrows as we clean houses, we switch off with washing out houses and installing glass.”

“My experience with Iraqis has been different from what I anticipated. People are very welcoming and very warm and friendly. It makes me realize how much everyone is the same. This includes soldiers and other fighters. They are also people with the same needs as us

but they believe lies from Satan. May the word of God go forth to the nations.”

Volunteer Opportunity: V.S. Workers

We have two types of international volunteers, long-term and short-term. A long-term volunteer is an individual committing to two months or more. The long term staff form a foundation for disaster relief efforts in a region and are augmented by the short term teams. These volunteers go through a mandatory orientation, with the rest of the details worked out individually. A short-term volunteer team generally is gone around three weeks. This length is fairly consistent due to visa restrictions. We have a mandatory orientation, and the cost to cover the trip is around \$1500 per volunteer. This covers plane tickets overseas, transportation, and lodging. These teams go to assist long-term volunteers and work on ongoing disaster relief projects.

If you are interested in volunteering internationally, would like our newsletter, or would like to arrange a slide show presentation for spreading the word about PCCR in your community, please see our contact info below.

Comments from a Board Member:

As we walk with the Lord, He will teach us what it means to abide in the vine so that we can bear much fruit. Jesus said, *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”* To abide in the Lord is to spend all our time with Him, in His business. If we do this, we will bear much fruit: that is a promise. Let us be busy about the Father’s business so that we can be profitable servants for the Lord.

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A CALL TO SERVICE:

Anabaptist Voice needs the assistance of another editor and designer/layout tech to work with current staff. Requirements are: volunteer (without pay), experience with Pages/Word or InDesign, and Mac capable. **Contact James Landis if interested.**

Call It Sin

by Menno Knight

We shy away from the three-letter word SIN.

- We call gluttony overeating instead of SIN.
- We call drunkenness a hereditary disease instead of SIN.
- We call tracking worldly celebrities and politicians “knowing what’s going on” instead of SIN.
- We call big game hunting a sport instead of SIN.
- We call it poor stewardship when people overspend on cars and trucks. We should call it SIN.
- We call it relaxation when people travel to worldly hotspots on cruises and tours. We should call it SIN.
- We call it investment when people gamble on the stock and real estate markets. We should call it SIN.
- We call it bad judgment when a brother overspends by borrowing or by bad use of credit cards. We should call it SIN.
- We may call a bossy woman “out of place” instead of SINful.
- We call the lack of a woman’s head covering a different interpretation. We should call it SIN.
- Some call homosexuality an alternate lifestyle instead of SIN.
- Some call adultery “unfaithfulness” instead of SIN.
- Some call abortion “woman’s choice.” We ought to call it SIN.
- Many call fighting in the armed forces “serving.” We ought to call it “murder” and SIN.



BIG GAME HUNTING

SPORT? WASTEFUL? RECREATION? OR SIN!

Why is it that we shy away from that short three-letter word SIN?

The prophets of the Old and New Testaments used SIN freely. Consider how, over and over again, the Holy Writ speaks of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat—he built golden calves at Dan and Beth-el—as “the one who made Israel to SIN” (I Kings 12:30; 13:34; 14:16; 15:26, 30, 34; 16:2, 13, 19, 26; 22:52; II Kings 3:3; 10:29, 31; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:6, 14:24; 15:28; 17:21; 23:15). That’s just the times God referred to Jeroboam the son of Nebat, but the word is used often throughout the Old Testament.

Jesus himself used the word SIN numerous times to describe evil conduct.

These quotes from the book of John will suffice to prove the point. “SIN no more” (John 5:14). “He who is without SIN among you ... go and SIN no more” (John 8:7, 11). “Whoever commits SIN is a slave of SIN” (John 8:34). “Which of you convicts Me of SIN?” (John 8:46). “Neither did this man SIN” (John 9:3). “If ye were blind, ye should have no SIN ... therefore your SIN remains” (John 9:41). “Now they have no excuse for their SIN” (John 15:22). “He will convict the world of SIN” (John 16:8). “The one who delivered me to you has the greater SIN” (John 19:11).

Is calling evil SIN something that only Jesus had the divine authority to do? It does not appear to be so from the words of the prophets in the early church.

The book of Acts starts right off with outspoken Peter putting it on the line. Crucifixion! Murder! Those charges were not soft spoken words that allowed the guilty to evade repentance. And when the guilty came in penitence and asked what they should do, Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of SINS” (Acts 2:38).

The cornered leaders of the Jewish Sanhedrin understood well the bold charges against them by unlearned fishermen. They said, “[You] intend to bring this Man’s blood on us” (Acts 2:28).

And Peter did not try to soften the blow with soft or roundabout words. Instead tactless Peter restated the charge and added to it. “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of SINS” (Acts 5:30, 31).

And Stephen with his dying breath, cried out, “Lord, do not charge them with this SIN” (Acts 7:60). SIN! That was a haunting charge to those who hurled the stones and to those who only stood by guarding the coats. Paul never did forget his having a part in that murder (Acts 22:20; 26:10).

Romans is full of the word SIN. Toward the end of the book in Romans 14:23, Paul concludes the chapter with the astounding statement, “Whatever is not from faith is SIN. That’s pretty broad and it should authorize a rather free use of the word.

But if Romans 14:23 is not broad enough, I John 5:17 should empower us to use the word SIN regularly. This scripture says, “All unrighteousness is SIN.”

Now then, I will return to the beginning of this treatise and ask the question again, “Why do we back off from using the word SIN to describe any evil act or thought?”

The word SIN bites. It is judgmental. It calls for repentance. It seems to elevate the one who proclaims the message above those who hear the word.

Yes, SIN is judgmental. Saying that anything is under the wrath of God and will send a person to hell is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. But when a thing is plainly spoken to in the Scripture, it is not we who are judging. The Word of God, Jesus Christ, has already decided it.

Calling a specific evil, SIN, maddens those whom it judges. Many preachers can preach every Sunday in almost any church without convicting the hearers. They speak in general terms and thus do not irritate their listeners. They are good popular preachers and their message is well received. But they are not prophets that call men to repentance by naming specific evils SIN. Prophets who do name specific SINS may lose their influence or their jobs. People think they’re too “radical” or they need more “balance.”

It’s much safer to teach that Adam is responsible for our sins and not we ourselves. And the doctrine that once we are “saved” we will always be saved, covers a multitude of SINS. And many believe there is always abounding grace that covers continuing in disobedience to the commands of God. So it’s easier for a preacher to proclaim the love of God and His all-inclusive grace than it is to start naming specific SINS.

That goes for all of us, not just the preachers. In the kitchen, on the farm, at the sale, in the grocery store, and on the road, we should be ready to use the word SIN. It will cost us the approval of many people, but it will also call men to repentance and challenge them to holy living.

We may also hesitate to call another’s evil works SIN because we’re afraid it will bring on personal attacks against our own little “inconsistency.” Many follow up their general statements against evil with easy-speak that sounds something like, “We’re all sinners saved by grace.” In the vernacular that means, “You’re not so bad after all.”

Many also believe that we’re all sinners and living in SIN. They say we’ve each got our own blind spots and willingly point them out to us. If it is SIN we’re harboring, we should repent of it and walk in newness of life, pure and holy in the power of the Spirit. We must be free of any willful SIN if we are to show a blameless example to others, and not be spiritually maimed and void of the Holy Spirit when we proclaim the gospel to others.

By its very nature, preaching and teaching that a specific sin is SIN calls for repentance. True repentance is a very humbling thing. Human nature doesn’t like to confess SIN and abandon it. Human nature doesn’t want to enter God’s kingdom as an unworthy servant. Many on the broad way want to slide into God’s kingdom by the back door without abandoning their past sins. Repentance and entering God’s kingdom always calls for the abandonment of known SIN.

Another reason we hesitate to call sin SIN is because it stirs up trouble. Calling “military service” SIN is just unthinkable for the heathen and the majority of Christians. Condemning SIN in the lives of rulers and calling for repentance will cause hatred. Grave consequences like extra taxes, confiscation of property, and personal harm will result from such troublesome preaching. Yet, because Jesus promised us we shall suffer for his sake when we preach his kingdom, we should not be deterred from calling sin SIN for fear of the consequences. The early church did not pray for tact and a more loving spirit. The believers prayed for boldness.

Like a house on fire or a house eaten away by termites, SIN is damning. Do we really believe that SIN will send people to hell? If we believe that eternal punishment is in store for those who willfully disobey God’s commands, we will not hesitate to name it SIN and to call all men everywhere to repentance.



Sharing Your Faith: Homeschool Encounters

by Michele Thiessen

It's been just 4 years since my husband Ben and I made our first connection with the minister of Lighthouse Mennonite Church in Nova Scotia. Since then, we've been following God's leading as we made changes in our lives so we could more perfectly be a part of God's kingdom and not a part of the world we came from. Just 8 months ago we were taken in as members of Lighthouse Mennonite Church. Throughout this journey, I've noticed that the way I dressed frequently grabbed people's attention and created many opportunities for conversation.

Two occasions where I had the privilege of telling others about my faith were at homeschool conventions here in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. When I learned that some from our church were going to the conventions to represent both Rod and Staff Publishers and Christian Light Publications, I asked to go along.

Upon arrival at the first convention, we busied ourselves setting up our display. When that was completed, I went to talk to two vendors I personally recognized from conventions I had attended years ago. I went first to the "Tree of Life" display.

Deb seemed to recognize me as I approached. I said, "I'm not sure if you remember me at all, Deb, but we've met at several home school conventions in Red Deer, Alberta." I repeated my name and Deb said that I definitely looked familiar to her. I offered that perhaps my clothing was causing some confusion. That's when I explained that I wasn't always dressed in a cape dress and head covering. It was this statement that allowed me to go right into sharing my testimony of how God led both my husband and I into the Conservative Mennonite Church after more than 30 years of attending a mainstream Christian church.



MORE THAN PURCHASING SUPPLIES?

Next, I headed toward the "Math-U-See" display. The rep greeted me warmly and asked, "Are you familiar with the curriculum?"

"Indeed I am!" I replied. "I've been using this curriculum for years teaching my own children." We carried on some general conversation about the curriculum and then I moved on.

At the second convention, I went to greet these same vendors again. This time I sat down and our dialogue included questions such as, "How long have you been involved with selling 'Math-U-See'?" and "Is Math-U-See' very popular here on the East Coast?"

"How long have you been in Nova Scotia?" she asked. "We have been in Nova Scotia four years," I answered, "but my mother had settled in Nova Scotia eight years ago. She encouraged us to move near her, and because of our interest in moving to Nova Scotia, we made contact with the Lighthouse Mennonite Church just outside Pictou."

The doors eventually swung wide open for us to move to Nova Scotia. After the long trek across Canada, we were glad to be close to my mother and to become a part of the Mennonite community here."

The "Math-U-See" vendors listened to my story with interest. "We've seen the Mennonites come to the conventions but never really had the opportunity to learn about them," they explained to me. "It was such a pleasure to talk with you and hear how God has changed your life! Thank you for sharing!"

Back at the first convention, I made my way over to "The Learning House" display. The helpful rep asked, "Do you need any help in finding something?"

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

"I am looking for audio book stories to add to my collection," I replied. "I recently made the decision to stop watching videos and discovered that I enjoy listening to books read to me on tape or CD while I busy myself working at home." This explanation caused my conversation with Angela to go deeper.

Now I had the opportunity to explain how God led us from living the common worldly way to living with conservative Mennonites. I told her, "Our people purposely choose to live a plain and simple way, separating ourselves from much of the world and its attractions to entertainment and technology."

Angela was captivated as I shared more of the changes we chose to make in order for us to become members of our local church community. She assured me of her interest in what I had told her and then expressed hope that she would see me again at the next convention in two weeks.

We did meet again and this time Angela had more questions for me. I answered them as best I could, and she thanked me once more for my candid way of sharing my faith and new walk with God.

As I stood at our display, I thought of the times I was the parent looking for good curriculum to use with my children. I recalled seeing the Rod & Staff display many times but each time I approached, the vendors seemed too shy or scared to strike up a conversation with me. At the time, I had many questions about who they were and why they dressed the way they did. I remember walking away from each convention wondering and wishing I had found out more about those different people in plain clothes. These memories prompted me to not let someone else walk away not knowing more about who we represented.

With a smile on my face, I approached the people who were brave enough to pick up our books and peruse them. Or, I would spot people who were glancing our way from a distance and appeared to be interested. I didn't wait for them to come to me, I went to them.

It was easy to go up to these people and ask, "Are you familiar with Rod & Staff material?" Most replied that they were familiar with it and some shared that they loved it and had been using it for years.

Others replied, "No, I've seen it, but never really looked at it before now."

I replied, "I know what you mean! I was the same way when I was searching for curriculum."

"You home schooled?" was the common query. That gave me an open door to tell them that until just four years ago, I too was a homeschool mom looking for good

quality, God-centered curriculum. Then things changed for me when I began to find out about Mennonite people and what they had to offer homeschoolers. My testimony usually followed shortly after that.

The coordinator of the home school convention in Halifax was very interested in my head covering. She told me that she and other ladies in her church had done a study on 1 Corinthians 11 and she asked about my convictions. I was able to share my story of how, after 20 years of marriage, my husband and I also were drawn to study that Scripture passage regarding the head covering.

After reading I Corinthians 11, my husband asked me, "Would you consider wearing a covering for my sake?" I agreed that I would. But he did not stop there. Next he asked, "Will you also stop wearing pants and put on dresses instead!"

The convention coordinator said, "I am impressed with how you allowed the Bible to change your lives. But I don't think the verses convict me enough to do it myself."

At the shutting down of the convention, the coordinator expressed her delight in getting to know more about our community. She said, "I hope that I'll see you again next year. Your smiles, friendly manner, and willingness to talk about your faith and life was a blessing to us all."

I look forward to many more opportunities to share our story with others I meet. I do ask God often to give me the chance to give Him the glory for the changes He's led us through. May we all take courage in reaching out to the world around us and be the "touchable light" that God desires us to be. I encourage us all to be willing to share our stories with others. God bless!

- Michele Thiessen | Nova Scotia, Canada



Some questions I have found useful in talking to people about things beside the weather, money, and politics are:

1. What do you know about the Mennonites?
2. Do you know why we dress different from the world?
3. Do you believe there is a Creator God?
4. How do you know the difference between right and wrong?

— AV Ed.

Sharing Your Faith: A Park Encounter

by Miriam Moyer



That day I wanted a bought hamburger. I prayed about it and asked the Lord if I should spend His money to buy one. Since I live alone, the thought came to me that if

I drove to the park and ate the hamburger there, maybe I would have the opportunity to share spiritually with someone.

Feeling that I had God's blessing for buying the hamburger, I drove the nine miles to the Dairy Queen and bought one. Having my drink with me and my hamburger in hand, I pulled in at the town park. It was a busy place with children playing on the equipment, a stroller being pushed on the track, and others that meant business in their jogging. Only one woman sat under the pavilion. I took a seat two tables behind her, opened my sandwich and bowed in prayer. I commenced eating while reading my book intermittently.

Once when the lady's son ran up to her, I heard her say, "She's reading." Hearing that, I made reply, "I'm reading but that isn't real important. I just brought my book along." That gave me an opportunity to open a conversation. Although the two of us were total strangers and she appeared much younger than I, we found much to talk about—our schooling, our health, our surgeries, our backgrounds, how we took care of our parents until death, our churches—just anything.

Then my new 37-year-old friend and I began to discuss spiritual things. As soon as things turned to personal matters, she came up with the inevitable statement that we've all likely heard it. "Well," she said, "we'll all get to heaven. It just matters how we believe."

"But," I responded, "we have to live according to the Bible. God is the one who sets the rules."

Her response was firm. "I believe that too."

"And we can't change the rules," I affirmed. "We have to go by God's standard."

"And I wouldn't want to change them either. In fact, we dare not," was her conclusion.

In our earlier conversation, she had told me that she had never become a Christian. I knew she had no front to hide behind. I nodded my head to her statement and added, "But many churches have changed and taken on

their own pattern of acceptable attitudes, conduct, and dress."

Her next sentences shook me to the core, and I believe God spoke to me through her. She threw out her hands as she said, "We all know you Mennonites live by the Bible more than any other churches around here. But," she hesitated, "I want to say this right." She hesitated again, then finished with, "But you make us feel like we might get there anyway."

Whoa. What was she saying? She said that we Mennonites believe and practice the Bible. Yes, but in our witness to our community friends we make them feel accepted to the point that they will get to heaven as they are. Is that what she said?

It was my turn to speak next and I asked, "Do you then think we should be more pointed in showing others the Bible way and the need to obey?"

"It seems like it," was her answer.

We talked on, about how churches change as men's hearts are drawn to want to be like the world. She had no profession to hide behind and she talked openly. She did not need to say much more. She had driven two truths home to me.

1. I am afraid to point my friends to Bible truths because I do not want to offend them.

2. I am afraid to call others to repentance and surrender lest our friendship dissipate.

I've often counted myself an "encourager." I admit to a fear of stepping on toes. Nudging and encouraging can be okay, but if the person continues to "stand still" maybe they need more than that. My friend in the park taught me that I must care enough about the eternity of a soul to call them to repentance, surrender, and obedience?

I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:1-2).

This beautiful Scripture calls me to stand before God and bow to His pattern. God is who we must please to make it through to heaven."

- Miriam Moyer | Leburn, Kentucky

What Jesus Would Do!

by Matthew Bauman

Jesus would be about His Father's business; never thus consumed
With cares of life or vain pursuits which mortals have assumed.
He'd heal the sick, the lame, the blind; with miracles, perhaps;
But how much more, the broken hearts with sin to soon collapse!
He'd preach the gospel to the poor, and sanctify the meek,
And urge the unemployed to haste, and soon His kingdom seek.

Jesus would teach His pupils in the realm of kingdom life,
To concentrate their hearts and minds above this earthly strife.
And with regards to social ills, He'd hardly bat an eye,
"Just pay your taxes when they're due, and let the rest pass by;
Humanity's lone remedy is healing from their sin,
So keep your savor, shine your light, and don't turn back again!"

Jesus would pray throughout the day, and sometimes all the night.
Our precious Lord and Master would procure the Father's might,
With prayer and supplication for the help that He would need,
To manifest the Father's love by ev'ry word and deed;
And intercession for His own that none would drift astray,
But that the work would carry on when He would go away.

Jesus would give compassion and love—these He'd still extend,
But would offer firm rebuke to those who merely yet pretend.
To those who bar the kingdom's door, or lead the blind astray,
The Master's harshest words would soon speedily fly their way.
He'd warn against deception's threat; undoubtedly, He'd share
The fixed command to watch and still engage in fervent prayer.
Above all else, He'd live the Truth, as peaceful as a dove,
And sacrifice His life, somehow, in pure, unselfish love.

Beloved soul, aspiring to walk the narrow way,
Be molded in the image we've attempted to portray;
It's now become an empty phrase and overused cliché,
But blest who do, what He would do, if He were here today.

Quentin Williams
This image not to be copyrighted



The Practical Side

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

— Colossians 3:17

This recurring feature in *Anabaptist Voice* consists of three parts.

1. **The Rest of the Story;** what actually happened.
2. **Reader Responses;** feedback on previous stories.
3. **New Stories;** situations met by today's Anabaptists.

Here is your chance to help others live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ “right in the corner where you are.” This section is not for some idealistic future kingdom posing theological complicated questions with no good answers—for example, the woman who had seven brothers as husbands (*Matthew 22:24-28*).

Take the time to write *Anabaptist Voice* and share your situations where you faced a difficulty ... and failed, or won a victory. As you ponder the situations in these stories and then share your answers and experiences with others, remember the words of Jesus when He told the packed out house, “**My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s Word and put it into practice**” (*Luke 8:21*).



THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF LIFE

THE PRACTICAL SIDE | The Rest Of the Story

What really happened with “Taking The Bait” from Issue #2.



Taking The Bait | by Coon Trapper

The eye is like a lamp for the body. Suppose your eyes are healthy. Then your whole body will be full of light. But suppose your eyes can't see well. Then your whole body will be full of darkness. If the light inside you is darkness, then it is very dark! - Matthew 6:22-23

Noticing what cell phones, computers, and internet were doing to my business, my friends, and my family, I made a decision to cut my technology conveniences.

I got rid of the cell phone and replaced it with a mobile home phone connect and a cordless phone. It serves the purpose well, but I will not carry this bulky thing to town. It is strictly for business communication which is exactly what we are supposed to use it for.

After five years of use, I can assure hooked cell phone users that this system works. I have found it liberating to not be tied to a phone at all times, yet when I need one it is available.

As to the computer, I have found that I use my time a lot better when I do my research on a public computer. When I use a public computer, I don't spend as much time looking up points of interest, but spend more of my time studying only the research I was particularly interested in.

Our family life has also improved since I got rid of the internet and cell phones. We have more time to talk to each other and be involved in each other's lives. We do not need to worry that our children are being hooked on games and pornography right in our own office or house.

So I'm all for backing away from technology if it destroys our family life, steals our time from reading good books, and tempts us to sin.



Bridling The Horse | by Can B. Bridled

I'm new to the Mennonite community of Christians. I've used computers for business, education, and now work for over 16 years. Since I work from home via my computer, I've run into some of the same concerns Brother Trapper has, and would offer the following.

1. Right now, I live in an area that does not have cell service, so it's fairly useless for me to own a cell phone.
2. It can be very addictive to try new technology, but I ask myself, “What, exactly, do I truly need?” For me, a computer is it. A computer is a tool that can be incredibly useful, but care must be taken with it. A rifle is a powerful means of hunting deer, but it, like a computer, must be introduced to young people with care and caution.
3. Children need to be constantly supervised while using the computer—blocks don't catch everything. Just as you would not have a youth use a chainsaw for the first time without some guidance, don't let a child have access to a computer unsupervised.
4. Brother Trapper should carefully decide what tools truly help him run a more efficient business, and then sell [or scrap] what he doesn't need for the business.
5. Limit the amount of time you spend on the computer. Think of the computer as you would a library; you check out only a few books at a time. Moderation in all things is good. One should fill his mind, and the minds of his children with only those things worthy of God. I don't read everything in a newspaper and the same applies to computer use.
6. While church accountability is helpful (*I've signed an accountability agreement*), the individual user of a computer is responsible for his own use and ultimately answerable to God for how he uses it.



Restrictions | by On A. Leash

Coon Trapper's predicament is too typical of many professing believers. Kingdom Christians do well to keep some distance from the constantly new realm of technology. This allows us to evaluate whether there is legitimate need and safe methods of control. At the same time, we cannot turn back the calendar and live in a world without digital technology.

I believe now is the time to find safety in our brother's counsel, in submitting to the guidelines of a Biblical church. Now is the time to emphasize hiding God's Word in our hearts and sensing deeply our accountability to God and each other. We cannot hand our children a set of rules that will protect them in this digital age, but we can help them put the Word of God into their hearts.

On the practical side, I've used email (with internet browsing blocked) for some time, and have never had unsolicited mail unless I had given my address to a store. I've never seen inappropriate advertisements pop up. I've used a limited amount of texting. Again, inappropriate messages have not been a problem. I've never had a data plan on my phone. If I understand correctly, I cannot receive pictures without a data plan, which safeguards from receiving pornographic texts.

So, employ the safeguards that are available, yet equip yourself and your children to handle the exposure they are sure to face in this world of ours.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE | Reader Responses

Readers responses to “Taking The Bait” from Issue #2.



Safeguards | by Liv Safe Lee

I agree that having the Internet makes for a host of judgment calls that must be recognized and weighed wisely. In the case of smartphones, our brotherhood has appointed two brothers to oversee an accountability and filtering plan for each one of our phones. I am one of those appointed brothers, and I am largely pleased with the system we are using (Mobicip). I can easily scan everyone's activity in a weekly report on Saturday and note any concerning activity. The two of us on the “Smartphone Committee” have agreed that we will not check out any questionable links unless we are together, for our own spiritual safety.

This system has been working for at least a year, and we now have about 20 phones from around our local brotherhood being monitored and filtered by it. Yes, on a few occasions we have had to tap some shoulders. But those times where I have called a brother to account have always served to strengthen the bond between us, and their Saturday reports have always taken a definite turn for the better after accountability hits home. From experience, I wholeheartedly recommend a brotherhood accountability plan that is administrated by people who care enough to make it happen and love enough to make it uplifting.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE | New Stories

Readers share a story and ask practical questions.

Covered | by May B. Different

I have been following Jesus in the way of the Anabaptists for about three years now. This includes the wearing of a head-covering. I have a question in regards to the head-coverings I see in Anabaptist circles. At what point in history did the head-covering style go from actually covering the head to becoming merely a symbol of a covering? It seems that the head used to actually be covered until recent history.

To me, what I see worn as a “head-covering” does not cover the head at all. It is merely a symbol of a covering. Whether cap-style or hanging veil, only the back of the head and perhaps the bun are covered and not the head. Scripture says that the covering is a symbol. If we wear a symbol of a covering instead of an actual covering is that sufficient obedience to God's Word?

Scripture does not say to wear a symbol of a head-covering; it says that to cover the head is a symbol. If one interprets this passage as requiring a symbol of a covering only, then size and style do not matter at all. Can we read these verses (*I Corinthians 11:1-16*) objectively (*not influenced by upbringing, tradition or personal preference*) and conclude that it teaches to wear a symbol of a covering? Is there integrity if we preach obedience to God's Word yet the heads are not actually covered?

I would like to suggest (*coming to this from a non-Anabaptist background*) that it would be preferable to err on the side of being too literal than to err on the side of loose interpretation. I am presently wearing a style of covering that covers my head, even if that makes me a bit of an oddball at my church.



**MORAVIAN
WOMAN,
1750's**

Practical Questions:

1. Does covering the head include the face?
2. Should all the hair on the head be covered?
3. Should only adult female church members have their heads covered?

Jury Summons | by I. M. Out

I received the official order from the Clerk of the Court:

SUPERIOR COURT TRIAL JURY SUMMONS: #77

Greetings:

By virtue of the precept to me directed, you are hereby commanded to be and appear before the Judge of the SUPERIOR Court to be held at the courthouse ... to be sworn as a TRIAL Juror. Herein fail not under penalty of law.

Then followed three paragraphs in red caps:

TO SEE IF YOU STILL NEED TO REPORT, YOU MUST CALL THE JUROR INFORMATION LINE AT ... AFTER 5:00 P.M. ON FRIDAY ... UNTIL 8:00 A.M. ON MONDAY ...

JURY EXCUSES WILL BE HEARD IN THE CLERK OF COURT'S OFFICE ON MONDAY ... AT 3:00 P.M.

NO CELL PHONES OR PAGERS ALLOWED IN THE COURTROOM.

The summons was accompanied by another sheet requiring detailed personal information. I filled out the questionnaire and in addition, wrote the following letter to the judge:

Honorable Judge _____:

I am writing in regards to jury summons #77.

My jury ID is #74085.

I am part of a heavenly kingdom living on earth (the Church) where King Jesus is our Lord and Master. We live by His teachings in the New Testament and believe we are to live peaceably with all men.

We believe the State and the Church have two different functions and are to be separate one from the other. As a member of Christ's kingdom, I cannot participate in the functions of the State.

Therefore, I ask to be excused from this call to jury duty.

Kind regards,

After sending the letter, I waited to see what would happen next.

Practical Questions:

Perhaps you have had a summons to jury duty. Please share your experience with *Anabaptist Voice* readers.

1. What approach did you use to the summons?
2. What reasons did you give for asking to be excused?
3. What was the response of the judge and the court?



Titles? | by: Warm Lee Belts

I live in a world unsupported by any church. Thank you for your email. It's a small thing, but even hearing my name with brother in front seemed so right in my world of pastors, fathers and just plain first names.

*"But you, do not be called Rabbi"; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.
- Matthew 23:8*

Practical Questions:

1. Should we regularly address fellow believers as brother and sister?
2. Does Jesus' teaching in Matthew 23:8-10 forbid the use of all titles such as reverend, master, pastor, deacon, bishop, and father?



A Mission Report: Friedenshuetten

by George Henry Loskiel

The church of the United Brethren (Moravians) was not an Anabaptist Church. But their missions where illiterate heathen Indians were changed by the hundreds into holy followers of the Savior, truly challenges us with the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. - AV Ed.

A Mission Report: From the Christian Indian village of Friedenshuetten (Peace Huts) (Wyalusing, Pennsylvania), on the Susquehanna River in 1771.

The inward course of the congregation was edifying, and proved often a great blessing both to the unbaptized and to the numerous visitors.

Nathaniel addressed an heathen Indian, who was much concerned about his salvation, to the following effect: "It is very easy to gain a happy heart as soon as you sincerely resolve to part with all sin, and believe what is told you of our Savior: for if you ask, you shall receive. But we are naturally averse to humility and prayer, and therefore receive nothing. I was so formerly, but have frequently heard from the Brethren, how happy a ransomed sinner is. I began to pray and persevered until our Savior granted me pardon and happiness. Now since I am baptized, I think I become happier every day. Yea I sometimes feel as if I saw our Savior before my eyes, for I perceive his presence so sensibly that my heart is ready to leap for joy."

Such energetic expressions, proceeding from people, who were lately the most devoted servants of sin, encouraged those who were newly awakened to cry for mercy. Many of them confessed with great sorrow and compunction their crimes and transgressions, and the manner in which they described their state was truly moving.

For instance, an heathen Indian after hearing a sermon, broke out in these words: "Alas, what a wretch am I! I have perfectly understood the words of the missionary and believe them all to be true; but my heart trembled and quaked for fear, for I sit in the midst of sin and darkness, and you are in the light."

- Excerpted from *History of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Indians in North America* by George Henry Loskiel. This remarkable 676 page work was first printed in German in 1788 and translated to English and printed in London in 1794; pages 481-482.

DELAWARE CHIEF
LAPPAZINZO
1737



Thank You!

We say "Thank you!" to each one who has expressed an interest in *Anabaptist Voice* whether face to face or by filling out a written response.

Some have donated money. That is needed.

Some have helped with encouragement. Words help keep us going.

Some have indicated a willingness to help distribute the magazine.

Some have shared words of wisdom to give direction to our efforts.

Others have indicated a willingness to try writing for AV. For all those willing to write, I would like to suggest that you pick out a question or two scattered throughout the magazine and write a 200 word response. Pick one that you have a special interest in. That will give us a chance to get acquainted with your writing and interests.

- AV Ed.



Announcements, Meetings & Events

If you know of any meetings or events that would benefit the Kingdom of Christ and are open to attendance by the general Anabaptist community, please let us know so we can continue to feature this section in future issues.

MEETINGS: REACH 2017

REACH brings together fifty conservative Anabaptist ministries and Kingdom-workers from all walks of life. The two-day program includes over 100 breakout sessions addressing a wide variety of ministry-related topics. Ministries share their vision and work in breakout sessions and displays. General assemblies tie the entire event together with worship, messages, and prayer.

Registration is currently open. For more information and to register, you can visit reach.fbep.org. A paper registration form is also available. Contact Faith Builders at the phone number or email address listed below.

DATE: March 23 - 24, 2017

LOCATION: Calvary Church
1051 Landis Road
Lancaster, PA 17601

CAPACITY: 2,200

CONTACT: Faith Builders at (814) 789-4518 or fbep@fbep.org for more info or to request registration forms.



Circulation & Financial Statements

Anabaptist Voice Income & Expense Report *July thru September 2016*

Income

Donations for Issue #2	\$4,433.81
Local Support Donations*	\$4,550.00
Total Income	\$8,983.81

Expenses

Handling & Packaging	\$980.00
Postage	\$3,067.81
Printing	\$4,936.00
Total Expense	\$8,983.81

Donations for Issue #3 \$519.02

**see section "Our Finances" on Page 4.*

ISSUE #1 - ACTUAL NUMBERS

Print Qty: 5,000 | Print & Postage Cost: \$8,538
Donations for Issue #1: \$3,020
Local Support Donations: \$5,517

ISSUE #2 - ACTUAL NUMBERS

Print Qty: 5,000 | Print & Postage Cost: \$8,984
Donations for Issue #2: \$4,434
Local Support Donations: \$4,550
**see report at right for details*

ISSUE #3 - ESTIMATED NUMBERS

Print Qty: 5,250 | Est. Print & Postage Cost: \$9,000
Donations for Issue #3: \$519 | **Funds Needed: \$8,481**

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“AS LONG AS THE EARTH REMAINS, THERE WILL BE PLANT-
ING AND HARVEST, COLD AND HEAT, SUMMER AND WIN-
TER, DAY AND NIGHT.”

GENESIS 8:22

