

Title	Messages, Business Meetings, and Other Proceedings from the 2010 Beachy Amish Mennonite Ministers' Meeting.
Speaker	(Various)
Speaker's Residence	N/A
Date	Tuesday, April 6, 2010
Venue	Fair Haven Amish Mennonite (Goshen, IN)
Program	Beachy Amish Mennonite Ministers' Meeting 2010
Transcriber	Cory A. Anderson (www.beachyam.org)
About this document:	<i>This transcript may be distributed freely. The sermon was transcribed during the live presentation and then later edited for clarity. The material presented is not necessarily endorsed by the above organization(s) or transcriber(s). The content of this transcript is not guaranteed, though every effort was made for accuracy and clarity.</i>

Tuesday, April 06, 2010

7:00pm: **Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn Amish Mennonite)**

1. "Come We That Love the Lord" (one verse from memory)
2. "Stand Up, and Bless the Lord, Your God" (Christian Hymnary, #17)
3. "O Praise Our Great and Gracious Lord" (Christian Hymnary #67)
4. "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (Christian Hymnary #195)
5. "Lord, I am Fondly, Earnestly Longing" (Christian Hymnary #837)

Welcome (Wilbur Yoder, Woodlawn A.M., IN)

Bow heads to pray

A welcome and extension of thanks to sister churches in assisting.

- Announcements: register if you still need to, nursery and childcare is provided from 8:30am-noon tomorrow, there is a handicapped restroom, listening devices available, recordings are available from Victory Music Services in the far end of the building which is the same booth Simon Schrock/Choice Books is at (SON Recordings is no longer doing the meetings), all speakers and song leaders meet in the room 15 minutes before services.
- This can be a sad time, because there are those who attended last year who aren't here, Willis Bontrager who was on the MIC board, Titus Glick drowned in an accident in El Salvador, tragic accident in Kentucky; a short silent prayer (5-10 seconds) and then Wilbur finished briefly.

2 Timothy 3 (the theme verse in NKJV). What are we battling? Church problems, personal struggles, poor literature from Protestants, individualism? It's our desire that you would go from here refreshed, a diligent workman. Take out Christian Hymnary, read page 16, verse 2, together

in unison: “Let each one consider the price we have cost, Let each one be burdened with souls that are lost. And seek that infilling of pow’r from above, That fits us for service and fills us with love.”

7:25pm: **Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)**

1. “The Love of God” (Christian Hymnary 779)

7:30pm: **Introduction (Wilbur Yoder, Woodlawn A.M.)**

Introduces Earl Peachy and we bow heads in prayer as Wilbur puts arm around Earl.

7:31pm: **“The Heart of the Father” (Earl Peachy, Valley View Amish Mennonite, PA)**

Some here tonight are here for the first time and others know the form, but there are things we’re carrying. Some have the meeting on their mind, making sure things get done right. Where else do you have a meeting where we can get ministers together like this, and then afterwards you can get a tape together and listen to it. I hope we have a conscious of a greater presence. Knowing the Father is the best thing that ever happened in my life. Read Jeremiah 29:23-24.

Who is the Father? A.W. Tozer: *What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God. Were we able to extract from any man an answer to the question, we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man. Were we able to know what our most influential preachers think about God, we might be able to tell where the church will stand tomorrow. The weightiest word in any language is its word for God.* Who is the Father? In answering this question, we don’t begin with ourselves.

From Scott McKnight in the latest edition of Christianity Today: *On the opening day of my Jesus class, I give a test about Jesus. Does he go his own way? Is he a worrier? The second part asks the same questions of the students. If given to enough people, we all think Jesus is like us.* We learn something of God by observing Creation. We see God’s imprint all over Creation, but nature can never teach us about the father. It is the Bible that tells us everything we need to know about God. Are we together that this Word is without error? Raise Bibles if you believe it is without error.

In Genesis, the assumption is “God is.” Man prefers to understand and control. God has no beginning or ending, nor an equal. He’s all powerful. He is God, fully self-sufficient and self-dependent. Though a stranger to many, yet none are a stranger to him.

God does not discover anything and does not become wiser, more mature, more experienced, or older. As man seeks to understand, God’s already been there.

Such a being is a threat, and we can understand why some people want to shake a fist at him out of a terror-stricken heart. Some of us who are old enough to remember were worried about a computer in Belgium that is collecting information about everyone. But Big Brother doesn’t compare to the Father who knows what you’re thinking and what’s in your heart. If there were someone like him, he wouldn’t be God.

Isaiah 43:10-11. Deuteronomy 4:39.

From our perspective, we are in a conflict, there is a warfare going on between good and evil. "Though there is a conflict, there is no real competition." [Unattributed] One was created, one was the Creator. One rules for a time, the other rules for eternity. Satan is just a small blip on the screen of eternity.

Let's look closer at the Father's heart.

He's a personal father, and it is abundantly clear in Scripture it comes from one who enjoys our attention. Not just an impersonal designer or mere influence, and not well described as the man upstairs. He experiences emotions and a great desire for us. Note again these qualities in the Scripture I read at the beginning. Loving kindness. One verse can say he's merciful and another he's faithful, but I hope we can all give an expression of what the Living Word says, that he's faithful. There are no negatives of knowing God. No unpleasant side effects, like medicine.

Now we shall focus on his obvious attention to man. There was an intimate way Adam and Eve were created. 'Form' refers to fashion or frame. He formed him with His hands. I don't know how his hands are. Then it says he breathed into his nostrils. It could have been possible for God to stand 1,000 miles away and breathe into his nostrils, but I doubt that's how it was. I think it was close and intimate. Then the interest in providing a companion for Adam, togetherness. There was something special in mind for Adam and Eve above his creation.

When God called Moses at the bush, he did not say "Hey you!" but by his name, Moses, Moses. [Then followed several verses of God using the name of people: Moses, Saul, Mary, Zaccheus, the stars called by name.] How many stars are there in the universe? It's unknown. Some range from 200 billion to 3^{16} . NASA says over a zillion. We are worth more than the stars, giving us attention even before we were born.

A Sunday morning, March 2, 1964, I reached into a cupboard or a book case, looking for something to read, and I found a Gospel tract. "Religious but Lost," written by John R. Rice. I began to hear a call. It's not good enough to be good. I was trying to be good and take care of things like filthy jokes on the school bus ride home. Here, I was reading I need something more. That night, as I went to my bed, I knelt down and asked the Lord to save my soul. I didn't talk with anyone, and the next night I did the same thing. No one taught me a formula. I just knew I needed to do it. The Lord gave me peace inside after that second night. Later that week, I told my mom I was saved. I think she was a bit surprised. The written Word became alive. I didn't know the Spirit was drawing me, but I thank him that He was. Even as we are together, God bless you brothers and sisters, and we have so many things to give attention to, I wonder how these meetings would be impacted if everyone took deliberate time to make contact with the living God. I'm not on my regular schedule; I can't take my prayer walk along the river. People want to talk when you go home. It's not normal, and it's harder for me to keep up that connection, but I encourage you and myself to do that during this time.

The first Scripture said "Let him that glory, glory in this, that he knoweth me."

Psalm 86, the things that follow hereafter in this topic, and as I talk about God's desire for us, that this connection takes place only when we bow to him, only when we submit. Reading now in Psalm 86:8-10. There's no God like our God, His greatness and also character. Neither are there other works like Thy works. Space, the speed of light. Crossing the Milky Way galaxy would take 100,000 light years. "The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus." If you want an impression of this, visit the Creation Museum. Revelation 7:9-10. I'm saying here tonight, the word of God saves souls all over the world; there isn't a culture it is not able to touch.

Turning now to another glorious Scripture, Philippians 2:9, speaking of Jesus. "At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow..." What a passage of Scripture! God highly exalted Him, a name above, an actual position, not just a name. When it talks about others bow, the lesser bows to the greater, of things in Heaven, those who have died, things on the earth and under the earth. Every knee, every knee. Not one is going to be stiff. That means, all the saved. It means, all the unsaved. It means, the Muslims. It means, even Mohammad himself, think of it. The rich, the powerful, men like Karl Marx, Adolph Hitler, Charles Darwin, Michael Jackson, the martyrs, the persecutors, the physically handicapped, the angels, Gabriel, Michael, Lucifer himself, Lucifer bowing to Jesus. Every tongue confess. On that day, the reality of who Jesus is will be known. Everyone is going to bow instinctively. The one we're talking about tonight is my Lord and hero. All resistance is now passed, though not all will be saved.

Lastly, I'd like to look at one aspect of his design. As I read the Scriptures, a message comes through that he is interested in togetherness, now and forever. Revelation 4:11. We were created from the start for fellowship with God, we were created for togetherness. He is the master and we are the servant.

God is a lover, an intense lover. He saw Adam, Where art thou? He grieved over his wayward children. Enoch walked with God. Elijah is the 'man of God.' There are parallels in the NT of his desire for relationship and husband-wife. Isn't it something? I hope there is still some intensity in your marriage, I hope so. ["Amen" from man in back, chuckle from audience.] This relationship is what it ought to be with me. We're privileged to be joint heirs with Christ.

Now, I want you to meditate on these Scriptures as I read them.

John 14:3

Same chapter: "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you a comforter..."

Same chapter: "If a man loves me, he will keep my words..."

I know we have the infilling of the Holy Spirit, but here, we get the whole package of the Trinity according to this.

John 17:24

Revelation 3:20-21 "Behold I stand at the door and knock..."

Matthew 28:19-20 "Go ye therefore..."

1 Thessalonians 4:17 "Then we that are alive and remain..."

Revelation 21 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth..."

You understand what I mean? It's the heart desire of the Father for togetherness with us.

For the present

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” He’s not out there in some corner, not out in the kitchen. Jesus just can’t stay away. That’s the Father we serve. So, my brothers and sisters, what a tremendous privilege is ours tonight, a servant. Whatever may have been in your heart, the desire in his heart is greater than ours.

(Bow heads to pray.)

8:13pm: Wilbur Yoder, Woodlawn A.M.

Is God a relationship God or not? He is definitely a relational God. Thank you Earl. One announcement, the sermons will also be available in several days on AnabaptistSermons.com. We’ll ask Linford to come and lead another song as we stand.

8:13pm: Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)

1. “Jesus, Lover of My Soul” (Christian Hymnary #186)

8:17pm: Earl Peachey

Closing prayer

Wednesday, April 07, 2010

9:00am: Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)

1. “Come, Heaven-Bound Pilgrims” (Christian Hymnary #16)
2. “O Worship the Lord” (Christian Hymnary #19)
3. (Christian Hymnary #196)
4. “God of our Strength, Enthroned Above” (Christian Hymnary #27)
5. “O Wonderful, Wonderful Word” (Christian Hymnary #209)

9:19am: Welcome (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)

Announcements,

- Please check back at the table to make sure your contact information is correct for the directory
- Bishops, let us know who your newly ordained are
- After lunch, pick up a ballot booklet
- In the afternoon session, there should be segregated seating (there doesn’t have to be, but we suggest it) so the women can leave and do something else during the business session
- When you go to break, leave your Bibles where you sat so you can come back and sit where you are now
- If you have email, please list it in the directory

How many of you heard God this morning (raise of hands)? How did you hear it? Where? I stepped outside and I heard God, the birds were singing. Is that God? God made the birds, and they still do today what they did thousands of years ago: sing! I get discouraged lots of times. I don’t know if birds ever get discouraged. I’ve never heard them complaining. I’ve seen them

fighting sometimes. The universe/creation speaks to us, it's God.

When God asked Adam 'where are you?' he personalized this. Do you think God was wondering which tree or bush Adam was behind? He was saying 'where are you in our relationship?' God wanted him to think. God asks us sometimes, "Dan, where are you?" Where are you in my and your relationship? I want fellowship. God never verbally or physically abused him so that Adam should be afraid. When he put them in the garden, he gave them some commandments. He gave us some commandments and they are not grievous. He's interested in our relationship. That's why God comes and asks us sometimes, where are you in our relationship? He loves us so much he doesn't want to leave or lose us. Today, he's still interested in all of us. God bless us as we sit through these sessions.

9:28am: **Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)**

1. "In Thy Holy Place" (Christian Hymnary #28)

9:33am: **Introduction (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

9:34am: **"The Call of the Father" (Tim Yoder, Harmony Christian Fellowship, MD)**

In preaching at these meetings, some people have said to me, "Oh, good! It's a great experience for a person after it's over," implying it's not so great at the time. "Tim, do you know how frightening it is to speak in front of 300+ Beachy preachers?" There's comfort in knowing most deal with the same human issues in a time like this. It is only by the power and strength of God that all my human fears can be defeated. This morning, I trust in that source of power.

I extend greetings in the name of Christ, who is contently focusing on this gathering. Imagine Jesus saying, "Father, come look at what is going on down there. I'd like to strengthen their faith, renew their commitment." "Go," says the Father, "these are people we call to our work. Go meet their need."

It is my desire Christ would walk among us today, and that he would touch the very core of our lives.

Three points:

- 1) Our call comes from God.
- 2) Recognizing God's work
- 3) What is it we're called to do

The call of the Father

I found it necessary to ponder my own life's journey, where I was then and how I responded to the call of God, where I am now in my journey, and how I am answering God's call. The call of the Father is life altering. It demands sacrifices of us, depleting our energy and resources. The Father's hull is not the easiest path to tread in life, but it is unique in its spiritual blessing and rewards, providing the motivation to continue the pursuit of the Father's call. Isaiah 43:1b.

The Father's call is not just exclusive to ministerial position, but applies to many other people in role responsibilities. Is it not God that calls the missionary, the teacher the doctor, the counselor,

the translator, the minister, and multiple other roles in life? Our theme is focused on the Father's call to the ministerial role, and I would like to explore that role with you. It would be fascinating to listen to each of your "calling" stories: how did God call you to the ministry, how did you respond, what was your primary spiritual battle then, and what is it now? How has it molded you into the person you have become today, and what is it you are today, and what does God know as the real person inside of you. These are all tough questions we'd rather not ponder, because it is a bit disturbing. Yet, it is an important part of our personal calling experience. I supposed the majority of our ordination procedures were by the lot, modeled after Acts. Is it the only calling method God honors? Without creating division and controversy among us, I much prefer a constructed dialogue in our varied positions. Let's not put God inside a box that does not fit and limits what he could potentially do among us.

Paul's experience in Acts is not a conventional method of calling among liberal people. God personally chose Paul, and then he involved the church which had some serious reservations about this. Ananias showed an incredible trust in God though his instincts objected. God knew all about it, just as he knew all about our particular environment when he called you and me to be His. Whatever method we employ, paramount in the choosing method is that it is the Father who calls and chooses whom he will.

Two basic core elements should not be bypassed in whatever procedure is used. It is God and only God that looks into the heart of man and chooses whom he wants for that particular time. It's the human manipulation that must be eliminated in any ordination for leadership. In John 15:16, ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. I believe this is a key to our acceptance and our embrace of the Father's calling to our own lives. Paul said in Galatians 1:1, an apostle, not by man, but by Jesus Christ. Paul was convinced it was God and only God that called him to minister. Equally, we need the same affirmation in our calling to the ministry. Anything else leads room for doubt and second guessing. May I suggest God is not looking for perfection as much as he is looking for someone who embraces His call. So often, it is my own will that is so difficult to subject at a time like that.

I for the most part have always been a preacher's son. That is not some elitist status. Being a preacher's child can be very tough. I know the difficulties, pressures, spotlight, expectations of other people of preacher's offspring, and far too often it is not a pleasant thing. Early in my youth stages of life, I observed that a preacher's life was a dog's life, and I wanted nothing to ever do with being a preacher. One of the statistics that bothered me was the percentage of preacher's offspring that are ordained ministers. But I can honestly say that in all that, I never felt or in any way sensed God calling me to be a minister at any *point* in my life. That was fine with me. I thought God always forewarned people through a revelation of his Holy Spirit, but that's not always the case.

My greatest struggles had to do with the acceptance of the call. What do you grab a hold of when your life changes so drastically, to bring a sense of stability back into your life? That's how I felt. Within myself, I felt this desperate need for something secure, something like bedrock that didn't move when everything else did.

Here's what I latched on to that helped me accept it:

Anchor #1: God is in control of my life, not me. No matter what happens, I have to believe that. If I don't believe that, then my life has no reliable steering mechanism, and no matter what happens, I have to believe in God. Can I control the direction of my life? Can I say 'no' to God and be in God's will?

Anchor#2: God doesn't make mistakes in my life. We stumble, we fall, we mess up, not God! God's ways are not littered with mistakes and bad choices. I had to believe this was not some mistake in spite of how it felt.

Anchor #3: It was God who called me to be a minister; he just let 'em know it was through the lot method. This method provided affirmation that it was God who chose this role for my life, not anyone else. Now, it's up to me what I do with his call. How will I respond to the Father's call?

Let's compare different responses:

Samuel said "Speak, for thy servant heareth," an incredible response for us to duplicate. Perhaps it's been your response. At some point in time, we need to recognize the necessity of this type of response in our own lives to the Lord's calling. Not only is it important for us men, but for you wives. Sometimes, it does take us awhile to get there, but the Lord does understand and gives us that time.

There was an eighth century BC prophet. Jonah responded with "I don't think so; I want to do things my way." He headed for a location of his own choosing. Not a smart thing to do by boat, or any other method for that matter. So often I want to do the Jonah thing, but then God sets me back on the straight and narrow way. God has a unique way of changing perspectives as we mature in life. I'm so glad he doesn't need to use whales every time. Honestly, only in the last two of the past 12 years have I fought God's call, then embraced it. How have you responded to the call of the Father in your life? Where are you and the Father at this juncture? Have you embraced the call of the Father in your life? Perhaps, that's still necessary for you to do.

Recognizing it is God's work

I believe all Christians are called to be in God's work, whatever their role, integrating the work of God into their involvement, and it does not require an ordination to do that. It is good to do the Lord's work, but better yet to do His will. The basic difference is when we're doing God's will, then God is working through us to do his work. I like that. The call to ministry is our directive from God into our specific arena of involvement doing God's will first and then his work.

John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me."

Luke 2:49, "I must be about my father's business."

Yet, it was 18 years before he pursued that mission. His obedience to his parents was the will of his Father for that time, and that's what he submitted himself to do. What is the security of God's will? Consider God's infinite knowledge and his devotion to your highest good.

This forces a conclusion, when God asks you to do something, he is renting you the privilege of tapping into the greatest mind of the universe. Instead of saying, 'Lord, this is what I'm going to do for you,' we should say, 'Lord, what will you have me to do for you?'

Too often there is a gap between God's will and our will. God's work must never be replaced with our own agenda. If my focus becomes the doing of God's work, then I rely on my own

strength and abilities, and it results in spiritual failure and burnout. What is God's work for you?

I believe the Lord's work involves every facet of our lives, our marriage, work, family, church. The question becomes too much, how do I achieve a proper balance in all these areas? Is it ever justifiable to sacrifice something important for something considered more important? I'd like to create a word picture for you.

I have in my hands two things [a tray and a glass of water]. How am I supposed to hold both adequately when one tray is calling for both hands? What am I to do with the glass of water in this hand? Do I drop it and break it so I can hold the tray with both hands? Far too often we drop the glass and we use both hands to hold the tray. What am I to do about the broken glass? Somehow, we need to realize the glass we are holding is the Lord's work and what we do with it is very important. Do we honor God to labor in his vineyard and neglect the vines which he has given us? Is there anything we can do with the glass?

I like the answer of my 14 year old son. "That's simple, dad! Set the glass on the tray first, then you can hold the tray with both hands!" It's not the sacrificing of one thing, but rather the inclusion of all areas in my life. A proper perspective often involves the attitude of John the Baptist. "There comes one after who is mightier than I." John 3:30, John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." It's not about the legacy you leave, but the promotion of Jesus Christ. Let's not lose touch with this important reality. What we're called to do is the Lord's work and not our own. After the people are exposed to your ministry, are they left thinking about you or about Jesus. Our identity should not supersede our Lord.

What are we called to do?

We are called by God to do his work. Allow me to read the ministerial charge at my ordination, and yours may vary, but this is standard. [Excerpts:] "Upon this confession and these promises which thou hast now made before God and these witnesses, I herewith charge thee to go forth and... Be instant in season and out of season.... Make full use of thy ministry. Likewise, give heed to thyself.... Pray without ceasing, and in all these things, seek to be a faithful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. Continue in these things..."

Out of curiosity, how often have you read your ministerial charge since you've been ordained? I believe there just might be value in pondering our charge occasionally. It might be an excellent means of refocus for us, of not losing perspective of what our involvement is all about, doing God's work. Permit me to showcase several points in this charge in what we are called to do.

The first point of 'doing,' be a faithful laborer. Jesus, in John 15:16, "Ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Of doing, 'bring forth fruit.' The idea is effective fruit production, and that's only going to happen one way. Jesus said in John 15:4-5, [excerpts:] "Abide in me and I in you, except the branch... no more can ye accept lest ye abide in me... for without me, ye can do nothing." God has called us to provide fruit for him, and the only way to do that is to be attached securely to him. Whatever the fruit is for you, whether it is souls saved, relationships restored, church leadership, team work, mission field, etc., it is to have eternal value. What does it mean to you to bring forth fruit in God's kingdom? The second point in this verse, that your fruit should remain; eternal preservation, not popularity, when our fruit is eternal

fruit. It's preservation is eternal in God's kingdom.

Colossians 1:10, [excerpt:] "...being fruitful in every good work..." That's what fruit preservation is all about. Increasing in the knowledge prevents shrinking and disillusion.

The second point in our charge, 'make full use in your ministry.' 2 Timothy 4:5 "Watch thou in all things." God has given us a responsibility to be alert to elements that are destructive to the souls of God's people. Proper identification of these elements are crucial. Too often we are hung up on the external evidences, and we fix the evidences, but neglect the inner. To make full use of the ministry may mean that you don't choose the easy route when the hard is called for. You detect our people's struggles under the surface before they rage openly. 'Make full use of thy ministry' is to develop your talents and gifts for the greatest usage, not function on a plateau of mediocrity.

The third part, 'give heed to yourself.' There's no greater sadness than one who teaches how to live the Christian life but doesn't do it himself. As God's chosen, we soon discover the intensity of Satan's attack. Galatians 6:9. Jesus repeatedly took time away to communicate with the Father. It's a necessity. A track star does not run a 10K at full speed, else he depletes his energy prematurely. A good man knows his limitations. As ministers, we are not immune to the stresses of people-relations and the demands of pressure situations. Don't give up and neglect your own spiritual welfare. Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up..."

In the ancient Greek games, there was a race where the contestants carried a burning torch. The winner was not who crossed first, but the winner was the one who crossed the finish line with his torch still burning. May God bless.

10:13am: **Response (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

Thank you. I'd like to share a thought of what Isaiah said, "Whom shall I send, who shall go?" God looks at the heart, and we fail to look at it at times. I remember Tim when he was growing up, but now I'm blessed to hear this young man preach the word of God. It's such a blessing to see these young men serving God, challenging us, us older ones, to walk with God.

10:14am: **Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)**

1. Lord, I Am (Christian Hymnary #837), first and last verse

Break

10:40am: **Songs (Linford Bontrager, Woodlawn A.M.)**

1. "Come We That Love the Lord" (Christian Hymnary #769)
2. "When I Saw the Cleansing Fountain" (Christian Hymnary #811, verses 1,2, 4 & 5)
3. "Purer in Heart" (Christian Hymnary #269)

10:51am: **Introduction (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

Thank you for being in on time. I've heard it said before that the ministers are the hardest ones to bring in. A few announcements:

- A reminder, the directories are going to the printer right at noon time, so make sure your address, phone number is right
- For the ladies, there are some maps on the tables with locations for fabric and such like for during the business session if they like
- The slides we're showing of missions, if you have any to contribute, you may come to the table
- There is a tan town and country van that is blocking someone in the corner, so if you would be kind enough to move your van. Indiana plates.
- If you would like CDs, they may be purchased in the far west corner.

In thinking about the pastor's home, some of you may have done it alright, but I doubt that. I say that with regrets. As I look back in my experience, I wish I would have known or done otherwise. Nevertheless, that doesn't change it, does it? It never changes a Scripture, no matter what we've done or said. I thought of a Scripture in 1 John 3, that one of the greatest joys he has is to see that his children are walking in the truth. For parents who have children at the age of accountability, there's no greater joy than to see their children are walking with the Lord. Christianity is not forced; no one is forced to be one. It is voluntary. It is our responsibility to teach and train, even beyond our families. Ken is here. Brother Ken, would you come forward. *(Bow heads for prayer.)*

10:57am: "The Essence of Salvation" (Ken Miller, Pilgrim Christian Fellowship, VA)

Grace and peace to all in our Savior's name. Looking across this sea of faces, for one I was looking for the face of my beloved, and I just found her. Second, I'm realizing that you're my comrades in this great work. I was very moved to think of the fact that some of my heroes are here. I'm especially thankful that two of my team members are here, Brother Bennie Byler, who has been my bishop now for going on 30 years. He's one of those men I admire and look up to, and am thankful for his influence in my life. I'm also thankful we have with us our newest minister, Brother Simon Schrock. Perhaps we should stop to consider Brother Howard Eichorn and his need. His beloved is very ill; her life is hanging in balance. With the pressures of the ministry, this dear brother would love to be here to receive encouragement. Could we pause while everyone intercedes for our brother and his situation? *(Silent prayer, Ken concludes.)*

If you would define salvation—I thought of last summer when my family visited the location in Somerset County, PA, when those nine miners were trapped by rising water in 1993. A miracle happened. They were able to bore down into the earth and opened up where they were trapped, and every one of them was plucked out. That day, salvation came to those men and their families. Salvation, in the NT, means to rescue, deliver, save. This morning, I'm thankful we can say with Simeon, mine eyes have seen thou salvation. Those whose faith is fully in him can be sure He is in our hearts, Christ. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved. We're here because of him. Hebrews 2:3, we're told 'how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?'

We have a two-fold obligation to this salvation. We're called to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Then as our calling as servants of Christ, we're called to stand alone with our

brother Paul to endure all things with the elect's sake that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 2:10.

What greater question is there then 'how can man be reconciled to God'? We have an adversary that, ever since the beginning, has been very hard at work to undermine and misinterpret and misinform people about the essence of salvation. This topic is important. I'm thankful we don't have to understand everything about it. I'm sure my understanding is limited and inadequate to lay out the essence of salvation, but I do know it works for all who put their faith in Christ.

Three main points

- 1) The problem of the other gospel, the selfish salvation, and causes
- 2) The atoning work of Christ our victor
- 3) What does saving faith look like; what it means to follow him, and what should be the fruit of saving faith in the lives of those we pastor

The Other Gospel, Selfish Salvation

I don't like conflict, but Jesus warned there would be another gospel, a delusion, a watering down. It's easy believe-ism or cheap grace, and it's a selfish thing. Unconditional eternal security. The other gospel is characterized by this terminology: "Would you like to go to heaven?" "Would you like to accept Jesus as your personal savior?" I'm sure people have been genuinely saved with these buzz words. The biggest problem I have is that the statements come from another Gospel that comes from 'what is in it for me.' Contrast with this response from a man who had been thoroughly humbled and brought to the end of himself, and as he lay there, there was a response that came from that man, and it is the response that comes to people who have had a revelation of Jesus, and it may come at a moment like it did for Paul, a period of time, it may be dramatic, not so dramatic. People with that kind of revelation realize the Lord they are facing is too great. With fear and trembling, they cry out, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" That is the language of genuine salvation. They're willing to make themselves poor in spirit and surrender to this Christ. Romans 1:16, [excerpt:] "I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation..."

See, Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel. It leads to salvation, because it is the power of God, and because the righteousness of God leads to salvation. Paul's understanding of salvation is thoroughly God-centric. He was concerned about God's power and righteousness being revealed through the lives of saved people. Paul was not primarily concerned about saving people from going to hell. We don't read anywhere that he invited people to accept Him as their personal savior. He called people to repentance, according to Acts 21. I believe that one of the primary reasons that we are caving in to the culture and the reason we are losing identity is because of a fundamental misunderstanding of what it is to be saved, a misunderstanding of salvation. I do not believe we can borrow as much from the other gospel as we have without losing something.

What is wrong with this other gospel? Number one, a neglect of Jesus' teaching, including his teaching on salvation. If I were leading someone to Christ, where in the Scriptures would I go? Romans 10:9,10, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth..." That's a wonderful passage, and countless souls have been genuinely born again by putting their faiths in those truths. But it would be well if we would remind ourselves, what did these verses mean in the context/times

they were written. To confess Christ as Lord, what does it mean? Does it mean I get up at a meeting or testimony during baptism that they confess in front of the approving group of people that Christ is Lord? Yes, it means that. But what would it have meant to the Roman Christians?

Before the term “gospel” came into the Biblical terminology (meaning ‘good news’), that word was used to describe the pleasure of those people when they received a new Caesar in power. When a new Caesar took the seat of power in Rome, heralds were sent out to major cities in the empire, and these heralds were to proclaim a new Caesar is in power, and people were called to give allegiance to this man. The people were required to congregate in that city to hear about the good news of the new Caesar. It was called, for example, the ‘gospel of Augustus Caesar.’ It was the gospel of the kingdom, and that’s the context we should understand Romans. The people were publically and verbally required to declare their allegiance to this new God-ruler. They understood that at Rome when they read the letter from Paul. Salvation was contingent on them making verbal allegiance to the new King-of-Kings. Salvation for them was not an easy raise of the hand or responding at a revival meeting or pledge or easy testimony. It was a total commitment to the King who had just been introduced to the world. In confessing Christ as the new King, it meant death. To not pledge one’s allegiance to Caesar meant death in certain areas.

We have here this very strong call, total allegiance to this new king and kingdom. If you start with the teachings of Christ and work up to Paul, you see Jesus said the same thing over and over again in his teaching. For example, “so likewise, whosoever does not forsake all that he has, cannot be my disciple.” He’s calling for unconditional, unqualified allegiance, and it’s the demand he still makes. He gets specific in places. He names things we must give up to enter into salvation. Matthew 7:24, [excerpt:] “No man can serve two masters... you cannot serve God and Mammon.” Jesus is laying down terms for this salvation. Jesus is asking for allegiance. A man will either love money and possessions and let go of God, or he will let go of money and possessions and hang on to God. The choice is clear here, the terms are as stark and sharp-edged as it would have been for a citizen in Rome deciding to serve Caesar or Jesus. When have you heard this in a personal evangelism class? That other gospel, the selfish salvation has reduced faith down to believe a certain point in time and certain things about the death of Christ, but the teachings of Christ are too hard, so they are pushed back into the era of the Law or into the millennial Kingdom. They’re too hard; we can’t live them, they say.

Atoning Work of Christ

Robert Friedmann had a passion for Anabaptist History. He says Protestantism is a one-sided teaching on the Pauline teaching of salvation by Christ. The individual, a total depraved sinner, craves for salvation, and eventually finds it in putting his confidence in the finished work of Christ. There’s truth in that, but it’s a one-sided emphasis. It ignored the remainder of Paul’s teaching and the Gospels’ and produced a system of individualistic and selfish outlook. Are we seeing any of those? The Gospel did not change the culture of the people who believed it, where there are sharply defined lines of the Kingdom of this World and the Kingdom of God, and God’s people lose their identity. The early Christians and Anabaptists saw salvation as a world drama, a conflict between good and evil, and Christ and the Kingdom came and overthrew Satan. Through the new birth into this Kingdom, we now live a new life and are justified by faith.

The second problem, the model of the atonement, the penal satisfaction model of atonement. A man, Abelard, in the 1100s developed a way of thinking of Jesus' work on the cross. God requires perfect obedience to his law. Since all men have fallen short of the law, God's justice and holiness have been seriously violated, and a widening deficit between the requirement and what we were living. Someone had to make up the difference, and that someone had to be a man, but it couldn't be man, because man proved he couldn't meet the requirements. So, it took both the God part and the man part of Jesus to make up the deficit, so he lived a perfect life; then on the cross, God did place the sins of the world upon Jesus. As Jesus hung on the cross as the Lamb of God, then God looked down and was satisfied (Isaiah 53 is clear on this). Then this theory goes on to areas not supported by Scripture. God's sense of justice had to be satisfied, every sin had to be punished, so God not only put the sin of the world on him, but also the guilt and punishment for all his sins. People then believe he went to hell and suffered. Since God's justice was fully satisfied, now he could be merciful to us. Every sin that was ever committed was made up by Jesus. The song "Jesus signed my pardon... when he signed my pardon on Calvary." A transaction there to satisfy the wrath of God. That theory is all over in the literature and songs we use. I believed that all my life, and I was shocked to find that this theory of atonement was not held by the early church. Not until 1100 did this man develop this. Listen to David Bercot's CDs on the atonement, or a Swedish theologian [name]

The first problem is, does God require exacting and retributive justice for every sin? What about the parallel in Matthew 18? Initially, the debtor was just forgiven. But the biggest problem I see is that the work of Christ was primarily a work of appeasement of the wrath of God. It wasn't a victory over sin, Satan, the world, and death.

Before we get into what the early church believed, let's look at the meaning of word 'atonement.' It's about reconciliation, to be made one with. God has a heart for oneness. The thing that separated us in the first place Jesus took care of in the cross and made room for atonement. 1 Peter 3:18. That is a wonderful Scripture describing the work of atonement as the early church believed it. The early church believed in a model called the Christus Victor model. Christ voluntarily paid a ransom for our deliverance. 1 John 5:19, the condition of the world Jesus entered into. We know the whole world lies in wickedness, the sway of the evil one. When Ronald Reagan gave a speech, he described the USSR as the "evil empire" and there were repercussions. But this verse is far worse, the empire under the control of Satan. Into this enemy empire, Christ came with a new way, a new kingdom. He says in Matthew 28, the son of God came to minister and to give his life a ransom. The prominent view of the early church, the price was not paid to God but to the bad guy. This was not a negotiation with the devil. It was like this.

Last Sunday I was supposed to go to the local jail to preach. Simon Schrock reminded me a few days before that it was my turn to go. With everything going on, I forgot, and Sunday morning came, and we didn't have a second brother to go along and preach. Somebody had to pay a price. Another minister had to give up his Sunday afternoon nap, probably, and cut short his Easter Sunday dinner so that he could take my place for what I had done. Jesus had to pay a ransom to free us from the tyranny of Satan. We do believe that Jesus was the mediator, the sacrifice, God did lay upon us the iniquity of us all. It was less about appeasing the wrath of the Father, and it was all about defeating sin, Satan, death, [etc.] those that kept us in bondage.

That old Gospel song, “Victory in Jesus.”

[Sang the chorus]

Did you hear in the chorus, “he bought me and sought me with his redeeming blood.” I believe this song is theologically accurate. Here are some references you can jot down for you to discern if I’m cutting this straight. Luke 11:20-22, John 12:31, John 16:33, Romans 8:3, Ephesians 4:8, Colossians 2:13-15, Hebrews 2:14-15. It is said that this was the most often referred to passage by the Early Church Fathers, Hebrews 2:14-15. Christ is victor. Jesus’ life was an unbroken string of victory over the devil, such as in the first eight chapters of Matthew. The 40 days in the wilderness, he forgave sin, raised the dead, healed the sick, caused the lame to walk, healed the blind, calmed the storm, and every page turn you have another manifestation of overcoming all the bondage the enemy brought. But a component is missing in the other gospel, the selfish salvation. In all the Gospels, Jesus wins over the kingdom of evil, and he also introduces an alternative lifestyle, another kingdom. It was announcement in another rule. We can be a part of another kingdom. We can’t be separated unless we understand salvation on these terms. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

What was the first thing Jesus preached? Repent, for I am bringing you another kingdom, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. I used to think of that as a train coming down the track, and you better get out of the way or it’ll run you over. Hey, you can change your way of life! This is the announcement of another kingdom! You can enter into another kingdom. Jesus said he’s coming to offer another way of life. In the Book of Matthew, we have the Sermon on the Mount, and it is the constitution of the new kingdom. All of this presents us with a figure that has tremendous power and authority, who singlehandedly overthrew a corrupt regime and brings in his own benevolent rule for all that follow him in true faith. Satan, sin, death, and the world He defeated. I say, this is the essence of salvation; it is a God-centered salvation. I must choose: am I going to enter in to this kingdom? It’s not a cheap question, “Would you like to receive Jesus as your personal savior?” The question is “Am I going to accept Jesus as ruler?” They were calling for more than this other gospel to focus their mind on certain aspects. They were calling people to embrace a gospel of the kingdom. We’re justified by faith when we reach out to that kind of Jesus.

Saving Faith

Now, faith that saves—Number one, the early church believed this, they saw Jesus as Lord, not a weak Savior appeasing the Father. So, first and foremost, saving faith means following Christ as Lord, surrender, not a freedom of struggle, but clear evidence of a surrendered spirit, a yieldedness. All authority, all power, has been given to Christ. Who are we to oppose him?

Second, we are called to follow by faith a savior. About adoration—a brother recently said to me about the congregation, our people don’t have this effervescent joy, a radiance, a joy for following Christ. A lack of joy may come from a lack of adoration. Christ has come to heal our emotions and set them free. We have to have some output for our emotions. Maybe we as a plain people want to squelch our emotions since we don’t want to be known as fanatics. But there is an outlet, Jesus. When we think about all he has done in saving us, it would be good if we leaders could come before our Savior and just adore him. Like Mary who wiped his feet with her hair,

just adore him. We can follow all these things, we can obey the commandments and be like the Pharisees with the old Law. I appreciated what Earl said, that Christ is his hero. There should be a sense of awe and wondering. In Revelation, John fell at his feet. Paul did too. The ones who saw him after the resurrection had awe and fear. Jesus said, "if you love me, keep my commandments." Oh, I'm scared of dogmatism that may come when we keep his commandments without adoration. We need to allow Jesus to be master teacher. The other gospel leaves out this element. It focuses on salvation as a point in time. Jesus teaches in Matthew 24, there will be many false prophets, but he that shall endure to the end shall be saved. When was the last time you read that in a 'Romans road' tract? There's a call to follow him. An apprentice watches his master carpenter closely, and now we are called to earnestly follow him. We must go to his school, study his life and his teachings and the teachings of his apostles. Let's make provision in our lives right now and enter into that schooling.

I'm going to close with 1 Cor. 15:57. Christ is victor, Christ is Lord. Thanks be to God who gives us the victor... therefore be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord that your labor is not in vein in the Lord.

11:49am; **Response (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

Thank you. Yes, I agree there is so much easy believism. If you pay attention, it doesn't last. At this time, a couple brothers wish to share in a book promotion.

11:50am: **Book promotion (Simon Schrock, Elmer Glick, and Lavern Yoder)**

Simon:

Elmer, I see since last year you went high tech [*PowerPoint*], can you handle it?

Elmer:

We'll try. Let me say something about the stacks of books back there, and in former years, he said, if you advertise a book publically, you'd better have plenty. But the home office said I'll be bringing half or more of these books home, but I hope you can help me out.

The catalogs I normally bring along are somewhere else, not here, so I don't have any to give you, but I do have one if there are things you'd like to order. All books on our stand are by Christian Light and [endorsed] publishers. Simon's books are Choice Books and other authors he's recommending. Every minister needs a CLP Church Directory, much valuable information. There is a good supply. Then main book I'd like to introduce is by Howard Bean, *A Good Minister*, a must read for every minister of the gospel. It combines wit and wisdom. Some of the chapter headings are, How to Be a Good Minister, Qualities of a Good Minister, and The Advantages of a Plural Ministry. Then various things about the sermons and suggestions for assignments you're given. It includes things about our schedule and personal life. Visitation, giving counsel. Another book, *Plain Speaking: How to Preach and Teach Effectively* by David Bercot, if you didn't get a copy last year.

Simon:

Since I didn't go high-tech like Elmer, I'm going to ask if we can have the lights on again; someday I'll learn this high-tech stuff. About 35 years ago, Simon Schrock, Owen Yoder, and Noah Petersheim formed S.O.N. Recordings. We'd like "S.O.N." to stand for something better,

the Son of God. The main thing was recording the ministers' meetings. Any profit that supports it goes to Choice Books. The three of us fit into Psalm 90, three score and ten. The average of the three of us, we're about three score and ten. It's about time to turn it over to someone younger, Lavern Yoder. Lavern, you have about 40 years until you get to three-score and ten. Lavern was raised in Chestertown. He ate crab. Now, he's on the west coast working for Choice Books, and the company is named "Victory Music Services." For the recording today, Lavern is recording the services, trying to do what Son Recording did and having these ready for you on CD when you're ready to leave. If you haven't graduated to CDs, you can place an order for cassettes and get SON recording to do that for you.

Now, place your orders; people have been wondering where the stand is. If you diligently seek for it, it's way back on the right corner. Lavern, what line of CDs do you have?

Lavern:

These CDs are both from the Esh family that were in the accident. One was released a month ago, and the other two years ago. The second includes "Home."

Simon:

Who brings the peanuts? And people are asking for the peanuts. We should have a board meeting afterwards to decide if we're going to get peanuts. Oh, we've got boxes of cassettes, and grandpa and grandma still have cassettes, and you have your old truck. And we're offering them for a stack for \$1.

Elmer:

This book is one of the top ones at this point, the book by Pablo Yoder *The Work of Thy Fingers*. Lots of photography by Jacinto Yoder and others. Pablo also has a book, *The Long Road Home*, which is the story of his life and how he was brought to submission. Some have been asked for a book for instruction class. *Basic Bible Studies* has a new cover, but still the same on the inside. It addresses the 1921 eighteen articles of faith. Also, *Love and Nonresistance*. It's set up with 13 lessons which can be used for mid-week meetings, for example.

Simon:

A comment on Pablo's book. The details, it's an awesome book. My favorite story, his pet snake—he had a tame snake, and it's one of my favorite stories. That instruction book, it's the one we use, it's very extensive. Last year, we promoted the one-year Bible. It's arranged in a manner that when you read the date, you get OT, NT, Psalms, and Proverbs. The reading from today from Deuteronomy, "Be strong and courageous and do not be afraid or tremble, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you." The NT reading, "Also I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man confess before the angels of God." Think of that awesome promise. Elmer, if you confess Jesus, he shall confess you before men and angels. In Psalms, the interesting piece of the Psalms, speaking of Israel, "For all this they sinned still and believed not for his wonderful works." In Proverbs, "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. Those who deal faithfully are his delight." I have 15 copies of the KJV one-year Bible. The price is \$20 I'm offering you. I have a passion for integrity in our culture, and we live in a lying culture. I believe we ought to be honest as we walk our journey. I bought a truck some time ago with a snow plow. I paid \$6,000 for the truck, and in Virginia you take a receipt to the DMV

for how much you paid for the truck. The man was on the other side of my desk, and guess what he asked me: “What shall I put on the receipt?” “What I paid for it! I wrote a book called *Where Has Integrity Gone?*” And I gave him one. Another man I gave a copy to is now in prison for \$32,000,000 fraud. Another man said that the book changed his life. Why am I telling you all this? I’m having fun with this, because I tell people “I wrote a book *Where Has Integrity Gone?* Now, the public hasn’t been eager to buy it, so we have an overstock.

Elmer:

If you want one for nothing, meet him at the... [*audience laughter*]

I will introduce the “Lighthouse” series books , and the cost are low. I’d like to close with *What Jesus Did for Us on the Cross* and compare that with what was taught this morning.

Simon:

Since you ended yours early, I’ll introduce one more. Faith Builders printed a book about Annie Funk, and Choice Books agreed to buy thousands of them. Annie took the Titanic back home to visit her sick mother. (*excerpt read*) They are 99 cents! We’re past time. God bless you!

12:10pm **Announcements and Dismissal (Dan Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

A few announcements

- There is an offering basket in the food line. It is not for the food, but for mailing, printing, etc.
- Also, for a majority, your dessert is at your place where you will sit. There are some diabetes people, and there is a place where you pick up your dessert at a table back there if you’re one of those.
- Also, not aware of any committees that need to meet, but if there are any, just dismiss yourself and meet as needs are.
- Reminder, maybe you have turned in your newly ordained, but if not, please do so.

Stand and have a verse of song, and ask brother Phaylon to bless the noon meal. Stand and sing a verse of “Alive, Alive, for Evermore.” Pray.

Lunch

1:40pm: **Songs (Mervin Gingerich, Sunnyside Fellowship, FL)**

1. “Jesus Has the Table Spread” from memory, one verse
2. “I Stand Amazed in the Presence” [“Oh, how wonderful, oh how marvelous”] from memory, one verse
3. “Come, Come Ye Saints” (#873 Christian Hymnary)
4. “In the Warfare That Is Raging” [“May the Lord Depend on You?”] (#847 Christian Hymnary)
5. “I Have Yielded Myself” (#365 Christian Hymnary, verse one)

Prayer while standing.

1:48pm: **“The Pastor’s Home” (Bill Yoder, Sunnyside Fellowship, FL)**

I thought about making a deal, that I’ll cut the sermon short if you take a 5 minute nap before the message.

No one handed you a sympathy card when you were ordained, fortunately. We need to work on how we behave ourselves as pastors. 1 Timothy 3:4. How—hand raise—how many of you grew up in homes where the father was an ordained minister. Thank you. There’s a good number that have, and I think you would have a lot of interesting input. There’s a lot of us who haven’t, so we’re learning the hard way, things to do and not to do. Also in 1 Timothy 4:12-14, talking to us younger men [excerpt:] “Let no man despise thy youth...” And then we have Ephesians 5:25. “Husbands, love your wives.” 1 Peter 2:18, “Servants, be subject to your master...” We’re dealing with a lot of commands from the word of God. We chose our work, whether out of necessity or desire. We made a choice to get married and have a family, and then you were chosen by God through the church to be a servant leader. Does God really know what he’s doing?

Does he really know all that we have to do? If the answer is yes, then we know we can accomplish his will. This is the exciting part, that God saw every one of you capable to handle this position. You were the one needed for the time and place to get the work accomplished that He would have you to do. He wants to you to be personal faithful, and true, a good employee or business owner, a good father and husband, and a good servant in the local body. If God knew that didn’t work, he would have had a different plan. He’s not scratching his head, wondering if this is how it’s going to work.

The thing that brings the most fulfillment in life is the thing we give the greatest effort to. [Repeat]. In thinking that through, I didn’t say the thing that brings the most joy of greatest peace, but the thing that is the most fulfilling. We need to check our hearts and thinking, why is it bringing fulfillment? Is it status, a heart to reach out to the people, our families, our business? We can have a wrong motive in everything we do. We need to determine, why that fulfillment in our lives?

Can we afford to fail in any responsibility God has given us? If we fail in our work, we could become a burden. If we fail in our work, that would be an added burden to those around us. If in church, it would hinder our beloved. If at home, it will be a hindrance in our ability; we lose souls we’re to care for directly.

Yet, God will not give us more than we are able to bear, to handle. We get accomplished what we need.

What about yourself? God made you as a person, and he has a will for you. As we heard this morning, we have our limits. We were not given new bodies or new levels of energy when we were given the charge. We still need nourishment, exercise. We need rest, spiritual nourishment. We needed that before and today, and in this, we become a bigger target for Satan. We need to take greater care on how we behave ourselves. I’d encourage you: we struggle differently in different ways, but if there are areas in life we’re struggling with as a layperson, deal with it; we

need to get a rid of our vices. We'll have a hard time relating with those around us if there is sin in our life. With David, when Nathan came to confront him about Bathsheba, he reacted. We may become hard with others or avoid subjects in our messages

Transparency is needed. We need to take care of our sins, we don't become open and honest with sharing all the dirty laundry. Our people know we're human, and they don't like it when we don't admit it. For myself, I need several hours a week by myself outside of the daily Bible reading to spend time alone. That makes a large difference for me in clear thinking.

Then, not only yourself, but your wife: you're still required as an ordained leader to love and cherish her. Now that you're ordained, you can't say, "I'll spend less time over here." She is still your helper. Before ordained, she was to be chaste, obedient to you. When we neglect something in life in general, it tends to wear out more quickly. That's the same way for husbands in loving our wives. The less we give attention to her, the more quickly she will wear out. If you give her proper attention, you will reap many benefits.

Your children: your wife is a permanent fixture with you, but children are there for only a season. There is the time in life where they need more attention. We have a small opportunity to train them rightly in the way they should go. We have an extra responsibility at a certain time in life that diminishes with the child training. We're half way through it. Our children are old enough that they are potty trained, they don't crawl into bed in the middle of the night anymore. But, the demands of those cares change. We don't have immediate demands daily, but they are different today.

How do you add this responsibility to your already busy life? We can't forget that God knows our abilities and he knows our limits. He expects us to be a good steward of our time and all that is entrusted to you. If we don't take control of our time, others will.

There are three areas I think we need to look at, that we need to probably more than anything rethink rather than cut out or neglect.

One of the things: I had once talked to a fellow I was facing. He said, "Some things need to be delegated, but not everything can be delegated." There are other things as a business leader, someone else can write out the checks or do other things. In the home, we can't delegate being the husband. That is something we have to do, be the husband of the wife. We can't delegate being a father; it's the calling God has given us. There's a lot of other things we CAN delegate: the chores around the house. Delegating frees up time.

As bishops, ministers, and deacons, we can't delegate everything, but we can equip. The body is put together, and certain members are in place for teaching, exhorting, edifying. We try to do it all ourselves sometimes, rather than equip our people to help out. An example is, when you help a young man in your church with a sin issue, and you step him through it and he's accountable to you, he gets a grasp of it and gets victory. When another person comes, you can delegate him to that first person, and then follow-up to make sure it's happening. It's a beautiful picture. It's part of our responsibility as leaders, that we edify, that we equip our people that they can help each other. Figure out what you can delegate and what you can't.

Follow-through and delegate what you can. We accomplish what we think of as important, and check your motive: why do you think it's important?

There was a non-member who called and wanted to see the deacon, and wondered if I could go, too. It didn't really suit, would have taken me away from the family. I called the deacon and encouraged him to follow through with it. I had confidence he could take care of the situation. I wasn't sure if that was the proper thing to do, and so I called Jason, and he said, "Yeah, you made a good sermon illustration." There can be the follow-up to make sure it took place, but we don't need to be at every situation and jump at the drop of a hat. If we don't control our time, others will.

To have a home that is pleasing to God is not just a requirement from your ordination; it was something that took place before. That's one of the requirements in 1 Timothy. These are commands we have in Scripture that we can't get around. These commands stay in place whether you're ordained or not. Command #1: Husbands, honor your wife. Many times our home suffers the most. We're to adjust our time. We tend to adjust and make those suffer the most who are the closest to us. Rethinking can make a big difference. There's ideals and then there's less than ideals. We need to discover what can work for both, in the church and in the home as well as work. Men, when you were courting your wife, one of the goals you had was to please her, to make her happy. Sometimes, we are accomplishment-oriented, but we forget our wives' desires change, and their needs to be changes. Our duty is to continue knowing her and what pleases her and what makes her life enjoyable. At the ordination, she receives more work and responsibility as far as being available at the drop of the hat to bring someone in the home for a meal and to fill in when a husband needs to go to a meeting. Scripture tells us that we need to know our wives so that our prayers are not hindered. Have you ever tried preaching on the home when things are not in order there? It's difficult; it's work to be done.

In the same way that the Scriptures ask us to equip our people, I would encourage us to be understanding in equipping our wives with the extra work they may have. They may need a dishwasher. Maybe they need a clothes washer. What are things we can help them with that makes their work easier as well. This is the necessary ingredient. For the next part, for the wives: first, my hat is off to these mothers that needed to stay at home this week to take care of children while the husband could come enjoy the meetings here. Many times, that is for a season. The children were being young; they were in a work-out. I think it would be a good idea to have babysitters so wives and mothers could be here as well. The wife is a key part in making the ministry work. We've all seen those where the wife hindered the work of the ministry. That's the sad situation. But to you wives, the husband's calling is a call from God, through the church to help lead the church. God knew all this before you ever knew it. He knew that your husband is who you needed to get the work accomplished for this time and place. He also knew that you would be the helper best suited for him through this work. That was long before you ever knew each other. You as a wife were the one who was going to be the best suited to help him get this work accomplished to his glory.

Look, wives, at this responsibility as an opportunity from the Lord. Mary surrendered herself to the work God had for her. God has called you to be the wife, the helper in this situation. Now, it's

in your hands, either be that helper, or hinder. Did God design you to hinder the situation, or to help? How can you help? Things that are encouraging for ministers especially is that you pray for him, and that you know you're praying for him, especially when he's preparing for messages, especially in an assignment or in addressing an erring brother. Keep your wife on page, and wives, pray for him.

When I was studying, it was one of the younger children who came running in and wanted to sit on my lap. I was never comfortable telling the child he needs to move on, or closing the door and locking it. A mother can help by coming along and taking the children and saying 'Come do this.' Later, fathers can give the special attention he needs. As a mother, there needs to be an accomplishment here. Don't go 'Stay out of there! Dad needs to study.' That sends a message to the child that nothing is more important than studying.

Don't criticize his messages or the way of delivery. Every person is born with a different way of preaching, teaching. One of the things I've told myself is that God gets his will accomplished through his word, and it doesn't matter who the person is, as he can even use a donkey in the process. Who are you wives to criticize? I would encourage you to give encouragement rather than criticize.

Never complain to your children or in front of your children that dad's leaving *again*, but rather bless him. Make sure the young ones, if he's leaving for a meeting in the evening and he might be back late, make sure they give him a kiss and hug before he leaves. It lets the children know that you're working with him and not against him. Another thing, when you do that, it's going to want to make dad get home much sooner because there's a loving family at home.

I believe that part of criticizing—making negative comments—can have a huge bearing on a child's thinking pattern on the church and God himself. Mothers, you have a strong hold on them because you have a close connection. Never discuss church issues in front of your children.

Wives, you're a helper is what your calling has been. You're a manager, in business terms, of your home. You can sense the heart beat of your children better than the fathers sometimes. My wife sometimes says, "Look, I think it's time for the boys to have a day of fishing" or something. Their responses at home, she sees; I can be extra busy here and there. Give us those clues! It's our responsibility to do something with it. It's not that we're neglecting, but we don't always know what the different needs are. We can learn from that way and put it into practice. It's our duty to stay as a family, even after ordination. Let's not forget that there are people in our church who aren't ordained that don't have good homes. It's not that we're ordained necessarily; those outside of the ministry also struggle as well.

Include your children in your church or business work where feasible. If you as parents and especially as fathers have to be gone for a weekend trip, make it an effort, make it a point you give your family special attention. Get away with whatever you find enjoyable as a family.

At the family altar, pray for the family audibly. Thank God for your wife. Name her by name, and the privilege for bringing you together and sending you the children and having the privilege to take care of them. Name the children by name. When you're gone, that will continue. Pray that

they will grow up serving God. Ask to pray for their safety, so when others are gone, they know they will be prayed for. Thanking God for them, it does wonders for them and the spouse. Pray that God will bless your spouse, and it's easier done when you bless her. If you're struggling in a marriage, continue to pray that God will bless her.

Another encouragement: don't make your children behave a certain way just because...—that doesn't mean they can live loosely. We have a Scripture that we need to keep house, and having a godly home is first essential, and if the children want to do something, to say "Well, because I'm the preacher, you can't go." They get a bad taste in their mouth for the work as well as the church and Christianity itself.

Secondly, be consistent; practice what you preach. I'd encourage, do an inventory on your messages. Are there things you're avoiding because of things in your personal life? Is it okay you're avoiding it? Take care of it, and then preach it. If you are living a double standard, you will lose your children. Dad is one way at home, but he deals with his church or preaches differently. When you preach a message, and a child knows a parent is living in sin in that area, I've often wondered what that does to the child, and even more if the preacher knows the preacher is living in sin. Don't go the double standard. The goal is to accomplish God's will: for our personal life, for our home, for our church, without neglecting anything. My encouragement is, God saw you fit to handle the work. It's a matter of handling some things to get it accomplished, but the things he already commanded you to do, stay in place. Love your wives, teach your children, take care of business, pray for wisdom how to get all those things accomplished.

What would happen if our ministry would be removed? Where would our extra energies go? Would we spend more time in business, on family, in leisure? Where would we go? That probably is, again, determined by what we think is important in life. We get accomplished what we deem important.

God bless you, for staying awake.

2:27pm: **Comments**

2:39pm: **Business Meeting (Dean Miller, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

The newly ordained, introduction. I'll assure you, we've all done this. I just did it a couple years ago. I'd like to do something a little different. As your newly ordained brothers come up here from your church, stand to show your support by doing that.

Name	Office	Church	Location	Date
Bobby Miller	Bishop	Salem A.M. Church	Newcomerstown, OH	Nov. 9, 2008
Alvin Stoltzfus	Bishop	Mine Road A.M.	Oxford, PA	April 26, 2009
Dave Beiler	Bishop	Shekinah Christian F.	Middleburg, PA	May 10, 2009
Melvin Lapp	Bishop	Crystal Valley M.	Dundee, NY	Aug. 23, 2009
Duane Troyer	Bishop	Faith & Light C.F.	Leesburg, OH	Aug. 30, 2009
Robert Beachy	Bishop	Canaan Fellowship	Plain City, OH	Nov. 8, 2009
Bill Yoder	Bishop	Sunnyside Fellowship	Sarasota, FL	March 7, 2010
Wilbur Gingerich	Bishop	Trinity Christian F.	Arthur, IL	Mar. 14, 2010
John Beiler	Bishop	Light of Hope C.F.	Wytheville, VA	March 21, 2010
Lester Glick	Deacon	Crystal Valley M.	Dundee, NY	Aug. 5, 2007
Al Garber	Deacon*	Gospel Light F.	Lincoln, MO	April 26, 2008
Dale Miller	Deacon	Bethesda Fellowship	Plain City, OH	Sept. 27, 2009
Steven Adams	Minister	Fairhaven A.M.	Millbank, ON	Oct. 26, 2008
Steven Gerber	Minister	Fairhaven A.M.	Poole, ON	Oct. 26, 2008
Phaylon Schrock	Minister	Fair Haven A.M.	Goshen, IN	March 8, 2009
Jon Yoder	Minister	Pilgrim Fellowship	Centreville, MI	April 12, 2009
Jared Schlabach	Minister	Living Waters F.	Sugarcreek, OH	May 17, 2009
Delbert Hostetler	Minister	Bethany Fellowship	Kokomo, IN	June 28, 2009
Leland Wagler	Minister	Mt. Nebo Mennonite	Newberry, IN	July 26, 2009
Simon Schrock	Minister	Pilgrim Christian F.	Stuarts Draft, VA	Aug. 23, 2009
Tim Yoder	Minister	Shady Grove C.F.	Lewisburg, PA	Nov. 1, 2009
Lamar Hochstetler**	Minister	Oak Grove Mennonite	Aroda, VA	Dec. 22, 2009

*With the charge of 'bishop' under Bishop Truman Yoder

**Who was ordained Tuesday evening because of a snow storm on Sunday.

Dean Miller: Let's all stand and have a word of prayer. (Ivan Beachy called up front to lead.) Song, and now is the opportunity for ladies to dismiss. Christian Hymnary #829 "Sweet Are the Promises." Please raise your hand if you have not received a ballot, and the users will bring those around.

2:45pm: **Bishop Committee (Tim Miller, Oak Grove Mennonite, VA)**

Reads off the current committee: Tim Miller, David Yoder, Philip Miller, Roman B. Mullet, and Raymond King.

Three nominees, and those are to stand as their names are read:

Ben Stoltzfus, Pequea AM

Ivan Beachy, Faith Mission Fellowship

Donnie Swartzentruber, Montezuma, GA

We did a bit different in the nominating process. We had become aware of a pattern, where the nominations and election were decided by which bishop had a topic at the ministers' meetings that year. To minimize that effect, we consulted with Paul A. Miller, and decided to let you give your nominees before the meeting, which you had a place for on the nominating card. It reduces the time in the meeting, too. Some did not notice the directions, so not everyone filled out that

part. We'd like to continue that practice and prayerful consider your nominee. Each time, give both the brother's name, the church he's from, and the state. As more join the ranks, we have more similar names, so we need to identify who you are referring to. Ushers, please collect the ballots at this time.

Thank you for the response in February. We received responses for about half, which is quite good for this group. *[laughter from assembled]* You are still welcome to send in your responses or given them to the committee still yet. One issue that was raised to us is in relation to the mode of baptism. Historically, we have accepted pouring, but it seems more problematic when the mode becomes a more significant issue than what Scripture and the early church made. If there is need for us to look into issues further, we're open to input and discussion on that.

Also, we're aware that there's promotion of doing away with the second ordination, the bishop. We have some concerns we hope is considered. One thing we fear is that we could be moving away from the seriousness from which the lead responsibility is viewed by both the congregation and the leaders. It also could, depending on how it's used, could lead to confusion in the congregation for who is responsible for what. A question we have is, how might this contribute to an instability that comes from a lack of consistent long-term leadership? Those exposed to mission churches know it's a struggle to have a frequent change-over in the leadership role, and are we in danger of that kind of instability in that kind of frequent turn-over. The second ordination has served our churches over the years, and serious consideration should be given before discarding it. We recognize there have been some situations of abuse by the bishop, but we feel those situations do not change the problems that would have come. To change the title doesn't change the man. Harm could be done by too frequent of that role of the pastor, and there is little accomplished by exchanging one role label for another. That's some of the things we think would do well to consider as we look at some of those issues.

With regard to your responses on the survey we sent out, I plan to give some summary comments form this year. The committee is going to continue to evaluate the responses and continue with the discussion next year. We appreciate you putting your thoughts on paper. With regard to the non-use of the radio, a substantial majority of the constituency continues to affirm the support at the ministers' meeting in Grantsville, MD in 1999. There was some question if our constituency position on that is somewhat obsolete because of the technology. As time goes on, we're adding other things to the negative influences which draw people away from Christ. We believe radio in the old form and the new form (Internet, cell phone) is still an influence to be avoided. Influence of video in most forms and TV in all forms compounds the way the enemy distracts, destroys, and takes us away from rather than toward growth in Christ and obedience to his word. Is the result of the influences we're so willing to allow taking us toward or away from God and his Word? We believe American Christian culture has simply followed world culture, and any way we absorb either of these can lead to our spiritual ruin. We think that a high level of concern is in order in relation to these things. We continue to be concerned that we may be neglecting to look far enough into the future in relation to the use of these information technologies. Ronald last year gave us some good admonition on those things. The direction in which we're going is more important than where we actually are at any given moment. Is our vision broad enough to see the effects of our choices, the choices of our churches today to the lives of the third and fourth generation, not just how it affects us and our children, but your grandchildren and great

grandchildren?

As we think about these things, and sometimes it changes faster than what we can keep up, we are not serving our churches well as leaders if we say we expect one thing and in reality don't expect that at all. Let's lead our churches into a way of integrity that what we have agreed on, what is our standard of practice, is in fact what we are practicing, what we expect of each other. To say passively that the pressures and influences of the world is going to work their will and all we can do is slow the pace, is to abdicate our call, but rather we need to lead our church in victory of pressures and influences.

In the question we asked about what our strengths are weaknesses are, there are some consistent themes. The strengths, a lot of response in some form or another, referring to the openness we have to differences and input and a broader spectrum of fellowship than others are comfortable with, and an appreciation for our emphasis on congregational autonomy. In response to our weaknesses, is that we have a lack of accountability to one another, and we're getting farther and farther apart. We see that our strength is our weakness. We've done fairly well until now in both the strength and differences it brings to us. Now there's increasing concern that those differences are great and fundamental enough that the tension is getting too great. One of our characteristics seems to be that none of us consider our churches to be typical Beachy. It's typical Beachy to believe we're not typical Beachy. On the one hand, that's a defining characteristic of our churches. Our churches do not need to be like any other church in our constituency. But to the degree that means that we're distancing ourselves from one another and from the constituency, to that degree then we are lessening our respect for each other, our consideration for each other, and the positions and concerns others may have. Another issue is that since none of us are typical Beachy, then typical Beachy becomes whatever we make of it. We wondered, is that helpful?

As we think about the common themes that unite us, obviously there are a lot of themes, things like faith in Christ and certain Anabaptist principles or principles promoted by the Anabaptists that seem common to us. There are ways in which those things are generic enough that they include our neighboring churches ourselves. How ecumenical are our churches? Does having faith in Christ mean something different? It seems important to call attention to two things that unite a group of people. One, and there are more, of those things that unite people together is around something distinctive. To say we are Beachy means we are not something else. An example, the fire department is not the rescue squad, and loyalty to each organization is distinctive from the other. Another thing that unites is the willingness of each member of the group to accept the parameters that are established, whether formally or informally, by the group. If you want to be accepted in the skateboarding crowd, which most of you wouldn't dare try anymore, you have the right clothes, hairstyle, and language, and you are identified and accepted with that group. There's an agreed upon set of parameters.

To build on that, consider this: the real depth of any relationship is based on the level of submission between the parties involved. Consider how the relationship in marriage differs from the relationship, those same married individuals have with others. A husband and wife will have a significant and high degree of accommodation to needs and desires. If the husband starts having a higher sensitivity to other women than his wife, she will rightly question whether his heart is truly with her. That lack of consideration brings about a brokenness in any unity and

oneness that was there. Romans 14 and other passages give us some particulars how this aspect of relationships is worked out in the church. We do need to consider as we interact on the constituency level. The broader the disregard for the needs of others, the more distant the relationship. Some people I do business with, I have disregard for most areas of their life; I don't know what they are. The broader the regard, the wider the scope of this regard and sensitivity care of the desires of others, the more close and deep the relationship. It seems that to us, as the constituency grows, it becomes more difficult to have the closeness of personal relationships that in earlier years heightened our regard for each other. Everyone knew each other well, which created a level of regard for what others thought. Now the group is so large, we don't know each other's names; that's why we all wear name tags. It's something that we need to consider, something we need to ask questions about. How can we be and maintain this constituency unity? Can two walk together, except they be agreed, is the rhetorical question of Scripture, and the obvious answer is, "No." Unfortunately, where there is less agreement, then we find it easy to separate our ways to solve the problem. I talked earlier about that tension, as the rubber band gets pulled farther. The obvious answer is to relieve the tension by cutting the rubber band.

Is the only solution to separate and reunite by separation and division, or can we consider that we are willing to sacrifice in the spirit of Romans 14 for the sake of deeper fellowship with one another. Do we accept this solution to some of the differences in the widening space between us is to work for agreement? We can also lessen the tension of the rubber band by moving the ends closer together. That's more costly, and we take the other route precisely because it's easier. Agreement comes at a price, and the price is submission, and our human nature would like to avoid that kind of thing. Our plea is to understand these principles and take seriously Romans 15:2 as it relates to our constituency and our relationship to our constituency. "Let every neighbor..." Our unity must be based on our commitment to centering on the Word of God... the kingdom of God is built up by investment in that and by the unity of our constituency. Too many of our people are starving and dying spiritually because the seeds of the gospel (pause) are being choked out their lives by the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and worldly values, and they become unfruitful because we've not been protective of them in directing them and warning them carefully enough.

It seems like it is characteristic of us to line up all round the edge of the constituency, and we, one eye out, and one eye in, or one foot out, one, in, all the way around, on every side of the spectrum. We're apologetic about bringing people into our constituency for a wide variety of reasons. Can we gain the vision for gathering together away from the edges, around the Word of God and around the presence of Christ within us? God is here. We're not the only people of God, but God is here among us. With the strength that we gain from uniting together, from stepping in from the edge, we give witness to the transforming work of Christ that stands as a witness both to the world and to worldly Christianity, that it is possible to live out salvation in a way that is faithful to the entirety of God's Word.

Brethren, let's first rise up and be faithful to God and to His work, and let us love one another as individual brethren, but also as churches, as a constituency, with a depth that calls us to live out the principles of Romans 14. Let's be drawn together by a common concern, be faithful both doctrinally and practically to the desire of God for his people, and may I even say this way, and the desire of God for His Beachys.

3:13pm **Moderator (Dean Miller)**

Thank you, Tim; the results of the voting, Ivan Beachy is elected. Stand and sing, "This is my commandment that you love one another."

3:14pm **Missions Interest Committee (Mel Glick, Cold Springs Mennonite, SC)**

Hillcrest Home (Ken Nisly)

Many wonder what all goes into caring for the elderly. It's a special thing to us to have our youth come with the idea to serve, though not all youth have the concept that in serving they desire growth. We thought we came to serve, that's great, but it's also our desire that those that leave do not do so in the way they came. This friction of unit life is like between husband and wife, but it can bring growth. Presently, the youth there have that desire to grow. What do you think of when you think of being a mentor? Perhaps what Barnabas did for John Mark, Barnabas was a mentor. If we have the concept that we all walk beside them, we'll accomplish what we want to do.

Current needs: nearly at full capacity with the elderly, around 88-90, licensed for 93. Need for a laundry couple at any time. A local couple has filled in for quite a while. Need ladies, CNAs and kitchen workers, as well as a secretary. Male needs are met.

What happens when someone comes work in a VS unit? What is their perspective of what's asked of them? The worst thing we can do to our young people is to have a list of standards written on a piece of paper for that purpose only. When they come and find what is written is what we mean, they have trouble with that. In our churches, we have trouble with what we ask to practice we do not practice. The conservative churches [Mennonite] seem to do better than we.

There are two other nursing homes in town, and the way they care for the elderly is not the best. Many want to transfer to Hillcrest. The two homes are operated by the same company, and the manger came to get a tour. As they were touring, she saw most were volunteers. She said, "I can't compete with that." We're doing what we're doing because we want to do it.

Northwest Ontario (Darrel Nisly)

Nate Hostetler, yesterday he underwent surgery to remove a tumor from his ear canal. The last report, they were able to get most but not all of the tumor. They hope he can be released today, but the way he appeared last night to his family, it didn't appear possible. Pray for Nate and family for a full recovery.

Last year, we requested a worker that might be pretty hard to fill. Following that meeting, someone suggested someone, and Galen and Edith Miller have now moved to Sioux Lookout to help with the bookstore ministry. Thanks for listening! Ministry happens as we live our lives.

I had the privilege of going for help in my marriage with my wife. It was a rewarding time. Only a few weeks later, at 10pm, we got a call from a neighboring couple who requested help that night. After sharing for an hour or so, we were able to share God's will for marriage. As the evening closed, we prayed. Later, the wife came and thanked us. Pray for this couple's salvation.

Spring is coming early this year. Fellows tend to run over water with their snowmobiles. You

start out on ice and cross open water, hoping you make it safely. Three young men were doing this, and two snowmobiles went down. One fellow drowned when the current pulled him under. This young man and his family were not believers. Through this, Nate Hostetler's son Jesse was asked to sing at his funeral. Many people were there, over 600, and were blessed.

Finally, at a Good Friday service, after the service was over, there was opportunity for testimony. From the beginning of the service, a woman shared she was impressed with a need to let go of bitterness from having been raped as a young girl. She wept and cried out, later testifying the Holy Spirit was pouring out the bitterness and she now feels so free.

Our desire is to be available, not only to give the salvation message, but to help with healing because of what Jesus does for him.

Sioux Lookout (David Herschberger)

As David went around to different reserves, he looked at what literature they had, and all he found were comic books and dirty literature in the local stores. Millions of dollars have been spent teaching these native people how to write through our schools. When looking around for materials, David couldn't find any Christian books, to try to get literature to these people. We started a small bookstore back in 1979, and in 1980, took the first trip to the isolated communities by plane. Book tables have been set up. [*Map is displayed of areas where book stands are.*]

About 250mi North and 250mi East they are trying to cover with literature. Because of lack of funds, the number of communities has been limited to 9, and last year, we added two more. Books are loaded in boxes, put in the planes, unpacked in a community building, and people come in to buy books, and the next day they're in another area.

Last spring, David approached the board and said he can't carry it on much longer. Three options: let it shut down, give it to another mission, or recruit a young man to help and eventually take over. They pursued the third. Galen and Edith Miller are now there to help develop it. We need a bigger building at Sioux Lookout to store the books and a display, to box them up and take them to communities. When it was started, contributions from people and MIC funded it, but to expand, David is asking for interest-free loans. This is what happened at first, and all were returned, and some said they needn't pay it back. \$1,000 to \$100,000 interest-free loans. For the building, 15000 sq ft., and the cost would be from \$24K-\$30K, and at present they cannot pay that. Another option is to buy a building, and that would be \$300K-\$500K. The other option is to build a warehouse on a commercial lot. Pamphlets are available if you know anyone interested.

Story: a chief welcomed MIC to his community, and he wanted a Christian influence. We gave them free literature, and gave him a Bible. Last year on Good Friday they held a service there, and the chief came and said he needed another Bible. It was all tattered and marked. He had built a small building to have believers come together to have a church.

Faith Mission Home (Galen Stutzman)

Thank you for your support and for suggesting people. Currently 59 residents in care and 44

single staff and 11 families from 16 states and a variety of churches. Erase a rumor spreading that there is a waiting list for people wanting to serve at FMH. Presently, they are comfortably staffed but not fully staffed, and numbers are going down in a month or two.

My work is working with the staff. One staff member came from a broken home, the father was not a Christian, and another staff came from a troubled home (mom and dad didn't get along). One had trouble getting along at FMH, the other you couldn't tell there was a problem. This underscores that it is the commitment to Christ that makes a difference. The home is under attack. The best contribution you can make to the constituency is to have a good home. The young people at FMH don't always get things right, but as the administration works with them, there is an openness to wanting to do things right, and this is an encouragement. Continue praying as our work load can be large.

Choice Books of Northern Virginia (Simon Schrock)

Thanks to MIC for supporting in the early days. 8,500 books are sold a day. Mel serves on the board of directors as representative of MIC. Mel helps find human resources. He even goes on the road and services book racks. Current needs: two sales reps in TX, a floater in Northern Virginia but travels to other states, someone in NYC as soon as possible, someone in Miami, FL.

On Los Angeles, Ernest Witmer had been to LA a number of times, and deep in his heart, he wanted to establish a conservative Anabaptist witness. Choice Books needed someone in LA and connected with Witmer, and this was a two-pronged vision. Choice Books gave him a job, but his pay scale does not allow enough for his family to live in the LA area. A co-worker suggested Simon raise funds, and he agreed to do it. Simon let a few people know, and he's looking for a 'few drips a month' to fill the bucket. This is not for what he does for Choice Books, but rather to establish an Anabaptist church.

Voting (Mel Glick)

Mel Glick thanks for ongoing prayer, financial, and personnel support. Express keen sense of loss of Willis Bontrager passing on, who had been with the MIC board for nine years. Pray for Esther and the family. Two options to replace Willis: go through an election process where secretary mails out an election form to the churches. Another option is to permit the board to appoint a replacement for Willis. After three years, that person would be eligible for election. We did get some affirmation from other groups at this meeting, but wanted to come before the body if they would trust us to appoint someone in place of Willis without going through the election process. A raised hand vote, passed without tallying. Ivan Herschberger completed his third term, and Rodger Byers, Free Union, VA, was elected to replace Ivan several months ago. As of last evening, he is a member of MIC.

Ireland (Mel Glick)

The Dan Yoder family is now citizens of Ireland. Four daughters and two sons. The two boys are married and are there, while the daughters are scattered. There are two school teachers there. The Ed Yoder family is leaving in August, and Ken Miller family is replacing them this summer. The church has had some connections in England, Wales, and onto mainland Europe. These attachments lend themselves to ministry. Friends from other EU countries, Eastern Europe, have moved to Ireland and have taken up residence. These families can move freely like we can in the

states. Some have chosen to attend and some have chosen to become members. Europe has many seekers where people have an interest in what we believe, and they make contact, and there are many contacts with East Dunmore. The Boys Camps, in past years there was interest in staff in becoming involved in a Boys' Camp in Ireland. Dan Yoder was ready to be a part of something. In the partnership, Bald Eagle provides the expertise and MIC already has the presence. The traditional Boys' Camp model probably will not work: climate, culture, government, etc. They have just recently been removed from being a third-world country, and in their memories, they remember third-world countries. Having tents or crude housing in the forest doesn't sound good. Another thing against us, they are not comfortable with us working with troubled boys as a religious organization. Recently, news of the Irish clergy abusing boys is a hurdle. Wes and Karen Sensenig are the pioneers and are searching out the project. We've just completed the purchase of 16 acres of land to access the forest. All forest land in Ireland is owned by the government, and they cannot buy their own woods. It must be leased from the government. One acre accommodates staff housing, and hopes to build a house. Currently they are renting. With some variance, perhaps build another one. The other fifteen acres will be for planting trees, as the government strongly encourages reforestation of open area.

4:04pm: **Amish Mennonite Aid (Earl Peachy)**

Daniel Bontrager requests not to be put up for re-election for AMA board. A slate of three brothers has been created to replace him.

Lavern Miller, Rosewood Fellowship, Shipshewana, IN

Paul Beachy, Grace Mennonite, Bastrop, TX

Virgil Kanagey, Calvary Mennonite Fellowship, Blackville, SC

Pray

Appreciation is expressed for Daniel's time on the board. The board requests to use Daniel as an honorary member status, and he has agreed to do that, but affirmation is requested from the assembled. Affirmation by closed eye. Unanimous support.

Financial report (Ivan Beachy)

Two books from AMA are available for free. Calendars are also available. The Love offering distribution has not been done. Generous in giving, \$58.70 per share, and 1,782 shares to be distributed for workers in 2009. Over \$104,000 to bless those who have served. There's no papers for financial report. AMA is in transition, changing accounting programs and accountants. Mark Payne is the new accountant and trying to come up with better reporting, especially with new IRS regulations on the 995. Present condition, the year ended positively, total income \$2.36 million in 2009. Phenomenal. After last year, \$25,000 had to be withdrawn from savings. One month's funds available in savings, but that was the only time needed to withdraw. Businessmen called and offered money, as business was better. The balance \$540,000, which included the reserve in love offering. Operating balance of \$436,000.

Personnel needs (Ray Stutzman)

Recently, there were visitors in church, and he asked the host who the man was that preached, and he asked "Was that the man who calls everyone for help? I'm going to stay away from him." Well that doesn't work, I've got him on the list. Recently, while retrieving a birth certificate for a

worker preparing to go, he talked to a man and lady at the state department. They found out about the work we do, and the words they had were very encouraging. Thank you as a constituency for support. It's not a problem to call any and ask for a reference. If you're a parent of one of those that have gone to the mission field for support, there is a lot of enthusiasm of parents. Last trip was to Paraguay, and it was a good time connecting with workers. In the next four or five months, people are leaving for the field. So, there are not many needs, but the next time will come around, and he still wants names. The workers going to the mission field: Lori Ann Troyer going to Belize to Double Head as a domestic social worker, daughter of David Troyer, Leesburg, OH. Marty and Kristy Bender have left for Kisumu, Kenya, in Agape work. He is the son of Glen Bender. Orientation scheduled for the latter part of June. Delilah Miller left in Jan. as an assistant to Miss Nancy in Belize. James Gingerich is leaving to do maintenance in Belize. Deacon at Bethel (Lancaster) will be leaving in July, unit leader in Scotland. Priscilla Wagler from Trout Creek, MT, nurse aid in Paraguay. Brenda Zook from Belleville, PA, leaving in August to be a cook in Paraguay. Catherine Hostetler, Belleville, PA, Agape worker in Kisumu, Kenya, where her brother Joseph is serving. Jay Yoder, Montezuma, GA, going to Paraguay as a maintenance boy there. Rhonda Kuhns, Belleville, PA, going to Paraguay to be a nurse. Rhonda Brenneman, Aroda, VA, RN in Paraguay. Isabella, Weston Showalter from Double Head is taking on that responsibility along with work as a unit leader in Double Head. Loncho and Pauline are leaving for sabbatical, and someone will fill in for them, and someone committed for two year term where Mark and Ellen Yoder are serving. Pending church approval, so not public at this time. Needs are covered, except, Merle Beachy in Kenya who has been serving there for around a decade will be terminating as bishop of Kisumu area. Looking for a replacement for him. Someone with administrative and pastoral experience is desired. This person may not take on his work, but fill a void and perhaps choose someone from there to take on mission responsibilities. Is there a minister in your congregation who is suitable for that? If someone comes to mind or if you wish to volunteer, please make this known.

General Missions Report (Daniel Bontrager)

In Central America, there is a meeting similar to this. AMA has been going for 50 years, and we don't see the fulfillment of everything right away. We used to bring a minister from Central America to give them exposure. There are around 100 ordained or commissioned leaders at those meetings. Two ordinations, one in Paraguay (where Amish group is) a deacon ordained. The deacon recently had a fire where his storage building and truck were burned. If anyone cares to contribute, it is welcome. Another Orlando Matute as bishop in the Cayo church. This is the second native bishop in Belize. Have encountered sufficient legal problems in the past couple years. The clinics in Paraguay they have been operating with official permission to be there. But this permission is being challenged. Those clinics may need to go through extensive, costly legal obligations. The clinic at New Life and Hope is improved over government clinics. But they say it needs to be modified considerably, but if they government takes it over, they can do it without costing a dime. If the clinic chooses to close it though the government requirements, we're okay with that (with approval of the colony church).

We want to see that church goes on itself. The El Salvador churches had the vision of starting their own children's home. That has grown considerably, beyond their means of operating by personnel and finances. With the help of CAM and Holmes County New Order Amish they have a larger home than the mission before. The old home has been converted into a deaf ministry.

That is being supported financially and personnel with the NOA. In Kenya, there are several new congregations, and not nearly as many as could be. It's a stressful situation because of the number of requests still coming. It's still true, and it keeps being that way. With growth, comes pain. One growing pain is that while AMA is not really a material aid ministry, sometimes you just can't help it. Agape is largely a material aid program, which helps many orphans and widows of AIDS. It is largely in private homes with financial help distributed through Agape, and thanks to CAM for assistance. While there are pastors, they're saying 'How are we going to support our families?' The image we're giving some is that money and spreading the Gospel go together. This is a prayer request, how can we best reach the people who want to know, and how can we best help people who are willing but don't have the resources.

Fellowship Haven, one of the earlier ministries of this group, has a few people still there. They say now, if they could do it over, they wouldn't have made some of the changes that they did. They would like to join this fellowship again. Some contacts have been made for help, and we give this as a prayer request. Pray for the hungry souls at Fellowship Haven looking for direction.

Proposed Ransom Policy (Earl Peachy)

There has been no ransom policy in place, and AMA proposes a statement that AMA does not pay ransom, though individuals may pay. AMA may assist in helping to transfer funds if requested by the individuals. Raised hand vote for show of support. Unanimous.

In the Mennonite history of missions, efforts were met with suspicions because it might have a liberalizing effect. We have a concern from the other end. The missions are concerned about the liberalizing effect that is coming from home. Visitors on the field should be willing to comply with local practices.

Paul Beachy is elected.

4:39pm: Calvary Bible School (Paul A. Miller)

CBS is governed by a five-member board, Marvin Kauffman, Tim Stoltzfus, Norman Kauffman, Ken Miller, and Paul Miller. Because Ken is moving to Ireland, he is not standing for re-election. There is a slate of candidates to replace Ken Miller. Two are proposed:

Stan Nisly (Carol), minister at Cornerstone, KS

Mel Stoltzfus (Mary Ellen), layman at Mine Road, PA

Last year, it was approved to allow one laity on the board if elected.

Principal's Report (Floyd Stoltzfus)

Nearly 41 years ago when Willie Wagler from Kansas took a trip to Shady Lawn, AR, and heard about the school that was evacuated back in the hills. He drove up there and was excited, and told the board he thinks he found the place. A place of God's gift given to us through the years. There's probably not a place more suited in the location where it is. I don't know if we could find it in Indiana, Ohio, or Pennsylvania. Woods, mountains, fishing, bluffs, caves, a natural falls within walking distance.

An encouraging year, thank you for gift of young people, teachers, and staff. 140+ people were

on campus for each of the two terms, and for the six term 220 students, 103 men, 117 ladies, from 16 to 24, 103 in the first term, 104 in the second term, and 74 in the third term. FL to NY and ON, from CO and TX and 18 states in between. 13 students from missionary families. Some are calling ahead to preregister for classes. This year they were preregistered before they got to Bible School for the third term (or first and second). After a sermon for the Beauty of Christian Womanhood and the need for women to have a Biblical size for their covering (Chester Weaver), and Floyd is offering copies of this recording. It brought a revival, a message from his heart, and he talked about drift in other churches.

Treasurer's Report (Tim Stoltzfus)

Last year with the ice storm, there were \$1,547 in balance at the end of the term. Income \$191,467 expenses, \$203,952 income, \$12,485 balance. Much of this was from donations. There was a theft at CBS, and several thousand worth taken during the months CBS stands empty. On arrival of the teachers, a senior teacher said "I wish they had taken the teacher's chairs."

Paul. A. Miller

An email will be coming of a list of items they're looking to replace. Marvin Kauffman is always looking for potential teachers. If there are possibilities, contact Marvin or other board members. We're open to feedback regarding CBS and how this training arm can better serve the needs among us, especially the changing needs of the changing times in which we live. As you entrust to us your youth, give us input and feedback on how we best can serve your needs and how we can augment and support the teaching programs in your own churches. This is preventative training in one sense, but in this training in sound doctrine and fervency in spirit to serve the Lord, so that our churches may prosper and grow and carry the Gospel. Stan Nisly was elected.

4:53pm: **Moderator: Dean Miller**

Announcements

- Mountain View Nursing Home is looking for a dean of ladies. Please give name to Mark Webb.
- If AMA and CBS board would make their way through the line first.
- *Steve Miller*: Recently, B-A-Pastors was started as an email list, and you are welcome to join the group. David Nisly from Catlett and Steve has been elected.

Stand for closing prayer.

Evening meal

7:00pm: **Songs (Titus Troyer, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

- 1) "He has made me glad" (chorus from memory)
- 2) "Spirit of the Living God" (chorus from memory)
- 3) "Nearer, Still Nearer" (#356 Christian Hymnary)
- 4) "O, Victory in Jesus" (words on overhead)
- 5) "Our God Is Alive" ["There is Beyond the Azure Blue"] (taped inside back cover of

Christian Hymnary)

7:17: Moderator (Harvey Miller, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

I'd like to address one person who has more power than all of us, "Unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." Tremendous power, that's God. Unto him be glory. He gets me excited about heaven. As we were addressed today to work in unity and peace, we wish to glorify Him. I expect that of our two brethren this evening, to speak something powerful. There's a change in speaker for the devotional.

7:18 Devotional (Monroe Gingerich, Salem Mennonite, IA)

Turn our Bibles to John 6. Yesterday morning on the way to work, I was thinking, what would be appropriate to share, the words from John 6 came to me. In feeding the 5,000, and the attention it brought to Him, they said he must be a prophet and they wanted to make Him king. He used the bread to convey a message, and throughout the chapter he is referring to himself as the bread from Heaven, the bread of God, the bread of life twice, and the living bread, referring to himself. In verse 63, the words he speaks to them are spirit and life. Food sustains life, it gives life. Bread here it is speaking spiritually of course. We notice throughout Jesus' ministry, his words were powerful. I was blessed just reading that. God is the only one that can give life. Unless God moves and gives us the power, we are powerless. Throughout his ministry, we see the power of the spoken Word. We also see the power of Jesus' own Words and how he met the needs of those around him. With the spoken Word, he brought life, healed the lame, sick, and blind. I think of the account in John 9 where they asked the blind man who he thought healed him, but he said he doesn't know but he knows now he sees. We want people to see Jesus.

Jesus said in John 10 that he has come to bring life that they may have it more abundantly. God's Word is the bread of life. It is powerful. We realize man was not made by spoken word, but formed him and breathed in him the breath of life. We're alive physically here today. We need to be alive physically before spiritually. The alternative to life is death. The alternative of a spiritual life is spiritual death. We are in one category or the other. Jesus said "The words I speak unto you are spirit and life." God's Word brings life.

Notice in the conversation he had with the Jews and people he didn't mess around with small talk. He asked, how was their heart? Sometimes we say Jesus could have had a following if he were more tactful, but Jesus' concern was the heart. Jesus was Jesus so he could do as he pleased. He brought conviction. Yet, the Bible says his words were gracious, and it brought emotional healing. The Word of God is quick and powerful, and it is a discerner of thoughts of the heart. As ministers we are called to be stewards of the Gospel. We are called to take God's Word and explain and expound. Sometimes, always, we'd like to see some results like Jesus had: the blind seeing and the lame walking. But Jesus we know was perfect, and at the same time we are not perfect. We must recognize that it is His spirit that works. We do our responsibility faithfully, and he gives. We are his message bearers and takers.

At times we feel spent and at our wits' ends because of many things we have to do, but we can do and we can do, but it is God's work, and God moves the hearts of men as he will. It is not our spiritual maturity that makes the Word of God alive. God can do with His word what he wants, even if at times it is preached by carnal men. He can turn it and make it useful for him.

As God's messengers, we need to continue to evaluate our lives. As an illustration, it wasn't too long ago I was convicted deeply. I dreaded studying for the next message, and I wasn't sure if I could even preach. During that time of struggle, I went to my desk, then looked up and saw a verse from the Psalm: "IF I regard iniquity in my heart, he will not hear me." God's word spoke. I repented and I experienced victory immediately. So as ministers of the gospel, we're made of the same stuff. We face struggles, and it will accomplish what it is meant to.

It's important for us to be who God wants us to be, and we cannot be a barrier to someone else receiving God in our lives. That's what stared me in the face; am I going to be a hindrance to others seeking God? We must allow God to work through us, recognizing our weakness and inability so that His word would be effective.

Stand to pray.

7:30pm: Moderator (Harvey Miller, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

Introduces special singing

7:30pm: Special Singings (Steven Miller and seven other men from Woodlawn A.M.)

1. "O Praise the Lord All Ye People."

Steven Miller: *This morning I was reading the one year Bible Simon introduced to me. God told Moses to teach Israel a song. God can instruct us through song, and we'd like to do that this evening. We have several songs; the message of the songs is for every believer, but I'd like to apply it especially to the ministering brethren. Please listen to the words of the songs.*

2. "Brother Let Me Be Your Servant"
3. "He's Shaping His Tools to Fit into His Hand"
4. "I Then Shall Live" [tune of *Finlandia*, Jean Sibelius]

7:42pm: Songs (Titus Troyer, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

1. "Alive, Alive, Alive for Evermore" (two verses from memory)

7:44pm: Moderator (Harvey Miller, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

The singing sounds wonderful from up here, all God's children chiming in. When you think about the brotherhood, vibrant, it comes to the last subject of the day. *Pray.*

7:45pm: "The Vibrant, Active Brotherhood" (Ben Stoltzfus, Pequea A.M., PA)

I've toyed with the thought, what would the committee do if we just sang for the rest of the evening? Singing can be active and vibrant without the brotherhood as well. I've been blessed just listening sometimes. Vibrant, active is a sure sign of life. If you find that in your brotherhood, you will find a group of believers cooperating together for a cause. Does that define me? Does that define you? Vibrant, active brotherhood.

Around 3,000 years ago, four men were banished from their city as lepers. Although the four were removed, the city was not much safer or better, because their city was besieged by a huge better army. The siege had been going on for so long, that the ones on the walls were on the

verge of salvation. Due to their intense hunger, some of them had succumbed to cannibalism, eating their own for sustenance. With the people in the city walls, starving, you can imagine how much these four social outcasts were. Considering their options, they said, why sit here while we die? Even if we could get in the city, it wouldn't benefit us much as far as food goes. On the other hand, if we continue sitting here outside the city gates, that won't benefit us either. Why don't we go to the enemy camp? If they kill us, we're not much better. Maybe they'll be sympathetic, feed us, and let us live. As the sun set, four hungry lepers limped their way to the camps. To their surprise, they found the camp abandoned. As the four of them continued limping into the camp, there was no sign of human presence anywhere. These four lepers figured death was inevitable for them. Instead they found unattended camp suppers cooking their suppers: food, food, food, and plenty of it. They also found silver, gold, and raiment. After filling their stomachs, they carried out the valuables and carried it out and hid it. After several trips, they realized "we do not well." This day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. Should the four hungry men only enjoy themselves, fantasizing about their fabulous future, or should they share the good tidings? The very ones who have despised them, had cast them out to die. This evening, the dilemma of the skinny, bonny, hungry lepers is not much different than our own. We have feasted on the Gospel. We have found the food that gives us abundant life and eternal life in the future. We have a joy unspeakable because we are well fed and taken care of. We used to be outcast, but this evening we have been pronounced joint heirs. We are offered a future beyond description, guaranteed by God. God has called us to flesh all of this out in the context of brotherhood.

Why aren't we vibrant and active? Is it because we have so soon forgotten where we once were, how desperate our situation was outside the city walls. Left to die, facing an inevitable death. As we evaluate our personal experience, our local church life. Do you see any correlation between one of the four lepers, those in the city walls eating their own sustenance. But if they bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one another. Brotherhood cannibalism. Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Does our vibrancy exhibit the lust of the flesh, or is there evidence we are walking in the spirit. We have a promise that if we are walking in his spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Wilbur asked last night, what is the biggest hindrance to fulfilling the call of God in our lives? My immediate response for Ben Stoltzfus is Ben himself. If Ben would just get out of the way, God could begin to show himself strong. Self hinders so much of what God wants to accomplish through us. Vibrant and active brotherhood.

When the spirit of God visited the churches in Revelation, he observed a condition in one of the congregations relevant to our topic this evening. Open to Revelation 3, beginning in 14. [*The church in Laodicea.*] Often one of the major problems within our brotherhoods is the fact that too many of us are neither hot nor cold. God clearly tells us he prefers us either hot or cold. This condition of being okay with something in between there is nauseating to our savior and the fact that we don't see it if we are in the middle is plainly to our detriment. Our condition in the eyes of God is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, innate. That's not a good commentary on a mediocre half-alive follower of Jesus Christ. I believe it's the half-alives among us who are the most damaging in brotherhood relationships. We're not on fire for God. On the other hand, we're not completely dead either. Just alive enough to be nauseating enough for the cause. God would

prefer us hot or cold. It's difficult to fathom God really means what he says here: hot or cold.

If I understand correctly, God is telling us that lukewarm is that we do not appreciate what we were saved from. We used to be outside the gates facing death and condemnation. Now that we have all the food we could possibly want, all we can think about is self indulgence. God says I prefer you either cold or hot. Is God suggesting here that if we're not moving towards, that he prefers we wouldn't even pretend to be Christian? Is God really telling us, those who are cold, who make it clear that they want nothing to do with following Christianity, that they are preferable to him than those who are half alive, mediocre, middle of the road, run of the mill followers? Is God really saying, those who have never tasted good things are less miserable?

I know your works, God says, and what I see is nauseating. Choose one or the other. Being okay with something half way between is not a good place to be. Jesus is giving us a choice, what sort of brother we will be in the brotherhood. The only reasonable choice as we look at the Word of God is that we become hot, alive, active, vibrant for the cause. As I understand life and what it expects, we happen to be in the driver's seat to become the hot people. God and His word is wanting us there, and he's going to give us the resources to go there. God tells us what resources we'll need if we find ourselves numbered in those in between.

The half-dead, half-alive, three passions listed here will be obvious. Revelation 3:18-19.

Passion #1: Buy gold tried in the fire

God says go and buy this book. Salvation can't be bought with money; grace on unmerited favor comes to us as a gift from God. This passage says we're to go and buy gold tried in the fire. In 1 Peter 4:7, the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold—I'm not sure what this gold is that we're counseled to go and buy. In Peter, it has something to do with our faith. Buying gold has the implication that it is going to be costly to get this. I don't know for sure what this church in Laodicea was in desperate need of, but I believe they needed some stirring up. Maybe they even needed persecution. I don't know if that's the condition of your brotherhood or not. I prefer to think Pequea is not in the condition where they need stirring up and persecution, but if she is, if that is the condition of our brotherhood, and God does send persecution or stirring up, you and I, if that occurs, we at that point will choose how we respond to it. It's important. Maybe it will serve us well now how we're going to respond if God does see it best. He says it in verse 19, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten! Most don't ask God to send that to us, do we? If our spiritual condition is such as causes God to vomit, he probably will send persecution. It's evidence of his love.

Most of us find ourselves living in a culture where feelings trump right thinking. I don't suggest we should urge ourselves where we are past feeling. Unless we are thinking right, the problem won't go right. How are we going to respond if God does send us chastisement and rebuke? How do you respond if that occurs in context of your brotherhood? Way too often we reply by getting angry. We respond by suggesting, "I don't deserve this sort of brother!" In fact, we might be there. We might deserve what God has given us. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Too often, we base action on feeling rather than what God has says. Our feelings tell us, if I have to live with this brotherhood, I'm out of here. I wonder how often we miss what God has wanted to teach us. Be zealous therefore and repent. Brotherhood offers blessing and protection for the

believer. In fact, this protection and blessing, we often fail to think about.

Just this past weekend, I was reminded of the blessing of brotherhood. In our community there was a 60 year old man that died in prison. His last name was Stoltzfus. His father had been a bishop of the local Mennonite church. In his youth, he had identified himself with a brotherhood, the pagans. The reason he spent forty years in prison was because he had been accused of murder. Throughout those years, he maintained he was not responsible for it. It is possible he was right and the jury was wrong. As someone said, he didn't receive that sentence because he sang too loud in church. He was not a suspect because of living godly. The brotherhood of the believers offers blessing and protection. We forget it so often.

[Excerpt:] "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the sinners..."

Passion #2: Buy white raiment that ye may be clothed

We cloth ourselves with it. Maybe you have difficulty with the suggestion that it might include that which we wear, clothing. Go buy white raiment! The implication is that it will be costly to buy! It will be holy, it will be a separate people unto God. Let me say this: I believe God desired this brotherhood in Laodicea to really look like something. I believe he wanted them to look like they were serious about the cause. As the world observed them, looked at them, there was to be no doubt in anyone minds who these people were: little Christs.

Passion #3: Anoint thine eyes

Because you're blind, so that you can perceive the direction you are heading. Do your brotherhoods need that in 2010? Do you need to know the direction you're heading? Absolutely! Have enough vision that you'll be able to see where your decisions [*will take the church*] in four generations, Tim told us today. We're so short-sighted sometimes. Have enough vision for at least four generations. Are these decisions your brotherhood is making, are they going to result in wretchedness in the lives of our posterity, or are they going to give us a blessing. What are we willing to pay to experience the sort of brotherhood that keeps us from heading down that road? I'm convinced it's going to cost us. I'm convinced it's going to cost us something that our flesh is not going to like.

1 John 3:14 "We have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This verse in 1 John, the content, is not what you will find promoted in nominal Christianity. Mostly what you will hear from them is that God loves you and all you need to do is accept that love, and happy day! Go get the food and enjoy it! Get as many valuables as you can possibly carry away and stash it away for your own good. The four lepers realized, "We do not well! This day is a day of glad tidings."

God really does love us just the way we are, but it's also true that because he loves us, he does not want us to stay that way. His goal is for us to be conformed to Jesus Christ. "Let this mind/thinking be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Don't allow feelings to trump your thinking.

There are three methods God uses in bringing us to the realization we need to change.

- 1) The mirror of his Word

- 2) The presence and influence of his Holy Spirit living within us
- 3) The brotherhood

All three of these need to have their proper significance in the lives of Jesus. I don't plan to say a lot about the first two, except, I don't think we should emphasize one at the expense of the other, especially with the Holy Spirit and brotherhood. There really is the possibility to overemphasize the brotherhood at the expense of serious Bible study. We will ultimately compromise the truth of the Scripture to accommodate rational issues. We will never truly solve relational issues by bypassing the truth of the Scriptures. God's Word and the illumination of His Spirit will give us the answers we need in brotherhood.

Sometimes we sort of pride ourselves by suggesting we are people of the book. Most of us last evening raised our Bible and said "This is THE book." Yet, sometimes we should admit we are a people of many books. We're more eager to hear what commentators had to say about what God had to say without looking at what God had to say. There can be an overemphasis on the spirit, where they say the Spirit told me this or that which is contrary to the Scriptures. Any spirit that violates what has been said is clearly not the same spirit which wrote the Scriptures to begin with. He cannot lie, he has promised to lead us into all truth. The spirit has not guided us differently than what he has already written. The grace of God operates in a similar way. Have you ever heard, "I'm so thankful for God's grace taking care of my wrong actions and sins." But God's grace has appeared to us for much more than that. Titus 2:11-12. The same grace that brought salvation is also the same grace that wants to do a work in our lives. John 3:14.

God is really giving us a thermometer, to value where we are in relation to him. I don't know if this is a practice in your home congregation, but at Pequea every six months we have preparatory services. Recently, I thought, this comes around just a little often, every six months we get together and take inventory of our relationship with each other. But you know, if we notice the seriousness of loving the brethren, it may put a little different light on our tradition.

Beachy believers need to affirm the certainty between faith in Christ and commitment to brotherhood. We can't have one without the other. The Bible says, we love the brotherhood or we abide in death. Death, that's serious. It's really serious. It's a seriousness that can't be ignored. Sometimes, maybe a lot of times. Sometimes we think God gave us some difficult people to love. The probability of that being true, most of us have a few in our brotherhoods that, well, if our feelings would trump right thinking, we would say, "Oh no we're not!" I don't think we should spend much time trying to figure out why they happen to be in our brotherhoods. We should encourage each other about why God says they're going to be there. 1 Cor. 12 "Now has God set every member in the body as it has pleased him." I've never seen anyone do themselves a favor by arguing with God.

I remember hearing one pastor that he feels sorry for those unhappy with where they have set them, because it pleases God. What we need to do is choose the life. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." How much are we willing to pay, sacrifice, to say 'I love the brethren.' Not feelings, but a decision. Whatever it takes, whatever it costs us. We need to begin up that path. Whatever it is we have to sacrifice, it won't be too much. The other alternative is not an option. 'Abideth in death.'

I've read about football fans who actually paint themselves purple to match the color of their teams. These same human beings will shave the name of their teams into their hair cuts. I also understand they wear some silly rubber masks and tattoo the team logo on their shoulders, and some insist that their honeymoon is shortened all in name of loyalty to their team. An 87 year old man was a devoted fan of a Southern California team. He had gone to 750 consecutive football games. He had not missed a Trojan game in 69 years. Once, when he was having an emergency surgery and was still in this hospital, he tells the nurse he needs to go for a walk. He ended up at the stadium. Someone asked him, why do you make all these sacrifices to identify with the Trojans? His answer, but that's all just part of being a fan.

Brothers and sisters, have we honestly answered the same question in relation to a team more important than any USC football attempt? How many of us have actually said, that's just part of loving the brethren. That's just part of my commitment to a team that one day is going to experience the marriage supper of the lamb.

In conclusion, regardless of how we view the condition of the brotherhood back home, for most of us, we think she is less vibrant and active than what we think she could be. Even if that's true, even though she has some spots and wrinkles and has lost the last ten consecutive games, she is the organism and locality where she says, 'I will build my church.' If you want to be a part, you must love the brethren. The ultimate future of the church is glorious above imagination. That reality should do something for us that were once boney, gaunt, hungry, desperate members. May God bless you.

8:30pm: Moderator (Harvey Miller, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

It costs to be vibrant, to be active.

Announcements

- Please come back tomorrow, 9 o'clock, have a good night's rest.
- For those having part tomorrow morning, be here 15 minutes earlier and meet in the prayer room
- Also, those who want CDs, back here in the west end of the fellowship hall
- There will be some shuttle service at the front entrance for those parked up the road. There will be continuous shuttle surface.
- If you're parked on the grass or either side and happen to get stuck, don't stand there. Come to the front desk and we'll assist.

8:33pm: Songs (Titus Troyer, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

1. "Rise Up, O Men of God" (#866 Christian Hymnary)

8:35pm: Closing Prayer (Perry Troyer, Bethesda Fellowship, OH)

Thursday, April 08, 2010

8:58am: Songs (Phillip Beachy, Messiah Fellowship, OH)

1. "Thank You Lord for Saving My Soul" (from memory)

2. “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” (#325 Christian Hymnary)
3. “Rise Ye Children of Salvation” (#875 Christian Hymnary)
4. “There Waits for Me a Glad Tomorrow (Appendix, Christian Hymnary)
5. “In the Warfare That Is Raging” (#847 Christian Hymnary, verses 1 & 3)

9:19am: **Moderator (Elmer Miller, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

This has been a blessed time. As the committee has reflected over the past few meetings, we have always reflected on the powerful singing and decided to have more of it, and are glad we're doing it. I'd like to look at a couple things as we look at the upcoming topic. “The way of peace” is not only a Biblical concept, but a lifestyle. How do you continue to teach it in our conservative churches? The past several world wars, the more conservative churches had a better record than other Anabaptists in going into alternative service. How do you teach that? As I grew up in the horse and buggy setting, there was some teaching, but not a lot. But it was a given. [*Dutch*] “That’s how it is.” If you’re not nonresistant, you’re not a Christian. Now, we’re not like that, but there’s some truth in that. As we become more acclimated into our modern society, it is necessary, and efforts are being made, to remind us of the way of peace. Jesus said there would be wars and rumor of wars. I cannot comprehend what’s happening in our day. But you know, as followers of the Prince of Peace who have a long history, a blessed heritage of following those in the steps of the Anabaptist forefathers who are considered the radicals. They were radical. Most of us here, there are several Scriptures very familiar. The Sermon on the Mount and we take it literally when he said ‘resist not evil.’ We pray for our enemies and many other things. We are of the Kingdom not of this world.

I want to say more about this, but a booklet available, “Statement of Position on Peace...” I want to read the preface to the 1982 edition. [*Reads preface.*] Brother Elmer Glick has agreed to share a message this morning. Without further comments, we’ll invite Elmer to the platform. *Prayer.*

9:26am: **The Way of Peace (Elmer Glick, Slanesville Community Mennonite, WV)**

I want to do justice to the topic, but there’s a tremendous amount of material to cover and only 45 minutes assigned. I will try to move swiftly, so I tried to put some in print so you can use the ear-gate and eye-gate as we go through this information. On the songs, we sang about a warfare that is raging. We sang ‘more than conquerors are we.’ It almost seemed like it wouldn’t take much to get this group to line up on the highway and go marching into Goshen and take over the city. But that’s not the way of peace. We don’t have time to turn to Ephesians 6, but we will look at the Christian’s warfare. This is not a passive group at all.

I cannot be practical with all the do’s and don’ts, but felt led to go back and lay a foundation of Biblical truth and bring in examples. In danger of being a doomsday prophet, this is no longer a given. In the generation that is coming, is it a given among our youth and among our children. Will it continue to be a given unless we’re willing to go out and do something.

In the way of peace, we think of the Amish, Brethren, and Quakers. But what does the way of peace really mean to you in everyday life? We think of these things, not going to war, not taking military jobs, we don’t go to a court of law with our grievances, we don’t vote, we don’t have political offices, we don’t take offices as lawyers or sheriffs. But is that all there is to the way of peace? Is that really what it is?

Do we as an Anabaptist people know who we are? Do we have a proper identity? Or are we a drift on the ocean of life, not really knowing who we are? Are we just another Protestant church with maybe a few distinctive. We need to get that into the heart of the next generation. If we are not more than a Protestant church with a few distinctive, then I believe we are in danger of becoming extinct. That's not what it's about We are a unique Christian group. What do I mean? We are unique in 2010 as peace churches in that we believe when Jesus spoke the words on the Sermon of the Mount, He meant what he said and He wants us to live it. It's for today, not for a future millennium. It's valid for 2010. The teachings we hold were never meant to be Anabaptist distinctives, but Christian in their totality in their beginning, written for God's people in any cultural situation. It so happens that Christianity at large has chosen to ignore many of them. It's important our children know what that difference is.

There's a quote to that effect that comes to mind. I'd like to relate various accounts. I'd like to share an account briefly of Pastor and Mrs. Kenneth. They have been operating a school and have changed from a Protestant to an Anabaptist curriculum. During the Nickel Mines shootings, they were enraptured by the ideas they were hearing. They went to Lancaster to see what makes those people really tick. They have switched most of their school to an Anabaptist curriculum. Dorothy and I had lunch with them last year. In our lunch together, the present book the administrator was reading was *The Kingdom That Turned the World Upside-Down*. She said, 'This book makes me angry. All my life I've been sitting in Bible teaching churches and I've never heard it explained like this.' She saw she was being deceived in all these years.

1. The Two-Kingdom Concept

I appreciate Ken Miller's excellent introduction, and he covered a lot of ground. As we look at the two kingdoms, if we don't get this correct, the next generation will lose it. It will not be a given. It must be passed on. Merriam-Webster's defines a kingdom as a politically organized community or major territorial unit headed by a king or queen. Note the difference between abstract and concrete ideas. The kingdoms of this world are concrete, we can see it. It's a place with physical boundaries. We cross state boundaries. When talking about the kingdom of God, we're referring to an abstract, an idea, and the same is true of Satan's domain.

At the creation, we have the first family. From that family, we have the extended family with patriarchs. From there, we go into cities and the city-states, with a strong warrior or tribe that erects a city, and they influence people around them. The formation of nations and kingdoms with boundaries, God was at work with kingdom building. God called out Abraham and he made a people for himself. That group was a theocracy, or, God ruling them. God used the judges, the priests, the prophets to convey His will to the people, but they wanted a king. They wanted a kingdom. So God allowed that, and they wanted one like the other nations around them.

We move then to the New Testament, and we have John the Baptist preparing a kingdom for Jesus. "Repent ye." He's preparing a way. Ken laid the foundation for some of these next points. As Jesus and his followers came, he was teaching about another kingdom, but they were thinking about wanting freedom from Rome. As we think of the Kingdom then, we want to see what all they were involved in. Bondage was a practice for them by Romans, but Jesus was teaching a higher kingdom. Most verses referring to the Kingdom are in the Gospels in the New Testament.

Even as Jesus was teaching about another kingdom, they were still thinking about release from Roman bondage.

As we think, then, we think of God calling us to a higher kingdom, out of a physical kingdom, into a higher kingdom. Their Sermon on the Mount is the charter of the kingdom. This committee didn't have any idea that at Slanesville I am preaching through the Sermon on the Mount. It looks like a long term project, but it's coming slowly. By charter, I mean, it's how we operate. It's the way we're set up and how we operate. Jesus repeatedly quotes the law, but each time he does, he raises it to a higher calling. It hath been said, but I say unto you. Each time he does that, he raises the bar. It's not so much what we do only, but it goes deeper: why do we do what we do? What are the motivations? Why do we act the way we do? Now we are responsible for our thoughts. Some of us can keep our actions under control and we can look good, but what is going on inside. Jesus said 'this kingdom is not of my world.' Pilate was thinking of the concrete on earth. Though Pilate had great political power, he found himself powerless in front of Jesus.

But we are a chosen generation (1 Peter). Do you understand that we have been called into a greater kingdom? We have been called into a higher level of holiness, a higher level of accountability. It's included in that charter and the rest of Scripture. But it's no secret that not all Anabaptists accept the two kingdom concept. While I was preparing for this message, I came across a new source. It didn't even strike me right away I was in the heart of, but I was reading the newspaper, and Goshen is going to play the Star-Spangled Banner at select sports events, followed by prayer. This decision was made after discussion over the past year. The reason was to provide a more hospitable atmosphere for athletic events as a primary reason for the recommendation and the decision. So we have the U.S. flag, the playing of the Star Spangled Banner, and then prayer. Interestingly, I got the recent Calvary Messenger and David L. picked up on it as well.

2. *Proper Political Involvement*

The Christian and the State by Lloyd Hartzler is an excellent source. Again, if we don't have an understanding on two kingdoms, we will never have an understanding. Our liberal Mennonite friends were once where we are, but they are now on a different path. Our people are asking questions, and I wonder, why are they asking the questions, and are they getting correct answers? Maybe it's my age, but why are we hearing more of these questions? Is it because the teaching is not out there? Think about it. We are living in the world, a perverse society, so how do we interact with political situations around us. Paul in Acts 22 made an appeal to the authorities. I believe when he made that appeal, he showed respect. He honored them. Now not all requests will be honored, but we have the privilege to honor our government and to make appeals as needed. In Acts 25, he appealed to Caesar. Paul could have been released, but he appealed. I don't see he made his appeal for selfish reasons, and I don't believe he was out of place. We make appeals to our government. Brother Elmer on the platform with his work in peace and service has worked with this. The CO process has served us well in appealing to the powers that be. We are not out of the woods. The Amish steering committee has already been interacting with officials with the new health plan, already! Has someone from this constituency been following up with the healthcare? Where do we stand on all that? Maybe we'll hear more at these meetings. Others have made appeals, CASP working with Homeland Security, Social Security

administration, and also Selective Service with CO status, appeals for release for jury duty—I don't know where your communities are. Selection is made now from driver's license rather than voting registration. Our people need to go now and be questioned by the people. We are a new Anabaptist group in the area of West Virginia, and we drafted a letter to the judge, and in the last 10 years, we've had maybe ten summonses, and each request for release has been honored, and we give glory to the Lord. We do interact with government, but we do it on appeal rather than a lobby. We can be careful on the types of businesses we patronize. But what about activist activities? Should we go marching into Goshen College? Is that the way we react? Should we participate in anti-abortion marches or right-to-life rallies? Or similar activities? We need to lay the foundation, then make application on that foundation. All need to recognize the way of peace is not through the legislative process, but through the conversion of hearts.

I found a poem in *The Christian and the State*:

We are recipients of many blessings from the Civil government.

We have the highways, the police protection, and other infrastructure.

But we also have duties that we need to perform to our Civil governments.

The thing that continues to amaze me is that many of the writings in the New Testament church were written when there were some very evil men in power.

Men like Nero, Diocletian, and others.

While there are many things where we cannot agree with the rulers over us, we still have a much easier time than they did in the early church.

And yet, time and again, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these holy men of God wrote letters to us giving direction concerning our duty to our rulers.

We have heard a simplified version of Pray, Pay, and Obey.

That covers most of it and encompasses a lot of territory

The first one is to Pray, to make intercession for those in higher power.

3. *Biblical Non-Resistance*

Read the pamphlet *Nonresistance or Pacifism*? I'm not going to differentiate between the two, but we as a people have done well in taking a nonresistant position concerning nonparticipation in the military, even in noncombatant jobs. Have we done as well in applying non-resistance in other areas of our lives? That's really the true test of whether or not we have gotten to the heart. Are we willing to give up our rights, especially in other areas of our lives, such as in business and finances? When the pocket book is touched, it's very easy for principles to go out the back door. I wonder if we as a people are not being tested more in areas of the pocket book than in areas of going to military battle, and it's part of the same package. The two need to go together. In reflecting on those in the past who may have lost the position, perhaps they also fell on this part of the issue, in finances in daily living. How do we do in turning the other cheek, in going to second mile, or suffering material loss for the sake of Christ and the Gospel?

Matthew 5:38-48, [excerpt:] "Ye have heard that it has been said, an eye for an eye..." How do you preach from some of those verses? I'll warn you, if you're going to preach through the Sermon on the Mount, be prepared. We have preached around some of those verses. Let's look at the Sermon on the Mount with a fresh look, a new look, and try to look and ask the question, "Did Jesus really mean...?" Can we look at it aside from our culture, our drift, our German background—hard work, thrift, make money? Let's try it, we need to. Then be prepared to follow

through. The key verses I'd like to look at are 39 and 44. Sometimes it may not be hard to love the Iraqis and Afghans. A faceless name, it's not hard to love them. But what about the man next door, the person who wants some of your business and making a claim. It's someone you see and face that is harder to love than someone an ocean or two away. Merle Ruth [quote]. Nonresistance is positive in expression. It holds the best prospect in turning an enemy into a friend. Nonresistance coupled with assistance, motivated by love, practiced in the name of Christ is the greatest peace-making power on earth.

4. *Early Anabaptist Positions*

The Kingdom That Turned the World Upside-Down is a good writing on early beliefs.

The Didache, also called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: in chapter one, I'd like to read a portion:

There are two ways, one of life and one of death, but a great difference between the two ways. The way of life, then, is this: First, you shall love God who made you; second, love your neighbor as yourself, and do not do to another what you would not want done to you. And of these sayings the teaching is this: Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you. For what reward is there for loving those who love you? Do not the Gentiles do the same? But love those who hate you, and you shall not have an enemy. Abstain from fleshly and worldly lusts. If someone strikes your right cheek, turn to him the other also, and you shall be perfect. If someone impresses you for one mile, go with him two. If someone takes your cloak, give him also your coat. If someone takes from you what is yours, ask it not back, for indeed you are not able. Give to every one who asks you, and ask it not back; for the Father wills that to all should be given of our own blessings (free gifts). Happy is he who gives according to the commandment, for he is guiltless.

Another early one is the Schleithem confession, a declaration of Swiss Anabaptist belief in 1527:

Article IV. We have been united concerning the separation that shall take place ...

We have been united concerning the separation that shall take place from the evil and the wickedness which the devil has planted in the world, simply in this; that we have no fellowship with them, and do not run with them in the confusion of their abominations. ... To us, then, the commandment of the Lord is also obvious, whereby He orders us to be and to become separated from the evil one, and thus He will be our God and we shall be His sons and daughters (2 Cor. 6:17). Further, He admonishes us therefore to go out from Babylon and from the earthly Egypt, that we may not be partakers in their torment and suffering, which the Lord will bring upon them. (Rev. 18:4 ff.). Thereby shall also fall away from us the diabolical weapons of violence - such as sword, armor, and the like, and all of their use to protect friends or against enemies - by virtue of the word of Christ: "you shall not resist evil" (Mt. 5:39)

Article VI. We have been united as follows concerning the sword.

We have been united as follows concerning the sword. The sword is an ordering of God outside the perfection of Christ. It punishes and kills the wicked and guards and protects the good. In the law the sword is established over the wicked for punishment and for

death and the secular rulers are established to wield the same. Now many, who do not understand Christ's will for us, will ask; whether a Christian may or should use the sword against the wicked for the protection and defense of the good, or for the sake of love. The answer is unanimously revealed: Christ teaches and commands us to learn from Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart and thus we shall find rest for our souls (Mt. 11:29). Now Christ says to the woman who was taken in adultery ...[but] with mercy and forgiveness and the warning to sin no more, says: "Go, sin no more." Exactly thus should we also proceed, according to the rule of the ban. Second, is asked concerning the sword: whether a Christian shall pass sentence in disputes and strife about worldly matters, such as the unbelievers have with one another. The answer: Christ did not wish to decide or pass judgement between brother and brother concerning inheritance, but refused to do so (Lk. 12:13). So should we also do. Third, is asked concerning the sword: whether the Christian should be a magistrate if he is chosen thereto. This is answered thus: Christ was to be made King, but He fled and did not discern the ordinance of His Father. Thus we should also do as He did and follow after Him, and we shall not walk in darkness. For He Himself says: "Whoever would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt. 16:24). ...Peter also says: "Christ has suffered (not ruled) and has left us an example, that you should follow after in his steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). Lastly, one can see in the following points that it does not befit a Christian to be a magistrate: the rule of the government is according to the flesh, that of the Christians according to the spirit. Their houses and dwelling remain in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven. Their citizenship is in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). The weapons of their battle and warfare are carnal and only against the flesh, but the weapons of Christians are spiritual, against the fortification of the devil. The worldly are armed with steel and iron, but Christians are armed with the armor of God, with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and with the Word of God. In sum: as Christ our Head is minded, so also must be minded the members of the body of Christ through Him, so that there be no division in the body, through which it would be destroyed.¹³ Since then Christ is as is written of Him, so must His members also be the same, so that His body may remain whole and unified for its own advancement and upbuilding. For any kingdom which is divided within itself will be destroyed (Mt. 12:25).

You could turn to Romans 13, but I'm not going there. Notice "we" and "they" and "them." (Luke 12).

5. Our Duty to the Civil Government

We are recipients of many benefits from them, the highways, police, infrastructure; it's here. We also have duties we need to perform to our civil government. In many of the writings in the New Testament, those were written when there were some very evil men in power. They were not in a society where they were well protected. Nero, and others, were ruthless, cruel men. There are many things we cannot agree with the rules we have; we still have an easier time than we do with the rules then. In spite of Nero and others at the time, again and again and again by inspiration of the Spirit, holy men wrote these letters, giving us direction in how we interact with rules over us, even in a democratic society. We've accepted the fact that democracy is the best place for the Christian. We may have bought into the Protestant idea that democracy and the church is God's will. This is simplistic: we need to pray, pay, and obey. As we pray, we make intercession and

supplication, giving of thanks for all men, for kings, and all authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life. We should pray for their personal salvation, that we can live a quiet and peaceable life, that our leaders can make wise decisions. In the OT, we see Lot sitting in the city gate, a political position. But who had the most power with God when it came to it, Abraham or Lot in the political situation? What should we pay, respect, and honor. We need to teach the oncoming generation the same. How do you address a police officer when we're confronted on the highway? What do your children see? Our taxes, paying tribute to Caesar. Obedience, some are hard and unpractical, but is that reason to disobey? We need to have an honest reporting of taxes, and there are many others.

It's time to close. I'd like to close with a few stories. Sometimes we remember better by stories. Alvin York, a Christian from Tennessee, was in a Brethren setting and was a CO. He was denied that. Here is his testimony. "As long as the records remain, I will be officially known as a CO. I was. I joined the church. I had taken its creed, and I had taken it without what you might call reservations. I was not a Sunday Christian. I believed in the Bible, and I tried in my own way to live up to it." But he went into WWI as a soldier.

John D. Martin tells of a 1945 B-52 that dropped a bomb on Japan. The entire group was "Christian," and before they left, their chaplains prayed a blessing upon that crew. If you know history, you know the rest *is* history. As they approached the city, they needed a landmark, and that landmark they chose was the Catholic church in that city.

Soon after we moved to West Virginia, a local church held an Answers in Genesis seminar. O'Hare was a WWII hero for the number of Japanese he shot down, and the Chicago airport is named for him. These are heroes lifted up in Protestant churches today because they have embraced the concept of God and country. Some of these same stories are included in textbooks that are in some of our schools. How can we continue to have Protestant materials in our school teaching God and country and expect to raise a generation with a two generation concept?

Would like to tell of Dean Taylor. They were active in the US army and through studying the Bible came to nonresistance. He concluded a message with a story, and I'd like to borrow the story.

From 1948 to 1994 there was a white minority ruling under a system called Apartheid, similar to the US Civil Rights. It was the white minority, though, not a majority. There were many atrocities. Nelson Mandela was instrumental in mending those evils. A commission brought these men to justice. An elderly black lady came to a trial connected to the man's evil deeds who was on trial. He admitted to taking her 18 year-old son and shot him and burned his body while dancing and partying. Eight years later they took her husband into captivity. Sometime later, in the middle of the night, they took her out to an isolated area where she saw her husband, tied to some wood, and they poured gasoline over his body, and they lit the gasoline, and there he died. While she watched, she heard her husband say, "Forgive them, forgive them." We come to the trial of Mr. Van de Brooke, and this elderly lady is there. When he was convicted of the evils, the judge turned to her and asked her what she would like as part of the judgment: "I want him to take me to the place where they burned the body of my husband so I can gather together the ashes to give my husband to give him a decent burial. Mr. Van de Brooke is to come twice a

month to come to my ghetto so I can be a mother to him. I want him to know that God can forgive him and that I forgive him too. And, I want someone now to come and lead me to him so I can embrace him and so he can know that my forgiveness is real.” The elderly lady was led across the courtroom, and as she got closer to him, he passed out. It was more than he could take. The entire courtroom remained silent and they realized what he had done. She had truly followed the way of peace. I can imagine the courtroom as silent as this room is today, when off in the back a lady started to sing Amazing Grace. *Sing Amazing Grace.*

10:19am: Moderator (Elmer Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)

Thank you, Elmer. I was moved, challenged, and blessed. An announcement, this booklet I introduced, these booklets are back in the Christian Light Publications stand. They are there in the box if you don’t have any. They’re for free. Thank you again for being here. The schedule is that we should be back here at 10:40, just depends on what Brother Phil can get out back in here.

Break

10:40am Songs (Phillip Beachy, Messiah Fellowship, OH)

1. “The Lord of Glory” (#337 Christian Hymnary, verses 1&3)
2. “I Will Abide in Thy Dwelling Place” (#64 Christian Hymnary, verses 1&3)
3. “I’m Pressing on the Upward Way” (#358 Christian Hymnary, verses 1&4)
4. “The Love of God Within My Heart” (#779 Christian Hymnary, verses 1&4)
5. “When the Ransomed Get Home” (#955 Christian Hymnary)

10:55am: Moderator (Glen Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)

The next topic is “A Servant Leader.” How do we do this out of hearts of love and kindness and humility? Our speaker is Eli Troyer, and those of you who don’t know Eli, he is a son in-law to John Dan Miller. *Prayer.*

10:56am: “The Servant Leader” (Eli Troyer, Farmville Christian Fellowship, VA)

Greetings, it’s good to be here. He’s right; my heart is racing. I do have some bones to pick here that passed to buck, but we’re just here to be encouraged and admonished. When I got the call last year, I remember, I had a hot flash. It was like walking into a sauna; it was hot. The next evening I went to an ordination in Aroda, VA, and as I was listening to Bennie Byler saying we’re to work together, it was like a confirmation. Back then it was racing, and the brother who was having the preordination meeting was Wayne Schrock. He said, ‘God has not given a heart of fear.’ This morning, it’s a pleasure to be one of God’s servants. Sometimes we look at it as being an obligation. Years ago—I’ve got kinsfolk in Alabama and we were there talking—and one of the boys said “Do I have to do it, dad?” and he said, “No, you don’t have to if you want to.” At Farmville, Albert and I take turns preaching, getting lots of experience, as Uriah can’t anymore. You’re done preaching, and you think, “Okay, I’m two weeks off.” Once, it was drudgery, but now, I think, “I get to preach again!” Some of you wish you could preach more, I’m sure. I invite you to Farmville, VA! We’re just a small flock.

As I was meditating about this message, it doesn’t matter about the size of your flock; it is God’s

flock. We are used in His hands. This morning, I would like to share with you, and who I am. Even though I've been coming for about ten years, you may not know. Uriah Shetler used to be our bishop, then we asked Bennie Byler and he consented. Some of you may know Jonas Swartzentruber and he is my grandfather from Montezuma, and then my other grandfather was from Virginia Beach. Donnie Swartzentruber is also my cousin.

Study to show yourself approved: I looked at that verse, and was wondering, what stands out most to me. The word that comes to my mind is "group." I love my constituency, but 'approved unto God.' We've found in the secular world that the subject of being servant-leader is being more popular because they are getting results out of their employees. I listened to an evangelist preacher, and he said, the longer he's served, the more his ministry is of servanthood. I've been in services where the minister sat up front, he didn't mingle with the others after serves. We should affirm our love for them. Our ministry must be approved to God. That's the thing I desire most, to have God's approval on my life. Not that we disregard our brothers and sisters, but that God can say "Well done thou good and faithful servant." We must put effort forth on our study, not just download off the Internet and read it off, but let it be Holy Spirit-inspired.

I invite you to turn to Philippians 2:1-16. [*Read.*] *Pray.*

We read in verse 5, let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus, but made himself of no reputation... Let this mind be in you. This was a servant's mind. You mean, the one who created the land we live in, the breath we're breathing? The one who spoke the world into existence? And he became a humble servant? Him? Brothers and sisters, how dare we think we're more than a servant, when the very Creator of heaven and earth, who named the stars, who parted the Red Sea—we are his servants. Once we have the mind of Christ, he can work some miracles in our life. Turn to John 13. He stands before his disciples, verse 4. (*Read*). It goes on to say in verse 12, [*read*]. We read this at communion time for feet washing, but we Christians take this further than literally washing feet, but the mind, he took on the form of a servant. It was not, at the time, the guest of honor's responsibility to wash people's feet, but Jesus did. At times, we need our own feet washed, and we trust our brothers will do that. But our responsibility now is to bend down and wash our brothers' feet. I'm blessed by a quote when we go to prison, "In this congregation, there's no big I or little you." How do those at our congregation at home view us? Are we viewed as performing a duty?

This past Sunday, we celebrated Easter. Our minds went back to Christ. We need a new vision for the price that was paid for us, that we can say that we are His servant. I had one time ended up in the pigpen, fighting the hogs for the drudge of the earth to feed, but when we went home, the Father is watching. I think we're doing our church and our people a service by making salvation too easy, when you just raise your hand and say 'Yeah, I'm a Christian.' Part of servant leadership is if we lead our children and constituents to the cross and have a face-to-face encounter with Christ, not just a light lip service but transformed inside-out. Lead those in church, our children and those outside of the church to Christ. [*Prayer.*]

What a Savior! Years ago, my uncle Noah Swartz was in our church for a while. I loved brother Noah and he touched my life. There is a story he told years ago, and it still touches me today. Back in time of slavery, there was an auction going on and a plantation owner walked by. Up on

the auction stood this old gentleman standing there, and they were talking about the qualities and how good he was. But the man kept saying, 'I won't work.' The plantation owner ran the bid up and it was knocked off to him. He was now the owner of ol' Joe. On the way back to the plantation, Joe kept saying 'I won't work.' He was not going to yield anymore to the demands of the master. When he got back to the plantation, the owner took him to cottage and showed him where he would live. He said, 'I bought you to set you free,' and ol' Joe dropped on his knees and said, 'I will serve you for my entire life.'

We need to be like ol' Joe. We keep working day by day for our old master, and there's no reward for it. We need to work for a new master, view ourselves as just one of our Father's servants. When we repented, we did not receive a good deal or bonus, but an ol' dirty rag. How much more when we minister to our brothers and sisters? We're just here for a short time. In just helping our brothers and sisters, a little. In our group, we have nine total households. I look at them and think, we're on a journey together. We were singing this morning the song 'When the Ransomed Get Home.' It's a privilege to minister to our constituents, even when we need to talk to them about areas in our life. It should be a joy as we walk towards heaven, as we find ourselves in the place of ol' Joe and being redeemed. We need to see our people through the eyes of Jesus instead of as a business investment. 'I don't want to take time to talk to that brother, he just needs to come to the end of himself.' Sometimes we need to come to the end of ourselves.

Moses felt the hand upon his life as he was called to the ministry. If you're like I, you're resistant. Moses saw his people oppressed and beaten, and he sees two fighting, and he says, 'I'm going to take you out of the place, starting by killing this Egyptian.' Sometimes we need to get the Lord in our heart so we can do it through his power, not our own. Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth, no longer the prince of Egypt. "Show me thy way." Not I, but Christ.

Ephesians 6:5-8, [*excerpts:*] servants, be obedient...not with eye service... but as servants of Christ. Someone has said, "It's amazing how much can be accomplished when no one is concerned who gets the glory." That's a mouthful. Yesterday, as I was back in the bathroom, they came in and cleaned our bathroom! Someone had a servant's heart. Yesterday I was outside when it was raining and I saw a young fellow behind a van, and he was *yay* tall, and he grabbed a gallon can of vegetables and lugging those things into the kitchen, then go back and get another one. Someone is teaching him a servant's heart. I think there is a great connection between how we view ourselves in the eyes of God and the amount we serve. The woman who came in washed Jesus' feet, Jesus said "He who has been forgiven much, loveth much."

Another reasons we are a sevant leader is because God has given us the work of reconciliation. Just down the road of Rt. 15 in Farmville there is a church, Restoration, something or another, and it's a restoration of a lot of different things. Restorations of the souls. I used to be called and asked to go and restore houses back to the original state, grant money from the historical society. Reconciliation means restoration to the divine faith. If we look at our people like a business, we're going to look for problems when we go through the motions, 'let's have Sunday night service, let's have communion.' If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature. Someone has said, when you're a Christian, you should tell your face about it. We have the greatest story ever been told, and sometimes, we're the quiet in the land. The cares of our life can pull us down.

Restoration of souls, someone has said, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. I can say, "Brother Lester, I love you," [*monotone*] or, "Brother Lester, I love you!" It shows on our face, the eye is the window to the heart. I can look and see the love of God in you. We need to feel the love of God in us. Back there, *yay* years ago, I was ordained, so I have to preach. Restore relationships—He's given us a ministry of restoration, but to its original state.

Restoration of the home, in the church, between brothers and sisters. I put down here, maybe restoration on the ministers' bench. No little you and big I; all on the same page. Brother, Albert, I love you for a co-minister; he's been an inspiration. When I have an issue, and we part ways with an issue, it feels almost like my wife and I when we get in a disagreement. I feel bad down in there. I pray we never lose our plural ministry. God knew what he was doing when he put us together. If there are differences on the minister's bench, let it take care of your needs. When homes falls apart, the children are the broken pieces, and when the ministry falls apart, our church children are the broken pieces.

Restoration perhaps in financial life, the money of people—you touch pretty close to the heart. But we have financial needs. 'You slept in your bed, you can make it'?? I was blessed by the Esh family funeral. Their house burned down and in 17 days the house was built back. Restoration. Just in our everyday walk in life we can restore people and show love when we swing the hammer or saw the board. Our ministers are not above us, they can see. We have a need in our own church we're going to have to address. We ministers may say, 'It's not our loss,' but we should identify with the needs around us.

Esther 4:14, "And how knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom as such a time as this." Now, 2010. You know, Esther could have said, I'm just little old me, there's nothing I can do. I'm a woman, and I can lose my life, but she chose the way of the servant. Years ago, I used to be in Amle (?) and I think you know it's in the past. They taught me, you need to be convinced of the product before you can share the product. We need to be convinced in our hearts that Jesus is the answer to the needs of our people. If you're not convinced of what you're sharing—my brother Albert said Jesus can forgive your sins, and I'm telling you what Albert said, but you need to know that.

"God's not concerned as much with your ability as your availability." God wants to use you. Ezekiel 22:30 [*read*]. I trust this morning that this will not be said of us, as we look at our people, we're willing to stand, to make a hedge to protect our children and grandchildren and grandparents today. As you look outside at the graveyard, you can see Mennonite names, Miller. Those people's time is passed; it's your time now. I've looked at life as a conveyer belt, and eggs may come through, and they're gone. We're on a conveyer belt now, and it's our time, brothers. Rise up O men of God. It's your opportunity to serve to give back to God by serving people. He's still looking for godly people, for you're not your own, you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your spirit. We look pretty good with our mutzas on and beards, and we have a Christian aura about us, but I can be so full of hate for our brother. What's going on in here [*heart*]? We're addressing issues like the Internet. Glorify God in your spirit as you are on the Internet. Someone put on his PC, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Ezekiel 34

is one of the saddest parts of the Bible, shepherds were pursuing their own businesses, storage sheds, counter tops, you name it. The sheep died while the shepherds went their own way. Is there no physician there? This morning, I'd like to give a resounding "Yes" to the question, "Is there any balm in Gilead?" Be used of him to minister to the people around us and have a servant heart.

Last issue I'd like to address, Peter denied Jesus three times, and when He came back, he asked Peter three times, "Do you love me? Feed my sheep." I'd like to challenge you about the lambs we overlook in our congregation, the children. Do you know them by name? Have they felt your hands? Do they know that they are important? Sometimes we wait to know the children until they come into the instruction class. Then they have issues in their lives. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We need to confirm our lambs that they are important when they are in their mother's lap. They are not the church of tomorrow but today. Put the cookies on the lower shelf. In our sophistication, we use words we may not understand. I don't do that, but I've heard preachers... [*laughter from assembled*]. When the pastors have children's class, but even if they can't carry a tune in a barrel, they know, 'I'm important to my pastor.'

Jake Hershberger was the bishop in the first church I was ever in. It was a big group. I can still see him going down the aisle with a Bible in his hand. I had confidence in him because he spoke to me. I could ask 'Can we have children's class?' Lay hold of eternal life, well done, thou good and faithful servant. May we say with Paul, Lord, what will thou have me to do? I said I would put a good word in for this book. It's called *On Being a Servant of God*. It's earmarked and marked up because it spoke to me. God bless you brothers and you serve him in your kingdom.

11:40am Songs (Phillip Beachy, Messiah Fellowship, OH)

1. "Not I but Christ Be Honored" (#260, Christian Hymnary, verses 1&3)

11:42am Moderator (Glen Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)

I thought of Moses in Exodus 5, God gave Moses specific directions for when he called the children of Israel out of Egypt. We have God's directions here. I trust we won't say what Moses said at the end of the chapter, why did you send me? I trust we don't get to that point; we have been called by God. It's important we do the work God called us to. It's not me, it's him. Announcements:

- David Hershberger placed a Bible in the back: maroon, zipper, he's asking everyone, check their Bibles. If you have it, return it to the lodging table. He's leaving at 12.
- Segregated seating at the afternoon session.
- Ministerial directories are here, there are 100 here. Those are for those leaving at noon. If you're living in an area where ministers aren't here, please take enough home for them.
- If you want CDs or cassettes, please make it known to the stand at the west end of the building.
- Message by Chester Weaver that he preached at CBS in 2010 on headship is available on display next to CLP stand.
- Any committees meeting during lunch hour can have the privilege of going first.
- There are copies from the songs that the octet sang last night and are available at the library counter.

Simon, maybe you should go first since Elmer promoted his during his message.

Simon:

I already decided to go first since I let him go yesterday. We do have peanuts now, but it's more fun when I don't have them. I got a question, "Do you give discounts for not having peanuts?" I want to tell you a little story. In my younger years, being a father, my children would like to be held. There's a dear brother that influenced me greatly these years. There's a book called *Now's the Time to Love* by John Drescher. The point of this was, when your child comes to you and wants to be held, that's the time to do it. We're busy. But this book, set them in your lap and read it to your children. Here's one. It's called *Build a House*. It can be very interesting to little eyes and especially to little Adam—he is Ivan and Elsie's grandson—as Adam gets involved in building and moving into a new house. As I don't have the modern technology Elmer has, to get what the title is, say it after me, *We Build a House*. [audience repeat] If you look closely, you will see Ivan Beachy on the front cover. Here's another to sit them in the lap, *My Brother's Keeper*. What is it? [audience repeat] These are not only good books to put in your lap and read to your children, they are nice to have on your coffee table so your guests can look through them while waiting for that delicious dinner. Another one: through this book, daddy explains to his daughter how the strong arms of Jesus can carry you through.

Elmer:

A whole table of books for children to stop and browse. There's some I'm going to have to go low-tech, because I don't have pictures of the cover. *Miss Nancy* by Harvey Yoder. A new one from Vision Publishers written by Judy Yoder. It's good information about activities in the Shenandoah Valley. Cup and Cross is about Anabaptist history, and is written on a readable level. *God's Will for My Body* is not new, but a best kept secret, a guidance book for adolescents. Along a similar line, *Living a Pure Life* and then *Practical Pointers for Child Training*. I mentioned the Lighthouse serious, the pocket booklets. *When A Loved One Has Died* is being kept at \$1. Another, *Returning to God and the Church*. The author fell into sin but returned to God and the church, It's a must read if you are dealing with situations like that. The Anabaptist vision is perhaps one of the best kept secrets in books. We hear about *gelassenheit* and things like that. It's just as true today as when Harold Bender first wrote it. *Heart Bridge* is not new but it never grows old.

Simon:

The Exodus [audience repeat]. In today's Old Testament reading, God told Moses to go up on Mt. Nebo and look over to the Promised Land, and there on the mountain, you're going to die and go be with your people. This book presents a beautiful history of the exodus till they come to see the Promised Land. Reading Moses' review of their history in Exodus, it was interesting and an exciting journey. This book takes you from Exodus to the edge of the Promised Land. It's the Exodus case, and it's a journey to pre-Exodus, to exodus, to mount of God, to the wilderness. It has 790 pictures in it. A fascinating one is when Moses struck the rock.

Elmer:

Who was the photographer when Moses was there?

Simon:

The price of the book is \$39, and I know you're used to a bargain. But I think of it this way,

many of you present \$100 bills at the stand. *Stronger than Pain* is the story of multiple surgeries, hospital stays, and on December 27, 2007 after 30 years of doctors and hospitals, she left the body behind and was translated into the presence of her Savior. What makes this a bit more moving, is that I knew Arlene's family. Her mom said one Sunday morning, aren't you going to church today? And the father said, no, I'm done with church. He began to walk away from church, his wife, and children. To this day he has not revealed himself where he is. Arlene had to leave this earth without saying goodbye to her father. It's a story worth reading, it's a page turner. *Overcoming Evil, God's Way*: How many have seen it? [audience repeat] This is written by Stephen Russell. What is exciting about this book, I've known him from about the time he left the Catholic Church and started hanging around with the Mountain View people. I've known him while he worked at Choice Books. I've watched him move from the evangelical view of how to solve problems to a solid Anabaptist point of view. Maybe he even passed me up a little. The co-minister when he was in the area at the time, Alvin Beiler, says, "Everyone should have this book!" They'll be about \$10.

Elmer:

Again, some stories for laps: *God's Miracle* series. Another, Mario, now he brings along his friends. A few audio recordings for the trip back home, such as *Special Friends at Home*. There are many reading books and primers, then the tried and true reader series.

Simon:

I have shown the book *The Gay Gospel* and people said "Oh, that's not for us." This is really an enlightenment into what the gay culture teaches. Maybe you wonder why it's a passion of mine. I live near Washington, DC, they legalized gay marriage, and the Washington Post is pro-gay. We have leftover from last year, some of Halley's handbooks. Lester, you would endorse those, wouldn't you? We happened to have plenty of the book that Eli recommended, on being a servant of God.

12:03pm: **Moderator (Glen Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)**

Thanks for the commercial. Dave Stoltzfoos, would you come and pray for lunch?

Lunch Break

1:35: **Songs (Julian Nisly, Center A.M., KS)**

1. "Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah" (#773, Christian Hymnary)
2. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (#100, Christian Hymnary)
3. "Take Time to Be Holy" (#277 Christian Hymnary)
4. "Lord of the Living Harvest" (#536 Christian Hymnary)

1:51pm: **Moderator (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

The cooks served 1,800 cups of coffee over the meals, 1,500 cups during the breaks and 80 gallons of iced coffee. This should keep us awake. I was blessed being here, but the message is only as good as the people it produces. Will it change our lives or stay here where it was presented? *Prayer*.

1:54pm: **The Great Commission (John Nisley, Plainview Gospel Fellowship, PA)**

God is a God of multiplication and addition, not division and subtraction, though I would ask him to subtract my heart rate. This topic was given to me with an outline, and I'll tell you what the outline is, then we'll decide if we can spend a lot of time on each, or if I simply have to give an overview of the topic.

1. What is the Great Commission?
2. Why the need for the Great Commission?
3. How is the Great Commission being filled? (changed from personal/congregational evangelism, but he changed to how it is being fulfilled)
4. Anabaptist history and the correlation between ministry and spiritual vitality.
5. Ministering to the religious in the communities as well as the heathen.

I can give an overview of the first three in the allotted time, the what, why, and how.

What is the Great Commission? The last recorded instruction given by Jesus to his disciples. Another thing is the Creator God would use man to fulfill something so great. It's a special calling from Jesus Christ to all his followers to take specific action while on this earth. When we think about being commissioned it is not only a task but has the authority to fulfill the task. It is given to one as an agent for another.

Let's turn to three Scriptures. Matthew 28 is the most familiar one. Notice the authority given first to Jesus and how he gives us this authority to go. [*Read passage. Then read Mark 16:14.*] I thought it was only those who went, but the signs shall *follow them*. In verse 20, it says, "signs following." The Lord went with them. Luke 24:47, it tells us what to preach, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. "I send to you the promise of my father upon you..." This was previous to Pentecost. The point is, we dare not go by our own power, our own authority. We'd better stay home. There is a pattern; it always starts at home. Family, even business, that is a principle we should always keep in mind. To neglect the things at home is to be against the very basic teachings of the Word. Ministry as we heard "happens as we live our lives" someone said. We go, and we sent people, just as they did back then. We heard last night about the 'other' gospel. When we think about the great commission and the four very clear teachings here, the Great Commission is not just baptism and church membership as was the thrust during the Protestant reformation, as it still is today. Our own churches have had this, where we depend a lot on baptism and church membership and we fail the four parts. Neither is it just to preach the gospel to get people saved so they don't go to hell. It's fire insurance for many people in churches today. We've been greatly influenced by these teachings. You will find that the Great Commission was the heart of the Anabaptist movement. They took seriously the four parts of the Commission: the Commission to preach the gospel, to make disciples, to baptize, and to teach, to observe the commandments of Christ.

We tend to take the easy route; we tend to baptize and make members or just preach the gospel and get people saved. The discipleship part of it is much more difficult. We tend to shy away from this part of it. In Chapter 7 in Stephe Russell's books where he talks about the duties given to the state—I've been greatly influenced by Stephe, he's a member of my church—he says, "In this short command to the church..." [*Summary: She is to proclaim the Gospel around the world.*

She is to initiate by baptism those that respond positively by invitation, responsible to instruct and guide all believers into complete obedience.]

Why the need for the Great Commission? If we look at the first and last two chapters of the Bible, we learn about the Creation, man being the pinnacle, God calling the creation very good. In chapter 3 we read about the fall of man. We learn about the need for redemption. In Revelation, we learn about Satan's final defeat and how God is restoring the Creation to a greater glory than what He first created. Between these chapters, we can see in Scripture, we learn about God's plan for restoration, the overarching theme of the Bible: the glory of God revealed to his creation. God will accomplish that which he has set out to do; his plan will not be thwarted. Every knee shall bow. *[Two verses from Isaiah]*

Even now the earth is the Lord's and the heavens declare the glory of God. The early Anabaptists used this verse much, Psalm 21:1 "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof..." In Habakkuk 2:14, it says, the Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Why the need for the Great Commission? Because of the curse on God's creation. God is restoring and renewing all Satan has ruined and is in bondage. Revelation 20:21-22, we read about separation, restoration, and redemption.

How is the Great Commission being filled? Through God's people. God's plan for the Great Commission began to take shape when he took Abraham away from his country and gave him a promise. It was exemplified through Jesus and his people. In Genesis 12:2-3, this promise was given to Abram. I believe Jesus Christ the true Israel did fulfill this responsibility. Exodus 19:4-6. God told Moses to tell the people, ye have seen what I have done unto the Egyptians... God desired a relationship with his people. He said in verse five, if you will be a peculiar people above all people, for all the earth is mine. Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. 1 Peter 2:9 *[excerpt:]* "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood..." Why? "That ye should show forth the praises of him that have called you out of darkness into marvelous light."

What does this look like? Jesus in Luke 4:18 said what His ministry is. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." I believe we are given this ministry. We do not do the healing, but we are the ones called to bind up the wounds and to preach the gospel to the poor, to preach deliverance. In Acts 26, Paul is giving his story to the authorities. One verse, before his conversion, authority was given to him by the chief priests to do what he was doing. After the conversion experience, the Lord gave him a charge. Acts 26, let's read the charge that he gave to Paul. Let's see if we can make see some parallels between that and what I just read in Luke. in verse 18, the charge given to Paul, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and sanctified by faith that is within me. It is our charge to open the eyes of people, to show them the difference between darkness and light.

One example of congregational evangelism that has impressed me a lot is the Thessalonians church. 1 Thess. 1:5-10. We can see the pattern that we are called to follow, in verse 5 of Thess. 1. They were preached to, they became disciples of the Lord and those who had taught them. In verse 7, they were examples, set a pattern to all that believe. It starts at home, then it goes outward, such as at the church in Antioch.

I'd like to talk about the things that I believe can hinder churches in truly fulfilling the great Commission. The early Anabaptists did well even during persecution in spreading the gospel. That is what flamed the fires. It does seem that eventually persecution was so great that they opted to be the quiet in the land. I'm not sure—we shouldn't look down on them for that. Once it is almost impossible to live, we look at things differently maybe. Early, let's look at history from the Hutterites. Early, they were very active, sending missionaries to share the Gospel. They have clear records of the ratio of people that went out that didn't come back. It was about 80%. They were sent out, captured, and executed and never returned. As long as they were vigorous in their mission work and being persecuted, they did well. Their Bruderhofs were centers of real Christian life. When they moved to the US and Canada, very little persecution. That prosperity overwhelmed them. I'll come to that later. Right now, we're just looking at what seems to be the problem. The Dutch Mennonites did well in sending relief back to their people. They were tolerated, they became prosperous; they lost their testimony for Christ. Dutch Mennonite merchants began to put canons of their ships to *seem* to be dangerous to those who would hijack the ships. Then they put the real things on. Then they started being governors of part of the colonies. So on and so forth. I believe for all of us whether Amish, Mennonites, Hutterites, whoever, there has been a temptation, especially for the plain people, to try to wall ourselves off to others. I believe in separation, but if we just isolate ourselves, first of all, the divide is external. We could take this whole group of people and go to jungle somewhere and start a community, but the devil is going to be there. The world is going to be there, the world is in our hearts. It seems like isolation is not the answer. We take the world with us.

In looking at current conditions, what are some hindrances? I named a few, but I'm not sure this is the problem. No persecution, prosperity, isolation, self-sufficiency, becoming politically involved, I don't believe that is the problem. In Acts 9:31, I love this Scripture. I believe you get the answer here. I'll ask the question, should the circumstances we're living in control us or control the vibrancy in our hearts? In Acts 9:31, [*excerpt:*] "Then did all the churches rest... and were edified." Here is the key, and walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, we are multiplying. Severe persecution or no persecution can be detrimental. Prosperity can be detrimental, but I don't believe this to be the underlying problem. Once we move away from the fear of the Lord and the Holy Ghost, we begin to diminish. Here it says, God is a God of multiplication.

I'd like to qualify what I said about separation, to fulfill the great Commission we need to be rubbing shoulders with the world by showing them how we live in Christ separated. Did anybody say it is going to be easy? "I send you forth as among lambs among wolves." I believe in separation, but not isolation.

Ministering to the religious in our communities as well as the heathen: Matthew 5:14-16, let's turn there. As we think about God's call, first to the nation of Israel, then to the church today. "Ye are the salt of the earth..." Salt doesn't do much good in a salt shaker. It needs to be in the soup. In verse 14, [*excerpt:*] "ye are the light of the world... and glorify your Father which is in heaven." As we think about the Great Commission, rather than thinking about the end results of the Great Commission, but I believe if we give a picture of God's kingdom being restored, of separation of the evil, it should excite people to see the glory of God.

I'm going to close with several paragraphs from a writing our son Josh wrote for an assignment at Faith Builders. "God Is Love." [*Read excerpt.*] We have in our hands the Word of God. May God bless.

2:29pm: **Moderator (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

I had to think about last night and the four lepers, and they wondered, what are we doing here, let's go share it. He called us out of darkness into our marvelous light. Then he read from Acts 26, to turn from the power of Satan unto God.

That'll bring us to our business session.

- More ministers' directories are now here. Take enough for your whole team.

Those are dismissed who wish to leave.

2:31pm: **Song (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

1. "Lord, Speak to Me" (#908 Christian Hymnary)

2:35pm: **Bishop Committee (Tim Miller, Oak Grove Mennonite, VA)**

The incoming chairman for the committee will be David Yoder from Kansas. In this coming year, there will be ongoing discussion on questionnaire items, and input is still welcome. You can send those to Brother David or to Tim who will pass it on to David. The summary of our report will be on the registration table. Please take those for yourself and your co-ministers who are not here.

We thought it would be good to review the purpose, statement, and function of the committee. [*The statement is read.*]

Comment on 1.2: In some situations, the committee does not see itself as directly involved in the minister team resolve problems, but being the resource to help get help. In a number of situations over the past years, we talk to individuals or a leadership team, we get the approval of the congregation before that, and someone else takes on assistance from there. This is a different approach than the traditional one chooses one, the other side chooses another, and the two choose a third. The committee is available to hear to help you find a way through without taking direct responsibility.

Comment on 2.5: This is why we do not feel we should be directly responsible in a congregational conflict. It's inherent that it does change the nature of the relationship to such an extent that the committee should NOT take direct responsibility.

May the Lord bless you as you seek to lead your congregation ever more in the ways of God.

2:41pm: **Calvary Publications (Elmer Glick, Slanesville Community Mennonite, WV)**

The present board is Elmer Glick (chairman), Nathan Yoder (Vice Chairman), Enos Stutzman (Secretary), Ralph Miller, David L. Miller, and Glen Bontrager. Paul L. Miller is editor, and Mark Beachy as treasurer and circulation manager.

Ballot:

Manferd McGratch (Taylorsville, NC)

Ralph Miller (Free Union, VA)*

Mark Webb (Aroda, VA)

In the annual meeting—and he told me to say “THANK YOU” loudly for the support. We thank you for your subscriptions, church donations, and personal donations. A bit of history about the financial stability. I didn’t go back into the records to see how far it was, but in the earlier years, we were subsidized by MIC. The board members from MIC, their funds don’t reach as far as they did at one time, and we are glad to say we don’t use MIC funds because of church offerings. We keep the subscription low enough to make sure people can afford it. Subscriptions are the same as last year, at around 5,000. We don’t know how many are being read, or how often each copy is read. We’d encourage you that when it does come into the home, it is at a visible point, especially so the younger generation can pick it up and read it. I hesitate to give a treasurer’s amount because it is deceptive. \$18,509.79. That seems large, but most of our income is derived from annual subscriptions which comes the first of the year, so we have to live off that amount for nine more months, paying Carlisle Printing and small stipends for editors. There were a few times we scraped the bottom of the barrel and even took loans until more came in. We are in the black, and we hope to stay that way, but that figure can be misleading.

In the back corner across from the CLP stand, we do have a few publications, including *Hey Peachy*—the account of a I-W objector and they are inexpensive enough. Another is *Dowsing—How Does It Work?* Trying to make clear dowsing is not for the believer. The third one is *The Terrible Price of Darkness*, having to do with the occult. The largest sales of this book are going into Amish bookstores. The prices are \$1, \$2, and \$5. We have two tracts, “Yes, I’ll Tell You Why I Wear It,” and “Answers to Questions about the Amish and Mennonites.” \$5 a pack. We would like to affirm our editor, Paul Miller, in his work. We wish to continue using him, as well as Floyd Stoltzfus and Ernest Eby as section editors as well as other [named] brethren. When David L’s last term expired, he didn’t feel he should take another term. So, we reaffirm his board position on a year-to-year basis, and we reaffirm his position on the board and his writing in the Observations. How many turn to David’s column first? [most hands raised]. In concluding the presentation, Ralph Miller has been re-elected.

2:51pm: Conservative Anabaptist Institute (Elmer Glick, Slanesville Community Mennonite, WV)

To help and encourage schools—Jonas Sauder brought this vision to birth, and continues to be highly involved in that. It continues to go on. What does this body have to do with the CASP board institute? To give the board institute some credibility. It was offered to various church groups. This body affirmed in the past that we would be willing to be the umbrella. Rather than form a committee, Calvary Publications took on the logistics of being your part of it. We do very little, like Paul A. keeps this meeting going here from year to year. We see there is continuity and oversight on the committee. Alan Byler, Lee Lehman, PA, Edwin Eby, Greencastle, PA, and Jonas Sauder from Lancaster County. The fourth annual meeting was held March 5-6 in Oak Grove, VA. Good attendance, good support, and we want to see that continued. We heard expressions of appreciation and support. If you’re not on the mailing, keep watching the CM each year, or, write to Elmer to be placed on the mailing list. March 4-5 is the projected date for

2011. You won't have far to drive next year providing your community hosts it. We're open to invitations.

2:54pm: IGO (Merle Burkholder)

God is doing some tremendous things in our day; people are coming to Christ. We have tools almost no generation has ever had. If we're going to get everything done, it's not going to happen with spare change and spare time, but we're going to have to get committed to getting the job done. In the past, we've had good intentions, good ideas, and good people, but they were ill-prepared to face the challenges of life, cultural adaptation, theological vulnerable, language, and we have lost people from our own circles from this. We sent people on to the field where we put people in leadership positions they were not prepared for. We send good people into difficult situations and tell them to do good things. After a year and a half in service, they knew they were not going to continue after three years. We've lost good people who had a vision for spreading the gospel because we have not prepared them effectively. We need people to prepare themselves to be a career as a missionary. As we prepared, we train them here and then send them around the world. The vision of IGo was to do missionary training in a cross-cultural setting. We take North American students and taking them to Thailand and immerse them in another culture. We do not run a compound. We have no A/C and air conditioning. The students are eating Thai food five days a week. We want to prepare people for village ministry and say "I know how to do this." We have taken an apprenticeship model because people learn when they see it. We start out in the first year of training with a three-week classroom term. They go out to a point in Asia at some point while there in teams and they get experience in different types of missions. They go back and forth between classroom and field experience. *[the remainder of this presentation is absent from this record]*

3:06pm: Moderator (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

Statement read. Christian Believer's Fellowship in Lewisburg is looking for someone to oversee Lighthouse Haven, a home for unstable women. No training necessary, but a practical understanding of the Word of God and how to apply it. If you know someone, let James Yoder know.

3:07pm: Song (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)

1. "I Love You, Lord" (from memory)

3:08pm: CASP / Peace and Service (Elmer Miller, Woodlawn A.M.)

What I have to share may seem fairly tame in comparison; yet at the same time I have a firm conviction it is of great important. What we want to do today is mention two things. The Peace and Service committee. Harlan will take charge of re-election. David L. will discuss what's been going on lately with the draft and other issues. Then, I want to give a report on the CASP program and raise some questions we'd like you to respond to. The first thing, let's have an election. Ballots are involved.

Harlan is coming off the committee. These are the nominees:

Dave Beiler from Shekinah Fellowship or Lewisburg, PA
Merv Lapp from Weavertown A.M., Lancaster County, PA*

David L. Miller: When I look back and think how much changed of these meetings, before the decade of the 1950s, there were no committees, Both mission boards started in the 1950s. MIC started in the Old Order setting and AMA started a couple years later. A couple boards have been added since, the CBS board and the publication board, but has anyone ever counted the number of para-Anabaptist boards? There seems room for that side of growth and introspection. We should stay abreast of those things and we, as well as CASP people, there are 14 different groups that consider themselves affiliated with CASP. The Beachys are the largest, and they have some 800 young persons age-eligible for this service. There are certainly a lot of service opportunities and things that have made it difficult to recruit the volunteers we've had. Those volunteers have been excellent. A month or so ago we got word from Selective Service that they would like to have a conference call with interested people, so Elmer Miller and I were notified. The head of selective service, they have a new director of selective service. He was on, too. They were interested in introducing their new director and informing people what they envision. We don't see any changes, other than the new director is very sympathetic to the alternative service. They are working on a memo of understanding, and Cassandra has been working on it for a long time. Her superior wasn't interested in it, but now it looks like it is going to happen. There are some 14 different groups who want to be affiliated with CASP. When they do these short-term service projects, there has to be a place. Sometimes I think we do well to back off and see ourselves in the context of the larger picture as a family of Anabaptists. We have a yearbook that CLP puts out regularly, and if you were total up the different groups who teach as Mennonites historically taught, it would be somewhere around 30,000, but it did not include some off the groups who were sort of mainstream, and Sword and Trumpet comes out with a second directory. That number would be somewhat less than 30,000 but the combined total would be about 50,000. I think it's good we have FB and northern youth programs that do not operate along the various groups. Conservative Anabaptists have so much in common, and we should reach across these lines and cooperate. You may not be aware, the history of CASP goes back to March of 2005 when MCC called this meeting in Illinois in a Church of the Brethren. The Church of the Brethren is struggling. In WWII about 10% of theirs went to COs and they are considered an historic peace church. This indicates what other groups work with who have been acculturated. The GC Mennonites and the (Old) Mennonites average about 50% COs. One of the concerns of CASP is the concept and the conviction for COs is not lost. The other reason for CASP we credit to Lyle Hostettler of Tampico, IL. He worked in I-W. He's bishop in Shelbyville, MO. He'd want a better place for young people to serve than what was in the I-W area. We are in the early phase of this venture, so we solicit your prayers as we continue. The organization that we work under is CAM and we need an umbrella like that. The 14 different groups includes three New Order Groups, Michigan, Holmes County, and Guthrie, KY. We sit around the table and have a common interest. Suggestions are welcome.

Elmer Miller: Sometime the first part of January I had my neighbor in my home, Marvin Troyer, who represents BMA. He came and said, "I hear you got kicked out, Beachy people got kicked out." "Yes and no." The CASP board would have kicked us out; they did in a sense when we had our meeting in August in Plain City, the larger CASP group, 85-100 people which represents the 14 groups, Eli Weaver on the CAM board. Since the Beachy group is the largest under CASP, you do your own thing. You find your own project, and CAM will no longer give you a place to serve. That's where we came up with this project in Hutchinson, KS with interfaith housing services program. Just a bit, we had this program this past year and we did have three months, or

three four-week terms. The first term there were seven people, and the second and third term there were six people. With the exception of one blip, we've had an excellent time. These men that came ranged from 18 to 26, one person was maybe 30. They did a tremendous amount of themselves. They worked with John Scott of Interfaith Housing. They were overwhelmed. Dan Miller (IN) was the project coordinator first six weeks, Marcus and Lois Overholt (SC) for the last six weeks. The work was done in five weeks that was meant to take 12 weeks. On the back stand, one corner there is a sign that says "CASP" and there's a newspaper article from Hutchinson News. There's some copies back there including a certificate from Interfaith Housing Service. [*Reads the statement.*] A few more things, we had asked last year for approval of this assembly to pursue this and it was given. Now, it is completed for this year, but we're not finished yet with what all, the bills. If you have any money left after the other requests, we need some too. The process we've been going through, we pay back loans (interest free). We have received from about five different churches and the Interfaith Housing Services themselves (unexpected) and they had stipends of \$300 per worker per term. We're going to be running short, somewhere between \$8000-\$9000. Will you see it in your heart in the next few months to send a contribution to me?

In our meeting a couple days ago with CASP committee, it was suggested we give a report. I did send out 90 letters to 90 different church leaders. After two months, 27 returned with responses. We got on the telephone. We were able to squeeze out enough people until about three weeks before the project was to begin, on the eighth day of January, I had two in the bush and none in my hand. Lots of potential, but it finally worked out. It was difficult. We try to publicize it, but we need more than just intentions.

There is a possibility of organizing a non-minister CASP board similar to Penn Valley. PVCR is one of the ones with a non-minister board with minister oversight. What our experience was, it seemed excellent beyond our expectations; it was just pretty smooth. We're thinking about that. By the middle of the year, I hope to send out to the church leaders a more comprehensive report to church leaders with potential for another year. Sometime another year, the CASP board will meet sometime the next year in Illinois. Maybe Cassandra and some others would attend. Maybe we can project another project for next year.

Elmer suggested this morning we should look at the health plan. Perhaps we should do a bit more looking at the health plan.

This booklet introduced this morning, something written in 1982 and then revised in 2004, we passed these out 4-5 years ago. There is a box full of them which is a statement of position on peace, war, and social issues. It was first written in 1982. We've revised it and added a few things to it.

Mervin Lapp has been elected to the board.

Warren and Grace Keupfer (KS), Ollie and Emma Troyer (KS), Ken and Anne Beiler (PA) [*also helped in some way with the Interfaith Housing project.*]

CAM is asking the Beachy group to go on its own. We asked, can we get under that program?

Advised we check with Eli Weaver from CAM. My question is, does it seem right for 2011 perhaps another three months we should purse that and try to squeeze some volunteers? [*Raise of hands for support.*]

3:35pm: Penn Valley Christian Retreat (Homer Zook, OH)

Regardless how small the work is, if it is God's directed work, it is important work. It is true, Elmer, that Penn Valley has a non-ministerial board and a pastoral board. We appreciate the group here that is left. Maybe we should have our business meetings on one day and keep the best till last. Again, thanks to all of you for support. PVCRC is under the umbrella of the Beachy constituency, and the pastoral board fits between there, trying to keep it Beachy, though PVCRC generally ministers to more non-Beachy people than Beachy people. As we try to keep it in that perspective. Pastoral board: Elmer Schrock (VA), David S. King (Belleville), and Homer Zook. David's term is up, he served for ten years already, and it was handy since he lived nearby. If there were needs, he was there. I talked with Elmer and Alvin Beachy, and with your request, we would make this consent, that you would give approval for David to serve another five years. David, would you stand? Would you give your approval for David to continue for another five years. [*Strong support raised hands*]

PVCR had a good year despite economic recession. There has been money coming in. Right across the aisle where the peanuts are, you can pick up a well-written report of what's been happening at PVCRC. They're offering 25 seminars, as I listened to the messages, maybe you have some suggestions of areas we could cover. One of the problems we face, those things we feel should be covered in seminars, it's hard to get our people there to listen. The board has adjusted some seminars. Smaller ones have been phased out. Few have always been full, is the marriage seminar, youth seminar (Bible school reunion). There have been some changes made that has really been working well. Some of the youth seminars were so large like the YFM they were uncontrollable, so we phased in some things to try to give some control, and it has been working well. Thanks for your support. We praise the Lord on the renovation program. There were some things there that were less than ideal, maybe for seniors and other things. We did recently have all permits to proceed with the renovation program. We juggled some things around. They're planning to start the renovation by Sept. 27. We would like to have your response to that in helping as much as you can. There are some present needs, staff needs. We also need an administrator. Ervin Hostetler plans to leave by August or September. We don't have an administrator at this time. If you have someone at home, we would appreciate your response. [*Read a short piece.*] We invite people to come and give input, three to four hours at most, so traveling a long ways seems difficult. Trying to find something that works better, maybe get some input about a seminar you'd like to put on the schedule. Feel free to share that with us. We have nearly \$100,000 for renovation program, offerings, etc. May the Lord bless you and continue to pray for Penn Valley as an arm of the Beachy constituency.

3:45pm: Faith Builders (Ernest Hochstetler, Cold Springs Mennonite, SC)

The display is in the location of the peanuts. You'll see information about the classes and teachers. There's an order form there and copies of publications there. Two books mentioned were *Overcoming Evil God's Way* and the one on Annie Funk. There's also a stack of CDs there from a colloquy "How can we avoid the dangers and maximize the opportunities in the next 20 years?" I'll give you something emailed to me. This has been prepared by the staff [*reads letter*]

of Steve Brubaker]. Thanks to all who gave. FB felt the economical crunch, but there's not as much physical renovation as needs to be done. The stats last year are the same for this year, and the Beachys represents about half of the students and staff. FB welcomes our comments and inputs. John Nisly, Gary Miller, ... Glen Yoder, Wayne Schrock, and myself are on the pastoral board, among others. If you want to give something, it's welcome. If you do budgets, include something for FB for this coming year. Who should attend FB? They have a program that takes turns every fall. They have 15 student spots open in the fall. Three reasons why go to FB: 1) Prepare for teaching in the schools. The main reason students give for not coming is the cost. They're suggesting if cost is a factor, that we as churches could help a student and agree that they would spend time teaching in our schools. 2) Maybe a student wants to go on to college, and with the caution, they should have some preparation time. 3) Preparing for service. There's a winter term also, and Roman will talk about that in a little bit. The last thing, they're working on an Anabaptist periodical. This one will be published a minimum of once a year, or maybe twice a year at most. It would be close to 100 pages for issues, a 'journal' but everyone is backing off that. It's heavy reading, and they want to address current issues we have in our larger Anabaptist circles. These articles would be freshly written by selected authors with expertise. If you could have the periodical in your home, would you want it? [*Hand raise, some interest*]

Verlynn Yoder: I've been ordained for six years, and after two years of being ordained, I felt the need to take some time off and spend time where I could be stimulated, and discussion time and interaction. I felt like going back to Bible School again. We went to FB for five weeks. We took our whole family along. We camped out there at FB. I took classes like 'pastoral care' and 'introduction to the ministry.' I could sit with fellow ministers, and we enjoyed stimulating discussions. My wife was also able to enjoy classes, and we took turns doing the babysitting. I recommend it as a way to be refreshed.

Ernest Hochstetler: You can take what you need, one week, two weeks, whatever.

4:01pm: Billboard Ministry, CAM (Ernest Hochstetler, Cold Springs Mennonite, SC)

There are seven different types of boards. All have the same 800 number on it. All the phone calls go to the same place. We would like to have a number of you volunteer to take these phone calls. Raymond takes some, Johnny Miller takes them, Menno has, and I have also. In 44 states. There are states that don't allow bill boards: Maine, Hawaii, Vermont, Alaska. CAM is trying to get into airports and public places. I don't have exact viewers per day, but a little over 2million a day on 83 billboards in these 44 states. One is on a board, and one is on the side of a large semi parked by a highway. A few are on smaller boards. Would some of you be interested in volunteering to take calls? Fill out a form and submit to Dwayne Stoltzfus. We need some additional counselors. What kinds of calls do you get? All kinds. When the phone rings, there are four cell phones ringing simultaneously. Whoever gets it first gets the call. Every call you get is recorded, and you submit to CAM the information. Calls from those who are blessed, and some Christians call and object to the evolution board. They believe there is another gospel allowing for a mix of creationism and evolutionary thought. We have calls you check off based on the type of calls. I've never been talked to before like this ever like some calls on the phone! On the backside, you check off what kind of person it was, and there is a place for a 'mocker.' The mini sign had been sitting in the peanut section, and the information shows you the different messages, and on the backside it shows the location of the billboards. These calls come in 24hrs

a day, 7 days a week. So, you need to plan to keep your cell phone by your bed, and you learn to wake up real fast. You don't want to talk to a person about his soul when you're asleep. You wake up and hear someone pleading for help. The plea today is not the promotion of the billboard. Average cost is \$600/month. We need you, tele-counselors, like Uncle Sam.

4:10pm: **Song (Dale Hochstetler)**

1. Jesus Loves Me

4:11pm: **Masters International Ministries (Nathan Yoder, Faith Mission Fellowship, VA)**

Slide show presentation. For nearly 20 years there has been an Anabaptist witness in Ukraine. Not as well known as the other mission organizations, we are grateful for what He is doing there. There are today a number of churches established, three existing and a new one. There are ways you can become part of this work, the tiller program. The NOA in Holmes County have provided chain saws and tillers for the poor folk there. They are multipurpose and used much. Other ways to be involved in the work, prayer. Summer Bible Camp program with young children. There are many children in Ukraine looking forward to going to summer Bible camp and many for the first time hear about another lifestyle. A summer Bible school poster for fund raising is available. There are envelopes and newsletters to pick up, and let us know if you want a summer Bible school kit. Another thing is the Lamp and Light translation work done by Michael Jantzi. One of the larger projects is translating *Doctrines of the Bible*. It's been many years Michael has been working on it, and it is finally ready for the printer, but the baby has come full term but mother doesn't have the strength to deliver. A printer in Ukraine can print for about \$3 a copy, and we plan to print 3,000 copies. We are planning to charge for it instead of giving it away for free, but we are looking for a donation to be able to print it. Another need, the church in Chernivtsi has been rented, but there is a plot of land available for \$20,000 that is sizeable enough that we can build on it. We need another \$10,000 for that plot of land. Natives are interested in helping with the work if the land can be secured. Recently, there's been a building project many of you have been involved in. There's a number of people responding in a village 1.5hrs west. The mission base is planning on relocating to this village, and there is no church of any kind there. They are inviting MIM in to evangelize. It seems like a golden opportunity. There are small houses there, and housing is an issue. Land was gotten there and a house was built. A couple plans to move over there. Another building (multi-purpose) is being built that can be used as a church, since legally it is hard to build a church. There is also an apartment and a storage area. It is nearly finished. Much of the material has been gotten at reduced costs, and a number of containers have been shipped over. Some people have loaned us interest-free totaling about \$200,000. They'd like it back , so as the Lord lays it on your heart, we invite you to share.

4:22pm: **Anabaptist Financial (Richie Lauer, VA)**

Slide show presentation. two-fold vision of organization, to assist the brotherhood in channeling material resources within the Kingdom of Christ. The other is to provide stewards with Biblically-based financial counsel consistent with conservative Anabaptists beliefs. We believe the funds conservative people hold should work within our own circles, rather than in the secular marketplace. Where you allow your money to work does matter and relates to accountability and stewardship. AF has been around for five years. Merle Burkholder is one of the board members as secretary. There is a 40-person advisory group that meets with the board once a year. From the Beachy constituency, there is Bill Mullet, Ben Stoltzfus, Aaron Lapp Jr., and Raymond King

serve on this group. The board seats are not allocated by affiliation, but are intentionally spread across groups. AF represents Anabaptist Financial and Anabaptist Foundation. The former is for investment and loss, while the latter is a public foundation. Both are tax-exempt organizations. The latter focuses on institutions, while the former works with businesses and individuals. The church constituency are those who support the 1963 or earlier confessions of faith [*list of church groups allowed*]. Headship veiling, still practice a form of non-conformity. 19 of 23 groups identified are currently participating. IRS approved donor-advised fund. Through the foundation, the giver can give anonymously and get the tax deduction. They give a gift to the foundation, then the foundation gives it to the organizations. Overhead is kept at a minimum. We assess 0.5% of donations. The foundation does not exist to raise money for itself, but for the other organizations. The channeling that has been going to longest is in the Wilderness Camp project. Currently, they're raising funds for the Maryland camp. We lack \$97,000 to give the camp to Bald Eagle. Open Hands Fund is to support efforts by creating self-supporting and responsible Anabaptist communities in poor countries. It's designed to have micro-loans in the community, as well as financial accountability and Christ-centered teaching. A self-sustaining, local congregation. 96% repayment rate on loans. Currently operating in Haiti. Lyndon Swarey has committed to three years to work in Haiti. Investment Management Agreements: funds are deposited and loaned back out to other conservative Anabaptists. 3.75% pay rate for long term investments (one year plus). These funds would otherwise be invested in CDs at secular financial institutions. Anabaptist Financial Investments: operates as a brotherhood-based investment option for conservative Anabaptists. At this time, it only applies for residents of PA, then MD shortly. Next year, complete in the state of OH, IN, and SC. Current rate of return 4.0%. 1.8 million per month coming in. Currently serving over 350 borrowers. To receive a loan, the borrower must belong to one of our conservative churches. They must sign a brotherhood agreement of accountability. Three business seminars a year, one in Ohio, IN, and PA. Visit afweb.org for more information. Also, church presentations on request.

4:37pm: Shepherds Institute (Chester Weaver, Rosewood Fellowship, IN)

An effort to provide help for ministers in preaching, pastoring, and theology. It moves from one place to another, and the last one was at Pequea AM. The next one is at Pleasant Grove Mennonite, April 19-23. It features presentations and a round-table. One church sent someone to the Shepherds Institute and paid a hired man to do his work at home. SMBI and FB offers similar programs. Shepherds Institute is traveling. Each class offers lectures and discussions. One of the focuses is the 'emergent church.' It is already posing a threat to our people. That will come up in discussions this year. Brian McLeran is the leading figure in the Emergent church. *A New Kind of Christian* is the book he wrote. Its emphasis on community and simplicity and non-hierarchy and smallness is attracting our people and—I'd better stop. Brochures and information are there in the back corner.

There are booklets entitled "Amber Alert: Exodus En Mass" which was preached at the Anabaptist Identity Conference last year. It deals with our young people leaving the church.

4:44pm: Youth Fellowship Meeting (Donald Miller, Cedar Crest A.M., KS)

Five member committee representing five districts in our constituency, we are needing to elect a new member to take Donald's place. It's his fifth year. New man on from the southwest district: Dan Byler, Huntsville, AR*

Julian Nisly, Hutchinson, KS

We received positive feedback for the meetings last summer. We appreciate your contributions and the work you put into it. I'll forego listing the locations. The next issue of CM will have a list of the youth fellowship locations. One dark spot in last year's meetings. Most of you probably heard where a young girl's life was taken in a motorcycle accident in the SW district. We want to re-emphasize a plea for a safe environment for these meetings to take place. We continue to have a burden for our youth. There is room for improvement, and we trust the format is a way we can contribute to their growth and maturity. We continue to be open to your input if these meetings are filling a needful role. We encourage the youth sponsors and parents to attend with their youth as a positive way to interact and know what's going on. Current board: Simon Bender, PA, Luke Stutzman, OH, Verlynn Yoder, MN, Wayne Nisly, Abbeville, SC

4:48 **Titus Wagler, Native Missions Endeavors**

The body gave approval to help put together a board. We provide help for churches already established in evangelizing locally. We have 32 pastors we are sponsoring at \$50 a month in India. We're praying for open doors in other areas. There may be some American missionaries that could be moved to another location. We need to replace Melvin Glick, it's a six year term. John Hostetler serves also, and Titus Wagler.

John Beiler, Crystal Valley, NY

Daniel Brenneman, Virginia Beach, VA*

Sanford Wayne Yoder, Wytheville, VA

Executive committee:

Alvin Beachy, Plain City

Leon Overholt

David Kauffman, Weavertown

Jay Hostetler, Sec/Tres

4:51pm: **Archiving and Annual Meeting (Paul A. Miller, Maranatha Fellowship, OH)**

"Hutterites have very clear records." Dutch Mennonites began installing cannon. Cory Anderson and Paul A. Miller were corresponding to collect records from this body. There is no formally established central archive or anything recording decisions you are making. We're suggesting the value of a central archives. What documents? Bishop committee reports, any committee reports, all service units that report to this body, the recordings of the ministers meetings, minutes of annual meetings, programs over the years, etc. It might be of interest to catalog, preserve, and make available to those who would like to research at a later date. We have not given much thought to how, there is no formal proposal today, merely raising the idea. If there is already such an organization, then we'll submit the information we have. There are duplicate binders, and records are being kept, but they should be archived somewhere. Someday our children and grandchildren may want to look back and see the records of our proceedings. If you're interested in participating, I'm welcoming contributions of the 'who, what, and where.'

At this time, I will express appreciation on behalf of the visitors to the hosting congregations who have worked. We appreciate planning and diligence. A year from now, the meeting will be in Lancaster, PA, April 5,6,7.

4:56pm: **Moderator (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

4:57pm: **Songs (Julian Nisly, KS, Center A.M., KS)**

1. “Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord” (#817 Christian Hymnary, verses 1,4)

4:59pm: **Announcements (Dale Hochstetler, Fair Haven A.M., IN)**

- If committees want to meet, feel free to dismiss yourselves after prayer

Supper

7:01pm **Songs (Gene Beachy, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

1. “We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise” (overhead)
2. “To God Be the Glory” (overhead)
3. “Send the Light” (overhead, verses 1,2,4)
4. “Wonderful Grace of Jesus” (overhead)
5. “’Tis Marvelous and Wonderful”

7:18pm **Moderator (Steven Miller, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

I feel the pieces are finally coming together, now that it’s all about over.

7:19pm **James Shetler, Cedar Crest A.M., KS)**

I’m amazed by the potential of influence that we can impact across our land tonight. What would God call us to do with what we heard? God has spoken to our hearts. Open to Luke 7:2-10. [*Read this passage.*] One of the greatest responsibilities we have is to influence people. Leadership is influence. God has called each of us to inspire enthusiasm in the hearts of the people under us. We can’t do everything that God needs done, but somehow God has put us in positions to influence others to also do his work. God wants us to develop within the hearts of our people to cultivate meaningful relationships, to develop a desire for growth and what it means to be a disciple. Also, to be a challenge unto excellence.

We have a limited amount of time here. We’re caught up with the desire to impress rather than influence them sometimes. God calls us to be an influence. The setting here, the Centurion that sent servants, he seemed to influence people. Note the care for those under him. He had respect of the Jewish people, the elders. That’s unusual, considering the animosity between Jews and Romans. In spite of a position of authority over others, his humility shows through. He knew who he was. I am a man under authority. Notice his focus. Never forget, we are also under authority. How you relate to God when others can’t see you is crucial. The rest of your life flows out of that. When you intend to impress people rather than influence them with your gifts and abilities, let’s remember, God wants us to use them to honor Him. When we try to impress people, it begins and ends with me, and the effort that goes into the impression that is being tried to make is often a selfish thing. But God wants us to honor him.

Another things that happens is when we try to impress is we're controlled by feelings that are unreliable and subject to change. To give you an illustration how easy our feelings can change. This is something that happened in my life years ago. Fourteen years when I was ordained, our five year old son was sitting with other family members in the crowd, and when he realized the lot was in his daddy's lap, he said, "Yah! My dad won!" In our efforts to impress people, we focus on how it affects us. Less than six months later, when numerous preacher meetings took me from him, he asked, "When is this deacon thing going to stop?" Let's not rely on our feelings.

The third thing is that God is deprived of an opportunity to receive glory when I try to impress people. The rewards at best when we try to impress people are limited, hollow, and unfulfilling. When you do your alms before men, to be seen, that is your reward. Those types of impact on lives last longer, into eternity, than impressing people. Long lasting influence is the result of God's influence in your life. You deal with the issues in your life. You deal with bitterness, unforgiveness. You learn to deal with those [*gestures, up-down*] on a personal level. Out of that, we make a difference to other people. God works in us first, and then through us. He doesn't wait until we have it all together. He doesn't wait and uses us in spite of our imperfections. But we need to be aware of our own weakness. Our people will not expect you to be perfect, but hope you're honest, with them and yourself.

The potential for our life to impact others becomes a reality when it is God who is working in us to do His pleasure. We are limited when what we try to accomplish is done in our strength. There are limits to our abilities, but when we tap into God' strength, there's no limit. I like the illustration of a tool in God's hand. In the same way a hammer cannot drive in a nail by itself, neither can you do God's work by yourself. His strength and grace is without limit, so let's tap into that. I challenge you to let God give you grace to reject the impulse to impress people. May God bless you as you embrace his call to influence those he has placed in your care. God bless you.

7:31pm: **Song (Gene Beachy, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

1. "Give to Our God Immortal Praise" (#824 Christian Hymnary, verses 1,4)

7:34pm: **Moderator (Steven Miller, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

Introduces Lonnie Beachy. Lonnie has the hardest time the whole week, when you study, this preacher says this, and this preacher says that, and they all say what you wanted to say. We're looking for a blessing from God through our Brother Lonnie. *Pray (with arm around)*

7:35pm: **"The Diligent Workman" (Lonnie Beachy, Haven Fellowship, OH)**

This reminds me of another conference. A pastor was waiting to get up, and some took the chance to leave early after supper. The song leader got up and led a song and introduced the speaker. As he did so, the speaker got up, the song leader got up, got some left over salad and left. When he turned around, he saw only one elderly gentlemen in that auditorium. He thanked him, but then the elderly man says, "I'd appreciate it if you'd hurry up. I was asked to give the closing prayer." Thank you to the local churches, the benevolence has been overwhelming. The food has been wonderful. I'm a little biased because the little lady behind the registration is my daughter.

I don't know if I need a rake or leaf blower for clean-up, and I'll let you decide which I used first. I know it's going to go out the window, and I pray God would somehow bring this all together. From the very beginning, the heart of the Father to the call of the Father. I was touched this morning by the servant leader.

2 Peter 3:10-14, please stand. [*Read the passage. Pray.*] You may be seated. Knowing the certainty of God's judgment, how ought we to live? Eternal life brings an eternal perspective. I'll read 2 Timothy 2:15, the one we've been keying in on. God is not satisfied with my belief, he wants my obedience. The diligent workmen. Diligent, hard working, industrious, assiduous, painstakingly reliable. Some people have suggested, "That could be a resume for me!" I think our culture has a good reputation of being down-to-earth hard working people. We are industrious, reliable, privilege is as it relates to our Jesus ministry. Was Jesus diligence while walking on earth in uniform? Yes! Was Jesus rushing around from place to place to place? Yes and no. We do know he took time out to pray. He took time to be by himself. He took time to enjoy friends, going to a wedding. He also persuades Martha that spending time was more appropriate and more timely and important than getting all the decorations in place. To stop and listen and to spend time, stop, listen, and spend time. I want you to think, we're going to view that. I confess to you as a pastor; that little phrase to take time and listen, to spend time and listen, is for me. I struggle with continual overload. My own doings, I know. I'm always in continued overload. Sometimes, it seems, the only time I pray is when I'm on the run, on a 'pastoring run.' Many can relate to what I'm saying. As you consider diligent work, what comes to mind? If I ask you, "Are you a diligent workman?" It's an in-your-face question. James? You put up your defenses. Of course you do. You start thinking, Yes, but I have limitations. Limitations, of time, resources. Yet I need to spend time, time out.

I know you relate to that, I think you do. Personally, I sometimes feel like a squeezed lemon. You think there's no more left to give, no more else to do. Out of default responsibility, you squeeze, they squeeze, we all squeeze. We risk it being bitter. So pastors, I deduct, I need to spend more time out with the Father. As I fall to the floor, the fountain and source of Holy Spirit power, I would feel more energized rather than squeezed, more passionate rather than obligatory, powered rather than fatigued.

I'm going to address a pretty sensitive subject. Does our use of time equate to being a tent-making pastor? I want you to hear my heart on this, and don't hear the messenger too quick. We have a wonderful heritage, culture, and practice. The plural ministry is a great benefit and must. Not the only way to do it, but I like it. The minister is meant to divide the work. My pastors are all busy. The limitations of time, does this equate to being tent-making pastors? Paul chose to be a tent-making pastor. My culture and church chose that before I was ordained for me. I'd like to believe I would have chosen the same. I like to sweat with my people. The negative situation in our practice is an over-involvement in business pursuits. We all assume someone else is going to do it, and no one does it.

Raymond once told me, Lonnie, there's no comparable way I can compare what you're doing in your ministry to what I did in mine. Somehow, I do pastoring. You've heard and I've heard about tent-making pastors. They are only ordained businessmen who show up on Sunday mornings to preach. You all have a first aid kit? That hurts. I hope we don't deserve that compound. Just as

the government needs to review the original Constitution, maybe we need to review our practice. I understand Paul's tent-making to be a means to an end. I'm not necessarily advocating Paul's choice of circuit preaching any more than I follow his choice of marriage. Mark Gingerich isn't here, is he? Is it fair for us to consider our situations for today? Unless you misunderstand my challenge. You've heard, don't mess with my money. The love of money reaches every tax income level. Possibly and probably the blue collar, middle class, day laborer, maybe more susceptible to loving money than the one who has already attained. The challenge is, can I adjust?

The challenge is, can we adjust preventative maintenance, especially as it applies to church issues and human relationships. Most of us learn by default, ER pastors. I'm going around putting band aids on people. Some of that is going to happen. Would it not be better to reconsider preventative, spiritual therapies that would keep people healthy? Would it not be better to be engaged Monday-Saturday, and not just on Sunday. This will mean less hours in the barn, office, job site. What were the early church leaders trying to say in their practice of tent making? I did make a pledge four years ago to that pledge. It had great benefit for me. I showed up unannounced on the jobsite. They weren't scared to see me, for no other reason than I care. Know what? The time, I got squeezed and squeezed. I've lost my passion and vision for those high ideas. I need to come back and begin again.

Management of time is our own making: "I have to for no choice of my own need to work. Numero one is providing for my family." We have mortgages, the new car, and condo, the four star hotels, I'm exaggerating for effect, you know my direction. Whose bar are we using? What's important here? Seek ye first financial security. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all of these things shall be added unto you. What am I saying? I'm leaving a lot of loose ends tonight. I'm supposed to bring this together. In tent-making pastoring, don't be afraid to serve God because you need to pay your mortgage. Just step out and see what God does. I'm not asking full time. I don't think Paul was a businessman that showed up on Sunday mornings. Pastor, I resolve to be more diligent in the kingdom work for God, trusting for my needs.

When Jesus showed up 2000 years ago, how did he find his church? His nation? The Jewish people? Did he find them diligent? Diligent in what? Religious drills. Everything was weighed and judged as it applied to the commandments of men. They made for doctrine the commandments of men. They made what we consider practical applications; they made practical applications of the laws of Yahweh. Addendum on addendum on addendum on addendum. They lost. Diligence as it applies to the diligence to the forefathers. They tangoed with Jesus. We be of Paul. We be of Appolos. Did this make the forefathers wrong? No. This is about the nature of man who becomes prideful about the application of God's principles. They were religious, not faithful. They were hypocrites. There was pride and not humility. They were frisking instead of fishing for me.

How does this apply to being a diligent workman? (I need a glass of water). Are we... I am a Beachy, I am of Maranatha, I am of Berea. I am of Mennonite. Does that make our identities wrong? No. Neither are they the total, secure answer. You and I, pastors, are pastoring youth that are more intelligent and academic than we; I didn't say wise. I as a pastor want to give them reliable, pertinent answers. Current to their situation. I do not think they are willing to walk in

someone else's life line. Are they only content to live out the edicts only pertinent to that generation? Every generation needs the experience of the Holy Spirit. Have our forefathers done something wrong? No, but we need it for ourselves today. present, current, contemporary. As a diligent pastor, my foremost purpose is to know the father as the forefathers know the father. We still today reap benefits of our faithful forefathers, diligent forefathers. With all due respect to our forefathers. They were hewed, as are we. I'm not one who criticizes the past, please hear my heart. Their forefathers criticized their forefathers. Every time change comes up, there's a war. But they may change. We call them good. In my short history. I've worked this adaption work under the Lord Jesus Christ and how the work applies in 2010. He can do it. He has answers for us today. They may be applied slightly differently than they were in our forefather's day. The question I leave with you, are we satisfied with the results we have. I have history, we have greater history. Are we happy with the results of what has happened? But if we continue to do things that same way, we get the same result. As it relates to what? Have we met our goals? Actually, what are our goals? Actually, do we have any goals? Understand, I'm not being harsh. I just want to keep you engaged

Has our focus in diligence been misguided or selfish, possibly? Our need for a very private school. Our need for exclusive activities. Have we worked so diligently at external separation and identity that we now wake up to find we formed an exclusive religious club, not too different from when Jesus showed up? A religious club. Am I being diligent for the work of the kingdom? Am I being a fisher of men or am I aimlessly following what may have worked for a past generation and pertinent for a past generation? Let's diligently, passionately see God for what works for our generation. How can we be more effective than pastoring our own? We all want to do this, it's the heart of all us pastors.

Let me change directions a bit, cover some of the things they asked me to address.

Some of you may remember, after a long court battle, [name] finally won the right to enter the cadet problem at the all male school. Soon she dropped out and we haven't heard from her since. She was a quitter. Were you expecting a punch line? That's what inspiration quitters have. Paul said, I have finished the course. There's room for us. Finishing the race is critically important. You know, I'm inspired by my father, and lots have gone before. I see those here, grey heads, who have set the marks for us. We can't lay down and say we're satisfied there. We have to finish the race. I'm not a marathon runner, but the runner tells us there are two critical points. You feel so good you risk over-expending yourself, and at the end, you don't have any left. Any application for us pastors? We start out with great promise. The second critical point is the half way point. You've got another half to go and you're tired. You're tired, runners hitting the wall. You've come to the end of your endurance, and you don't know if you can put another foot in front of the other. We've seen it all over, marriages, to pastors. I've seen it to extraordinary pastors. Have you experienced it? We're told to run with perseverance, but you know what, you've got to do a gut check? Are we experiencing burn out? So spent, then some small situation comes up and your whole ministry is teetering on the brink. Many have scandal, misunderstanding. Many of you were not different than me. Let me qualify that. I'm a pusher, mover. I have more drive than sense. I love being a pastor. I feel called of God, the urgency of God, to make a difference in people's lives. I resonate with Tim Yoder yesterday morning because he's my friend, but I didn't have the same experience. I love to serve; it's not a duty, but

a passion. But I have limitations. I'm told people are supposed to sleep. Some new study. I have a family, bride. I'm gaining folks, fainting, seemingly diminishing. Burnout.

Galatians 6:9. Some of us are weary of over-doing. Burnout seems to be an expected role of pastors. Is that right? If we are going to be spent, let's be spent for Christ. He also asks us to be good stewards of our body. Thanks Adam, Eve. We'll deal with it. Much of the chagrin to those who are doing the miracle juices, we have limitations. My wife is probably guilty of extortion getting it into me.

If and when is a sabbatical necessary or appropriate? Is there a Biblical precedence? This is an afterthought on my subject. I don't know what God is doing to me, but the last six weeks, I'm having symptoms of emotional attack, not because there are problems, I'm a pastor who thinks he can do everything 24/7, and I don't want change. I don't want to lose my passion, but I'm losing my passion. Would it be wise to at least consider opening the idea to sabbatical? Jesus did immediately after baptism. He took 40 day hiatus to the wilderness. Tell me about the devil—comma—angels came to minister to him. How many have taken 40 days off just to be with God? I've not! I've made a request in the last week, in the last week, and we may go through with it.

Some points to consider—delegate: the gift of the plural ministry. I've got the best team out there; we're all busy. We're not just spiritual comrades on the team. I need them. Whether they or church laity. I believe it would do well for us to engage them. A busy church membership is a healthy church. More than that, can we bend our culture just a bit and consider the power of affirmation? As a pastor, the power of affirmation, affirming our associates, our church members has an effect on them and their faith. The little ones, the lambs, I know every child by name, shake their hand. What about the adults? They have the same need as the children. We need to engage them. We need to affirm them. It's counterculture for us to praise, encourage, honor a job well done. It seems our culture gave us a myth, as we do what Jesus did, and that was affirm people. In delegating, play the role of "pastor-coach." Encourage them in the ministry. It's amazing what people will do when you believe in them, when you tell them they can do it. As an ending part, would our marriages survive if we treated our bride as "We'll see you next Sunday" or "you will do that." "How dare you make that decision—I'm the bishop, minister, deacon." God did not ordain me as the sound man, the trustee, the Sunday School leader. They are just as good as me. They may be better at it than we are.

Reaching to those things that are before. I press towards the prize. Jesus was persecuted, but he went on and paid the price and ran the race. He's asking us, when we get weary, we are to fix our eyes on Jesus when you get to where I'm at. Every pastor needs to hear this. It's so easy to give up, to quit, to say, 'I don't have to do that anymore.' If you take the tour in Williamsburg, VA. They'll tell you why when you go to a court and they swear you in, know the history of that? Story goes back to medieval times when someone was tried against a crime and evidence was against him. There was one way out. You could plead the benefit of clergy. When a convict was accused, and that was the only way out, you could plead the benefit of clergy, a clergy was brought in, turn to Psalm 51, and if he could read without stammering, he was set free. He was only allowed once to proclaim it. They would brand a cross on his right hand forever. He only ever claims it but once in his life.

One day, we too will stand before the judge of the earth, guilty as can be. We can plead that; plead the benefit of the cross. It's our only hope. I don't know where you are. I want to always want to be the passionate service-leader Eli spoke about today.

Little illustration: last Wednesday my bride needed to go see a new place and she doesn't know how to get there. We have a little GPS gifted to us. She's learned the basics. I turned it on, put it on the dash. She needed to go to point A to B. It took her to her first place and then took her to the second place. Fast forward, time to come home. She is set for the address, and it starts spitting our cyber profanity. It's set on loud because her husband is hard of hearing. She hits the power button, but you have to hold it. She hits it, it doesn't go off. It continues to spew out all kinds of edicts, directives, and she peels it off the dash and throws it under the driver seat. Still barking out edicts. She turns up the CD, overrides the noise with better noise.

So many illustrations. That little GPS, the Bible, rightly applied, works. It is not silent, it speaks, directions, directives, instructions, gotta rightly apply it, take us where we need to go. We need direction. We're under authority. I need direction. Be diligent and run the race with patience. Don't run the race with impatience. Keeping running what is set before.

Many of you know some of the difficulties our congregation went through in the past four years. I buried not only a church member, but a wonderful friend, Brother Mark. I'm engaging with his oldest son, he was in my barn last Wednesday night. He's grieving helpfully. He said, "Lonnie, sometimes I call my own phone." He inherited his father's cell phone. "because I want to hear my dad's strong voice on the answering machine." How desperate are we to hear the voice of God, that strong voice. Pastors, that's where I'm at. I need to get a handle of God on my life. I can't do it on my own; you can't do it on my own. I need an infusion of God. I need his voice, his GPS, and the patience of the whole congregation. I'd like to covenant my life in a new way. Together, with my spouse, we rejuvenate; we serve again with a passion. Tonight, maybe you feel the same. I feel like I need assistance even now, maybe we'll call people out to pray. If we want to stand as a commandment to pray, that is, we want Him number one. And we want to pastor, and take, there are some abuses to being pastors, but if you love, truly love, does it matter? Moses, how often was he guilty? He struck the rock. I wish I could claim one sin. Often did he say, God, spare your children, take me out of it. Spare them. They are just trying to find their ways, they need to know that people care, and we cut them off because they did not fit in the box we made for them. Let's run the race with patience. We have to finish the race faithfully. If you want to stand with me. Eli, you had the shepherd's prayer. The rest of you want to stand where you are.

Eli Troyer, prayer.

8:27pm: Moderator (Steven Miller, Woodlawn A.M., IN)

Before we have our dismissal song. I'd like to make a few closing comments. Thank you to Fair Haven congregation for letting us use this facility. I want to thank my fellow pastors from Woodlawn and Fair Haven for all the planning time you spent. Just a few people I want to recognize. It's risky to name some, but just a few people who put in special effort. Megan, thank you for dozens of hours in front of that computer, taking care of registration, the directory. Abe and Marlene for taking care of lodging. ushers, parkers, food committee, Uve Steinmann got

more into he expected in the sound booth. Speakers, song leaders, every one of you, thank you very much for your part in making this an enjoyable time. Thank you, all of you, for coming and being a part of us. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to come and be a blessing to the rest of us. Thank you for that. We'll have a closing song.

8:31pm: **Songs (Gene Beachy, Woodlawn A.M., IN)**

1. "Forward, Flock of Jesus" (#393 Christian Hymnary)

8:36pm: **Moderator**

- Please return your name tag holders.
- The business meeting minutes will be emailed or faxed. If you want snail mail, sign up at the registration table.
- If you ordered CDs, please come and pick them up.

Dismiss in prayer—Glenn Yoder.