

<b>Title</b>	Messages and Other Proceedings from the 2013 Beachy Amish-Mennonite Ministers' Meeting.
<b>Speaker</b>	(Various)
<b>Speaker's Residence</b>	N/A
<b>Date</b>	Tuesday, April 2 to Thursday, April 4, 2013
<b>Venue</b>	Fairlawn Mennonite Church, Apple Creek, OH
<b>Program</b>	Beachy Amish-Mennonite Ministers' Meeting 2013
<b>Transcriber</b>	Cory Anderson (www.beachyam.org)
<b>About this document:</b>	<i>This document may be distributed freely. The content was paraphrased during the live presentation; while it largely contains verbatim speech, the quantity is reduced from previous years. 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 02, 2013**

### **7:01pm: Songs (Joel Gingerich, Christian Fellowship Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

1. "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (text for all songs projected on digital screen unless otherwise noted)
2. "Lord I Am Fondly, Earnestly Longing"
3. "On Christ, the Solid Rock I Stand"
4. "O to Be Like Thee"

### **7:14pm: Moderator & Devotions (Bobby Miller, Salem Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

*Stand for prayer.*

The area churches welcome you. Thank for dropping other engagements and taking the time to be here with us for worship, learning, reflection, and fellowship. We look forward to hosting you here and want to do all we can to make it a time of refreshment for all. Relax, enjoy this time. If any needs are not met, make yourself known at the information and lodging desk. We will be giving announcements at the end of the service. You should have received a paper of the layout of this facility, which you will be referring to for the meeting. Concerning the organization of the meeting, we in Holmes county felt neighboring churches rarely participate in these meetings, so we here can host the meeting but asked seven surrounding churches to each give one person as a representative for a planning committee. They have helped us put this program together. The committee is named on the back of your program [they are named]. They will moderate most sessions, and since I was appointed to be the coordinator from Holmes County, I was asked to share this evening. Appreciation is given for the committee. The verse for our meeting is Isaiah 62:1. I will be reading from Isaiah 60:1 on. [Reads verses throughout the next two chapters, concluding with the theme verse.] These verses describe the Church's future glory, the ministry of Jesus Christ. Because of God's glory, we can shine with brightness. We have been called to reflect Him who is perfectly righteous and holy. "When the world looks at me, do they see Jesus?" When I look at the pictures in the program, they all have a reflection. When you look, were you thinking about the water? I was looking at the picture in the water. Isaiah is asking us to shine God's brightness, be His medium to reflect the glory of Christ, and as people look at us,

they should be drawn to the reflection of Christ, not the medium. Are we earnest about a cause greater than ourselves? Will we spend and be spent for Zion's sake, the Church's sake, the Kingdom's sake? Are we zealous of pursuing a reflection of Christ? We like clear, not blurred, images. Isaiah felt a restlessness; he could not rest, be quiet. His restlessness was not discontentment with the restrictions of living for God, but for a deep yearning to see the image of God reflected in His people. Our desire as a committee is that Christ's image reflects off us into the communities around us. To reach our goal of reflecting Christ, the sermon topics were selected. Only through His continuing work of the Spirit of God in our lives, and His transforming work can change us from glory to glory. Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. May we take one more step toward being a crystal clear image of Christ--individually and as churches.

*Stand for prayer.*

**7:32pm: Beholding God's Glory (Merle Beachy, Faith Mission Fellowship, VA)**

A black preacher from Texas came to the White House, feeling it an honor to be there. He observed there was more dignity per square inch than anywhere in the world. That's how I feel this evening. There's more dignity here than anywhere in the world right now. I say that honestly. It's a privilege to speak. But I'm aware that within America there is a moral decay destroying this nation, and it's not politics that's going to change that, not Washington, DC, or the branches of government; I believe it's men and women like these here that are present, working at the grass roots level working in local communities within churches. That's where the transformation will take place, if it happens. This group has been called to present to every man perfect in Christ. We are to lead God's people, demonstrating the truth of the Word of God, and if those truths are not being represented, then we must lead our people to repentance. There is one hope for this nation, if those truths are brought back. Two things we need to watch for major threats. One is our gifts, we can depend on them too much... Second, our experience, when we think we have done it a number of times, it's easy that we think we have the recipe for what works, and forget it's not our gift or experience that will bring people to repentance. One of the big issues is to look and behold God's glory. I think of an example in Alaska. There were missionaries there having VBS and they were flying children out to an island and the water around was rough. These men were experienced pilots. One made three successful trips, having made three flights, but on his fourth flight he pulled three children into the cockpit, looked at the gas gauge: it showed full. But, he did not do the basics. He did not do what every pilot is trained to do. Not just looked at the gas gauge, but did not look down into the tank and see what is there. He took off, but he was flying out across, thinking everything was okay, but his plane began to sputter and go down. He realized what had happened. He picked up his mike. The tape on his airplane recorded the words: "I thought I knew what I was doing." He left that mike on as he turned to the children; he told them: "I'm sorry. You trusted me. You need to put your sleeping bags in front of you. We are going to hit the water." The tapes came to an end as you could hear the ripping as the plane hit the water. Many people in our churches are trusting us, to pilot them safely, showing them the way. Unless we realize we must always get a fresh look at the glory of God or we will fail at our efforts.

Open to Isaiah 9. We'll call Him--Jesus. He will save us from our sins. When our heart is full of joy, we'll call Him wonderful. When you have almost lost your way, you'll call him Counselor. When you're all alone, you'll call Him Emmanuel, God with us. We have these words here in

verse six [read verses]. What a blessing to be able to look back and realize the Son of God is answering to this work, this prophecy, the Son of God is here, is all of these things and more. There is only one book God has authored. I want to ask a question: if there is only one book He has authored, is any other book more important. [No.] And yet, I will tell you now, since September of 2011 when we hit U.S. soil, and I began looking for a job, going to work, trying to put in 40 hour weeks and pay those bills, keep up with that, I'll tell you I am having a tough time spending time in the Book. 66 books are there for our reading, consistent with one another, and the books, because of how they were spread out, they are evidence in themselves of the authenticity of the Word of God. [Quotes several Old Testament prophecies about Christ.] Inspired men wrote, and we do ourselves a favor to get in the Book. It holds the key to the prosperity of the nation, to behold the glory of God. Henry Ford makes two observations, at the Detroit museum that gave two observations by him. How can people be educated and not know the Bible? He believed the Bible was central to the right working of a nation. Even in business principles. His second observation, you can only wear one pair of pants at a time, no matter how many you have. That's interesting. In a day we are enamored with things, we can still only wear one pair at a time. That's interesting coming from Henry Ford. The first is where we are today. We need missionaries in the U.S. There are people today who do not know what you are talking about. There are those being led astray by those called shepherds. Hopefully not from our own congregations. We're seeing the standard God has for His people, but more importantly for me. When we get talking about me, we're not as confident as when talking about others. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 [Reads verses.] When we behold the glory of God and allow it into our lives, we are changed into that likeness. I will be very fond of admitting that I have a lovely wife. Every time when I get up to preach, often prior while sitting in the top, I'm scouring the crowd, looking for that face. As time has gone, it has been my desire to become more like her gentle person. God would like to do the same thing. When we were leaving Kenya and it was time to say goodbye, one of the senior national pastors said, "We will always remember your wife. She's quiet, but faithfully doing what needs doing." If there's something, she comes and quietly says a word. (She didn't know I was going to say that.) We need to be acquainted, familiar with what God is like to reflect Him. That's what God wants of us, and it's the way we want to go. In the Old Testament, the law was given, but there wasn't an open to all; they had to wait until it was read to them from the Scriptures. But the Bible says we are able to look into the Word of God, see the glory of God and are changed into His likeness. Praise the Lord. What will the glory of God do to us?

Turn to James 1. "Lay aside all...of person he was." [Reads verses.] It's important we see Christ in the Word of God, how God would like us to change us into His likeness. We've taken a glance at the Word then go to work, we forget what we read, and come back home and do not remember at all. James 2:25 [Reads verses.] Every one of us has two words in our vocabulary for this week: either "amen" or "ouch." I just know that before these meetings are up, and I've already had to say "ouch" while studying for this evening. I have not reached what I want. As we are transformed into the image of God, how much we'll have to hear those words.

Exodus 13, the glory of God in the impossible. Every one of us has come to straits in our life, and we wonder what the next thing God wants us to do. All of us in our ministry have come to a place where we wonder, God, why did you lead me to this spot. Why have I been called to do this work? I cannot carry it. There's no way out. You feel like throwing in the towel and getting

out. One day I was sitting with a local brother in Kenya. He was having Bible studies in the community and said, "The other night I was thinking how hard it is to lead these people. I felt like getting up and running, telling no one where I'm going." Exodus 13, ridiculous situation, you can say. None of us have been in this situation, 600,000 people hoping to leave Egypt; they're following God's leading in the cloud; they're going down that way; and what do they find? They are up against the sea. A mountain on either side and in front of one mountain was a military outpost guarding for invaders and a pagan temple on the other side guarded heavily. [Reads from verse three on.] Can you imagine the glee when Pharaoh realized that the children of Israel were boxed in on three sides? There was no place, but to God. Leaders, have you ever felt that way? Blocked in, can't go left, right, ahead, and the back is blocked. What happened? People will say, "Moses, why did you bring us out here? Were there no graves in Egypt?" Moses realized a cloud had been there that they followed, and that though there was no recourse, they were in the right place. If you felt God's call on your life, have followed God's cloud, God will take you through. There were no boats; they were not going to cross on your own strength. Pharaoh just came in and camped. But God stepped in. The cloud goes to the other side. Moses was told to move forward. Forward? Put your rod out. God brings an east wind and less than overnight there was a dry path. Walls of water on the left and right, they walked right through. Think of the arrogance of what happened next, that Pharaoh forgot what happened in Egypt. He walked right through it, took his whole army, and when he did, their wheels came off--they popped off. They realized, God is fighting for Israel--let's get out of here!--but it was too late, the water washed back in. It was a protection for God's people and destruction for those who were against His purpose. Keep your eye on God, He put us here for such a time as that. If God will use you, in times when things seem impossible, and you give yourself to Him---The glory of God: if we could just see that. Moses told the people to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Don't look at me, look at the God who put us here.

Turn to Psalm 19. This one you may not have expected to come up this evening, but I have to bring it in. The glory of God in creation. I love creation, I am an observer of nature. There's a reason I believe we should never forget what God would like to tell us through creation. There are three witnesses to the authenticity of the Word. One is Old Testament versus new. The second is creation. This nation has lost its moorings, denying the God of Creation... There is no speech, no language where that voice is not heard. When you begin to speak to anyone on the street about the laws of physical laws, there is something there that strikes a chord. We know that no matter who throws the ball, it stops. But the ball we call earth, that we walk on, is not stopping. It keeps right on going. The sun is rising somewhere 24 hours a day. If you would be following it around for 24 hours, you could watch it rise for 24 hours. Why? There's something that keeps it going. The witness of creation speaks volumes and they cannot be denied. There has to be something bigger than man. Every 24 hours, there is a witness that will not be put to silence. Stop, and allow it to minister to your hearts. I just want it to be a tremendous blessing; no matter what the schedule, catch your breath, look at creation, no matter how small, and allow God to speak to you of His faithfulness through that part of creation. Just stop, pause, let that aspect of the glory of God minister to your heart. When the disciples were on the boat, they awoke Jesus. Jesus gets up and calms the sea. The disciples said, what man is this that even the waves and winds obey him? God is shouting to us through storms, floods, earthquakes. What is God doing? If man will not listen to the still voice of creation, He has to bring it in a way that cannot be denied. Not just in this nation, but the world.

The glory of God is holy. Turn to Isaiah 6. [Reads verses.] Friends, when Isaiah saw the King and saw the holiness of God, he said “Woe is me.” Such will be the response of the individual when they see God. When we see the glory of God, and God allows us to see more of Him, we will ever respond, “Woe is me, for I am undone.” When we come to that place we can then say, “Here am I, send me.” As Isaiah sensed the work of God, he saw what He is doing. A coal on his lips cleansed them, and Isaiah said, “Here am I, send me.” Moses asked God to see His glory... We cannot comprehend the full image of God, though we can see parts of His beauty.

The glory of God through the submitted servant. Job: we have the submitted servant. As Job is living out his life, everything was being taken away from him. His wife said, curse God and die. Job later says this—“Shall we not receive good at the hand of God and also evil. When God answers a prayer and things are going well, I can see the goodness of God, but Job had the vision of the sovereignty of God that we need. We are like checkers in the hand of God; we are disposable. If the purposes of God are disposable at the expense of us, God is still good. Stephen had that vision in Acts as the stones were flying. What did Stephen say? “Lay not this sin to their charge” and as he looked up, he saw the glory of God. His life was disposable for the purpose of God. What a difference that will make when things don’t go the way I would like it to be. When everything you planned goes to pieces in your hands, all life seems against you. Can we not receive bad at the hands of God even as we receive good. We have come to comprehend a bit more the sovereignty of God. The three Hebrew children said to the king before being thrown in, Daniel 3:16-17 [reads verse]. God is able to deliver us. They said something more, “He will deliver us out of your hand.” They threw those three men in, and Nebuchadnezzar in astonishment said, “Didn’t we throw three in? But there are four in there: the fourth like the Son of God.” How did he recognize Him? The three children referred to Him. We will stay faithful to our God, not worship your gods. Nebuchadnezzar when Daniel was put in the lion’s den said God would be able to take care of him. How did he know? Daniel was faithful to God, God’s glory came through His submitted servant.

As we submit ourselves to God, God can do glorious things, the glory of God at the Cross. In Luke 23: Do thou not fear God? He came to the place where he feared God. Seeing that we are in this same condemnation, and we justly... As he saw and feared God, he realized the wages of sin is death. Tonight, you and I must keep what Christ did at the cross every day. What a terrible sight! At the same time, what a wondrous sight. It is the most magnificent manifestation of love ever existent in the history of the world. The love of God: beholding the glory of God--you and I will never behold the glory of God until we see it there. Have the purposes of man been accomplished? If the redemption of man was lost in bloodshed..., but He gave His life. When Jesus said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit,” He said it in a loud voice. Those soldiers there knew it to be the call of the conqueror, not one out of breath. When He said that, He quit pushing and bowed His head and gave His life. When they came to break the legs of the right and left, Jesus was gone; the work was finished. Jesus’ life was not taken, it was given. That’s the glory of God. The glory of God in the resurrection in Matthew 28: the women wondered who was going to roll away the stone. The tomb was empty. This day the Jews worked with a façade of a story. It would be easy to squelch the rumor if they could just bring the evidence of the body. He’s not here, He’s risen. You see the glory of God--we come with an open face--we do not have to be afraid of God. Let me read, “My King.” [Reads text. Jesus is king of

many things, is many things to many people, and is almighty.]

**8:28pm: Comments and Dismissal (Bobby Miller)**

Jesus came as the express image of God as we heard here at the end. By way of testimony: There was a time in my life that I faced severe doubt about all I had been taught: the existence of God and validity of Scriptures was all up for doubt. But the glory of God in creation kept me. I could not get past someone being in control. The glory of God in the Word, creation, in times impossibleness, at the cross, in the resurrection, in His Son Jesus. We like to talk about taking time, but few of us do it: stand still, take time, to see.

Several announcements:

- This facility is rented, so let's respect it and keep it in good condition.
- Do not bring any beverages in here except water. Coffee and other drinks will be available on breaks. If you bring your coffee into carpeted areas, use lids.
- Vacate the building by 10pm; it will be open again at 7:30am.
- Consider the extra time to get to this facility since it is outside of the main Holmes County area. Please be on time.
- Refer to your map of this facility's layout for these meetings.
- Tomorrow and Thursday, childcare will be provided, though parents are responsible during meals.
- Information/lodging is just outside the entrance; if you do not have lodging, head out there and find a place. Plenty of beds!
- If anything should be announced, bring it to the information/lodging desk.
- Did you register? Do you have a name tag? Is your personal information in the directory up to date? If not, stop at the registration tables.
- For all who have part in the meeting, meet 15 minutes before your time period in room 105.
- On the program map, if some are staying in the Walnut Creek/Berlin area, 77 does change to another route (363).
- If you are interested in Jonathan Raber's men's ensemble, practice will be held at 5:45pm in room 117.
- Behalt (Amish-Mennonite Heritage Center) is offering free passes to all ministers and wives. Passes are available at Cory Anderson's display.

**8:40pm: Song / Prayer (Joel Gingerich / Bobby Miller)**

1. "The Love of God" (one verse from memory, standing)

*Stand to pray.*

## **Wednesday, April 03, 2013**

**9:02am: Singing (Joel Gingerich, Christian Fellowship Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

1. "Come We that Love the Lord" (from memory, one verse)

2. "All Creatures of our God and King"
3. "What can Wash Away my Sin?"

**9:09am: Devotions (Kenny Kuhns, Zion Christian Fellowship, OH)**

This upcoming topic is not one of the most beautiful ones. There's a difference between who we are and who God is. We can raise who we are or God in our minds: higher or lower, but we cannot do that in reality. Our theme this weekend is that we would reflect Him. For us to do that, change needs to come to our hearts. If tonight when John D. Martin speaks on repentance--if after he finishes and has an altar call and half of us come up here, what are we repenting of? I think if you would know that for yourself. You would have done that this morning already. Turn to Luke 17:34. [Reads verses.] How did they choose which will be taken and which left? Was the difference sin, or praying the sinner's prayer, or one living a holy life and the other not? Our view of salvation could separate us of our awareness of our need to repent and be transformed. Our view of our self could hinder that. Think of the thief on the cross. He was taken; the other left. Was there one without sin? No. What was the difference? Prayed the sinner's prayer, leading a holy life? The text says the one railed at Jesus, saying, if you are Christ, save yourself and us too. That could be a sinner's prayer. The other said, we are getting what we deserve. Would you remember me when you come into your Kingdom? Jesus said, today you will be with me in Paradise. We are all sinners--all--but does the view of who we are: does that separate us? We've attained some level of acceptance in our churches, do we not change? We have our behavior down good, but does that mean we do not need to repent? A story that affected our selection of the topics and themes was that one of our committee members was on the way to the committee meeting and listened to the repentance story of someone. That man was talented, disciplined, lived a godly life, a very godly, influential man. As he was going through life, people tried to help him. Finally his church does not want to hear him; his children are not turning out well; his wife leaves him. He spent a week with a counselor, laying out what he needs to repent of. He said, I accept intellectually what you have to say, but I cannot see it. So nothing really changed. Then things got worse: he got sick. Something happened then; the veil went off his face. He saw what everyone was trying to tell him. He repented. He lay in his hospital bed, dying; reaching out to everyone he hurt and restored his relationship with his wife and family. I remember visiting my son in Kenya for three weeks, and being in a mud hut Sunday evening teaching a Bible class. I asked the young people, what is God like? They looked at each other and did not know. If we are going to reflect Him, we have to know what He is like. The best they could come up with is that He is like Ivan Beachy. You know, for many people, you're reflecting God. It's important to know who He is, and we have to know what sin is to become more like Him. I remember being at Faith Mission Home as a visitor and Merle Beachy preached, "If you enjoy your sin, you are in trouble." I thought, "I'm in trouble." I got up after the service and said I found myself enjoying my sin, and I'm in trouble. The verse that preceded this is in Luke 17, "Whoever shall seek to save his life..." That day, I felt like it was the truth. When the scales come off our eyes and see where we have sinned, the opportunity to repent is a privilege--not bad news, good news. We want to know what sin is, not repent of things people say we should, but those things that make us the most unlike God.

*Remain seated for prayer.*

**9:21am: The Doctrine of Sin (John U. Glick, Mine Road Amish-Mennonite, PA)**

The Bible is clear of what sin is, and provision is made for it to be taken care of. Merle said last night, two words are in your mind. One is *Amen* and the other *Ouch*. You may express *ouch* verbally if you care to, when we look into this subject and realize it is *ouch*. Most particularly when we look at the greatness and glory of God and try to compare ourselves to the exceeding greatness and glory of God, we realize there is something in us--a problem that causes us to say "*ouch*." This morning a third word might possibly be *Whoops!* What is sin? God determines that. Several verses say that if you know good and do it not, it is sin. Sin is everything that is in contrast to God's greatness and holiness. Anything that is separate and outside the realm of His glory, holiness or character--that is sin. What is His holy character? Everything that is true of God. We reach out to try to comprehend the greatness of God—we find ourselves coming a little short of Who He is, but it is of prime importance that we have a right concept of Who He is. Let's review the Creation, placing ourselves in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had that intimate relationship. Thinking of Who God is--He is self-existent. Isaiah enlarges who He is so that the people can repent of their sin. Isaiah 43:10, "You are my witnesses..." God is self-existent: And for me to grasp that--that He always was—somehow, I find myself coming short of comprehending that. He always was. He does not really need any of us. He does not need us to fulfill His purposes, He is complete in Himself. [Reads text about all God is.] He will destroy all wickedness in the lake of fire. The Bible says not only what it is, but who is going to be there: the beast, false prophet, and the devil, but it does not stop there: all those whose name is not in the book of life. Try to comprehend all of God's glory and holiness. In Exodus 15:11 [reads verse.], we begin to get the concept of the greatness of God. We also begin to realize that there's a problem, even though man was created in the image of God--in His likeness. Isaiah 40 raises this question: Who am I going to compare God to? After reaching out, he asks what he can compare Him to, saying the nations are like small dust. Insignificant. Man was created in Him image. It establishes relationships. Understanding likeness to be some similarity of character. He loved mankind. He can be compassionate, benevolent--God created man with such character qualities. Man was put in the garden as a creature of choice. The tempter then came. God created Adam and Eve in spirit, soul, and body. The tempter, in Genesis 3, is brief but far reaching. The tempter in verse 5 said, [reads verse.] A question: Did the tempter tempt the body, the soul, or the spirit? He tempted them to reason and reasoning is in the mind. The mind is part of our soul. The temptation was to reason, and they did. When they employed reason, they disobeyed and transgressed. Romans 5:2 mentions *transgression* and they lost the intimate relationship, separated from God's presence. What died when they ate thereof? Their body did not die. The temptation was in the soul (and in place of obedient faith, reasoning and disobeying) they lost the spirit relationship with God. They lost that sonship. In the Old Testament, we have a few times where God is addressed as *Father* and *Creator*, but not as Father/Child relationship. The seed of sin grew in depth. In Romans 7, we read that the seed of sin is in our flesh. They sought to hide from God when they heard His voice. In Genesis 5 when Adam was 130 years old, he had a son called Seth. He begat the son in his likeness and image. It was now in the image of fallen Adam and not the perfection of God. There's a problem now. Man is disoriented. God hates sin and He will not tolerate it, though He is loving, compassionate, and forgiving. But because of His exceeding Holy character, He must execute wrath upon sin. We must give it the same terms as God does. Some of the terms we use in relation to sin, do not measure up—like shortcomings--but God calls it iniquity or transgression. Man in his condition today is fallen; he is still capable but never all-knowing. He retains love, but not perfect love like God's. He can choose, but is subject to wrong. He can forgive, but not absolve. He can make promises, but we're subject to



failure. There's something wrong; there's a problem. To leave a clean moral life through self-will, but we are subject to temptation. It's true of the unredeemed, but is it true of us as well? We're subject to it.

When Adam and Eve were tempted by reason, it was in the mind. One could understand the warfare that was raging in Adam and Eve's mind (to think it through); that warfare continues in our minds today. Even though we have renewed minds--unless you're different than what I am, and don't find that battle, that struggle? Ah, yes, we're living in victory, have the glory of the cross, been transformed, yet there's still that thing in each of us whether you like it or not--and whether it causes you to hide your face from God. At times we feel like running away from it. I believe that our enemy uses that tactic, that approach, probably as forcefully as he did to Adam and Eve--getting the mind to reason rather than yield to faith in God. Capture a man's thoughts, and you control him. If in the temptation, they did not yield to reason, Satan could not capture them. But he did, and the battle continued. Their minds reasoned that the fruit of the forbidden tree looked harmless. Imagine that! The forbidden fruit may have looked similar to the other fruit, looked harmless, perhaps even helpful in their needs. Can we make application in our time? James 1 says, "Every man is tempted..." (Can't blame it on someone else!) drawn away and enticed. When lust conceived, it births sin. Sin is universal. We are told that adequately in Scripture, especially in Romans. Romans is written to Christians; those who are believers. Interesting enough, the word *sin* is in the book of Romans 55 times. It's mostly (except seven times in the noun form) in the verb form. In chapter three, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It's making reference to all regardless of our ethnic background or where we identify/belong with. Chapter three: those verses leading up to 23 are not a pleasant descriptions of what is relative to all. Sin is a ruling power. You go to Romans 5:21, it says sin has reigned unto death. It affects our thinking. In Romans 1:19-21 [reads verses.] That's sin, that seed of sin. It pervades our members. In Romans 6, it is there. *Sin* is read the most often in Romans six, yet we look at this chapter as a victory chapter. We have something we are working with. Verse 14 says, I am carnal. Romans 7:14, and following verses, are present tense. Sin abounds. Romans 5:20, it abounds. Chapter four goes through the lengthy exhortation how we are justified by faith, not of works, lest we boast. In chapter five, because we are justified, we have access by faith to grace. We glory in tribulations. Even Adam and Eve reasoned it would be better to take of that fruit. They lost their relationship with God. In our time it is urgent to exercise obedient faith; and yes, God put reason in our minds, but when that takes precedence, we are in for the same fall of Adam and Eve. Romans 5:8-12 says God gave us His love, and then tells what really happened. It is the comparison of being in Adam versus being in Christ. In chapter six, it tells about being the old man, of being in Adam. It is the same thing when he says, "the old man." In chapter five, this is what happened in Adam, but this much more in Christ. When we do the comparison and retain the Adamic man, then we miss justification by faith. Let's look in chapter five: it says, by one man sin entered the world. All have sinned, and death reigned. [Reads Romans 14-21.] It sounds like a defeat, but it is the victory that is highlighted. We have four aspects of sin,: three results (judgment, condemnation, death). Spiritual death for Adam and Eve and their descendents and physical death as well. Unless we have that blessed opportunity: that in these bodies we can still await redemption.

Iniquities--what are iniquities and transgressions? *Iniquity* is limited obedience to the known Word of God. I set my limitations of obedience. We may draw a vertical line and God's holiness

is on that line. I come as far as I think is okay and limit my obedience. When I say I'll come so close, but I think I'll be alright (even minor disobedience) that's iniquity. Iniquities and transgressions are often in the same context in the Bible. Saul died for his transgressions. Christ died for our iniquities and transgressions. God says in the Ten Commandments that He will visit the iniquities upon the third and fourth generation of those that hate Me. How can that be taken care of, changed? Eli had one in his family he did not restrain. God told Eli he will visit that iniquity, paying for it dearly. Psalm 78: an interesting Scripture showing how God will visit iniquity to third and fourth generations, yet here this can be changed [Reads verses]. The point is-- to turn to the Word of God and make it known. Self-righteousness is an obstacle to having the righteousness with God that is acceptable. Romans highlights that self-righteousness, particularly directed to the Jewish people. Chapter 10:3, 14:23 [reads verses]. We are told in Romans 3:5 [reads verses], and chapter six yielding is emphasized. That's what overcomes the problem of sin--not letting that in us have dominion, not reasoning when that forbidden thing is offered, instead of that obedient faith to what God's word tells us. The Pharisee and the publican: the Pharisee was the one who was self-righteous and despised others. We must take heed and not be overcome with this. James 4:17 [reads verse.] Romans 1:21 [reads verse.] Let us ask ourselves: Are we glorifying Him as God, lifting Him as high, in the congregations God has asked us to minister to? Is He being seen? Moses and Aaron when told to speak to the rock, Moses took the rod of God and he struck the rock--and what happened? Yeah, the people's needs were supplied! But it cost Moses and Aaron their right to the land of Canaan. What happened? They were not fully obedient. Are we lifting God high as we minister? As we move among the people and interact is our blessed Lord Jesus being lifted up? What are they seeing in us that make people think about God? Our relationship as we walk with the Lord. We see the glory of God as we reflect His image, even though we have that seed of sin. The glory of God is reflected in God, as we nurture and enhance our concept of who God is. A quotation from A.W. Tozer [reads text, that our idea of God should correspond to who God is, our creeds are of little consequence]. We are not able to fully comprehend the totality of God's being. Be diligent to expand our concept of God, His glory and holiness.

In conclusion: 1. Our concept of God and what it does, 2. failure on our part to give Him His rightful place in our lives, and in the life of the congregations--these may be a cause of murmurings and discontentment among us. Let me take it an inch further--possibly, even cause divisions, the failure to have the concept of God nurtured in our minds and in the life of the congregation. Sin's final result is eternal death. Reading, in conclusion, from 1 Corinthians 15--that last enemy to be destroyed is death. Sin causes death. Eternal death is for those who do not come by faith and accepting the righteousness in Christ Jesus. Perhaps we are tempted by our background, that self-righteousness. If that's all we have when we face judgment... Let me conclude here, behold, I show you a mystery, that we shall not all sleep... [reads verses.]

10:10am: **Singing (Joel Gingerich)**

1. "Just suppose God searched through Heaven" (from memory, two verses)

10:10am: **Announcements (Kenny Kuhns)**

We asked the speakers to dig deep into the Word of God and speak in a fresh way; we just witnessed that. We sometimes look out into the world and see how bad it is, but the world knows what sin and righteousness is.

Announcements:

- Coffee and water are available. Don't bring food or beverage into the sanctuary, except water, and even in carpeted areas use lids.
- Please refer to your map of this facility's layout to find meetings and all that.
- Child care is available, except during meals.
- If you have announcements, please take them to the information desk.
- Please be polite and follow the usher's instructions. We could start repenting there.
- Of the workshops, men have numbers on their name tags that correspond with a room number on the map. After break, go straight to your workshops. Leaders, after dismissal, go to room 105 and meet there for instructions.
- The newly ordained and wives should sit in the front in the afternoon. This includes anyone who has not been here and has a new assignment (such as bishop).
- CBS board and the IT committee will meet over lunch in room 109.
- Workshops will break at 11:45; go right from there to lunch.

*Stand for prayer.*

10:20am: **Break & Workshops**

11:45pm: **Dismissal for lunch**

**LUNCH BREAK**

1:31pm: **Songs (Joel Gingerich)**

1. "This is the day the Lord has made" (from memory, one verse)
2. "All hail the power of Jesus' name"

1:35pm: **Moderator (Elmer Yoder, Pleasant View Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

Our next topic concerns the doctrine of salvation: We notice our theme verse, where it says [reads verse]. The Gospel of Christ--Paul said--he's not ashamed of. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Therein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith. I trust David will keep us awake.

*Remain seated for prayer*

1:39pm: **The Doctrine of Salvation (David Yoder, Center Amish-Mennonite, KS)**

You will be disappointed if you expect to hear all about salvation, but hopefully it can have that idea. To you, I am going to read the list of ideas the committee sent out. What is the biggest thing we need to be saved from? Self. Salvation is the initial step to... [other comments.] Salvation is becoming alive to Christ. I consider it a privilege to share with you, but I am also humbled. I feel safe addressing this subject with you brothers today. With some of the things we struggle with in our constituency, some of the tensions, I've been asking myself: Could it be we are especially weak on our understanding of salvation and grace? Are there some gaps there? We have either

through our own misinterpretation through what we have inherited or been exposed to, perhaps? On the doctrine of salvation, nearly everyone on this planet has got a doctrine of salvation. It won't match yours and mine. Everyone who has any sense of a life hereafter, will be thinking about how to get there safely. If you have the audacity of Steven Hawkins, who was asked if he is faced with reality of an eternal God, he said, "I will ask why you hid Yourself so well." It sounds like an ignorant response from an educated man. He won't be asking God any questions, but bowing his knee, hearing. Our view of salvation is shaped by our understanding of who God is, what He expects of us, how we see us coming to Him, what we believe ourselves to be, and what happened at the fall of man. Where is fallen man headed? More things would factor in, but those are some key places to begin from. I just want to admit that I always feel responsible when I take the Word of God and expound from it--what God shows us in His Word. We are placing ourselves in a vulnerable position, trying to understand the ways we apply them. A group of men like this, who are not afraid to talk if questions should arise. What is the scope of salvation? Where does it start and end? This doctrine highlights the difference between Christianity and other religions. Most people on this planet have some doctrine or idea: the way they get safely to the other side. Flawed in many cases--but they have their ideas. The notable difference I see is that we have a God with whom we have a relationship. We seek to please, which is vastly different from a God we are scared of or trying to please. When a Muslim once asked a Christian why it's not as good, the Christian said it is, if you do not need a Savior, but I needed a Savior. A believer invited a Jehovah's Witness inside and said that you're not going to change my mind and I, not yours, but I want to ask a question: Supposed I lived a life of sin and then I was soon going to die. What kind of hope can you offer me? The man said, absolutely none. We have something we can offer to the person who is dying and has lived a life of sin. It is the same as we can offer salvation to that tender soul that comes seeking the grace of God.

We debate about what people can and cannot do, as long as the church exists. At least in the last 400-500 years, the debate has intensified around whether can we lose our salvation once we are saved. For now, I would like to take you to a story in the Scriptures. In John 3: the story of Nicodemus coming to Jesus. Jesus broached the subject about how to be saved. In verse three [reads verses through 21]. Jesus, here, opens the discussion after Nicodemus presented himself. He was a seeker curious about what was going on with this man. Obviously he had a different school of thought, but he was sincere. Jesus in verse three states that except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. What does it mean to be born again? In the early 1970s, *born again* became a buzz word to describe a certain type of Christianity. It's a Biblical term, but it was a movement started largely by Chuck Colson bearing that title. Even today, if you ask the average Christian if they are born again, he will say yes. But what does this mean? Nicodemus tried to fit this into his framework: how can a man be born a second time from the womb? It was Nicodemus's way of trying to make sense out of what Jesus was saying. I'd like to move down to verse six, where Jesus moves the discussion into the realm of the spiritual. What is born of flesh is flesh, of spirit, spirit. He was talking about something spiritual when he said you must be born again. Then he used an example with wind [reads verse]. Jesus is saying that this is the way that it is for the believer. Something happens, you can see the obedience, but you cannot really describe it. If Jesus did not take it upon himself to describe it, it probably is a chore for us to do it. It's okay if we try to understand it in terms we can understand. If I were to ask you to relate to me your experience of the new birth, I'm sure the stories would all be different. One thing I suspect would be mutual, and that would be the lifting of the burden and the sense of being free.

For me, the birds seem clear and the sun brighter, it seemed to me that life had changed. I can't describe how it was. I had an experience later in life that seemed a little the same way, when I laid down some bitterness I was carrying. It's not that we can't experience something similar, but the new birth occurs when we lay ourselves down on the altar and God takes over. I just finished preaching through the Sermon on the Mount. One of the things that became special was Matthew 5:3. After I began interpreting the Sermon on the Mount through that verse, it makes sense to me in ways it did not before. [Reads verse]. That best describes the attitude we have to have in order to receive the new birth--a poverty of spirit. I used to look at the Beatitudes as a recipe: do this, get this. The poverty of spirit is different, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The rest give consequential blessings. It's in the future: do this, inherit this. But it's not that way when it speaks about "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That's the quality that is absolutely essential for us to receive the new birth; that's where salvation begins--a poverty of spirit. We bring to Him our sin, and He cleanses us, and He makes us new creatures. Would to God that all of our carnal desires would evaporate when that happens. Somehow we still have to deal with our carnality, but it's at a different level. That's part of what it means to be born again; we don't understand how it works, but we see the effects in ourselves. I think to understand what Jesus is trying to do with Nicodemus, we must understand the context. Up until now, the spiritual teachings of the Israelites amounted to an instruction of law. There was grace sprinkled throughout, but they were educated in the law using the head. Three ways we receive instruction: our heads, our works, and our hearts. Nicodemus had been also instructed on how to live; he knew how to live. He knew how to think about God, but what drove him to ask Jesus those questions, whatever they were? Nicodemus had been taught, he knew the words, the law, and had come to an understanding, but he wanted to know something else. Jesus now opened another question on the heart level. That is what's unique about salvation when Jesus came... moving salvation to the heart. Up until that time, there was nothing to do with guilt. When we train children, we teach them what to do and what not to do. Thank God that at some point the teaching of their hands moves to their head, and they begin to realize that this is something you do at this time but not that time. At some point later, they begin to feel guilty for having done it. That's when it moves to their heart. That's what Jesus was saying when speaking to Nicodemus, with the wind: you feel the effect but do not know where it is coming from. That is the essence of what the new birth is about. Something has changed; something is different. Yes, we deal with carnality, for we are carnal beings. It is no longer an effort to do good, but is an effort to do what is in us, the nature of Christ.

It seems to me that here is one of the things we ought to learn from Jesus: how this was staged to bring Nicodemus to the kingdom through his heart. The model for us to follow, when we go to help a brother that is erring. Can we see some of his externals as symptomatic rather than foundational? I'm appealing that when we tried to move a young man from spiritual immaturity to maturity that we consider his actions to be symptomatic. I remember one time when I went to visit with a young man; I came away thinking that "unless I have something of substance next time, I won't go." Substance: that is what lies inside. I want to look at this a bit later. In 14 Jesus introduces the fact that it is no longer about just acting right, but that the Son of Man must be lifted up. After the Israelites were bitten, anyone who looked up at the brazen serpent was healed. Now, did they have faith in the serpent? Moses' word? I'm not sure, but they had enough faith to, at least, look at it. Jesus is trying to move Nicodemus from educating your head and hands to your heart. Then He tells the story about Himself: For God so loved the world... He sent not His

son into the world that... This had to be good news to a man like Nicodemus. Jesus is not bringing further condemnation, but light. He did not come with more laws and ways to act right. It's been good news ever since. For many years I would not have seen this in 3:16, I thought Jesus loved us. But it was God. Jesus shared this love, but for God to give Him was a gift only God can give. But He did it. He sent Him to save us.

Jesus, here, elevates the role of believing to a new level. There was a level of belief in the Old Testament. Something will happen in a man's heart that there will be a conversion experience. When we talk about salvation, Jesus ends up in verse 21 [reads verse]. As humans, we are asked how we act, live, and demonstrate the power of God in our life. Jesus, here, makes the point that our deeds are made manifest as they are wrought in God. That is at the end of the discussion about the heart. If we were to take only the words of John three, we may be left guessing as to what that all includes. What does salvation consist of, look like? Are we primarily saved from eternal punishment or to something? Here, I fear, sometimes, we have preached an unbalanced gospel. It means what it says: that we were saved from eternal damnation, but also unto something. We asked the question: What's the balance between faith and works? That may be the wrong question to ask. If we look at *balance*, we are looking at competing forces to equalize. That is not the role of faith and works. We are talking about a *blend* rather than a *balance*. We have a hard time figuring out God is both wrath and love. The truth is that it is not hard for God. He would entreat us that our faith propels our works and that works bring evidence of our faith. How do we view John three as opposed to Matthew 25? The Judgment Day: when you have the sheep and the goats. If you just take that passage, we will be judged by how well we have treated the least of these. That's part of it, but only one part. Of necessity, we take Scripture as a whole. In both passages we take it as being part and parcel of salvation. I continue to believe that unless we demonstrate by our actions, the way we live, and unless we demonstrate our faith, I question whether or not we have been saved. Here's where it is easy to go to one of these texts. God calls us to a life where our heart is changed; things become new; the old is passed away, and all things are new.

I'd like to go to Ephesians 2:4-10. [Reads verses.]: it's not a matter of us doing the good works that saves us, but that these things (the renovation of our heart) have spawned a new life. That's what the new birth is about. We have been created unto good works. We often talk about grace/works; would it be correct to say grace is God's part and faith is man's? We need to reach in faith to receive what He sends to us. That's God offering salvation to us, but we must receive it. In the *Mennonite Weekly [World] Review*, something impressed me, how it said that the gift of salvation has been given to the whole universe, but the problem is not everyone is willing to receive it. Unless you receive a gift, it has no value. That's how I see salvation.

Back to the question: What are we saved from or to? There's no question that we are both saved from punishment, self, ruination, and saved unto good works, life and life eternal. One illustration: Can a drowning man be saved to something? A boat? a life vest? But the next part is, is he saved until he gets to shore? That is, in some ways, what we see in salvation. I mentioned earlier that there is much debate in our circles: Is salvation irrevocable? I would say this: I don't have a problem with the security of believers, but I do the security of unbelievers. When we believe, we are secure; we can have that assurance, but when we quit believing or live a life that interrupts our ability to believe, we lose our salvation. I cannot tell you when that point is. That's

why I am willing to let Him judge, err on the safe side of--well, let me say-- I refuse to judge people's position before God. It is His responsibility. Someone recently gave an illustration that has helped me understand salvation from a more hopeful perspective. There's this question: are we saved: is it an event? or a process? It was an event for me, but it's also a process. It's not just something that happened back there. He said how he was visiting in Alaska, it was cold outside and they went to visit a family. As they walked through the door, they felt the warmth of the house. They closed the door behind them, and then enjoyed the fellowship. Not once did he turn around, admire the door, glorify it, and focus was on the door itself. He focused on what was inside. That was an apt illustration of how we should see the event in our own life. It is the entrance into the Kingdom: once we are in there, why make such a big deal? (That sounds irreverent). When we put so much focus on that event, we tend to minimize where we ought to be today. Years ago, I stopped by a business and the man told me he is dying of lung cancer. He then told me how he was saved a long time ago and everything is fine between him and the Lord. He has a nicotine habit, but he was saved back then. Then he lit up. The demeanor of that man's expression and story disheartened me because it was not saved from-and-to, but to-do-what-I-want-to-do. In his case, he almost spoke with an edge of anger. He knew what position I would come from, I'm sure. If that's our focus, the door, we may have invited some of this idea that we are secure in Christ--so from there on out, it is not that important what I do. I love the theme of these meetings, "Reflecting His Image." Would it make sense that one of the questions we can ask (if a person is erring or is external) is how/what he is doing is reflecting the image of His Lord? It may, indeed, but who is his lord? We can excuse ourselves. I, myself, have benefited from the teaching on assurance of salvation. We move on beyond that. When the forgiveness of sin frees us from its power, we are truly saved from sin.

I'm assuming most of us make or living by the sweat of our brow. We shepherd in--our spare time? If we're going to really meet the needs of the people we serve, it's going to take time. Titus 2:11 and ... [Reads verses.]

2:45-4:56pm: **Business Meeting (see minutes)**

## **SUPPER BREAK**

6:59pm: **Songs (Joel Gingerich)**

1. "Fill up my cup" (from memory)
2. "I stand amazed in the presence" (from memory)
3. "We will glorify" (from memory)
4. "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me"
5. "Jesus lover of my soul [non-traditional version]"
6. "Jesus paid it all"
7. "'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus"
8. "Take my life and let it be"
9. "O to be like thee"

7:21pm: **Devotions (Dan Hostetler, Melita Fellowship, OH)**

Tonight, we are talking about repentance [reads theme verse]. Going over to 2 Corinthians 7:10 [reads verse]. Repentance is not an end in itself, but to salvation. As we sat and discussed this and talked about this, I guess what we thought was--Is repentance an event in your life or ongoing? It takes both. Another word might be cross-bearing. Repentance is not an end in itself. Where will it take us?

7:28pm: **The Doctrine of Repentance (John D. Martin, Shippensburg Christian Fellowship, PA)**

It's a blessing to be here, though it's a different group than what I am used to. The Quakers don't do much singing at all: The reason we do is that we are to come before His presence in singing. God has told us what He expects, and it is to be in song. The reason Quakers don't sing is because a lot is said in our songs that is not truthful. We sang, "take my life and let it be." One of the things we said was take my silver and gold, and mites. We tend to hold on with all our might. In 1792, Jacob Albright established the evangelical association and had revival meetings. The preaching was fiery, the response demonstrative, lively. A lot of Mennonites got involved in this movement. They are today the United Methodists, or the old constitution United Brethren church. A prophet sees ahead of his time and has an answer. The question the youth faced was--how can you be sure you have a saving faith? They said, "You need to have an emotionally defining moment with God, the proof you have faith. You need a second defining movement to establish holiness." This was a forceful appeal and many left the Mennonites and joined this movement. Christian Burkholder looked in on this and he identified the problem. This concept of an emotionally-defining moment does not go deep enough. He wrote a little tract addressed to youth regarding true experience. If you have a genuine experience, you have allowed God to do a work that is thorough change: hatred into love, lying into honesty, covetousness into liberality, and pride into humility. Eradication is a prideful claim being made. In his mind, true repentance is a thorough and an ongoing work in the life of the believer. Humility is evident. Romans 12:3 tells us the first evidence of a renewed mind [verse cited], "do not think more highly than you ought to think." As we allow repentance to work deeper in our lives, it would result in a pure love to God and our neighbors, the carnal nature would be brought to death. John Bunyan summed up the Gospel in one word, *repentance*. It was certainly the first word Jesus spoke: that is, having change of mind, regrets for past sins, and change in conduct for the better (Amplified). In Acts 2:38 [reads verse] and in Acts 17:38 [reads verse]. Christ's last word to the Church is in Revelation 2-3, where He tells those churches to repent. This word is seldom heard in churches. A neighbor from a mainline Protestant church never heard the word from the pulpit in 30 years. A Holiness friend felt that that people whose old nature has been eradicated does not need to talk of repentance. A.W. Tozer observed at a revival meeting a group who was singing was dressed immodestly. When he got up in a Holiness meeting and preached repentance. The moderator said a real challenge was given, and a brother prayed for repentance. He said, "We have sinned, but not in the usual sense of the word."

*Repentance characterized*

The Greek word means a change of a new mind, a mind that processes everything differently. John the Baptist calls people vipers, to flee, and bring forth fruits. They asked what verses they should be. Most people may not have said what he said. He said, "If you have two coats, give away one; if you have extra food, give it away. We are inquisitive people, driven by a desire for accumulation. But we need to turn from gimme to give. Luke 19: Repentance is a radical change



of mind that sees life in a different perspective. For years, I was perplexed that the Sermon on the Mount did not call for repentance at the beginning, but the Beatitudes are a description of the new birth, surrendering oneself and making one's self teachable. The first one: blessed are those that mourn. If you have truly repented, you have a new set of eyes. A light bulb came in our being, and you saw everything differently than before. You see yourself, the world differently. You saw reality as God sees it, so you mourn for your own sins, and that brings this process of repentance into practical activity. You mourn for the world, and your outlook becomes redemptive. Sam Hadley at the Bowry Mission was converted--a drunk--and he eventually became the leader. A large revival meeting happened and the evangelist wanted to see the Bowry. Sam showed him the mess on the streets—drunks, gambling, prostitution, all that. The evangelist left but soon heard crying. He came back and found Sam crying for the city. Repentance is a new mind, not just new thoughts. One totally sees everything in the reality God sees it. We were looking at this account: Zacchaeus. (We are not going to read it). He said I'm going to give half my goods to the poor. Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house." Nothing was said about the new birth (nor most of what we talked about) but this was proof of a radical transformation. Our judgment will be based on our service to others. Matthew 25: Jesus says this is what it looks like when you have that kind of transformation. That was the proof. Instead of self, accumulation, building our own retirement, going to Florida to play shuffleboard, it's all transformed, poured into the kingdom of God. 2 Timothy 2:24-26 [reads verses]: God may give them repentance. 1 Corinthians 12:3 [reads verse]: Nobody can establish Jesus as Lord of their life but by the Holy Spirit. Thus the warning--if you hear His voice, harden not your heart. People make a drastic mistake, God speaks to them. They say, "Well, there are a few more things I have to do, I will repent later. The fact is when you are going to do it two years down the road, you won't be the same person. You make decisions, and your decisions make you. You have no guarantee He will grant you that desire, motivation, ability to get the job done.

What are the evidences of repentance? Sin is abhorred. Job says, "I abhor myself!" But he was the best man of the day. 2 Corinthians 7:10 and following [reads verses]: That's interesting, we have people who claimed to have repented, and they have to do it again and again? Those who claim to have lost it, too often, never had it. The flesh may tug at the person--habits we struggle with--but something rises up. The something that rises up is that abhorrence against sin. The love of sin is gone. The one who repents walks farther from sin. I don't understand those who claim to have a relationship with God but are not done with the world. They think they can take this from the world and that--the world is not a smorgasbord. When you take the world, you take the whole thing. I grew up in a Conference church where people were messing with the world. We left. When Desert Storm happened, the preacher's son ran off to the military and the preacher could not understand why.

Backing up to Zacchaeus: repentance changes our values. I think it is good to preach good fruit, but if we just preach good morals, then we have not gotten to the root: the values--what is most important. That's what Zacchaeus got right. In Hebrews 11, you won't find one comment about the morals. They were men of great moral character, but it was all about values. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ of more value than the treasures of Egypt. That is quite a value statement! In the end, it's all about worship and worship comes from the Old English definition, "worth-ship." I think it would be a good exercise to list the ten things most important to you. I'm sure God will be on that list and I'm sure He will be at the top. Next, cross out the thing on that list

that is the least important. Then, cross off the next thing. If you do that honestly, you will end up with the one thing you value most. Most say it's God. But here's what happens: You're having a great conversation and then someone mentioned a certain topic. Someone quiet came alive to that topic. That's what he worships. All of you have one passion, even if you're shy. Many people who call themselves Christians, that worship isn't Jesus. If you went to talk to the people he's around, they'll tell you about what he gets excited about. The person who repented--his passion is Christ. Many of you may say, "For me to live is my business, hunting, my retirement." Go home and test it, see if you have truly repented. The kingdom of God is the number one passion in your life?

The second thing we notice is that the disposition to repeat sin is gone. You won't repeat lying. Something in your being rises up and convicts you and you will do everything to get that lie cleansed. In 1 John 5:3, his seed remaineth in us, we cannot practice sin. If you take a step one way, something in you will turn you the other way. As many as are driven by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. There is no such thing as passionless Christianity, those whose whole Christian life is lackadaisical. They are driven, instead, in a certain direction. If you have to ask if he is a Christian, he probably isn't. The disposition to repeat the sin is gone.

Third: conduct changes to increasing Christ-likeness. John says we are to abide in Christ. We used to have an old wood stove we heated our house with. We throw wood in and then come back in an hour and there is that piece of round wood. The bark is there--as are the rings--but the log is on fire. They have become one: yes, it's John, but it's Jesus, the two are the same. Throughout the epistles Paul labors to make this point. Did you ever notice all those prepositional phrases from Paul? In Christ, unto Christ, it's all predicated, the two are one. Conduct changes to Christ-likeness--a passionate love for God's law. The law He has established that will never change. There's a compassionate love.

Four: Confession and restitution become a way of life. They have caught a vision for the people of Christ. It's his passion to say and do the right thing at the right time. If he's done something wrong or hurt somebody, you don't have to make him make restitution. He wants to do it. I have a friend that committed adultery time after time, and it was always my responsibly to help him get back on track. He asked me, how can I be sure this will last? I told him, "Your wife does not trust you. When she sees you looking at the waitress, that offends her, and she says something. You need to receive that, accept it, and be very open with your wrongs and your response to those wrongs" Repentance is an opportunity to turn away. You are not a high-maintenance Christian. There is a driving force, if it is true repentance. I grew up with 20 other people my age, they all went to the altar and cried, but only one is still living a godly life.

### *Repentance compromised*

The human heart is loathed to repent. Why? It's because of fear. As we grow up, we have certain experiences. We are hurt, humiliated, and we go up in defense. Bitterness is wounded pride. We make ourselves invulnerable. Repentance looks like it'll happen again, and it'll be a disaster. There's partial repentance. What does that look like? --No total change of mind. A few ideas change, a little reform here and there, but the outlook is unchanged. If sin would end in happiness, they would never forsake it. They fear punishment. Finney commented on this: Any person who is a Christian primarily to escape hell shall surely go there, quoting "he that would

seek to save his life shall lose it. He that loses his life... shall find it." That's why the Anabaptists did not worry much about assurance of salvation. You people have an Amish background, and they did something they should not have. But the early Anabaptists were not worried about going to hell like the Protestants. The person who has thoroughly repented does not have those concerns.

Second, feelings have not changed; the person still secretly loves the sin. If you try to talk to him, he may say, what's the big deal?

Three, there are concealments of the sin: he rationalizes and has "spiritual" reasons to do what he did. One day I drove by the church and a relative was working in the graveyard. I pulled in to say *hi*, driving a rough car. The first thing he said was, "I guess you see I bought a new Ford truck." That doesn't mean anything to me, it's just transportation. See what we're doing? One evangelist of our day built a two-million dollar mansion. He justified this by saying he was the one responsible for hosting family activities. They found his extended family consisted of seven people. That's the kind of stuff incomplete repentance does.

Four, there's a partial reformation of the conduct.

Five, it's temporary, high maintenance. Israel kept going back. These people come to the altar year after year to confess the same sins.

Six, their repentance is forced. They need to be cajoled into pleasing God, but they will never please Him. The person who has repented loves to bless God. David wanted to build a temple, and Nathan told him not to (from the Lord). Yet, the Lord also said, "David, in all the wandering through the wilderness, when did I ever say that I want you to build a temple? David, I am so pleased you wanted to build me a temple. I will build you one, a house. There will never fail to be one of your descendants on the throne." The person who has not repented things says, "Oh, what do I *have* to do?"

Seven, he focuses on the few things he does well and then tries to see what others are not doing well in that area. A neighbor who sells eggs said to me, "I see you dry your hay on Sunday." He was a scrupulous observer. One of my relatives prided himself on how honest he was, and he knew everyone that was not honest.

Eight, there is a false security, these people are complacent, have less and less conviction. They cannot be renewed to repentance because they say they already repented. You cannot penetrate them. You see they are not driven for God, and you cannot get them to see it.

Nine, there's a hardened heart. These people don't come to church Wednesday evening. They do not get joy out of worship. It's a half-hearted relationship, they're complacent. I look forward to every meeting we have. The person who repented loves to worship--every opportunity.

Ten, the focus drifts from Christ to something else. Turn to Revelation 2. What Christian Burkholder was observing was a shallow conversion that did not go deep enough. Here in verses 2-3, how many of you think this sounds lukewarm? Nothing lukewarm about this bunch. Their

love had not cooled off. If you had been a heretic, you were out. Their focus was on church purity. But the focus had shifted from Christ to something else. Is our passion directed to Christ, is that number one? You may be passionate about church purity, singing, or other things related to Christianity, but not Jesus.

### *Repentance confirmed*

Repentance is a beautiful thing, all kinds of wonderful fruits. God wants us to repent. He wants to give it to every person. One time Ahab had put on sackcloth and was being humble, Elijah was told by God that He will spare him. Cornelius was not a Christian, but he did alms, prayed always, responding to God, and God responded to him. It's because of repentance that we enter into the kingdom of God, and we experience eternal life--I'm out of time, but I want to conclude: What is eternal life?

It's not later, but it begins now. I ask people, "What is it?" They often say it's your experience with Jesus, but I want to know what is eternal. It's the ability to make decisions now that will be still good for the future; there is permanence in one's life, and his decisions are timeless. His family, work, and decisions all have long-lasting, eternal perspectives. There are Christians who say they have eternal life, but it's full of dead-end streets and ashes. If you are truly repented, I expect you to be living in the eternal reality now and in 30 years. I conclude with a story: Clarence was the principle of the school I grew up at. He told this story about being on a ship with a Presbyterian missionary, who said he was nonresistant. Clarence said that was unusual. He came to be nonresistant because he opened his Bible and went to the verses about giving to the one that asketh... He thought it was not practical that people would take advantage of him. Those verses stuck to him. He said to his wife, let's just do it. People came asking, and he gave them. Pretty soon, everything was gone in the mission post. In the village, they were discussing the stupidity of the person. After a few weeks, it got old, and one man said he felt bad, and he took stuff back, and others did the same. Later they said, the first time he was there, you told us about God and how He gave the best, sacrificed, and did everything. We did not understand that kind of life, but now we do. It's not mine to interpret, but to obey. That's what we call repentance. God wants us to continue to say yes to his will and make those changes.

8:24pm: **Moderator** (Dan Hostetler)

Amen? (Amen.) Has it sunk in far enough, can we take it home and show it to our church members: witness what repentance is.? It's a challenge. Actually, it has to be more than a challenge, otherwise it won't be reality.

Announcements:

1. Remember to vacate by 10pm.
2. Please return your name tag holders.
3. For those here the first time, the book stands are in the gymnasium.
4. Directories should be here by noon, Thursday.
5. Prayer request: please pray for Paul Miller, he has had a long term fight with depression and is at a counseling facility. Pray he will give up and for his release.

*Stand for prayer.*

## Thursday, April 04, 2013

*Jonathan and wife Susan sing duets prior to the service.*

### 9:00: **Songs (Joel Gingerich, Christian Fellowship Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

1. "We're marching to Zion" (from memory)
2. "He has made me glad" (from memory)
3. "We will glorify the King of Kings" (from memory)
4. "O to be like thee"
5. "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh" (from memory)

### 9:10am: **Moderator (Sylvan Weaver, Calvary Chapel, OH)**

I have been blessed from being here, these subjects are the basics, but that's not quite right. When we think of the basics, it is what we start with then move on. These rather are the essentials, everyday, and an ongoing thing. I thought of a few familiar verses. Psalm 139:23-24 [reads verses]. That's my prayer: search me God, know my heart. David is not saying: see what I'm doing, if I'm doing the right thing. We may say, what's on the outside counts. But I say, if the inside is right, the outside will be right, too. We want the inside of our hearts to be right. If there's a wicked way in us, then we need to repent. Psalm 134:18 [reads verse]. David was a man after God's heart. Was David a perfect man? He made mistakes, but he was a man with a contrite heart. David was quick to confess and respond properly. He made some mistakes; there were consequences, but he was always ready to repent. I think that's what all of us need. If God shows us something, we should be willing to repent and turn around. That's what the message is this morning--a message of transformation. God can do this when he reaches deep into our hearts.

*Remain seated for prayer.*

### 9:15am: **The Doctrine of Transformation (Donnie Brenneman, Kempsville A-M, VA)**

What more can you say than has been said? [Quotes a verse of song]. I enjoy singing, and I think our Savior is worth of all praise we can give. Would you stand with me? [Leads "Man of Sorrows, What a Name," "But I Know Whom I Have Believeth," and "Jesus Thou Mighty Lord"]. What does transformation look like? And, who does this transforming? Who decides when and how I am transformed? I would like to try and address some of those questions, but I would like to remind you, we just got done singing, "I know not why, how, the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin, revealing Jesus through the Word. I know not how the saving faith to me did impart." Can you relate with that? I would like to, on the outset, read from 1 Timothy 3:16 [reads verse]. Part of the verse I'd like to emphasize: great is the mystery of godliness. In Thessalonians, Paul writes about a mystery of iniquity also at work, but here is "great is the mystery of godliness." I would like to review three verses in the New Testament: in Matthew 17, the transfiguration. This is the same Greek word we have in Romans 12:2, *transformation*. Also in 2 Corinthians 3: we all with open face, beholding... the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image. That word is the same in each passage, we all with open face. When Jesus was transfigured, it said his face shone, and light was radiating from his countenance, and the whole atmosphere changed. When you go on the mount, sometimes it gets cold. Traveling here, we

encountered a small snow storm, but on this mount where the transfiguration took place, it was warm. Peter says he will build tents to stay, but God says, “Sh! this is my Son.” The disposition is to listen: not to talk, not tell Him how He should run the kingdom, but to hear and obey. Transformation--amazing.

Genesis 1:1 [reads verse]. God divided the night from the day, light from dark. How did He do it? By His Word! Hebrews 4:12 [reads verse]. The Word of God is powerful. Psalm 29: “The voice of the Lord...” [reads verse]. Is there a transformation taking place here? In my mind, there is a tremendous transformation taking place when God divides the light from the dark, land from sea, calling land earth and water, sea. What is giving the importance, the drive? The voice of the Lord, in response to the voice of God, the waters move and the land takes their position. Isn't that amazing? The sun, the moon, the stars: He calls them all by name, Isaiah says in chapter 40. This amazing transformation, it's amazing! We look at the animals, herbs, vegetation, and I want to emphasize in Genesis--Here you read *he commanded* nine times things to reproduce after its own kind. The trees and the animals, after its own kind. “Except a kernel of wheat... [reads verse].” We're close to spring. And you plant that seed in your garden, cover it with earth, water falls, and maybe your children or dog runs over top of it. What happens? The sun warms it. Something's going on down there, you can't see it. One day you look out and there's new life coming out of the ground. Why? Great is the mystery. There is a principle of life that God has implanted in the species he has created. Life. That is obedience to His command. In studying this, I came to the conclusion (and I want you to understand, and I'll give further explanation), God delights in doing things in the dark. When I say in the dark, Scripture says that God is light and [in Him] there is no darkness at all. God likes to do things hidden from man, and man cannot get a hold of it. But it is working, and man cannot get a hold of it. God has done some tremendous work, hidden in the darkness of that ground. Out of that darkness, God has put life in that seed, no matter what steps on it: cow, cat, hog--life comes forth.

The principle of life, after its kind. When Adam and Eve sinned: the wages of sin is death, and we read in Romans 5 that there is a positive power, so that by one man comes life--the man Jesus Christ. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. That life was the light of men. Peter tells us the world was created by the Word of God. We are in the process of transformation. This world is reserved by the same word, held to the day of fire. There's going to be an amazing transformation. When time shall be no longer and Jesus descends with a shout. There will be an amazing transformation. “Behold, I make all things new.” Hebrews 7:15-16 [reads verse]. And God, Who spoke this world into existence, John tells us in chapter one: “In the beginning...” [reads verse]. What does this Word in the flesh do? When Jesus came, “I delight to do thy will, O God.” Jesus says, “I came down from Heaven not to do...” [reads verse]. There was a life being driven. We have that term in Luke 4:3. He was baptized in the Jordan River. In chapter four, when the heavens were opened, and God gave the Word to His Son, do you think the Son had a sense of satisfaction? He delighted in the will of the Father--that compliment encouraged Him. There is this power of an endless Life operating. When this Life comes into contact with me, something changes. John 10:10 [reads verse]. Life, that's what we need. Ephesians 2:10 [reads verse]. Romans 5: “When we were Christ's enemies” [reads verse]. Each seed bears after its own kind. Adam's sin corrupted all seed thereafter, so what is the need? When you have bad seed, you look for good seed. God has provided that seed in His Son. We read in 1 Cor. 15:57 [reads verse].

In Christ there is a new seed, a living seed, a powerful seed. The seed of the Almighty, the omnipotent God. Man shall not live by bread [reads verse]. Jesus is telling us, it's not enough to have physical life, but we must receive a new seed. Jesus came from the seed of Abraham and David--see, that seed. The seed produces after its kind. When that seed is in us, how is it? In 1 Peter 1 [reads verse]. Incorruptible seed. By the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever... The Word is the seed. In Luke 8 (the parable of the sower), the seed is the Word of God. There is life in the Word--the Word is a living Word, a powerful Word, bringing light where there is no light. Jesus was made after the power of an endless life. Transformation, how does it work? I am not into speaking, this morning, or attempting to speak on the process. Rather, I have chosen to confine myself to the facts. It works. How many of you ate breakfast this morning or supper last night? How many of you when you went to bed worried about how your food is going to be digested, or wondered what the beans are going to do when they meet the potatoes, or when both encounter the applesauce? How many are worried about that? How that that form will be changed in a different form and flows through the body, ministering to different parts, and carrying away the waste? How many are worried about how that all operates? You're not here concerned about what you drank, but it's working in you, even though you're not thinking about it. I don't know how the processes all works, but I know it works. It's the same thing with the seed in our life. You want to be transformed. One of the things you must do is believe. If we want to be transformed, we can only do as what 2 Cor. 3 says, "We all with open face" [reads verse]. How do we behold the glory of God and the Lord? Turn to 2 Corinthians 4:5 [reads verse]. You want to know and see the glory of God, look in the face of Jesus, and see the attributes of God, living, exemplified, and the compassion of Christ, and the love of Christ. I want to point us to that hill on Calvary, when the Word became flesh so that we could have life. God gave us the Word (the revelation of Himself) under the tutoring of the Holy Spirit, transforming us to the image of His dear Son. Romans 8:29 [reads verse]. O to be like Thee, conformed to His image! Fathers sometimes go places with their son or daughter and people see "products of his kind." People tell my wife, you can't deny who your mother is. You look just like her. Others tell me they can see where my son comes from. Produces after their kind. God wants many sons--to bring them to glory. As we look at lives marred and ruined by sin, not knowing what to do with sin, God has given us all that we need. 2 Peter 2:1 "...his divine nature." [reads verse]. Being a partaker in the divine nature, God wants to transform us into the image of His Son. As we walk among sinners, like we ourselves, we can point to the Answer. The fountain is living. John 19:30 [reads verse]. Out came blood and water--a fountain open, for cleansing from sin.

You and I can be transformed. The Spirit leads us to the Fountain for cleansing, not once or twice, but time and time again. Do you remember the bath when you were born? Probably not. Who gave it to you? You probably don't know that either. How many baths have you had since? Probably don't know. How many did you have this week? Today? A fountain is for cleansing, and the blood, 1 John 1:7 [reads verse]. How many have gotten dirty since your first bath, and how many times? You don't know. How many have sinned since you first became a believer? I am so thankful for a fountain open for uncleanness and sin. If we confess our sins, He's faithful to transform. This transformation: how many of you take a bite of a carrot and swallow it? a steak? or hotdog? Chomp it off, swallow it. Probably no one. What do you do? You chew it and chew it, munch, munch, crunch, crunch, and you savor the flavor. How are we transformed? By the renewing of our mind? What is the renewing? The word as I understand it is to renovate, remodel, taking old things out, the new in. I think it is as we read the Living Word: not just bite

off a chunk and swallow. But as we savor the flavor, we are doing what David says in Psalm 1 [reads verse]. In His law does he meditate day and night. Jeremiah ate His words [reads verse]. Wherewithal shall a young man [reads verse]. It is possible to be transformed. Yes, and to continue to be transformed. How many of you want to stay just as you are for the rest of your life? I don't. I want to see more of Jesus! Hungering and thirsting after righteousness, poverty of spirit, broken and marred, and Jesus does not get frightened or wonder what He should do.

I would like to put a subtitle: the omnipotent transformer. This transformer can wash away all sin except one, blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. We are driven again and again to the Fountain; when I fall and fail and go to the Fountain and experience again the forgiveness, it makes me want to bow at His feet and say, "Thank you, Jesus." Transformation leads us in various stages and ways, ultimately to pure service. Worship God in Spirit and truth. How does it work? Remember Jacob, Genesis 32: he was a schemer, conniver, cheater, a gimme person. He got what he wanted, regardless of the cost. Sometimes God speaks to us through the avenue of need to make us aware of our need for Him, whether financial, emotional, or spiritual needs. Jacob knew what buttons to push to get what he wanted, but there came a time there was something greater than him. God brings those situations into our life. God told Jacob to go back to the land he came from. There is a tremendous crisis; his brother was coming against him with armed men. That's how God works, He brings problems bigger than we can handle. God meets us in this crisis, and there we wrestle with God. How did I get here? Why am I here? I don't understand!-- and God wrestles with us. Wrestling is what Jacob did—I enjoy wrestling with others, I would take anyone. Here Jacob wrestled with God, seeking a blessing. That's perseverance, hunger, being driven. I need something I don't have, and I'm not going to let you go until you get it. Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be given. God gave him a blessing, and then he broke him. He wants to bring us to a new area of brokenness. God wants to bless us more than we want that blessing. God wanted to make a change in Jacob. The process: he wrestles with God--the will--until Jacob says, I won't let you go. Now God is asking Jacob, who are you? As Jacob struggles under that conviction, pressure, tension, he finally yields: I am Jacob, he says. He admitted who, what, and where he was. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." It is the power of an Endless Life. Grace came pouring into his heart. God gave him a new name. He was broken, and humbled. Having won the battle with God, Jacob limped--a transformation, a holy limp. Having become broken before God, he becomes broken before his brother. When he meets him down the path, he sent out presents. You can have it. Have it. It's a present. It's yours. See the transformation? Lastly, he comes and bows seven times before Esau. Esau looked at Jacob and saw brokenness. When we see brokenness, what effect does that have on us? Doesn't it melt us? The ability of God on Calvary's cross--so you and I can be transformed. Metamorphosis: a monarch butterfly—beautiful. But before he arrives, he's a caterpillar, crawling over rocks and stones. He goes up a tree and fastens--and what happens? Great is the mystery of godliness! He takes on a change, followed through, and comes out into liberty, a new creature, and there he looks down on the heights. The place that once gave him so much trouble. Alive, flashing in the sunshine. That's what God wants to do for us, the sin that gave us so many problems. That's what he wants to do with us.

10:12: **Moderator (Sylvan Weaver)**

*Stand for prayer*



Announcements:

1. Any newly ordained, please fill out the name form at Cory Anderson's table in the rear of the auditorium.
2. There are CD sets available of the meeting; \$45/set, \$5 singles CDs.

10:15: **Song (Joel Gingerich)**

1. "Live in me Lord Jesus" (from memory)

10:17: **BREAK**

10:50: **Songs (Joel Gingerich, Christian Fellowship Amish-Mennonite, OH)**

1. "Thou Art Worthy" (from memory, one verse)
2. "I Will Serve Thee Because I Love Thee" (from memory)
3. "Prepare me to be a sanctuary" (from memory)
4. "Open the wells of grace and salvation"

10:56am: **Moderator (Eli Schrock, Antrim Mennonite, OH)**

*Stand for prayer*

10:57am: **The Work of the Holy Spirit (John Mark Yoder, Christian Mission, IN)**

While you were coming in, it was like an army coming in. Wanting to get instruction in our head, because we're in a battle together. This morning, I want to get out of the way so that God can minister to us. I don't want to stand in the way, but I want to share what God has laid on my heart and allow Him to speak. I feel humbled to stand in front of a group like this, but we're in the work of the Lord together. I am blessed by that. Turn to John 16:7-15. I would like to scratch the surface of what the Holy Spirit wants to do in our lives and in me. The person that studies the most gets the most out of it; I've needed it the most, and I've been deeply challenged by preparing for this. I want to pass on a few of the things the Word of God would teach us about what the Holy Spirit wants to do in our lives [reads verses].

We have come from different backgrounds. We have a shed business, and a prayer has been that God would daily open doors, bringing into our lives people to minister to. I don't want to just have a business to make money; there's more in this life than that. As we meet with people and talk with them, we have opportunity to sow the seed and share. That is the primary goal of the business. As we meet with people, they come from different religious backgrounds. I have noticed recently that whatever we have been taught for many years hangs onto us. I'm not anti-Mennonite. My point is simply, when I come into the Word, I want it to speak to me. While talking to a man from another background, he said, "I've never seen that in the Word of God, never been taught that." What I called basic truth, he had never seen that. Can the background we come from be a hindrance? It can be, but does not have to be. When I come to the Word of God, I want to see what Jesus is telling us, not just me. Whatever He hears, that will He speak. He's the channel. A little red light goes on and says, what about Balaam. The spirit spoke to him, and Balaam made some wrong choices. What was going on underneath? Do you want to know the will of the Father, or do I want to know what God's will is, so I can pick and choose what I want to do. God is not offering us a buffet so we can pick and choose what we want and still get to

heaven.

Turn to John 10, “My sheep know...” [reads verses]. I get the picture of a big father and son. And we have the biggest father ever! Our Father is not limited, and there is no one greater than our Father. When I am sitting in our Father’s lap, and He has His arm around me, I’m safe. He says, my sheep hear my voice, know my voice, follow my voice, and I give them eternal life. No man is going to pluck the son out of Dad’s hand. My Father is greater than all. The Bible says that if a son asks for fish or bread, will the father give him a stone? No. Back to chapter 17. Two words in verse 11 and 15, and both words are *keep* [reads verses]. Let’s look at some other verses highlighting the relationship between God and Christ as the basis of the Holy Spirit. 14:10-11 [reads verses]. Jesus says the Father dwells in Me and I the Father. Verse 16 [reads verse]. That’s a promise; I will give Him, send Him. In this day and age we live in, we have many warrantees (sometimes lifetime)--building materials, you name it. This is a lifetime warranty, eternal lifetime warranty. Jesus lives forever. He said that He will send Him, the Comforter, the revealer of truth. Notice what else is happening: I see something else merging here, another concept in here. Let’s read on. [Reads verses]... myself to Him. You see what’s merging into having the Holy Spirit? Verse 21, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them. When I am following the Holy Spirit, He’s walking with me, in me. He expects that we are going to keep His commandments. Those two familiar commandments are here.

The Holy Spirit can be treated in different ways. How can the Holy Spirit be treated? The Bible says Peter denied the Lord. And after he denied him, what did he do? He went out and wept bitterly. Peter did not go out and say, “Sorry, I kind of messed up, will you forgive me?” No, he wept bitterly, and he and the others likewise left Him. The basic story is that the disciples left and there was Jesus; they denied the Lord. In Acts 7:51, the Holy Spirit can be resisted. Hebrews 10:29, we can insult the Spirit of grace. In Acts 5:3, the Holy Spirit can be lied to. Acts 5:9, the Holy Spirit can be tempted. The Holy Spirit can be grieved, Ephesians 4:30 [reads verse]. The Holy Spirit can be quenched, 2 Thessalonians 5:19 [reads verses]. It can be railed upon, Luke 12:10. Can we have an honest moment? We’re preachers and supposed to be open with each other. In your Christian walk, somewhere, have been tempted to think that you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit and might as well give up? Raise your hand (some did). I wrestled with that for years. Today, I know my Jesus lives, and I am one of His. Acts 1:8, the Holy Spirit gives us power. What’s this power for, what’s it all about? Why an outpouring of power? [Reads verses]. I was blessed as I sat there yesterday; the utter most part of the earth--Africa, Kenya, you name it--there is a witness going out across the globe. It’s not about us, but Jesus, helping people find this great Savior, and they can experience this divine power in their life. These people received the power of the Holy Spirit. It’s power is to be a witness. Turn to 2 Peter 1:1-3. After Peter left the garden and went out, reality was sinking in on Peter’s mind: I have denied my Lord three times. I just got done telling him I would die for Him a few hours ago. Now Peter is a changed man. [Reads verses]. There’s a power in the Holy Spirit and through Jesus Christ, we can have that which goes beyond the power we often talk about. Farmers get excited about four-wheel drive; airplane pilots get excited about the thrust of takeoff, and on a spaceship--pull a few levers and you’re off to the moon. This is talking about divine power, the kind that when God gets down on His hands and knees, puts dirt together--all of a sudden there’s life in there, all kinds of things happening. That’s divine power in action, right there. When He spoke at the Creation, there was a universe. There are all kinds of creatures He made. That’s divine power--not this little horse

power, spinning around in the mud! That's divine power; it has no limits, no measure, and He's saying that according to his divine power, He has given all things that pertain to life. I have no excuse: He's given everything we need. Sometimes, I look at my Christian life and wonder. Am I experiencing the life God wants me to experience? He is calling us to glory and virtue. What are the promises that are great and precious to you? When you get back tonight or tomorrow, make a list of the precious promises that motivate you. What has he given us? I put that out to you. Verse eight: He talked about all the things that are happening to us [reads verses]. If the fruit tree does not bear fruit, cut it down and put it in the fire. Verse 10 [reads verse]. How can we keep from falling? He wants to present us faultless, until He opens that heavenly door and pulls you in and says, "You're safe." He's given us everything we need not to fall. I am saddened when I hear of people who turn from the faith and fall, to go after some other exciting thing.

When talking with someone who talks about themselves, you get tired of it. Here, he is not speaking about Himself. The Spirit is going to speak of Him.

Whatever He hears, He will speak of that--whatever the Father says.

Romans 8 [reads verses]: I get excited when I hear someone asking to go with you. I did that on conversion, asking the Holy Spirit to come with me. Do you have to ask Him to go with you every time? Not if He's still there. Turn to Matthew 12: a little illustration given here. Years ago, Roman Mullet brought this out--some of you knew Roman. Matthew 12:43-? [reads verses]. I would like to ask--when my house is swept and garnished and we have repented, it's ready for a new owner. Is there anything that keeps the Holy Spirit from filling the house? God wants us to offer the house to Him to take over? But there may be a closet door somewhere that has a little something tucked away that I hope no one knows about. I've been that way: I have my struggles. We can put a lot under the idea of a "struggle."

Sometime ago, we were doing a job for a man and plugged a cord into his garage. At the end of the garage, a picture was posted not fit to be seen. I knew my boys would go in there. When I went in I turned the other way (Most of you men have seen those in stores, stuff that's not fit). God's Spirit began to turn inside of me. This man had health problems, had gone to the doctor, and it did not work out to talk to him. This man claimed to be a Christian, seemed nice, open. I eventually got on the phone and called this man and expressed my concern. He said that his son gives him one of those calendars each year for Christmas. As I shared, he said, "I did not think about it that way. When I get off the phone, I'm going to stick it in the trashcan." I was blessed that man was easily entreated. He said, "Thank you for calling me. I see what you're talking about." Now, we do not get that kind of response always. Someone will stand in front of me and use God's name in vain, and I wonder if I can get the courage to talk to Him. He's my customer, maybe he'll leave! I want to allow God to work in my heart so that when the Spirit tells me to say something, I will say it. I've given my business to God, it is His. When Peter's heart is filled with the Holy Ghost, and Anaias came into Peter's presence, Peter did not turn to him and say, "We need to have a talk, as Satan as an inch of your heart." Look at the words he gave Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? We read down to verse 9 and Peter says to his wife, "Why have you agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord?" You know the results. In chapter 4:12, we see that the message of salvation; there were 5,000 people that were filled with the Holy Ghost that Peter was preaching about.

Something else I'd like to speak on: turn in your Bible to Luke 2. Sometimes we have people in our churches (or ourselves) where submitting to the Word of God is a hindrance to get much done for God. I have news for you, from Luke 2. We know the story: when Jesus went with his parents down to the synagogue. They realized Jesus was not with them, and found Him. "Mom and Dad do not understand!" Do you think that's what Jesus thought? There is a place where we have slid from where others have questions and the questions affect us more than the answers do them. Did Jesus go home and sit in the corner and say, "Mom and Dad say I can't be in the synagogue and I cannot be effective at home"? But the Bible says he increased in wisdom, in favor with God and man--underneath the bondage of submission, if you will. He prospered in wisdom, in favor with God and man. Do you know what? God gave Him the parents that He was supposed to have, and God has given you and I the parents that we should have. I did not understand every thing Dad told me, but I had a decision to make. Submission does not kill anyone, it's your choice. What do you want to do with that? Either growing in wisdom and favor with God and man? It's a choice. When God says in His words, this is what I want you to do. If you are still under the law, what are you doing there? The Spirit sets you free; let it work in your heart. Romans 8 tells us that.

Ephesians 5 tells us we should be filled with the Spirit. When you take a shed out to someone in the afternoon and a man comes out with a little glass in his hand; he has stress and wants to finish the day relaxed. The Bible says we should not be filled with wine, but with the Spirit. Why compare drunkenness to filling with the Spirit? The two are so opposite. Do you have long days when you're weary, get home and be tired? My family is not perfect, and we sometimes need to work through difficult things. I would rather have Jesus in that situation than be without God after a long day and face the reality at home of a messed up life, and a messed up family. On the one hand, you can have that mess up and try to squelch down the feeling of all those feelings, or you can come home and sing, "What a Friend I Have in Jesus" (recites first line). What happens when you carry it in prayer? (recites second line). When I'm filled with the Spirit, the Bible does not say we will be spectacular preachers or wonderful preachers, but we do have (in verse 19) a song of praise in our heart for the Lord. When we sit down and have family devotions, that song sometimes goes ringing through my mind. Take your problems to the Lord: that's the work of the Holy Spirit. Stop wresting with these things and take them to the Lord. I have wondered already, what is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit. I was drawn to Matthew 23 ... and people want to walk into Heaven but the Lord stops them and says He does not know who they are. Somewhere along the line we get disconnected. Was that the Spirit's fault they did not make it in? What is His responsibility? Do you have that new technology, you touch the little thing in your pocket and it does all kinds of things? Do you have one of those? Do you think the Holy Spirit wants to be like that in regards to sensitivity? He does not come with a sledge hammer and say I want you to get in. He wants us to respond; He comes to us in that still, small voice. We must quiet our hearts if we want to hear Him. He's given us His Word and wants us to quiet our hearts. We can't hear Him in all that noise and fuss.

Galatians 6 talks about an incredible thing. Most of us are getting ready to do it if you have not already: getting ready to sow, and then this fall, reap. Have you ever sown a seed of corruption that did not have a harvest with it? What we sow, we will reap. If I try to justify myself; if I sow a seed of corruption; it will have about a 1% increase. Is that how it works? Do I want to sow one seed of discord or--you name it. Do I want even a 30% increase on that seed? It sobers me to

think that I am not without sowing seeds 24/7. When we are going throughout our day, we sow seeds ongoing. Our life is like an example: like a Bible. Words have tremendous power. I think about words of encouragement.

Proverbs 13:10: When we have men's meeting or counsel meeting, or talk together, and sometimes we do not get along or agree. [Reads verse]. With the well-advised is wisdom. I will plant that seed and let you chew it, but it comes into meetings and getting along. Why the dissension that we face among us? When the world looks in at the children of God, the Word can be blasphemed because of what they see going on with the people of God. Do you think the Holy Spirit has a work He wants to get accomplished in your life this next year? I want us to think about that. What do you think God wants to get done in my life this next year? What do you think he wants to get done with the laity? Too often I'm focused on what God wants to do in the laity. Do I see the need that I have; what God wants to get done in me? One solution, the mistake we make is, I put it under the clause of "I have a little fault here": instead of getting on my knees and repent, we say we need to do better.

In closing, giving ourselves to God without reservation. What we give, He takes, what He takes, He cleanses, what He cleanses He fills, and what He fills, He uses. Let's allow Jesus to fill every area, unreservedly. We are just open before our Lord Jesus Christ.

11:57am: **Moderator (Eli Schrock, Antrim Mennonite, OH)**  
Announcements.

*Stand for prayer.*

## **LUNCH BREAK**

*People went straight to their sessions after lunch.*

*Business meeting.*

## **BREAK**

*People congregated in the sanctuary for the business meeting. See business meeting minutes*

## **SUPPER BREAK**

*Congregational singing prior to service.*

6:59-7:10pm: **Songs (Joel Gingerich)**

1. "I will enter his gates with thanksgiving" (from memory, one verse)
2. "Come bless the Lord" (from memory, one verse)
3. "I love you, Lord Jesus" (from memory)
4. "O to be like thee"

7:10-7:13pm: **Moderator (Jonas Beiler, Ebenezer A-M, OH)**

For this evening, we have a men's choir. I am going to allow them to share at this time. It's always a blessing to have singing. As we prepare ourselves, the singing is like tilling the soil to receive what is to come.

*Stand for prayer.*

7:13-7:31pm: **Men's Choral Group (Jonathan Raber, Heritage Mennonite, OH)**

*The choral group included 22 men.*

1. "The treasures of earth are not mine"
2. "I thank God for the lighthouse"
3. "Your anchor holds"
4. "Just a little while"
5. "I need no other argument"
6. "Which way shall I take?"

7:26-7:29pm: **Moderator (Jonas Beiler)**

And we all say thank you for those songs. As I think about this being the last evening of the 2013 meetings, we heard a lot in the last few days. We have a lot to think about, to go with. Sometimes we think about that and try to sort those things out in our mind. We nearly can't remember all the things said. I think of God: what does God think? There's a verse in Jeremiah 29:11. The setting is where the children of Israel were in captivity in Babylon, and Ananiah prophesied that in two years the vessels will be restored. Then Jeremiah said he was not a true prophet; this will take a long time. Jeremiah said that he was a false prophet. In verse 11 [reads verse]: Whether you amen--ed or ouched this week, God had thoughts towards us, towards me. Those were thoughts of peace, not evil, to give you an expected end. Can we go with that in our hearts? He wants to give us a good expected end.

*Stand for prayer.*

7:29-8:27pm: **Reflecting His Image (Daniel Bontrager, Rosewood Fellowship, IN)**

There is one thing we have overlooked at this meeting. Someone has put in much effort. On behalf of all of us, let me say a hearty thank you for the local committees and meetings. A few years ago when meetings were at Tennessee-- a week of messages--the preacher said I could preach on the last night half a message. Perhaps that could not be such a bad assignment? Perhaps to preach the last half of the message will occur when we all go out these doors. Down in Virginia Beach, there was an old chicken house. There were a couple boys in there, and they like to imitate a preacher, and one boy preaching said, "Let's open the door and let some of that Light out!" Is it fair we enjoy this all together when people in this world have never heard a word of it? Moses, back in the first chapter of the Bible: God says, "Let us make man..." [reads verse]. I don't know all that was meant that God created man in His image, more than in His capacity to

reason, as God said the day you eat of this tree you shall die. But they ate and their physical images continued on with their reason. There must be something deeper than that. The Bible said something died. This week is just a summary of the story of man in these messages. We heard how God created man and God gave consideration for that man. He said let us make. What all was that discussion like? I do not know. He created man in that image. Then man fell. What died that day was the image of God stamped in man's heart. There was a connection that man was alive in a dimension that he lost--his relationship to his God. Man found himself with a chasm between him and His maker. There was an uncrossable chasm. There was no way that man could travel to the other side. Then we heard the story of a rebirth, a new life that involved repentance, transformation. The other aspects in the Christian life--this restoration of man--is to have fellowship with God. What did He really have in mind? God created man so that man would praise Him. Also, that God had something He wanted to share with man--the thoughts God was thinking toward man. Jesus said it was the Father's pleasure to give him the Kingdom. God wanted to share something with man as well as receive something with man. Now we come to this moment where there is a means to be restored to God. Jesus did not come to earth to live with man then to take us to be with him. In the mean time, we are present with god through the holy Spirit. Ever since I received this assignment, I have been trying to comprehend God. How does finite man comprehend an infinite God? Perfect in holiness, love, immutable, omnipotent, omnipresent. Where is God now? As we sense this plan of man, what God sees when He looks on this sea of humanity? We meet people when we travel. Have you been somewhere where there are no people? Everywhere, this earth has been inhabited, and God is looking down on this whole scene and has a purpose for everyone. Someone opened the door and let the Light in. I sensed that somebody was experiencing a burden in his heart on the program committee--that God would be honored and the deepest needs met. The Gospel is for the whole world.

On the committee's notes, I found this phrase. "We are called to reflect the character and nature of Almighty God." Think about it. We are called to reflect. Not just think about it, but to show off. To reflect the character and nature of God. Then, another word I had never seen put there. They followed this statement with a three letter word: "*Wow!!!*" Ever hear preachers talk like that? People talk about so many things being *awesome*, and we use that word too casually, but this is awesome, reflecting an Almighty God. He intends to make Himself known through the people He created in His image. When I saw that word, I went to Webster's dictionary for help: What does *wow* mean? It is an expression of hope, surprise, wonder, and pain. What a combination. How do you even conceive the thought of an infinite God with a finite mind? I went through a series of emotions and experiences. There were tears; there was awe; a sense of futility: It can't be done. There were no feelings at all sometimes. As I was thinking about this assignment, and of God, I thought of the story I read some time ago about a Sunday school teacher describing God to the children. Suddenly, one of the children called for attention and said, "I know that man, he leaves just down the road." Wouldn't that be a wonderful testimony for us: one of those people who reflect God? We talk about some profound things in these meetings. I could not expound on some things specifically. The bottom line is that we cannot conceive God. The relationship with God is not necessarily in the mind. He that cometh to God must believe that He is and is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. As I try to contemplate, how is God? How is heaven? Isaiah 6: his testimony... (by the way, it seems all the speakers took away my texts) Uzziah was the king and, I think, there was a certain air of sadness and despair in the land. As Isaiah was looking at the situation, their king had died: what was

going to happen in these circumstances [reads verses]? Uzziah died, the hope of the nation was downward. Then all at once, the glory of the Lord filled the whole land. What would it be like if we heard the angels uttering the words, holy, holy, holy. I would like to hear them utter those words! But, would I really? The post of the door moved, the house was filled with smoke. Would you like to see a picture like that? The presence of God was there. I was imaging up there, beyond the blue, that there was an eternal God. But how do mortal eyes see, put God in a frame, that you can visualize it? Is it important? But it is important to see it in the eyes of faith. He plans our birth, our departure, our life's outline, and what He asks of us is that we give Him authority to direct our lives. When Isaiah saw this, he said, "Woe is me." He saw something else. Any time we see God in His reality, we are going to have a picture of something else, and that is of us. "Woe is me," said Isaiah, "for I am undone..." [reads verse]. The story does not end there. [reads verse] "...and thy sin purged." [Reads verse]. I don't know how loud Isaiah's voice was. When we see God and we see ourselves, life takes a turn if we respond to God. Another word for reflecting is *mirroring*, to mirror God. We have in our store mirrors, nice mirrors. The real purpose is not to display the mirror, neither is it to display the frame around it, although it looks nice. That frame contributes nothing to its purpose. The job is in the mirror: the purpose is not to explain something. The purpose is not to imitate, but to reflect. It can only reflect what is before it. The message from Isaiah's experience is that I am never really in a condition to reflect God until I'm in His presence. As I stand before Him, He stands out. The entire purpose is to reveal what is before it. I wondered how the Early Christians felt about the meetings we have sometimes, when we have meetings to stimulate evangelism. Remember, they were put in prison for evangelizing. Do you think they needed stimulation meetings? It is a condition of the heart. Wouldn't you like to see that kind of environment today? It's a possibility. Anytime the people of God have met the conditions of God, they experience the blessing of God. He promised He will do. When Isaiah saw what brought him to his face before God, that's where you see the people of God when they encounter God--on their face, but God can also pick them up. The purpose of the mirror is to reflect.

1 Peter 2, "You are a chosen generation" [reads verses]. We have been chosen; it is God's purpose. One purpose is that He be reflected across the world. In 2 Timothy 1:8 [reads verses]. Today we are looking for ways to make life simple, but here is the calling the people of God. Here is the testimony of Timothy [reads verses]. The afflictions of the Gospel. Sometimes our young people may not be challenged. Last week, we were in Paraguay. Someone said that you folks aren't working like you used to. It wasn't the biggest condemnation I've heard, but he sees nowadays we are trying to make life so easy for the missionaries. There is no sense of commitment. He said what you see out there is a way to soothe your conscientious. The Gospel is the gospel of the Christ. Christianity without a cross won't do the job. It won't reflect the eternal God. Jesus was the express image of God. When you look at Jesus, He did not have a place to lay His head. It was His meat, His food, to do the will of Him that sent Him. That was a reflection of God. Those disciples ventured a question: if we do not leave everything, are we worthy of Him? Can we be His disciples? It's a blessing when you can go to other places and find people who serve the same living God. You have inherited families. When dear brothers and sisters across the world sense that was part of the reward, they don't forsake it. You do not have to do it in another country.

Three things I'd like to think about, how we can reflect the image and character of God? The



Scripture is clear. We need to reflect. Romans 10. People talk today: let's lay down doctrine and have fellowship. If we lay down doctrine, we will have fellowship but not with the right group. The character of God is manifest in his Word--it's what we need to know. A little child who says that I know that man. The theology of what he was saying was a demonstration of God working in that man. I remember the night I was converted; if you asked me what all took place at that time, I would have been at a loss, even why I went through the fears I had, the things that were happening. It happened on a Saturday night and I fell asleep on the couch. I woke up and something was different. I came to the place where that blind man was when he was healed and they were asking what kind of man Jesus was: "but one thing I know; I was blind and now I see." We do well to learn theology, and it's okay to have stimulation meetings; we have to do something to get off our seats. It's going to take more than that. We do well to have our doctrine in place. Romans 10[reads verses]. Is doctrine important when it comes to reflecting Jesus? Are people going to believe something they do not know about? [Reads two sets of unspecified verses]. Doctrine sets the foundation for the redemption of mankind. If we are filled with that Holy Spirit, I believe the doctrine will go out. It's part of this message: holding fast the faithful word that by sound doctrine you can convince the gainsayer. There's some room for some difference. We may not all agree where that line is. There's a concern about doctrine when there is a mixed expression of doctrine. Is it any wonder people ask which is the right religion? I do not blame them. The criteria in Scripture is not to study the lines so we can see how far apart we are, but rather study the Scripture, look at the doctrine, and if we are not together, should we not be concerned?. Father, may they all be one as we are one. It does not all have to be my way, but it should be our concern if we are sending a mixed message. Who is accountable if people do not come to Christ because the message is confusing?

A second point, beyond doctrine: teaching... the Anabaptists had a time when they were not relating so well together. They sat together, looked at the Word of God, and they disputed. Evidently they were not on the same page. They had different views, but their heart was united. They wanted to present, believe, and be one. It seemed good to the Holy Ghost. Besides doctrine, by their fruits shall ye know them. Not everyone that says Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom. Doctrine is good, but there is more than teaching. Note everyone that says Lord, Lord. You shall have love toward one another, reflecting Jesus Christ. Another thing in John 15: herein is my Father glorified. We come back to this saying: we used repeatedly, that is, obedience. For the most part, we have it fairly clear with doctrine and obedience. We do well to remember the way we believe and behave reflects on our Lord. It's what gives people a concept of the God we profess to serve.

Third, we can see well what others see wrong or do not believe, or who is doing it right. We say we believe all things, when we talk about believing all things of the Bible, getting only as far as nonresistance and nonconformity--but we must believe the whole counsel of God. About reflecting Jesus, we do it more than anything by what we are, what we say, what we do. But did you think about it-- that we can say a lot of things for the wrong reason. People do that. What can you do that is better than praying? Jesus said, you're praying to be seen of men. Did it help? Not that we should be careless about doctrine. Adin said many times, "Away with this dead correctness." He was not saying away with the correctness, but away with the deadness. There must be a relationship with Jesus, or the rest won't cut it. Jesus said you will receive power. My question is: When I think of us as having doctrine and obedience, may I ask where is the power?

I am not insinuating there is nothing. Fifty years ago when these meetings started, there were no mission outreaches. You would never hear what God was doing in another area. I thank God for these efforts, but we are in danger of apathy and lukewarmness. When we preach, do people say, "What shall we do?" I'm reading about a Gospel Paul said he is not embarrassed of. It has transforming power. In the Scripture, Acts says, you shall receive power to forgiveness--repent. When you see folks walking down the aisle in an altar call, looking around and laughing, that's not the power that changes life.

I'd like to talk about John the first chapter. When Jesus came on the scene, someone said that we found Him of whom the Scriptures have spoken. Then Jesus arrived and saw Nathaniel there and said, "Behold an Isrealite indeed in whom there is no guile." Jesus singled out this man and said those words. On the other hand, I hope it can be a challenge, that we do like the songwriter: Is He satisfied with you? What do you see nowadays in the Church? It's important to get the doctrine okay and insist of obedience, but it is impetrative that we look at our Lord and reflect His image--which we do not do by turning on our own light.

8:27pm: **Moderator (Bill Mullet, Bethel Fellowship, OH)**

Several weeks ago, I could not believe the reflection in the mirror, and I wonder sometimes what God sees when He hears what He is going to reflect. I've never looked good, but I really did look bad. Thank you for sharing from your heart and the Word.

Announcements.

1. Thanks to God for His presence, speakers, workshop leaders, those who organized the meetings (Mark Miller the logistics coordinator, Bobby Miller the coordinator for the program committee, Phil Beachy the coordinator for the business meeting and IT and registration, Joe Miller the facility coordinator and display organizer, and Phil Miller who was the chair of tying this all together, Joel the song leaders, ushers, cooks, Dan and Rita Miller who oversaw the cooking, IT man, Victory Music, child care workers, and all you for attending. The Fairlawn Church for their facilities and Pastor Dwayne here.
2. Drop off name tags as you leave.
3. Ministry directories are still available.
4. Meetings next year in Stuarts Draft, VA, April 1-3, 2014.
5. It was nice to have the widows come.
6. How many people were here? 550 served yesterday evening, 650 plus last night.

*Stand for prayer.*

8:37pm: **Singing (Joel Gingerich)**

1. When the Role is Called Up Yonder