

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

*James 1:22*

# Anabaptist Voice

Championing A Faith That Works

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## NOTICE:

*This publication is distributed without charge. It is supported by interested brethren and freewill donations. Donations can be made using the contact info below.*

*Our desire is to keep organizational structure to a minimum. We feel this will allow for maximum efficiency of publication with a minimum of restrictions in editorial content. An independent council has agreed to provide direction to the editor and staff of Anabaptist Voice.*



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## Circulation & Financial Statement

Following is a snapshot of our projected circulation and cost for this issue. Cost includes, layout, printing and postage. The following issue will contain the actual information about this issue.

**Printing:** 5,000 | **Est. Cost Per Copy:** \$1.50 | **Printed By:** Haines Printing Co., North East, PA

# About *Anabaptist Voice*

## Introduction:

In the fall of 2015, several brethren felt a call to launch a distinctly new, Anabaptist magazine. After much discussion and prayer, we would like to present our vision. The following statements are to provide direction and stimulate conversation among those who take an interest in seeing this magazine continue. If you are interested in laboring together with us, please respond using the contact information on previous page.

**The Name:** *Anabaptist Voice*.

**The Masthead:** “Championing A Faith that Works”

## Our Purpose Statement:

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

## The Tone

The tone of the magazine shall be positive in that:

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

Our motto shall be the words of Isaiah 30:21.

*Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying,  
“This is the way, walk in it,”*

*Whenever you turn to the right hand  
Or whenever you turn to the left.*

## The Audience:

The primary target audience would be anyone associated with an Anabaptist church. We define an Anabaptist church as one that practices a believer’s baptism, maintains separation from the world, and is seeking to live out the New Testament teachings of Christ and the Apostles. Our aim is to reach a broad constituency comprised of many Anabaptist church groups.

The secondary target audience would be those not familiar with Anabaptist churches, but are searching the Scriptures for truth.

## The Goal:

To reinforce Christ’s call to forsake the world and be a loyal citizen of Christ’s heavenly kingdom. Many people have not heard how Scripture is meant to be understood and applied in a simple, childlike faith. The aim is that *Anabaptist Voice* would stir all who read it to a greater kingdom awareness and a greater desire to obey Christ in all things.

## The Distribution:

We want to send *Anabaptist Voice* in bulk to as many churches as will receive and distribute it. Another possible way to start the mailing list would be to mail sample copies to all men in the church directories. We will seek to enlarge the mailing list as the Lord gives direction and means. We hope to begin with an initial printing of 5,000 copies and would hope to double that in time. *Anabaptist Voice* will begin as a quarterly publication. If there is sufficient reader response and plenty of quality, original material, we may publish more frequently.

## The Finances:

*Anabaptist Voice* will be open to all who desire to receive it without any paid subscription. Donations will be accepted by those who wish to support the work. A few brethren have committed to initially support *Anabaptist Voice* and to provide the financial backing needed so this project can be carried out.

In addition to the expense of printing and mailing *Anabaptist Voice*, the editor and his staff will be reimbursed for their time as needed.

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

## The Format:

The editor will be responsible for selecting articles and choosing the proper format for *Anabaptist Voice*.

## The Organization:

A minimum amount of structure in the organization will permit operating efficiently without undue restrictions. We are beginning with at least three brethren who will serve as counselors to the editor.

The editor will be responsible for assuring the magazine adheres to the stated purpose and will be responsible for overall content, securing writers, and proper copy editing. The editor will also be responsible for hiring assistants as needed.

## Our Statement of Beliefs:

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

1. In the 23 articles listed in the Christian Aid Ministries Statement of Faith (*available upon request from CAM or at [www.christianaidministries.org](http://www.christianaidministries.org)*).

2. The kingdom of God is now in effect on the earth (Matthew 5-7), and will be more fully experienced in a future state in the presence of God (Revelation 4).

3. The whole world outside the kingdom of God lies under the sway of Satan (1 John 5:19).

4. God’s “New Covenant” with the people of God (the church) changes God’s “Old Covenant” with the Israelites (Hebrews 8).

5. The Bible can and should be understood and put into practice (Matthew 7:24).

6. The church is to be a holy people who call all the ungodly to repentance, self-surrender, and obedience to King Jesus. (1 Peter 2:9)



## Will It Be Read?

Good thinking. It is important to get the purpose statement of each magazine out into the open for all to see. Once a magazine understands its slot, or niche, then it is free to move forward.

I think you should move ahead with your vision. The biggest problem I see is getting people to actually read the magazine as it will experience formidable competition in this information-saturated environment. Give it a try and in one year reassess the situation.

Chester Weaver, LaGrange, IN

**Anabaptist Voice:** Getting readers to read the magazine is indeed a formidable challenge.

## Will It Be Denominational?

Salutations in Jesus' name, the One of whom Paul spoke to the Athenians as being "He who hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth ... that they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after Him and find Him though He be not far from every one of us."

Having been closely following your varied discussions regarding the *Anabaptist Voice*, I was led to read Acts 17:16-27. In view of the fact that there are multitudes of people around the world who do serve an unknown God, when we speak of the God that we know, it is certainly bringing strange things to the ears of those who have not heard such an invitation. Nevertheless, the Word does need to be spread, and I believe that God would have us use, in a legitimate way, the things that are in this world to bring that Word to them on His behalf.

I understand that the vision for a publication such as *Anabaptist Voice* included not being identified with any particular grouping or fellowship. We do wish you well in your endeavors to launch *Anabaptist Voice*, but let it not be just another outlet for one particular Mennonite group or another.

In Christ,

Joseph Van Loon, Deloraine, Tasmania, Australia

**Anabaptist Voice:** Our target audience includes all people who strive to follow and obey King Jesus, whether they use the name Anabaptist or not.

## Will It Get Us beyond Great Ideas?

Every time the [magazine] project is brought up I have been excited about it. It is a great thing to create change through good literature. Nations have risen and fallen influenced from nothing but good literature. We need journals like this. So I bless you.

Since you asked, I'll give you some thoughts about the journal in general. I feel it is time to get back to the genuine roots of Anabaptism. As Conrad Grebel said in an early letter written at the beginning of the Anabaptist revival of 1525, "I believe the Word of God without a difficult interpretation, and out of this I speak." Later in the letter he wrote, "The words of Jesus were meant to be put into practice." These two very simple statements defined early Anabaptism. I pray that they will define us once again. If the Anabaptists are ever to regain the world-changing force we once had, we must recapture this laser-sharp simplicity.

So how can a new paper do this? Let's champion genuine attempts to put these basics into practice. Polemics have their place, and a journal is the place where issues and theologies are discussed. If the paper is truly representing a genuine work of God, it will be full of more than coffee table revivals, paper reformation, and good ideas.

If we look, we will have fun showcasing saints hidden in our movement. The Anabaptists are full of lights shining in the darkness—brilliant young people, innovative businessmen, daring missionaries, fresh ideas, and centuries of wisdom. Find these pockets of life and inspiration and bring them to the light. Encourage genuine journalism [seeking out and writing about those who *did* or are currently *doing* what Jesus said] that will interview our saints and *tell their story*. Encourage new talent that is trying to break out of the hamster wheel and try new things—great things that put the teachings of Jesus into practice. If the paper does this, I believe Christ will be glorified.

Your brother,

Dean Taylor, Altona, MN

**Anabaptist Voice:** Interpretation and practice of the Word of God is indeed the core of Anabaptist teaching. Under the direction and blessing of the Holy Spirit, we intend to stick close to these two parts, as put forth in the purpose statement for *Anabaptist Voice*.

*I believe  
the Word of God  
without a difficult  
interpretation.*

*The words of Jesus were  
meant to be put into  
practice.*

-Conrad Grebel

# Who Is an Anabaptist?

by James G. Landis

*A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches. — Proverbs 22:1*

In 1927, the M.B. Bergey Company in Souderton, Pennsylvania, owned a hosiery mill that manufactured stockings for women. According to my father, the Bergey company bought the name “Granite Hosiery” from a New York company for \$10,000. Think of it—\$10,000 redeemable in one-ounce gold coins worth \$20 each. Those 500 gold coins today are worth \$1200 each or \$600,000 - for just a name!

Maybe the name “Granite Hosiery” was worth \$600,000 because of what it represented. Maybe not. But our interest here is: What is a good name to describe a Bible-believing, Bible-practicing follower of Jesus in today’s world? Is “Anabaptist” a good name to describe such a believer?

So what does the name “Anabaptist” mean to us? Who is an Anabaptist? First, I shall define who an Anabaptist is by looking at what the historic Anabaptists believed and practiced in the sixteenth century. Then I will discuss what it means to be an Anabaptist today.

## Historic Anabaptism

*Those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.*

*- Acts 8:4*

When we attempt to define historic Anabaptism, we must note that “Anabaptist” was a name given to a people by their enemies. To be called an “Anabaptist” smeared the person and marked him as uncooperative, a rebellious citizen, and a heretic. “Anabaptist” was a bad name and often brought on hiding, exile, imprisonment, confiscation of property, torture, and death. Anabaptists expected such suffering and called it “cross-bearing.”

We are proposing that three sets of “B”s stand out in the historic Swiss Anabaptist movement that began in 1525:

1. Believer Baptism
2. Bible Believer
3. Brotherhood Belt

## 1. Believer Baptism

*Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

*- Matthew 4:17*

Believer baptism lay at the very core of Anabaptism. In 1525, six adult brethren baptized each other upon their own confession of faith. Their confessions and

vows meant these brethren would surrender their lives to Christ and follow Him. To the early Anabaptists, baptism marked the beginning of a new and changed life that included repentance, surrender, and obedience. To them, baptism could not mean just a verbal commitment, but rather a life-changing event. From then on, they had the will to live in obedience to the Word of God under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. Baptism marked the beginning of a new life.

This “rebaptism” meant these brethren had rejected their baptism as infants, as well as the authority of the Reformed and the Catholic churches to rule over their lives. Instead, they sought to establish a New Testament church based on the supreme authority of the Word of God. This revolutionary heresy tore apart the fabric of their society in which the priests, preachers, princes, and popes claimed divine authority to make the Word of God whatever they wanted it to be. The rite of a believer baptism signified to everyone the rejection of state and state-church authority to govern matters of conscience.

Therefore, in the sixteenth century, to be called an Anabaptist meant that one had been baptized upon a voluntary confession of faith instead of as an infant. There is a huge difference between the two baptisms. The meaning of a believer baptism lay in the voluntary vow, while the significance of infant baptism lay in an act by a priest. “Rebaptism”<sup>1</sup> denied the validity of infant baptism and the very grace it supposedly conferred upon the innocent head.

Thus believer baptism fired the soul of historic Anabaptists.

## 2. Bible Believer

*You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.*

*- John 15:14*

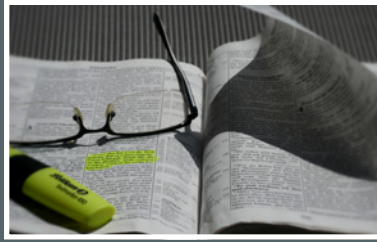
Think what it would be like if the only Bible available were in Latin. What would it be like if the only people trained to read Latin were clerics, monks, and scholars? How ready would you be to trust the rulers to correctly dispense the truth to you, especially if rich officials living openly corrupt lives demanded subservience and built cathedrals that took hundreds of years to build?

<sup>1</sup> Anabaptists did not consider putting water on the head of an infant a baptism at all. Therefore, a believer baptism was not rebaptism, but the first real baptism.

## THREE SETS OF B'S THAT MARK ANABAPTISTS



. BELIEVER BAPTISM .



. BIBLE BELIEVER .



. BROTHERHOOD BELT .

In such discouraging times, God inspired Johann Gutenberg, and others using his invention, to print Bibles. Then God raised up scholars like Zwingli, Manz, and Grebel who could study the Bible in the original languages. God appointed others, such as Luther and Tyndale, to translate the Bible into English, German, and Dutch.

Suddenly copies of the Bible became available in the native languages at a price many could afford. Now even peasants could read the Word of God. They took it in simple childlike faith to mean what it said. They obeyed its teachings and commandments. Many peasants learned to read so they could do like the Bereans and see if the new things they were hearing were true.

The Bible stood at the center of Anabaptist faith as the rock upon which they built their practice. Their simple interpretation of the New Testament as teaching to be obeyed and put into practice set them apart from all the other reformers—Luther, Knox, Calvin, Zwingli.

To become an Anabaptist meant disregarding state and church authority and placing their supreme trust in the Word of God (Jesus). Believers no longer attended the state church services, refused to have their babies baptized, refused military service, declined serving as civil officers, and ordained, married, and baptized without the sanction of the state or the organized church.

The Anabaptists were not attempting to reform the unscriptural Catholic church; they were building the kingdom of Christ on earth. That kingdom was, above all, a peaceable kingdom where men did not join armies to kill, steal, and destroy. Every believer was to be part of a holy kingdom where all believers were expected to live a pure life free from drunkenness, fornication, and swearing. Anabaptists separated themselves from the world and the civil and religious governments that ruled by force.

With the open Bible before them and their simple faith, both the learned and the unlearned among them were unafraid to debate with and challenge the priests

and nobles of their day. The Bible gave Anabaptists a surety that made them willing to suffer and die for the Kingdom of Christ.

### 3. Brotherhood Belt

*Your love for one another proves to the world that you are my disciples.*

*- John 13:35*

To become a hated Anabaptist ushered in a sense of brotherhood familiar only to those who looked at the New Testament churches as models to be copied. This brotherhood of being one in Christ was something distinctly radical to the Catholic and Reformed churches of Switzerland.

Among the believers, a great need arose for the strength of the body. They yearned to be together to hear the teaching of the Word, to feel the power of song, and to share the joys and sorrows of life with one another—in caves, in houses, in barns, and in forests—a fellowship they never found in the majestic cathedrals.

They established an alms fund to help the needy among them. Collectively, they shared what they had to help those whose loved ones suffered confiscation of their goods, exile, imprisonment, torture, and death. Though many Anabaptists suffered terribly under torture, they still refused to divulge the names and whereabouts of their brethren.

In the beginning, there was no formal church government to organize this movement. Most of the early leaders were martyred or died soon after they took up the cause. It is true that some believers who followed men and left Biblical obedience went astray. Some like the Münsterites used force in an attempt to set up the kingdom of God on earth and thus gave the Anabaptist movement a bad name. But as a whole, the movement was directed by Biblical obedience and local leadership rather than by centralized authority.

Anabaptists rejected a distinct line of ascending authority such as that practiced by the Catholics—priest, bishop, archbishop, cardinal, and pope. Anabaptists knew one another as “brethren” and called their ministers and deacons to serve the brotherhood as equals, rather than calling leaders to positions of authority, power, and wealth. Servants came from the local brotherhood. Yes, the writings of Menno Simons and others did give some direction to the churches, but the writings had no church power to force its decisions on the local congregations. That authority came later in the movement, along with outstanding problems.

Anabaptists believed the New Testament teaching that errant sinners should be publicly put out of the brotherhood until they repented and could be lovingly restored. That desire to maintain purity of life within Christ’s kingdom set Anabaptists apart from all the state churches, where sinful members could not be separated from a sinful world under the dominion of Satan.

The common belief in the Kingdom of Christ and the practice of holy living united Anabaptists. These brethren were also drawn together by horrible persecution which Satan stirred against them. The result of these two forces created a strong brotherhood among the Anabaptists that stood distinctly separate from the world around them.

## Anabaptism Today

*You are our letter, ... known and read by all men.*  
- II Corinthians 3:2

We are attempting to define what an Anabaptist is today. We have looked at three distinct aspects in the faith and practice of those who were first called Anabaptists.

**1. Believer Baptism.** All Anabaptists hold that baptism must be upon a confession of one’s faith as an adult. Furthermore, baptism to an Anabaptist includes repentance, surrender, and obedience. It is the beginning of a new life that includes the possibility of falling back into a life of sin.

These statements about believer baptism stand in contrast to a baptism that is only an event in infancy

or adulthood where pardon and grace for sin are bestowed upon the individual by the pouring of water or submersion in it. And then the event is over. It is the difference between saying and doing.

The meaning of baptism to an Anabaptist is a lifelong vow to follow Jesus and keep His commandments. It is not just saying; it is doing.

**2. Bible Believer.** An Anabaptist accepts the written Word of God as his final rule of faith and practice. The Anabaptist views the New Testament as being God’s will for the present day church that is living in the Kingdom of God on earth — *now*. This means that the teachings of the New Testament are to be put into practice and not relegated to some future age.

Some of the plain marks of this life are: a literal woman’s prayer veiling, a modest life style, honesty, non-resistance, Lord’s Day observance, the holy kiss, men as leaders, disciplined children, pure sexual life, and a secure family life. These are only some of the things that set Anabaptists apart from the world and its allurements and mark them as different than most contemporary churches.

**3. Brotherhood Belt.** Because Anabaptists are bound together as one under the Lordship of Christ, a special love for one another exists. That love means self-sacrifice for the good of others in the church. We call that special love “brotherhood.”

One belt of brotherhood stands for close-knit relationships and involvement in each other’s lives. It means intertwined lives that share common joys, sorrows, experiences, hopes, goals, and resources. It is close communion in everyday life where brethren really learn to know each other as soul mates, rather than in a shallow world of virtual existence. Brotherhood to an Anabaptist is much more than a once-a-week meeting and an annual picnic.

Leadership to an Anabaptist means a plural servant ministry instead of a professional clergy. We call our leaders “brothers” and “ministers” (servants), instead of “Reverend” or “Father.” Jesus taught us to stay away from elevating leaders to positions of power where they lord it over the souls of others.

Brotherhood binds Anabaptists together when danger threatens. When Satan attacks a believer through sickness, storm, or persecution, the brotherhood is there to support him. In need, a believer turns first to the brotherhood, rather than depending on insurance companies, government agencies, or community groups.

Brotherhood unites Anabaptists in a common desire to share our goods and the Gospel with those helpless



suffering ones whether they are victims of disease, disaster, hunger, or war. Our hearts and our hands go out to them. For Jesus said, “If you see your brother in need and do not share your possessions with him, the love of God does not dwell in you (I John 3:17).

## Practical Application:

*Take up your cross daily and follow Me*

*- Luke 9:23.*

I am suggesting that the same “B”s that characterized an early Anabaptist—Believer Baptism, Bible Believer, Brotherhood Belt—also tell what an Anabaptist is today. Yet there is one thing quite different today from those early times.

In the 1500’s, “Anabaptist” was a name placed upon the believers by those seeking to destroy them. In that time the name brought forth a vision of disgrace, suffering, and deliverance through death.

Today, to be called an Anabaptist does not automatically conjure bad images in the mind—burning crosses on your lawn, lynchings, police raids, jail time, or confiscation of property. In most of the “Christian” world the name has been sanitized of most of its stigma. It now designates in the mind of many people a respected, although somewhat peculiar religious group.

But what does “Anabaptist” mean to us who have chosen to use this name to describe who we are?

It seems to me that our weakness is fear of persecution. As a result, we back off whenever society or the

government passes out its ungodly decrees. So we become quiet on health care, conscription, environmental decrees, insurance, war, and the judgment to come ... lest we anger others and lose our privileges and subsidies.

We ought to pray for boldness to proclaim the Word of God as they did in Acts 4:29, come what may. God heard their prayer and shook the walls of the place where they worshiped. Then, “They spoke the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

Part of being an Anabaptist, an obedient disciple of Jesus, is persecution—hatred, threats, jail, hunger, injustice. An Anabaptist should expect it, for Jesus said, “... the world hates you ... If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:18-20).

I ask then, “What does it mean to be an Anabaptist?” Count the cost. Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23). Are you ready to take up your cross every day and be called an “Anabaptist”?

~ JGL, Waynesboro, GA

## Questions for Readers:

1. What practice should be added to help define Anabaptism? Why?
2. Why do Anabaptists not experience much persecution today?
3. Should Anabaptists condemn sin by persons in government?



. COPPER ETCHING BY JAN LUIKEN .

. DROWNING OF JORIS WIPPE DURING FLEMISH INQUISITION .

- FROM “MARTYRS MIRROR”

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In need, a believer turns first  
to the brotherhood, rather  
than depending on insurance  
companies, government agencies,  
or community groups.

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# The New vs. The Old

by Chester Weaver

Are the Old and New Testaments at variance with each other? What is better about the New Testament compared with the Old Testament? Did God change His intentions with the change in testaments, or did He raise the standards of expectation in the New? Are the Old and New Testaments opposed to each other? Is the Old Testament for the Jews and the New Testament for the Christians?

The first use of love (Genesis 22:2) is located in the Old Testament. The love in focus in this verse is family love. God had just asked Abraham to go sacrifice the son he loved. This same Hebrew word is used for Isaac's experience with Rebecca two chapters later. Three chapters later, love is used to describe how Isaac felt about Esau's venison meals.

The next book, Exodus, uses love to describe how people feel about God (Exodus 20:6). Leviticus 19:18 exhorts the Old Testament saints to love their neighbors as themselves. Then Deuteronomy 4:27 uses love to express how God felt about the Jewish people. The Old Testament ends by stating that God loves His dwelling place on earth, at that time desecrated by Jewish apostasy (Malachi 2:11). In between the first and last Old Testament references are over 150 uses of the same Hebrew word.

What is going on here? Is not love a New Testament concept? Does not law encapsulate the Old Testament Jewish experience, "This do and thou shalt live"? Were not grace and love new realities ushered into the world with the teachings and experience of Jesus Christ? The Old Testament had been written upon tables of stone whereas the New Testament law was written upon the "tables of the human heart."

The reality is that love has always been part and parcel of the way God related to man, how man should relate to other men, and how God expected man to relate to Himself. The historical reality is the sad Jewish story of failed love, first from man to God and then man to man. In the fullness of time God worked to change the sad reality by embodying love and sending Love into the groaning creation, creating Part 2 of the human story.

And that is where we find ourselves today. Part 3 of the human/cosmic story has not yet arrived.

But capacity to love, the power to love, and the experience of loving took a huge leap forward with the change of Testaments. Why and how? The Holy Spirit of God was poured out from heaven upon men to energize them to love in ways they could not previously. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came upon men in special circumstances to enable them to do special work for God. Samson and the prophet Jeremiah are examples of men doing special work for God. But the common Israelite man or woman did not experience Holy Spirit presence in a personal way. Instead, they saw it from a distance, as in the cloud/pillar of fire leading the Israelites in the desert or hearing the words of a Spirit-directed prophet.

With the pouring out of the Holy Spirit of God at

Pentecost, forty days after Jesus ascended to the Father, every single believer had the glorious opportunity to experience an in-filling of the Holy Spirit of God into his/her own life! The Spirit of God would empower each believer, first of all, to understand in a new way the truths of God, and secondly to experience the truths of God in everyday experience.

God had come close to humans in the Person of His Son Jesus. Now He came even closer by dwelling *within* a believer's heart.

The Holy Spirit of God would enlighten the believer's mind to comprehend the great liberating truths of God. Those great liberating truths require a transformed mind, a mind possessing spiritual discernment. Once the deeper truths of God are understood, the believer actually experiences a pattern shift wherein he sees all of life from a different perspective. No longer is life about pleasing self (the natural pattern), but it is about promoting the Kingdom of Christ which is outside of himself. The Kingdom of Christ focuses upon the needs of others, the welfare of others, and empowerment of others. In other words the Kingdom of Christ is all about selfless serving.

In this way the New Testament saints live on a much higher spiritual plain than the Old Testament saints. The standard of morality is higher, the standards of ethics are



Does the New Testament confront the Old Testament head on?

higher, and ability to love is more encompassing. Instead of killing enemies, the New Testament believer loves enemies. Instead of being bound by oaths to tell the truth or to carry out obligations, the New Testament believer lives a life of integrity every day. Instead of needing laws to force right behavior, the New Testament believer delights to do the will of God, especially the opportunities of the Higher Ethic, such as forgiveness, the Golden Rule, Good Samaritan work, humility, *Gelassenheit*, pulling beams out of one's own eye, and blessing others in any way possible. No limits exist for the Higher Ethic. The Higher Ethic cannot be enforced. The Higher Ethic is far above laws, rules, and regulations because the believer *delights* to do the will of God, just as Jesus Himself once said, "I delight to do Thy will, O God."

The practice of the Higher Ethic makes a powerful impression upon observing people because it is so unnatural. In Reformation times the persecutors needed to cease killing believers in public because the glorious dying of the martyrs caused the observers to desire such inner power for themselves, thus spreading the very cause they were trying to destroy. Moravian missionaries volunteered to go to places from which they would never return, but in the process made deep inroads into enemy territory. In many homes, children observed parents rise above formidable obstacles as they lived a daily faith, causing children to embrace the faith of their parents.

And thus the New Testament faith has come down to our day. Even though the Jews (ever since Christ fulfilled the Old Testament) remain committed to the

Old Covenant, the New Covenant is available for them also. In fact, it is available to anyone who is willing to abandon himself and his own cause to adopt God's eternal cause as his own. The New Covenant is not about race; it is about relationship with the One who fulfilled all the requirements set by the Old Covenant. It remains superior to the Old Covenant in so many ways, especially as a step up in the quality of human-to-human relationships, as well as the all-important human-to-God relationship.

How much longer will Part 2 of God's plan remain in place? No one knows. At any day Part 3 may be ushered in. If Part 2 is so much more glorious than Part 1 (the Old Testament), what will Part 3 be like? Most likely Part 3 will once again be so much more glorious than Part 2!

I do not want to miss the experience of Part 3 for anything. Do you?

~ CW, Lagrange, IN

### Practical Application:

Name some things you do or do not do because you are living under the New Covenant.

***Note:** This article explains one aspect of the differences between the two covenants. We welcome additional articles containing other thoughts about the relationship between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.*

~ AV

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## *Anabaptists Believe*

We believe and promote the Bible as God's written Word and that it is the final authority for all mankind.

We believe God gave His Word so the average person can read and understand it and that we need to obey it in a child-like faith.

We further believe God is powerful and able enough to give mankind His Word without error. Let it be our standard for truth!

-- From *A Call to Holy Living*  
by Phil Haines, Waynesboro, GA.



# Crowned with the Cross

by Peter Hoover

King Otto, with his great power and wealth, wanted to carry the greatest and most dazzling crown on earth. Since he was a “devout Christian,” he insisted that the cross of Christ needed to be the “crown of his crown.”

A gifted monk spent a long time crafting King Otto’s crown, with all the largest and brightest jewels, the most expensive pearls, and more gold and velvet than any crown had ever sported before. The king was immensely pleased. Even though the crown was heavy and uncomfortable, he loved to wear it on all important occasions. But, did he miss anything?

Jesus indeed spoke of carrying one’s cross: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?” (Lu. 9:23-26)

Living over a thousand years after Emperor Otto the Great, we have no problem discerning whether he was wearing the real cross, the true cross of Jesus, or not. It is easy for us to say his cross was earthly; it will all eventually burn, and he will not be carrying it when he stands before the judgment seat of Christ. But, what about the foolish ornamental crosses we also find ourselves wearing, off and on—as if they were so many lucky charms?

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**Item of Interest:** King Otto wasn’t the first king to desire an ornate crown. Although the interpretation is not certain, the crown described in II Samuel 12 may have weighed as much as 75 lbs.!

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The crown of Otto the Great, Duke of Saxony, King of Germany, King of Italy, and the Holy Roman Emperor from AD 936 to 973—the most famous and successful person on earth during the tenth century.

What about things we confess, things we defend, things we wear, or the fellowship we choose—there are so many ways of wearing ornamental crosses. These may be good enough in their own way, but totally incapable of saving us from our sins. On the other hand, the real cross—“la verdadera cruz” as we call it in Spanish—only comes with inner contrition, with true pain, embarrassment, and shame.

True crucifixion never occurs amongst us as long as the majority of the people around us think the world of us. But, on the other hand, the true cross always leads us to what happened with Jesus in Gethsemane: dying to ourselves so that Christ may live in us. And once that happens, we live in peace with Him and those around us. Do not worry, crucifixion certainly hurts, but it is not the end. It is the *beginning* of a truly wonderful life with Christ.

Fifty years ago, when a good number of historic church fellowships dropped many of their distinctives, they began to set wooden or steel crosses on their old

meetinghouses, or to dangle golden crosses from their necks—while violence against the order of Christ ran wild amongst them. Watch out for false crosses!

King Otto died in his home town of Memleben, on May 7, 973, in what is now the German province of Sachsen-Anhalt. I do not know what he said or thought in his last moments on earth, but one thing I know: he and all of us will stand before Jesus when He comes again. No more glitter. No more gold. No more religious symbolism of false crosses.

Nothing but the naked truth of who we really are.

Let us pray, repent, and take up the true cross of Christ, for our salvation!

~PH, Tasmania, Australia



# Does SIN Prove FAITH?

by Andrew V. Ste. Marie

*This imaginary conversation exposes the error of the teaching that “faith alone” guarantees one’s salvation. While many Protestants would not carry this teaching to its logical conclusion, if one follows through, the conclusion is inescapable. -AV*

**Worldly man.** Men and brethren! What must I do to be saved?

**Anabaptist.** If you would enter into life, keep the commandments.

**Worldly man.** Which ones?

**Anabaptist.** Repent, and turn to God, and do works that show you have repented. Stop doing evil; learn to do well.

**Worldly man.** I live with my girlfriend; I shoplift often; I steal from my employer; and I am very covetous. Must I stop doing these things?

**Anabaptist.** Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words – fornicators, thieves, and covetous men, who are idolaters, shall not inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.

**Protestant.** Now wait a minute, Friend **Anabaptist**. Are you teaching salvation by works?

**Anabaptist.** How is that?

**Protestant.** Why, you just told Mr. Worldly that he must stop sinning to be saved. That is a doctrine of works.

**Anabaptist.** I still do not understand. How would you explain it to Mr. Worldly?

**Protestant.** We are saved by faith alone. Nothing we do has any bearing on our salvation, now or ever.

**Anabaptist.** So you are saying that to stop sinning is doing something, and thus is works salvation?

**Protestant.** Yes.

**Anabaptist.** Well, continuing in sin is doing something too. So is having faith, for that matter.

**Protestant.** Now it is I who does not understand. What are you getting at?

**Anabaptist.** Hold on a minute, and you shall see. First, let me ask this: Are you saying that if Mr. Worldly stops fornicating, stealing, and coveting, that it would prove that he is embracing a salvation based on works?

**Protestant.** Yes.

**Anabaptist.** So if he would continue in these sins, yet believe in Christ, that would prove that he is seeking salvation by faith alone?

**Protestant.** None of us are perfect. We will continue in sin all our lives. God understands that and forgives us because of our faith.

**Anabaptist.** That is not an answer to the question. Is continuing to live in sin proof that one is seeking salvation by faith?

**Protestant.** [Uncomfortable] I cannot say yes...but it does prove that one is not seeking salvation by his own efforts. He is simply trusting in the merits of Christ.

**Anabaptist.** I will take that as a qualified “yes.” So in other words, you are saying that faith would motivate a life of sin.

**Protestant.** Not exactly – he may stop his sins later, after coming to faith. But those living in faith do still sin.

**Anabaptist.** The Scriptures say that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Therefore, all sin is not of faith. The two are radical opposites. If one is sinning, he is not believing; if he is believing, he is not sinning. Faith cannot motivate sin, and sin is never an evidence of faith. If Mr. Worldly continued in sin, that would give the clearest proof that he does not have faith. If he repents, it must be by faith. Therefore, faith permeates all the counsel which I gave to Mr. Worldly at the beginning of our conversation. One can only repent by faith. *Faith is obedience; faith is righteousness; faith is doing the will of God.* Whatsoever is not of faith is sin; what is done by faith cannot be sin.

**Protestant.** Stop! You’re calling my own faith into question now.

**Anabaptist.** Maybe I am, yet it is not I, but the Word of God that judges you. I do not know your life; if the Holy Spirit is convicting you of faithlessness and unbelief, then give the glory to God and repent.

**Protestant.** You are teaching works righteousness and will probably go to Hell for your rejection of Christ’s Blood and seeking to gain Heaven by your own efforts.

**Anabaptist.** Say so if you will; God is Judge, and will be the Revealer of the secrets of all hearts on the Last Day. If Christ and His Apostles were teachers of works, I will be one too.

**Worldly man.** God, be merciful to me, a sinner! Help me to repent by faith!

— Adapted from *The Witness*, PO Box 246 Manchester, MI 48158.

## **For further study:**

The following scripture references give a biblical basis for the above discussion:

Matthew 19:17. Acts 26:20. Isaiah 1:16-17. Ephesians 5:5-6. I Corinthians 6:9-10. Romans 6:1-2. I John 3:3-10. Romans 14:23. I Corinthians 4:5.

~ A.V.S. Manchester, MI

# HEARTFELT or HEARTLESS Obedience?

by Mike Atnip

*This article shows how a heartless legalistic obedience fills only the letter of the law, while a heartfelt obedience joyfully fills the spirit of the commandment. -AV*

In I Samuel 15:13, King Saul told Samuel that he had done what God had told him to do. Yet, the prophet heard bleating from sheep that were supposed to have been sacrificed. Do we do the same thing today? Consider this true story.

Last winter I told my 14 year-old son, “Daniel, it is supposed to be very cold over the weekend. Fill the firewood in the back room up to the windows so we don’t run out of wood when it is cold.”

Since Daniel was feeling cold and a bit sluggish, as boys sometimes do at chore-time, he wasn’t excited about my plan. Eventually he made his way to the wood pile and began his task.

Not long afterwards I made a trip to the back room for some wood to fill the stove. Daniel was finishing his task, or at least he thought so. “Daniel,” I chided him, “That’s not near enough wood; you need to fill it up.”

“But I did fill it up to the window,” he replied.

I looked. Sure enough, he had the wood stacked up to the window. I laughed and told him, “That’s what you call legalism! Go fill it up right.”

Yes, he had stacked the wood up to the windows in a neat stack one piece wide. I think Daniel had to smile to himself.

He returned to the woodpile and I went for the camera to record a perfect example of legalism. Now before you dump this paper in the trash, thinking I am about to call discipleship “legalism,” hang on a minute. Heartfelt obedience is not legalism. However, heartless obedience is legalism. Daniel obeyed my command to fill the wood to the windows ... legally. Look at the picture again. Is not the firewood stacked up to the window?

## Legalism Defined

But Daniel’s heartless obedience missed the point. Legalism can be defined as “trying to get by with as little as is legally possible.” It’s like my aunt, who proclaimed

that police do not stop people until they are going at least five miles per hour over the posted speed limit. She wanted to be legal, so she would set her cruise control at 59 miles per hour in a 55 mile-per-hour speed zone. Trying to get by with as much as she could and still be “legal,” she was a legalist to the core.

Well, legalism runs in my family. I have been guilty of it too many times myself. For example: when we moved

to Bolivia, South America in January of 2000 we knew that it was illegal to import guns into Bolivia. Since we planned to live in the country and get some wild game for meat, we wanted to take a .22 rifle along to do some hunting. But we also knew that it was not illegal to import gun parts into Bolivia. So, we took the rifle apart. I took some gun parts into Bolivia, and another family took some gun parts. Lo and behold, when we got into Bolivia we found we had enough parts to make a whole gun! Legal? Yes. Legalism to the core! While we obeyed the laws of Bolivia, we missed the point and made ourselves into hard-core legalists by our heartless obedience.

Heartless obedience to the letter of the law affects the whole human family, and the descendants of the original Christians in the Swiss

territories were not exempt. Instead of fully surrendering to King Jesus in heartfelt obedience and obeying his teachings, people began to look for loopholes. As more and more people squeezed through the loopholes, the holes were made larger and larger. Finally, the holes were turned into large gates which everybody passed through without even realizing that the holes were never intended to be passageways. That is the way heartless obedience works.

For example: Jesus taught that we should love our enemies and do good to those who hate us. But people



The firewood, filled to the window.  
Or is it?

began to say that revenge was fine as long as it was done “justly.” They argued, “You can kill someone in self-defense, as long as you love the person while you hack off his head.” From there it was broadened into outright warfare, as long as you were doing it in the name of Jesus. And by such reasoning or lack of it, people joined crusades to take back the Holy Lands. In fact, one could even get an indulgence for all his sins if he joined a holy crusade to murder and steal.

Strange, isn’t it, how heartless obedience can turn into a gate to the broad way. Yet it was this very spirit of fulfilling the letter of the law without living up to the spirit of it that Anabaptists stood up to. Anabaptism was a move away from heartless obedience toward heartfelt obedience where one does the will of God with a heart full of love.

## Self-propelled or Belt-driven?

A friend of mine told me of a father who commented on how the dishes got washed in his home. He said, “We have two types of dishwashers around here: self-propelled and belt-driven.”

First, let us consider the “self-propelled” dishwasher as demonstrating heartfelt obedience. Let us imagine that this model is female. When she does the dishes, she may sing from a song book propped precariously on the window sill above the sink. When the dishes are finished, she neatly places the towel on the rack to dry, sweeps the floor, and empties the trash can. Then with a smile of satisfaction she meanders off, looking for more things she can do to bless her family.

Now let’s look at the “belt-driven” dishwasher as demonstrating heartless obedience. This belt-driven dishwasher obeys the order out of fear and does only as much as he has to in order to escape punishment. It is not hard to picture this model as a boy under 15 years of age. When he is told to wash the dishes, his face contorts into a frown. Mumbled words slip out from between tight lips. His slow movements remind one of a sloth. But when the dishes have finally been washed and he has obeyed the letter of the commandment, this belt-driven model suddenly finds the energy to scoot out the door towards the bicycle lying in the yard, slothfulness forgotten.

But mother calls out after him, “Johnny! Come back and finish your job.”

“What do you mean?” he argues. “I washed all the dishes.”

“But you are supposed to take out the trash, wipe the table, and hang up the dish towel.”

“But you didn’t say to take out the trash and do all that other stuff,” he growls. “You only said to wash the dishes.”

So it goes with heartless obedience—fear, complaining, technically obeying the order, evasive, unhappy, selfish. In contrast to the heartless obedience of the boy, is the heartfelt obedience of the girl—out of love, cheerfully fulfilling the spirit AND the letter of her order; kindly thinking of others.

Now let’s take a look at how we obey the Lord Jesus. When we find a command of Jesus—say, for example, Luke 12:33, “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old,” do we obey the commandment out of fear of punishment or are we stirred by love to do all we can?

Or, let’s consider the teaching of a woman’s head covering. When I Corinthians 11:7 tells us, “But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head . . .,” that indicates that a covered head is God’s calling for a woman that prays and prophesies.

Now the question for each of us to consider is: Are we obeying this commandment out of a heartfelt desire to please God or out of a heartless fear of punishment? Ask yourself the question in this way: Would the ungodly people around me say I am covering my head, or would they say it is half-covered or a quarter-covered? When we tell them what that thing on our head is, will they squint their eyes and say, “And that is a covered head?”

Heartless obedience means a focus on the letter of a command while trying to see how little one can do and still escape punishment.

Heartfelt obedience propels one out of selfless love to fulfill the spirit of the commandment.

~ MA, Baltic, OH

## Practical Questions:

1. Should an Anabaptist stick to a posted speed limit of 65 miles-per-hour when everyone around him is going 75 miles-per-hour?
2. Is it sinful to disassemble a gun and carry parts into a country if that is legal?
3. Is it sinful to shoot a wolf if it is killing your sheep?
4. What are some examples of heartfelt obedience in your life?
5. What are some examples of heartless obedience in your life?



# The Planting of an Anabaptist Church

*A feature in each issue of Anabaptist Voice*



## *Editorial Note:*

Galen Weber of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Canada wrote a 50-page history of the Lighthouse Mennonite Church. Recognizing Galen's powerful choice of words and keen insights, I asked Galen if he would write an account of one of the New Testament churches, and then a shorter version of the Lighthouse Mennonite Church story (2000 words).

## *Galen's Response:*

Thank you for the research/writing assignment. I intend to take it up. Mark you, however, the last glorious article I produced was rejected, without comment, by the editor.

## *Writing Challenge:*

Write the story of an Anabaptist church that you know personally, and share it with the readers of *Anabaptist Voice*. Pictures could be included.

## *Excerpts from Brother Galen's 50-page history ...*

The story of the Lighthouse Mennonite Church in Nova Scotia began when Heather Putnam attended a Christian Light Homeschooler's Training Seminar in Harrisonburg, Virginia. That week Heather made her first acquaintance with Mennonite people.

Heather boarded with John Paul and Catherine Campbell and family, who formed a lasting friendship with her. Then on Sunday morning, rather than searching out the Harrisonburg Mormon church, she went with her new friends to the Bank Mennonite Church.

Heather returned to Nova Scotia, much blessed, much instructed, and much—well, unsure. There were so many new experiences, so many new people, in just a week's time! One thing for sure, she could never be a Mennonite. That white cap veiling that all the women wore, for example—ridiculous!

Heather studied the Bible and Sanford Shetler's commentary, wrote many long letters to Catherine Campbell, and confronted many new truths in the

CLP homeschool curriculum she was using. Long submerged questions resurfaced in her mind and she began to question the credibility of the Mormon faith she and Robert held. By the spring of 1995, Heather stood convinced. Joseph Smith had not been a prophet of God.

Then began many 1200-mile journeys to New Glasgow by Gospel teams, ministers, and bishops from Virginia. Once every six to eight weeks someone traveled to Nova Scotia to share the Gospel and encourage interested souls in the faith. Was it worth it?

"Absolutely," says Brother Eldwin Campbell, remembering those years. "For a person such as Heather, whose family—her very dearest loved ones—rejected her, the church must become that person's family. To survive, such a person must have our love and our fellowship. People like this must be welcomed into our homes, feel our hospitality and love, discuss with us the Scriptures and whatever issues they're facing."



On Sunday, August 10, 1996 Heather was taken in as a member-at-large at the Bethany congregation in Virginia. Heather's acceptance strained her family relationships. In between the Gospel team visits, Heather and one daughter, Alison, attended a Nazarene church, while Robert and two children continued to attend the Mormon church.



ROBERT AND HEATHER PUTNAM, 1997

A number of Virginia families—Darrell Wadels, Clair Heatwoles, Lonnie Yoders—sought to move to Nova Scotia, but could never obtain the required visas to enter Canada to live and work there. When all these attempts to locate US families in Canada failed, the Virginia brethren appealed to the Ontario churches to send help. Kenneth and Mary Weber of Ontario answered the call and moved their six children to Nova Scotia in the summer of 1999. Teaching and outreach and fellowship from Gospel teams attracted other interested people to the church. School teachers came to add to the small number.

One of the families that showed interest was the Bonvie family. Clint and Darlene weren't sure what to think. They said, "These have to be the oddest religious people on earth, but they sure seem to have something... something beautiful." And, "Those people are **really** different. We're not going back there next Sunday." But the Bonvies kept coming back.

Over the years it was a rocky ride for the fledging church. Heather Putnam left for several years, repented and returned. Then she left for good and forsook all manner of righteousness. For a long time the church tried to operate without designated local leadership. A switch of church affiliation took place which called for new and different standards. This change upset many. Bishops came from thousands of miles away to hold communion, baptisms, and membership issues. The devil actively troubled many people with distress and discouragement, and disallusionment.

Yet the Lighthouse Mennonite Church touched many lives with the Gospel—Fehrs, Lees, Grahams, MacCabes, Putnams, Barkhouses, Welches, Bents, Bonvies, Gunns, Dunnsters, Duncans, Elliots, Mortons, Ogdens, Vachons, Walls; and many more local souls—souls who might never have been confronted with the true Gospel of Jesus Christ if the Lighthouse Mennonite Church had not been there.

It took it all—revival meetings, youth activities, Bible studies, outreach efforts, work projects, phone calls, new contacts, brotherhood meetings, sewing circles, weekly worship, church cleanings, Bible conferences, fellowship meals, hosting guests, and often travel to somewhere or other. These "memory-rivers" swirl intermingled through God's workings over the years.

Facing decisions and difficulties, the brethren built lasting relationships as they learned to know each other. Through working and sharing they discovered that loving means serving each other, and serving means humility. Something extraordinary is essential to blend ordinary people into unity, and that something is found in Jesus Christ.

The oracle for Lighthouse Mennonite Church, just as it is for every congregation of saints who give themselves to live the will of God is ***Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.***

— GW, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Canada.

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*Editorial Note: The work of the Lighthouse Mennonite Church goes on. Recently Ben and Michelle Thiessen were taken into the church as members. The following page contains a letter of introduction written to Vera Rose Campbell. In October 2015, Doris and I had the privilege of visiting in their home and learning to know and love the Thiessens.*

## Meet Ben & Michele Thiessen

By Michele Thiessen

Dear Vera Rose,

My name is Michele Thiessen. I'm married to Ben Thiessen and we are from Alberta, Canada. We moved to Nova Scotia in April 2014. We are partaking in instruction classes with the full intention of applying for membership at Lighthouse Mennonite Church.

We are on a very interesting spiritual journey in the Christian life as lived out by Conservative Mennonites. This is a completely new world for us. Though my husband has family roots in the Old Order colonies that settled in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, he was never raised in the Mennonite church.

Ben did, however, grow up learning Plautdietsch and experiencing typical Mennonite social life and customs. I grew up in a very liberal Christian setting with big contemporary churches and an independent and unaccountable lifestyle. We were married 24 years ago and raised three daughters ages 18-23, none of whom are living the Christian life and serving God.

God miraculously drew us to marital restoration, the truths about modest dressing and headship coverings just three years ago. Shortly after that, due to intensifying feelings of discomfort in the liberal church, we were drawn to seeking a conservative church.

We had no contact with Mennonites prior to this. I just happened to go on a search, and I remembered seeing Mennonites in Nova Scotia while visiting my mother three summers ago. I tracked down the minister here in Nova Scotia, and we were directed to a church in Alberta, which unfortunately was over a two hour drive from where we lived. We did attend as often as we could, but being so far from a community of believers made our learning and seeking difficult. We attempted to explore the option of moving to Red Deer, Alberta, but nothing panned out for living arrangements and work. My mother encouraged us to consider Nova Scotia. Knowing there was a church here that we had already made acquaintance with, we decided to move here.

It's been a year since attending full-time a community of believers who live a very conservative Christian life. God has been very good and gracious to us by providing us a home,

a job for my husband, and a strong church family to help and support us.

One special sister here, gave me your mother's book, Vera's Journey, to read. She explained that she thought it would help me understand more about the different conservative churches. However, this book did more than just that. Your mother's story became such an inspiration to me, as well as a powerful encouragement to walk the narrow road. Learning the cultural ways and becoming familiar with living a sacrificial life of service to others has been a challenge, but also very rewarding. Reading the stories of others and their struggles helps give hope that change can happen even in a life so desperate as the one I had.

When I learned that I was able to contact someone directly related to Vera, I so wanted to write and express my gratitude for whoever encouraged your mother to have her life story written down. Thank you all for sharing your life story. It would be a wonderful blessing to perhaps meet you one day.

May God continue to bless you and your families.

A new sister in Christ,  
Michele



BEN AND MICHELE THIESSEN AT THEIR HOME ON  
LOCH BROOM LOOP RD., PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA  
DECEMBER 2015





## From Doubt to Faith

Thronged by the thousands of worries  
That come in the wake of belief,  
Tossed by the tempests of wondering,  
I desperately sought for relief.

No one in view of my vessel,  
Alone on an ocean of doubt,  
Destined to hopeless tomorrows,  
I longed for another about.

Someone to share in my struggle,  
And someone to comfort and calm;  
But – there was no one to help me,  
Not one who could quiet my qualm.

Feeling alone and forsaken,  
I lifted my voice and I cried,  
Cried to the silence around me  
For someone to come to my side.

Then in the move of a moment,  
My vessel was steered by his hand –  
Jesus had come to my rescue,  
And guided me safely to land.

Hands that were wounded for loving  
Were ones I could trust as my Guide;  
Turning by faith to my Saviour,  
My doubts all went out with the tide.

-L.J.D.

# Writing for the Plow Boy

by James G. Landis

William Tyndale yearned to translate the Bible into English so that even a “plow boy” might understand it. A priest once argued with Tyndale that the Bible must be kept in Latin because the untrained were not fit to interpret it.

Putting the Bible into simple language that untrained and unfamiliar people could understand, spurred the Anabaptist movement forward. When even simple peasants read the Word of God, they found the “Bread of Life” and had the courage to obey its teachings.

Today, instead of trying to keep the meaning of the Word of God hidden from the common people, we need to help them see it through Anabaptist binoculars.

Out of one eye, Anabaptist Voice focuses on the same kind of plow-boy writing that encourages the understanding of the Word of God by the common folk with willing hearts. This magazine is not meant for those learned ones who are “ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” (II Timothy 3:7) or for those who would “make the Word of God of no effect” (Mark 7:13).

Out of the other eye, Anabaptist Voice focuses on helping the believer put the Gospel into shoe leather. The magazine is for those who have heard the Word of God and now wish to “DO” it every day (Matt. 7:24-27).

Our goal for Anabaptist Voice is to keep our writing clear so that both the writer and the reader understand and apply the gospel message to their daily lives.

## A New Type Of Bible Study

With this goal in mind, let us engage in a Bible study of I John 1:1-2:3. In this study, we will attempt to put the passage in such simple language that it is clear even to a modern-day “plow boy”.

## A Plow Boy Writing of I John 1:1-2:3

Verse 1 - I want to tell you about the One who was from the beginning, the One we have heard with our ears, the One we have looked upon with our eyes, and the One our hands have handled, Jesus, the Word of Life.

Verse 2 - (For Jesus, the Life, was shown unto us, and we have seen Him, and we bear witness of Jesus, the Eternal Life, the One who was with the Father and was shown unto us.)

Verse 3 - The One we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus, the King.

Verse 4 - And we write these things unto you that your joy may be full.

Verse 5 - This then, is the message which we have heard from Jesus and now declare unto you: “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.”

Verse 6 - If we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

Verse 7 - But if we walk in the light, as the Father is in the light, we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Verse 8 - If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Verse 9 - If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Verse 10 - If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and his word is not in us.

Chapter 2, Verse 1 - My little children, I write these things unto you so that you do not sin. But if you sin, you have someone to plead for you before the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

Verse 2 - Jesus is the one sacrifice that brought us peace with God. Jesus is the forgiveness for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Verse 3 - And this is the way we are sure that we know God, if we keep His commandments.





## Writing For Clarity

John's message in this passage comes through with forceful clarity.

- We must know Jesus.
- We must know the Father.
- We must walk in the light.
- We must not sin.
- We must keep His commandments.

Let us examine several reasons this simple rendering helps convey the message to the reader.

### John Was Excited

In the first three verses John repeats himself in each verse, "The One we have seen and heard." John was so enthralled with the experience of having met the Lord in the flesh that he just had to tell about it.

**Point:** Enthusiasm adds zest to the writing.

### John Stated His Purpose

In verse 1:4 John says, "These things I write unto you that your joy may be full." And in 2:1 John writes, "I write these things unto you so that you do not sin." John had it clear in his own mind why he was writing to "his dear children." He knew what he wanted to tell them and wrote it out so they knew why he was writing to them.

**Point:** Somewhere in the passage a writer should clearly state why he is writing a piece.

### John Used Repetition

In this passage John uses the word "sin" ten times. He uses the word "fellowship" five times. In the first three verses he mentions again and again that he has seen and heard Jesus. In three verses John contrasts light and darkness.

**Point:** Repetition of words and picturing the same subject in different ways can help rivet the thought in the mind of the reader.

### John Used Many Pronouns

Look at I John 1:1-2:3 in the KJV. You will find that the translators used a number of pronouns that are not clear as to whom they refer.

- I John 1:7 — Who does the "he" refer to?
- I John 1:9 — Who does the "he" refer to?
- I John 1:10 — Who does "him" refer to?
- I John 2:3 — Who does "him" refer to?
- I John 2:4 — Who does "his" refer to?

**Point:** Writers must be careful to keep pronouns (he, him, it) close to the nouns they refer to (Father, Son, Spirit).

### John Used Simple Language

In the above rendering John used only one word containing three sounds (syllables): "e-ter-nal." The passage is mostly single-sound words with a smattering of double-sound words among them.

**Point:** Many long words will reduce the number of readers who can comprehend the message and who have interest in reading it.

### The Clincher

When a teacher or minister says that a passage is "deep", what he really means is that the writing is not clear or else he does not understand it.

Plain writing is putting great truths in simple language so that all can understand them."

We pray that *Anabaptist Voice* will be a prophetic voice proclaiming truth to living Anabaptists in language even a child can understand.

~ JGL, Waynesboro, GA

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## Plow Boy Challenge - Ephesians 1:1-23

A preacher called Ephesians one an English teacher's nightmare. Then he proceeded to read through the passage ignoring much of the punctuation. He stopped where there was no punctuation. He did not pause at commas and semicolons. He did not stop at some periods.

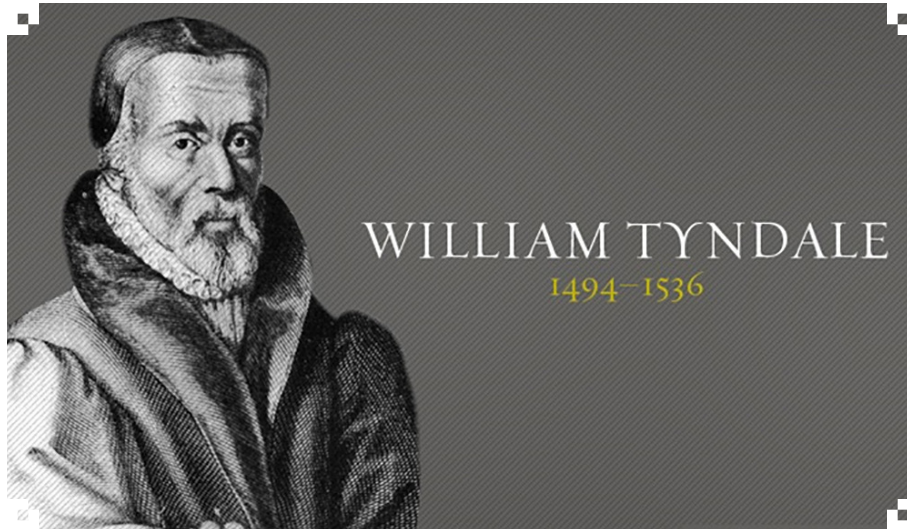
Many people publicly read the Scripture poorly. Some race through. Others jerk along. With some study and practice, we can do better. Here is the Plow Boy Challenge. Write out Ephesians 1:3-12 in simple English you understand. Read it out loud until you can read it smoothly. Then record it and listen to it.

When you are satisfied, send your "Plow Boy Rendering" to us at *Anabaptist Voice*.

# A Character Sketch: William Tyndale

by Alice I. Brewer

This article is located at [www.tyndalearchive.com](http://www.tyndalearchive.com) and adapted for use here. -AV



To a 15<sup>th</sup>-century farmer, the Bible was just a big book full of unreadable words and made-up rules. This was because priests in those times insisted on the Bible being in Latin. They said the Bible was a holy book, and not just any peasant should be allowed to read it. Really, they wanted it to be in a language only they could understand so they could make up a bunch of laws to suit themselves. In that way they could get away with it by saying “*It says so in the Bible.*” They thought no one would ever know different, and no one would ever try and reveal the truth. Then God raised up William Tyndale.

William Tyndale was born in October 1494, roughly 500 years ago. He was born in Gloucestershire, near the Severn estuary, where a monument stands commemorating him. Little is known about his early life, except that by 1512 he had graduated at Oxford, after studying at Magdalen College. It was obvious to his tutors he had a great ability for languages. After graduating, he went to study theology in Cambridge. There he was appointed a priest.

Like many fellow scholars, he found teaching theology a big drag. In 1521 Tyndale returned to his birth place, Gloucestershire. Here he became a tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh in the manor House of Little Sodbury.

Besides this, he was conducting services at the nearby parish church of St. Adeline. Soon, his sermons aroused the anger of the church hierarchy, especially when he was found preaching to a crowd *outside* the Bristol Cathedral. They charged him with “spreading heresy,” and he was summoned before the chancellor of

the diocese of Worcester (who was standing in for the bishop at the time.) He was warned not to preach in public anymore. Even so, Tyndale continued doing this at every opportunity.

One day a priest visiting Little Sodbury openly attacked Tyndale’s beliefs. He replied, “If God spare my life, before very long I shall cause a plough boy to know the scriptures better than you do!” This was not an idle boast. Tyndale knew how he was going to put an end to the priests’ evil ways. He was going to translate the Bible into English, so everyone would be able to read the Bible for themselves. He thought the priests, who had probably never read it once in their life, would then be for it.

Tyndale was so gripped by the idea of the Word of God being so easily accessible to the public that he couldn’t wait to get started. But he didn’t want to translate his Bible from the Latin version, because it was likely it had mistakes and alterations, so he decided to go to the original source. He wanted to use the original Greek and Hebrew texts

So he got to work. Then news of his work reached the church authorities. They were furious! Tyndale’s friends warned him his life was in danger if he remained in London. They told him the only way he would be safe would be to give up the work.

Tyndale didn’t want his life threatened, but he also didn’t want to give up his work. Therefore, in May 1524 he moved from England and went to hide in Germany, where his work could continue in peace. He was able to blend into the background easily and was able to go



TRANSLATING THE BIBLE WAS CONSIDERED A TERRIBLE ERROR IN WILLIAM TYNDALE'S DAY. AUTHORITIES STRANGLED AND BURNED HIM FOR HIS LABORS.

unnoticed because of his great ability for languages. He could speak Greek, Latin, Hebrew, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish as well as English. This meant if someone was looking for an Englishman in a crowded market full of people speaking different languages, they wouldn't even glance in his direction.

Tyndale was able to get on with his work really well in Germany, and by 1525 [the same year the Anabaptist Movement began in Switzerland] he was preparing his first manuscripts for printing by Martin Quentel in Cologne, Germany. Sadly, the authorities in Cologne were not so friendly towards reformers, and poor Tyndale had to pack up his work again and run away to Worms.

In Worms, an uneasy Tyndale hurriedly finished his translation and sent it to be published. In 1526 the finished books were shipped secretly to England in barrels and merchant ships. That February, some of his books along with other reformers' works were confiscated and burned in London. This did not stop Tyndale, for despite the desperate efforts to put it down, Tyndale's Bible was in great demand. It was making a great impact on people, not only because it was in English but also because it was so close to the original text. He was so concerned to keep his New Testament translation accurate that he said, "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus Christ to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience."

While his New Testaments were being shipped to England, Tyndale immediately took up translating the Old Testament. The Cologne authorities were beginning to become a threat to Tyndale, so he moved to the Netherlands, where he lived in Antwerp. This was a convenient place for sending his Bibles to other countries. Here Tyndale translated the complete Bible, Old and New Testament, but he still did not consider it finished. He produced at least two revised editions in 1534 and 1535. By this time the church authorities were getting very angry, and also pretty worried. If Tyndale's

Bible continued to be shipped into England, everyone would know the officials had been lying to them. They knew they couldn't stop them once they were in England. Burning hadn't worked; there were just too many of them. The authorities had even tried buying them for a while, but that just gave Tyndale more money so he could make even more Bibles. They had decided there was only one thing left, they were going to **KILL** Tyndale. No more of these silly threats, they were going for the real thing!

### Books about William Tyndale:

1. *Thrilling Escapes by Night*. - Albert Lee  
A fictionalized account of parts of William Tyndale's life using him as the hero.
2. *William Tyndale: A Biography*. - David Daniell  
A readable biography that traces the dramatic life of William Tyndale, the first person to translate the Bible into English from the original Greek and Hebrew. It discusses the profound religious, literary, intellectual and social implications of his immense achievement.
3. *Tyndale: The Man Who Gave God an English Voice*.  
- David Teems

It was an outlawed book, a text so dangerous "it could only be countered by the most vicious burnings, of books and men and women." But what book could incite such violence and bloodshed? The year is 1526. It is the age of Henry VIII and his tragic Anne Boleyn, of Martin Luther and Thomas More. The times are treacherous. The Catholic Church controls almost every aspect of English life, including access to the very Word of God. And the church will do anything to keep it that way.

Enter William Tyndale, the gifted, courageous "heretic" who dared translate the Word of God into English. He worked in secret, in exile, in peril, always on the move. Neither England nor the English language would ever be the same again.



4. *The Obedience of a Christian Man*. - William Tyndale

One of the key foundation books of the English Reformation, *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528) makes a radical challenge to the established order of the all-powerful Church of its time. Himself a priest, Tyndale boldly claims that there is just one social structure created by God to which all must be obedient, without the intervention of the rule of the Pope. He argues that Christians cannot be saved simply by performing ceremonies or by hearing the Scriptures in Latin, which most could not understand, and that all should have access to the Bible in their own language - an idea that was then both bold and dangerous. Powerful in thought and theological learning, this is a landmark in religious and political thinking. ~

“ Let it not make thee despair, neither yet discourage thee, O reader, that it is forbidden thee in pain of life and goods, or that it is made breaking of the king's peace, or treason unto his highness, to read the Word of thy soul's health—for if God be on our side, what matter maketh it who be against us, be they bishops, cardinals, popes.

~William Tyndale



. THE GOSPEL OF JOHN .  
IN TYNDALE'S ENGLISH

## Enduring Phrases from Tyndale's Bible

These simple phrases from Tyndale's Bible have endured the test of centuries and are still familiar and beloved by English speakers today. — JGL

- lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil
- knock and it shall be opened unto you
- fashion not yourselves to the world
- seek and you shall find
- ask and it shall be given you
- judge not that you not be judged
- the word of God which liveth and lasteth forever
- let there be light
- the powers that be
- my brother's keeper
- the salt of the earth
- a law unto themselves
- filthy lucre
- it came to pass
- gave up the ghost
- the signs of the times
- the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak



# The Value of Literacy

by Kendall Myers

*For judgment I have come into the world, that those who do not see may see.*

— John 9:39.

A picture that I've posted on the wall behind my desk at school reminds me of the profound value of literacy. The black and white sketch depicts a woman that I would guess to be in her sixties bent over a booklet, tracing its lines carefully with her finger. Every line on her face speaks to the intensity of her desire to make out the meaning of the text on the page before her. In my mind, she is someone who has just been taught the rudimentary elements of reading, probably for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. For her entire life, a transparent yet impenetrable space has existed between her eyes and words on a page and now, though it is hard work, her face shows the joy of being able to see the pictures that emerge as she pieces together the textual puzzle.

Literacy, in the strictest sense, is simply the ability to read and write; but in a fuller sense, it is the ability to grasp a piece of writing in its entirety and understand its relationship to its larger context, to engage critically with the information in the text—to analyze and evaluate, and to respond creatively with writing that synthesizes that information with one's previous knowledge and articulates it in an accurate and compelling way.

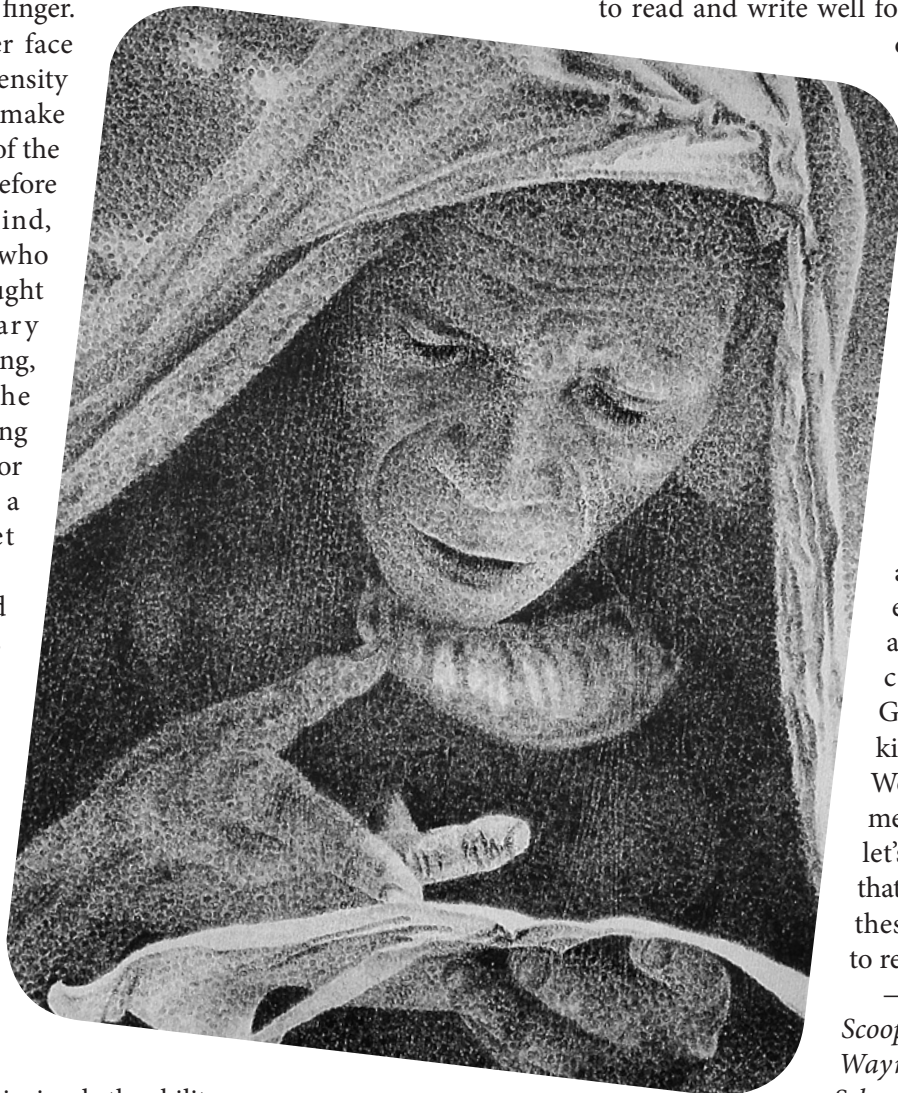
In a world where literacy rates have risen dramatically over the last 100 years (from around 25% to around 84%),

it can be easy for us to take this privilege for granted and assume that all of our children will become fully literate somewhat automatically. Living in the 21st century though, is no more a guarantee of becoming literate than any other century. If we take the opportunity to learn to read and write well for granted, we are in

danger of devaluing these skills and lapsing into complacency in regards to the standards that we hold for our children in these areas.

As followers of Jesus and ambassadors of His kingdom, we have the highest motivation to read and write with excellence. We are called to learn continually about God and to build His kingdom in the world. We have a vision and message to articulate—let's cultivate the tools that we have available for these tasks—the ability to read and write.

— from *The Scholastic Scoop*, a publication of the Waynesboro Mennonite School



## Practical Questions:

1. Is the ability to read essential to being a good follower of Jesus?
2. Should a literate person read the Bible every day?

# A Call To Service: Introduction

by James G. Landis

The United States and Canada claim that because you are a citizen or a subject, a young person who turns 18 has an obligation to “serve your country.” And this usually means fighting in the army or an attached part of the military. In wartime, trying to evade this so-called service is a very serious crime.

Some of us who are older, well remember the posters with a stern-faced Uncle Sam in a blue coat pointing a bony finger at you. The caption read, “Uncle Sam needs you.” The claim to two to four years of your life in service and a willingness to die for your country has been somewhat blurred by the technology of warfare and the volunteer armies. But the underlying claim to your money and your life is still present.

Of how much greater priority should the claim of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords be on the lives of Anabaptist young people? Should it be two years or four years of active duty in building up Christ’s kingdom? In the words of Romans 12:1, such duty would only be a *reasonable service*.

Or another example of a reasonable service might be the service program of the Mormons. You have probably seen them — clean-cut young men in long-sleeved white shirts walking the streets and going door-to-door. I have talked with them in Bulgaria and recently on an airplane flying from the mainland of Australia to Tasmania.

I talked with my seat-mate who was one of four young men going to witness in a town of which they knew little more than the name. He claimed to believe the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Our discussion led to military service and the creation account and I asked if I could email him some literature. “No,” he said, “not before my two years of missionary service is finished. We have no internet service, and no magazines or other entertainment during our service period. Our phone calls are extremely limited. We read only the Bible, the *Book of Mormon*, and a few other church papers. This is a very intense period in our lives.”

Think of that. Imagine Anabaptist young people going door-to-door with only their Bibles, *King Jesus Claims His Church*, and *Anabaptist Voice* to read ... for TWO WHOLE YEARS. No texting, no internet, and only a call home once a week or once a month! How would they ever survive!

Our fear is that 20-year-olds are not mature enough to withstand the encounters and experiences they might have in such missionary service. They might even lose their faith ... or their lives. But we forget the Scripture that says, “If you try to save your life, you will lose it, but the one who gives his life for Christ’s sake and the Gospel, will find a new life in Jesus” (Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 9:37).

With this background, *Anabaptist Voice* announces a regular feature in each issue named, “A Call to Service.”

In this section, we want to draw attention to Anabaptist organizations whose ministry includes service to others around the world. Things like disaster response, care of orphans, care of old folks, medical relief, teaching institutions, distribution of literature and humanitarian aid are examples of reasonable service.

We would like those Anabaptist organizations who want to be included to write to us and ask to be listed. With the request for a listing should come a story telling about how your organization came to be, its location, what its purposes are, the current staff, the church affiliation, and the opportunity for voluntary service workers.

The organization or church need not be a formal organization registered with the State. A vision for Kingdom Building and a name is sufficient. Kingdom Building service opportunities without pay can include many things, but it should be a means of daily witness and speaking up for the Lord.

Once the organization is listed, the name of the organization and the contact information will appear in each succeeding issue of *Anabaptist Voice*.



## Plain New Testament Scriptures on Nonresistance

1. “Jesus said, ‘You have heard the old saying, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, Do not resist an evil person. (Matthew 5:39).
2. “You have heard the old saying, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, You must be like your Father in Heaven. Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you”(Matthew 5:44-45).
3. Jesus told Pilate, “If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight to keep the Jews from arresting me. But my kingdom is from another place, therefore, my servants shall not fight on the earth using the weapons of this world” (John 18:36).
4. “When others wrong you, never try to pay them back. Revenge belongs to God and he will repay the evildoer” (Romans 12:19).

The object of every Scripture quotation is to enforce the true meaning of the Scripture upon all Anabaptists with a willing heart.

## Giving the True Meaning

*Anabaptist Voice* does not claim to be a scholarly paper. Neither do we claim to be competent translators that can speak with authority on Bible meanings based on a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek.

However, we do believe that those Anabaptists who want to know the truth can understand the truth of the Word. *Anabaptist Voice* affirms that the Scripture is inspired and that it has the authority to govern the life of the believer.

Since *Anabaptist Voice* is dedicated to furthering the truth of the Scripture for those of simple faith, we will always attempt to use a simple rendering of the Scripture. This is not dependent on one translation or the other. We will always seek to use a simple, straight-forward rendering of a Scripture without designating it as being from one version or another. It may even be in the writer’s own words. It is the meaning of the passage that we seek to convey.

Hence, writers will not attach a version to any quotation of Scripture, but give only the chapter and verse where it may be found. And if any error be found in our rendering by diligent brethren, we urge anyone to write us and instruct us in the way of God more perfectly.

This policy for *Anabaptist Voice* does not attempt to say what translation or version is best for your church. We are not saying that your congregation should conduct its worship services in English, French, German, Spanish, Swahili or any other language. That choice and the version or versions you use is a local decision with which we have no argument.

*“If anyone really wants to do God’s will,  
he will know that the teachings of Jesus came from God.”*

— *The meaning of John 7:17*



# Anabaptists: A People of the Book

by Frank Reed

The future for the Anabaptist community is linked to Scripture. Both the Mennonite and Brethren churches were birthed out of the Scripture. Our forefathers read and studied the Bible and took it at face value. They honored and obeyed the Scripture. Many of them memorized much of the Bible. In fact the Brethren said, “The New Testament is our only creed.”

The Bible was the prominent factor in both private life in the home and in the corporate life of the church. If the Anabaptist community is to continue to be a spiritual expression of Scripture, it must be the same today.

The Anabaptist community must continue the hard work of expository preaching. There is a hunger for the Word of God in our churches. Those of us called to preach and teach have an awesome responsibility and opportunity. We must be about our Father’s business.

The home must also be a place of Scripture teaching. The Bible must become a focal point in the life of the individual and the family. Personal commitment to study the Scripture and to have family devotions are part of what it means to be Anabaptist.

In our busy society, Bible study can become only a brief exposure on Sunday morning at church. This will not work. The Bible must retain a place of prominence in our lives.

Many people commit hours for sports. Many will watch a ball game or play in one for 3 or 4 hours. We may commit many hours for leisure, but how much time do we spend studying the Scripture and meditating on its truths? We commit hours and years to business and farming. But how much time do we commit to the Word of God as we prepare our souls and the souls of our children for eternity?

If we are going to be people of God, we must be people of the Book. To be people of God means being men and women of the Scripture where Scripture is the most prominent force in our lives and the Scripture directs our thinking and behavior.

Our leaders must be diligent students of the Scripture and all of us must be committed disciples of the Word of God. It should be the first wall of defense against the world and the answer to our deepest longings and needs. It should direct our decisions and plans. Only then will we have the needed strength to continue to be the people of God.

Jesus said, “Sanctify them by thy Truth. Thy Word is Truth.” It is the Word of God that will set us apart unto God. Nothing else will work.

For thirty years I have studied and taught the Scripture. It has been a life-changing experience for me and for many of my students. We are the hammers and the Bible is the anvil. Hammers wear out, the anvil - never!

I am calling us as a community to the Book of books – the Bible. It is our lifeblood and our heritage and our future. If we depend on the Bible and its Giver, we can hardly imagine the blessings that await us now and in eternity. God bless you as you do that.

~ FR, Manheim, PA

## Practical Questions:

1. How much time together should a family spend in reading the Bible each day?
2. Is the Sunday school a good place for Bible study? Why? Why not?
3. How much time should be allotted for a Sunday morning message?

*The basis of all Anabaptist beliefs is the two-kingdom concept. You cannot live in both kingdoms with divided loyalties. You must make a choice. Are you in the kingdom of this world or are you in the Kingdom of God?*

— Frank Reed

## Food for Thought: A Statement of Three Different Positions:



**Pope Clement VII**  
**Catholic Church**  
*Church is over the State.*



**Ulrich Zwingli**  
**Reformed Church**  
*State is over the Church.*



**Conrad Grebel**  
**Anabaptists**  
*Church and State are separate.*

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## REAL BIBLE STUDY

by James Landis

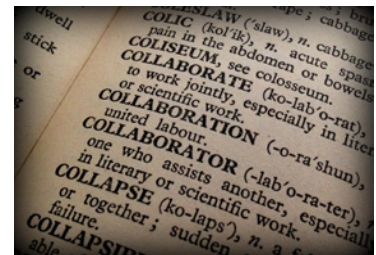
While seeking to write out the “Plow Boy Version” of the passage from I John (pg. 20), I encountered the word, “propitiation” in the KJV. This word presented several challenges. What did the word mean? How could I put it in simple language that everyone would understand?

I studied several different translations and wrote down a definition that I thought sounded pretty good. *Jesus is the One who took God’s wrath against our sins upon himself and brought us into fellowship with God.*

In the editing process, Brother Mike Atnip called my definition into question. He said, “We could have a long discussion about propitiation, but your definition is a general Protestant definition.” Brother Mike then gave a shorter and simpler definition that satisfied me better than the first one. *Jesus is the one sacrifice that brought us peace with God.*

This example illustrates one of the best methods of real Bible study. Take a passage of Scripture. Write out your own Plow Boy Version of the passage as you understand it. Then get together with another friend who has written out his own interpretation of the same passage. Compare your writing and where you differ. You may have several friends together, but keep the group small, no more than four or five.

As I understand it, it was out of this very kind of Bible study that the Anabaptist movement was born. Ulrich Zwingli, Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel and a few others met regularly together to study the New Testament in the original language. It was a firm desire to understand the true meaning of the Scripture that convicted them and impelled them to put it into practice.



. WHAT DOES IT MEAN? .

# The Practical Side

*Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.  
— Colossians 3:17*

The story goes that President Calvin Coolidge went to church one Sunday while his wife remained at home. After he returned home from the service, his wife asked, “What did the preacher preach about?”

“Sin,” the President replied.

Wishing to enlarge on the conversation, his wife asked, “Well, what did he say about sin?”

“He was against it,” was the only answer his wife got out of him.

This is common in many pulpits. Preachers can preach against sin and people know they are against it. But it is all couched in language that does not condemn specific sins. It is when someone begins to name specific sins that the fur flies. This is the practical side where *Anabaptist Voice* wishes to continue the Anabaptist practice of putting the gospel in street clothes.

It is our hope to make “The Practical Side” a recurring column; highlighting real life situations that will spark many responses and generate material for future articles.



. CALVIN COOLIDGE .  
“SILENT CAL”

## THE PRACTICAL SIDE | Eating Out

by Need Food

*Abstain from every form of evil. — 1 Thessalonians 5:22.*

Three of us brethren were on a business trip away from home. On Friday evening we needed a place to eat. A large selection of restaurants and food places on one street invited us in. Which one should we choose?



. INDULGENCE OR NECESSITY .

We pulled in at one restaurant, but the parking lot was full and a long line of people stood waiting to be served. We decided to move on and settled on Applebee's. None of us had eaten at that one before and we thought it worthy of a taste test.

This place was also full, but we were soon seated on high stools close to the bar where drinks were

being served. The lights were none too bright and directly in front of us was a large TV screen showing a basketball game with partially clad men and accompanying commercials. Much noise and music made it difficult to visit with one another or talk on our cell phones while we waited; it was an atmosphere in which I felt uncomfortable.

When the waitress brought us the menus, we studied them carefully. It appeared that the average dinner plate cost \$12-\$15. Adding on the expected tip, our bill would probably top \$50 for the three of us. This was a larger amount than we wanted to pay for food that evening.

### Practical Questions:

Considering the uncomfortable atmosphere and unexpected cost, what should we have done?

1. Quietly exit and find another eating place.
2. Order a cheaper menu and forego the tip, thereby saving money.
3. Order a better menu and tip extra to show we're not stingy.
4. Pass out gospel tracts while we waited.
5. Remain and tell all our friends never to eat at Applebee's



## THE PRACTICAL SIDE | On Hold

by Food Processor

*A man diligent in his business shall stand before kings. — Proverbs 22:29*

Our family operates a salsa and jam manufacturing business. We buy products in large quantities to use in our cooking and processing. Many of these products such as peaches and tomatoes come in metal gallon cans.

An inspector from the State Department of Agriculture regularly comes by to check on our operation. One morning last summer, he arrived just as we were finishing the first batch of 180 cases of product. During his inspection he discovered fruit flies in our warehouse.

We had been totally unaware of any fruit flies until that morning. Upon checking into where the fruit flies were coming from, we discovered that a shipment of peaches from California we had received three or four weeks earlier was the culprit. Some of the cans had ruptured because of poor processing and some of them had been punctured while unloading them.

It was not like fruit flies were swarming all over the plant—we estimate there were only two or three dozen fruit flies loose. The inspector wanted to put a hold on all shipments from our plant until the product we had run that morning could be tested—possibly two or three weeks until the test results came back. He took samples with him and then left.

We shut down the whole plant. We threw out thirty gallon cans of peaches. We cleaned everything. That afternoon a fumigation service came and fumigated the whole plant. The whole cleaning operation took us the rest of the day. I called the State Commissioner of Agriculture and he assured me that we were free to continue shipping all our products except the single batch we had processed that morning.

The next morning the inspector and a federal observer returned to check on things. There were

no fruit flies to be found. But he carefully inspected everything and found a few food particles on some obscure gears. These gears never came in contact with any food that we processed. We promptly cleaned the gears and then he allowed us to resume normal operations. However, the inspector adamantly refused to release the 180 cases—\$2500 worth—we had processed yesterday, until the test results came back.

Several weeks later the test results came back.

They found no fruit flies, but instead they found some squash bugs. We were very perplexed by their find. We had never had any squash bugs in our plant and we believe that if squash bugs were really in the product they must have been in one of our purchased ingredients.

Everyone knows the product was safely heated beyond the pasteurization

level and there is no health danger to the public. Furthermore, the FDA tolerance level for insects in food is a certain amount above zero before action is taken. We discussed these things with the inspector. Now he and his superior say it is not about the bugs, but about contamination found in the plant. They want the product condemned and destroyed. Now, many months later the 180 cases of perfectly good product are still sitting in the warehouse.

### Practical Questions:

What should Brother Processor do?

1. Threaten to sue the Department of Agriculture.
2. Destroy the 180 cases on hand.
3. Give the product away.
4. Pray that God will bless the inspectors.
5. Pray that God will change the hearts of the inspectors.



. YUMMY OR NOT .

## THE PRACTICAL SIDE | A Three Ticket Day

by Rushin Mennonite

*For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. — Romans 13:4a*

It all started with the alarm ringing at 3:30 in the morning. I knew I had a full day ahead of me. I had farm chores to do in the morning and then an appointment with my young deaf son's audiologist about two hours away. I knew time would be tight to make it to our appointment on time.

I finished the chores, ran to the house, got cleaned up, and jumped in the vehicle. As I pulled out of the driveway at 7:30 a.m. I told myself, "I should have plenty of time now to make my 10:00 a.m. appointment. There is no need to rush."

As I was driving along enjoying the beautiful morning, my mind wandered off in 100 different directions. This is nothing unusual. The country road was straight and had no traffic. Around 9:00 a.m. I realized I was getting tired. In my drowsiness, I paid absolutely no attention to my speed.

I rolled merrily along a ten-mile stretch of road with absolutely no curves and no other vehicles traveling on it. Suddenly, I came wide awake. I entered a school zone, came up behind another vehicle, looked down at my speedometer, and saw a police officer coming toward me, all in the same instant. I saw the officer turn around and immediately I pulled over.

As I went for my wallet to dig out my driver's license, I groaned. In my flurry to get away in the morning, I had forgotten to get my billfold. My situation was compounding rapidly. This was not the first time I ever got pulled over for speeding, but I knew down deep in my rapidly accelerating heart, this was the first time I was going to get a ticket.

As the officer came to my window, he had every right to be disturbed. He issued two tickets, one

for not having a driver's license and a super-speed ticket for being way over 20 miles per hour above the posted speed limit. In fact, he told me, "If you didn't have your five-year-old son along, I would take you in to the police station."

The officer finished up his paperwork and brought it to my window. As he handed me the tickets, I casually remarked, "I guess there is a first time for everything."

He looked at me funny and said, "Is this the first ticket you ever got?" I nodded. After that he seemed somewhat apologetic and said, "Be sure

to show up at the court date. I am sure we can do something to help you with the tickets." And I needed help. The two tickets he handed me amounted to an \$1800 fine.

You can be sure I drove cautiously and carefully the rest of the way to the ear doctor. We were a few minutes late, but things went okay and in due time we were again on the

road home. My morning lesson being still fresh on my mind, I diligently observed all speed limits. So I was not unduly worried when passing through a small town, I observed a police car sitting in front of a local post office. I drove slowly through town, and then began speeding back up to 55 miles per hour. Then I looked in my rear-view mirror. I could not believe it — blue lights again! This time, I called my wife to get the number on my driver's license. The officer had an awful time looking things up because of his misspelling. Everything took a long time. I was respectful on the outside, but inside I was standing straight up. I fumed to myself. "I do not deserve this. He clocked me from behind and charged me with going 56 mph in a 35 mph



**. GOD'S SERVANT FOR OUR GOOD .**

zone — more than 20 mph over the posted limit and subject to the reckless driving charge. They just have a speed-trap going on in this little town.” The officer handed me a ticket for \$350 and departed. Once more I was on my way home with a lot of strange thoughts going through my head. It seemed there was no other possible outcome to this day than that I would lose my driver’s license. How would I explain to everyone why my wife had to drive me to church? And the fines. They hurt.

### Practical Questions:

What should Brother Rushin do?

1. Mail the money in to the court and learn a lesson.
2. Hire a lawyer to plead his case for him.
3. Appear in court and defend himself.
4. Appear in court and plead for mercy.
5. Make a statement before the church so everyone understands.
6. Pray to God for forgiveness.
7. Pray God will bless the police officers and magistrates.



### PLAIN WORDS ABOUT SUFFERING

*“For grace is clearly at work when a person accepts undeserved pain and suffering and does so because he is mindful of God. For what credit is there in enduring punishment you deserve? But if you do what is right and yet are punished and endure it patiently, God will be pleased with you.”*

I PETER 2:19-21



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## THE PRACTICAL SIDE | Interaction Requested

### What should they do? What they did!

Write to us and tell us what you think would be a proper Anabaptist response to these difficult situations. Please limit your answers to 200 words for each situation. Then check the next issue of *Anabaptist Voice* for the real life responses to these accounts of “The Practical Side” You may be amazed at how it all turned out.

### Share Your Stories

Have you ever faced a tough practical decision or made a mistake that got you in a tight spot? *Anabaptist Voice* would like to have many more stories of real life situations that posed difficult choices for an Anabaptist believer. Please write out your stories and send them to us. Be sure to include the actual outcome of the situation. You can find our contact information inside the front cover.



# Announcements, Meetings & Events

## **MEETINGS: Soldiers of the Cross 2016**

“A week of evangelism teaching and training, including going out into the community and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.”

**DATE:** May 27 -thru- June 5, 2016

**LOCATION:** Holmes County, Ohio

**SPEAKERS:**

Finny Kurvilla, Conrad Sollenberger & Glen Souder

**TOPICS:**

- Evangelism & Discipling
- Personal Discipleship
- Christian Apologetics (*having to do with the defense and proofs of Christianity*)

**CONTACT:**

- Jay Stoltzfus: 330.473.5145 or jaynkaystoltz@gmail.com
- Paul L. Miller 330.852.2807

## **MEETINGS: 3rd Annual Church Planters' Forum & Retreat**

“If the Gospel is going to spread throughout the earth, churches must be established. What can leaders of the church do to inspire and equip the congregation for this work?”

**DATE:** June 7 -thru- June 9, 2016

**LOCATION:** Penn Valley Christian Retreat, McVeytown, Pennsylvania

**SPEAKERS:**

**Men:** Merle Beachy, Elijah Byler, Jay Fox, Gary Kauffman, Finney Kuruvilla, Stan Miller, Chuck Pike, Allen Roth, Wayne Schrock, Clayton Shenk

**Ladies:** Norma Fox, Carolyn Roth, Mary Lois Shenk

**TOPICS:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • The Joys And Sorrows Of A Church Planter   | • Bible Studies With The Un-churched                 |
| • Leading A Church To Plant Churches         | • Church Planting in 3rd World Countries             |
| • Planting a Church in Reading, Pennsylvania | • Practical Tips for Families Adjusting to City Life |

**CONTACT:**

- Edwin Eby: 814.325.7898 or ernest.eby@gmail.com
- Gary Kauffman: 478.235.5615 or glkauffman@gmail.com
- Penn Valley Christian Retreat: 717.899.5000 or pennvalleyocr@gmail.com

*Anabaptist Voice* requests that at least two attendees at these meetings would write a 600-word report of their experience and include a picture or two. We want pictures that make the experience personal.

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



# *Anabaptist Voice*

Championing A Faith That Works

## Thank You!

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

Some have donated money. That is needed.

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

Some have indicated a willingness to help distribute the magazine.

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

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

- AV Ed.

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**To:**



*“All true Christians are members of one body. Since they are thus united, it is Christian and reasonable that they divinely love one another, and that one member genuinely cares for the welfare of the other. Both Scripture and nature would teach us thus.”*

~ Menno Simons



THIS IS THE WAY, WALK IN IT. - ISAIAH 30:21