

GOD'S MISSIONARY STANDARD

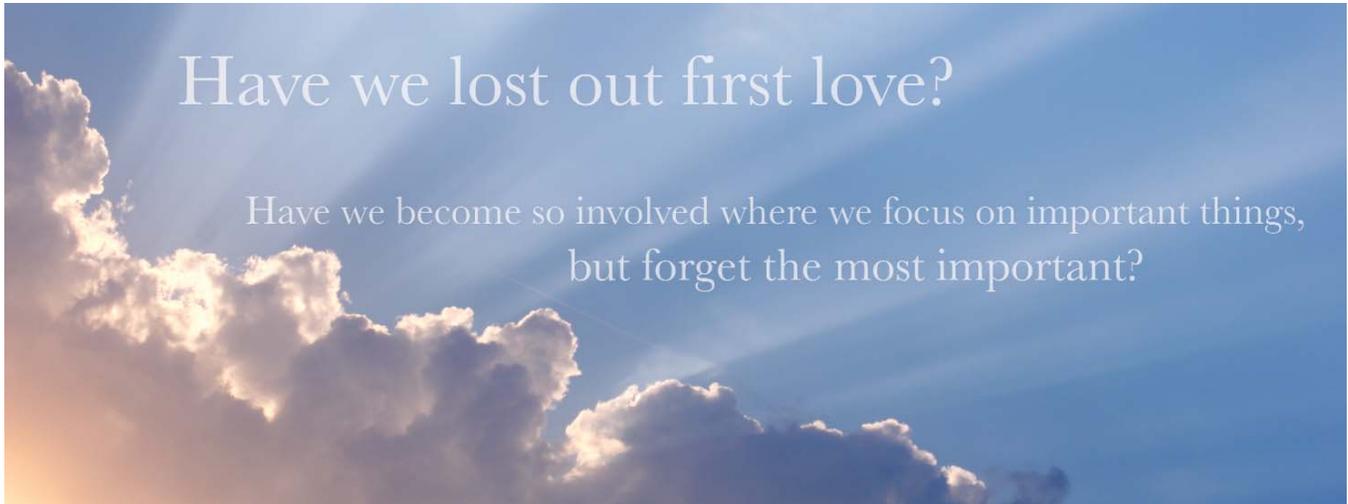
March 2009





Keep the First Thing First

ROBERT BOOTH



In the book of Judges, we read the tragic story of Samson. As a baby, he was dedicated to God. I believe that God had great plans for him. But little by little, sin overtook his life. In Judges 16:20, we are told that God departed from Samson. He lost his first love.

In Samuel a similar tragic story is written. Saul's life began well. He loved and served God. But gradually, he turned his back on God. Saul ended up slinking over to the witch of Endor, trying to access evil powers. He lost his first love.

It starts out in the little things. It may not be obvious that little things are taking us away from our love and devotion to Jesus Christ. Sometimes it happens before we wake up.

I believe this is what happened to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2. They were a thriving church: a church that was on fire at one point. When Jesus speaks to them He lists many positive things.

I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found

them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. —Rev. 2:3-4.

Then some of the most chilling words come next; they had left their first love. How did that happen? It didn't happen overnight, the failed to keep first things first.

Today we hear people talking about the glory days, and how much they miss them. I have heard countless stories of God's presence visiting church services and cottage prayer meetings. And, to be honest, I yearn for that. I long to be in services where the presence of God is manifested in unspeakable ways. I want my daughter to be raised "underneath the spout where the glory comes out." Where did those days disappear to? Is God no longer powerful? Did He underestimate the power of evil? Of course not.

Have we lost our first love? Have we become so involved where we focus on important things, but forget the most important? If so, let us quickly go to the rock that is higher than we are. Let us fall on faces and examine our lives before the throne of God. Let's seek the power of God that we are lacking. Let's purpose to keep the first thing first.

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Millmont Couple Commissioned for Missionary Service

STEVEN E. HIGHT



Pastor Frederick Bennett's warm welcome helped us forget the cold, snowy night outside the Millmont God's Missionary Church. It was November 23, 2008, and the congregation had gathered to witness the commissioning of Rex II and Missy McDowell for service in Costa Rica with Evangelistic Faith Missions.

Conference President Harry Plank led the opening prayer. Until recently he had been a member of EFM's board of directors and had joined in approving Rex II and Missy as missionaries.

Steven Mowery, chairman of PVBI's missions department, preached the commissioning sermon. He began by asking us the central question regarding the Great Commission: "What is the role God has for me in helping fulfill Christ's final command?" Each person has a job to do in bringing God's plan to fruition, and Brother Mowery pointed out three roles that were represented in this service:

- Rex II and Missy are going. Soon after Christmas, they, and son Devin, will travel to Costa Rica to begin studying Spanish and participating in EFM's churches.
- Tom and Drema Susan and Rex and Hannah McDowell are giving

their children to the missionary cause. They dedicated these young people as babies, and now they are willingly sending them to another land.

- The local congregation must be about the task of gathering the resources necessary to support the McDowells' ministry. This includes financial and prayer support and emotional undergirding via e-mails, cards, letters, telephone calls, and other communications.

Various family members participated in the commissioning service. Accompanied by Benjamin McDowell, Missy's brother, Jason, played a trumpet solo for the offertory. Later he and his wife, Romelda, asked God in song to "Keep Them" as Rex II and Missy go to the field. Jeffrey McDowell joined Rex II and Missy in a brass trio rendition of "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus," which included narration by the elder Rex.

I administered the commissioning, calling Rex II and Missy to faithfulness in carrying out their missionary responsibilities and promising EFM's support for their work. Laying hands on them, a group of ministers and family members set them apart and entrusted them to God.

Rex McDowell offered a father's prayer of blessing, reaffirming the dedication of his son to God. Likewise, Tom Susan prayed for his daughter and son-in-law, asking God to protect them and help them to do His will. In a touching final moment, Rex II's maternal grandfather, Rev. Delmar Kaufman, prayed for them in a special recording.

The McDowell family has been active in the Millmont church for a decade. Rex II served as youth pastor for two years and he and Missy supervised the bus outreach ministry. Missy grew up in the Millmont congregation and spent eight years teaching the Sunday School nursery class. The Susan family has been part of the church for many years, with Tom Susan currently serving as class leader.

Thank you, Millmont God's Missionary Church, for preparing missionaries and sending them forth. May we stand shoulder-to-shoulder in our love and support for Rex, Missy, and Devin as we all cooperate to complete the commission! 

Steven E. Hight, is Vice President of Evangelistic Faith Missions.



Missions Update

DWIGHT RINE, DIRECTOR

Wow! You did it again! You all have done a wonderful job with your giving to the World Missions Department. We sent out an appeal for the Hurricane Disaster Relief and you responded by giving a total of \$ 16,623.05. Praise the Lord! Then in the Annual Self-Denial offering, you gave a total of \$18,198.90. I am just overwhelmed with gratitude for your sacrificial giving. God is so good!

The Mission in Miami is moving forward and Bro. Cancio gives us good reports as to the growth of the Church and the spiritual development of the believers. Bro. Cancio is also looking forward to returning to Cuba for another Holiness Convention. Please be much in prayer for these efforts.

God has been helping the Junod's in Texas and they have had a new family in their services. We are so grateful for the opportunity to minister to these new people. The church is working hard to raise some of the money needed for a new driveway, and they are making good progress. We look forward to getting this project completed in the future.

It was November 5, in the middle of the night when Kevin Forney and I headed for the JFK airport on our way to Haiti. What an exciting trip we had. We had the privilege of working on the rebuilding of the church at Demichel. This is one of the churches that was damaged by the hurricanes this summer. We also were able to do some repair work to the school building at Leogane and spend some time with our precious people there.

While I was in Haiti, I also had the wonderful opportunity to meet with most of our national workers. I want you to know we have a wonderful group of National Workers who love the Lord and are working to share the Gospel message. God is at work and I received good reports of people's lives being transformed by the redemptive power of Christ.

Thanks for your continued prayers and support of the World Missions Department. God is at work and we are excited about the days that lie ahead. God Bless You All. 

—Dwight Rine, World Missions Director

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Penn View Students in New York City

STEVE MOWERY

Classroom study, dialogue, and research provide good theories and ideologies. However, integrated hands-on experience meshes classroom theories with realities. Such was the case recently for the Cultural Anthropology and Principles of Missions students of Penn View Bible Institute of Penns Creek, PA.

Course instructor Steven Mowery (Chairman of the Missions Division) took the Cultural Anthropology students to New York City for a time of cultural inquiry in Chinatown. Trained to observe and evaluate cultures regarding their tensions of orientation and other cultural dynamics, the students were immersed for a whole day in the Chinese cultures of Chinatown in Manhattan. None of the students was familiar with the basics of Chinese culture and worldview, thus this immersion experience was quite challenging.

Working as a team and without the facilitation of their instructor, these anthropology students connected with Chinese people from differing types of professions, economic levels, academic training, and Chinese ethnic backgrounds as well as from differing levels of assimilation into life here in the United States. A goal for this experience was to have meaningful interaction with some within the close-knit communities. Several of the students felt they had a measure of success during this brief experience by building limited relationships with some of the people.

While the cultural inquiry was taking place in Chinatown, Mr. Mowery scheduled a ministry experience with his Principles of Missions students who were a part of this joint excursion. Working under the auspices of the historic Bowery Mission on Bowery Street in Manhattan, these students served a long line of homeless and poor people of New York City who had lined up for farm produce, pastries, soup, and tea offered by the mission. This time of offering humanitarian assistance provided opportunities for interaction with the people. These students also received a tour of the Bowery Mission as well as a tour of the city in order to view ministry opportunities in that great metropolis.

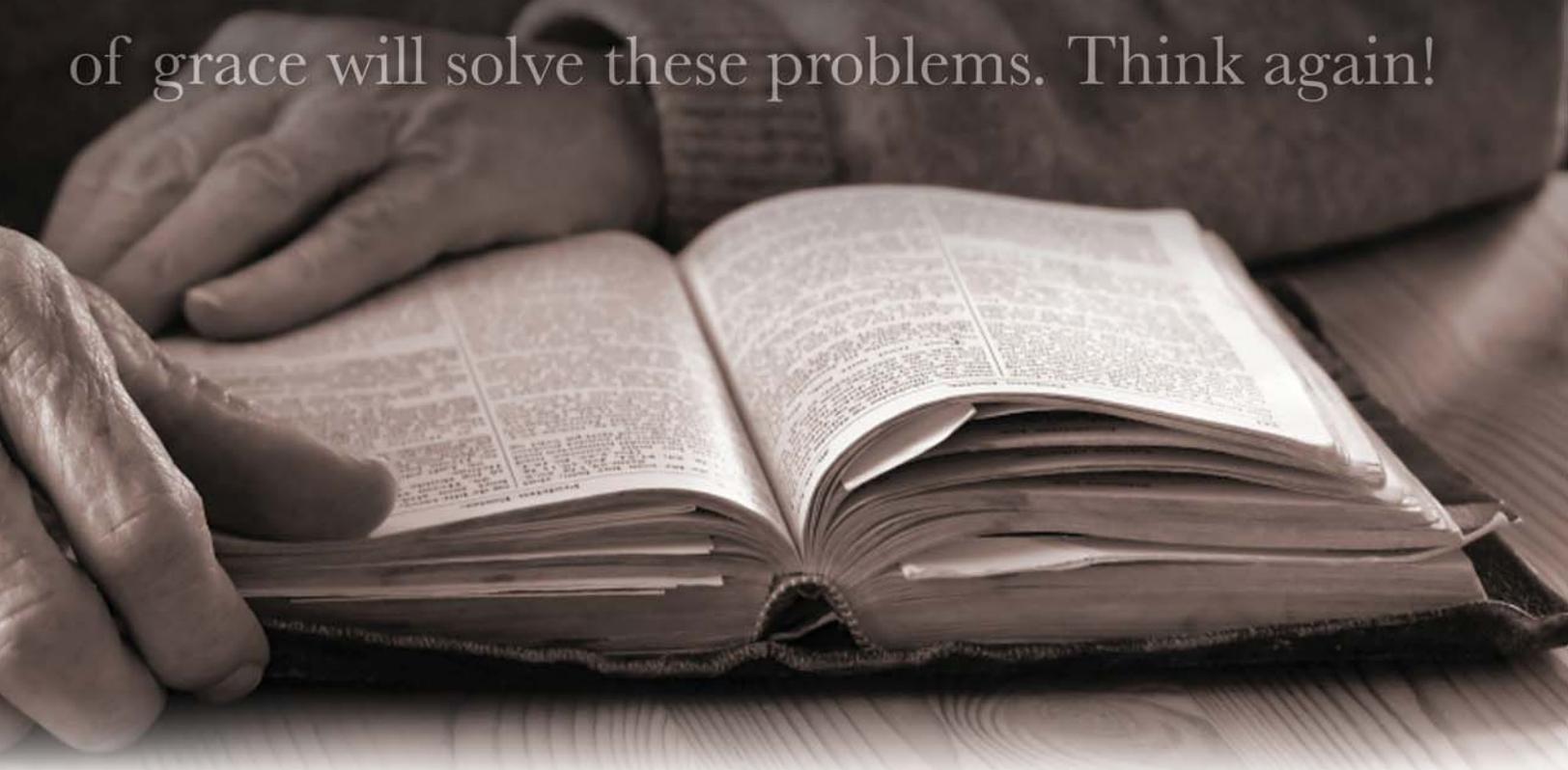
The following day, these students from both classes joined for a time of worship, testimony and fellowship with a Mandarin Chinese Church on West 72nd Street. Pastor Yu, a personal friend of Mr. Mowery, and his church welcomed the students and incorporated them into the service for a time of ministry where they communicated through a Chinese interpreter. The worship and warm fellowship followed by a meal of authentic Chinese food made for a very meaningful and wonderful time for the students on this cross-cultural, inner-city excursion. ■



Spiritual *Disciplines*

by Timothy Cooley, Sr.

Unfortunately, some holiness people have decided that the spiritual disciplines are for the less spiritual—those who do not realize that the second work of grace will solve these problems. Think again!



*“The more we sweat in peace,
the less we bleed in war.”*

A former Marine made it memorable to me, but Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (a diplomat from India) and U. S. General George Patton are both widely known for the saying. Who knows who said it before that? Some have interpreted this proverb to mean that if we work at peaceful relationships before there is a conflict, we may never have to wage a battle. In many settings, that is true, but the knowledgeable Christian is keenly aware that we are in a spiritual battle with a highly skilled, untiring, resolute enemy, one who hates every individual Christian and also the Christ we serve. The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battlefield.

Most of our battles do not seem life threatening. They seem like small decisions. A thousand small skirmishes pester us, and we either win or lose, but it seems no one else really notices. Then along comes a bigger battle, one that we sense is high risk. If we lose this one, everything is at stake. The trouble is that by the time we lunge into that battle, our success or failure has already been determined—by our preparation or lack of it.

Across the centuries, many Christian thinkers have written about the spiritual disciplines that make a soldier strong in Christ, most notably in recent years, Richard Foster and Dallas Willard. Unfortunately, some holiness people have decided that the spiritual disciplines are for the less spiritual—those who do not realize that the second work of grace will solve these problems. Think again!

John Wesley preached “means of grace,” including “works of piety” and “works of mercy.” As long as these “works of piety” are carried out with a true heart, God has ordained that prayer, reading/meditating on the Scriptures, and receiving the Lord’s Supper are “the ordinary channels whereby He might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.” Wesley’s Sermon 27 focused entirely on fasting. The

“works of mercy” included “the feeding the hungry, the clothing the naked, the entertaining or assisting the stranger, the visiting those that are sick or in prison, the comforting the afflicted, the instructing the ignorant, the reproving the wicked, the exhorting and encouraging the well-doer” (Sermon 26). Wesley warned those who earn all they can and save all they can that they must also give all they can, and he preached that the early Church believed that “none could be real Christians, without the help of Christian discipline” (Sermon 116).

Willard remarks, “Spiritual growth and vitality stem from what we actually do with our lives, from the habits we form, and from the character that results” (p.20). He explains, “The disciplines are activities of mind and body purposefully undertaken, to bring our personality and total being into effective cooperation with the divine order” (p.68). St. Paul pressed young Timothy “to be at work in the ‘spiritual gymnasium.’ ‘Train (gumnaze) yourself unto godliness...’” (p.98). Willard cites Oswald Chambers’ teaching on “forming habits on the basis of the grace of God.” Chambers warned, “If we refuse to practice, it is not God’s grace that fails when a crisis comes, but our own nature. When the crisis comes, we ask God to help us, but He cannot if we have not made our nature our ally. The practicing is ours, not God’s” (as cited in Willard, p.118). Willard explains, “Discipline, strictly speaking, is activity carried on to prepare us indirectly for some activity other than itself” (p.120).

“The rigorous form of life mandatory for excellence” (p.121) is the only way we can purge ourselves to become “vessels of honour” (II Tim.2:21).

Willard classifies the disciplines as “disciplines of abstinence” or “disciplines of engagement” (p.158). Foster breaks them up into inward, outward, and corporate disciplines. Both authors offer outstanding insights on the whole range of exercising ourselves unto godliness (I Tim.4:7). Perhaps each of us will not excel in all of the spiritual disciplines, but the more we are aware of the full round of discipline the more we will be able to “put on the whole armour of God” (Eph.6:11) and to “fight the good fight of faith” (I Tim.6:12).

Excuse me, I must get myself to the spiritual gymnasium! 📖

FOR FURTHER READING:

- Foster, Richard. (1988). “Celebration of Discipline: the Path to Spiritual Growth”. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Wesley, John. Works. Sermon 16, “The Means of Grace”; Sermon 26, “Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, Discourse 6”; Sermon 27, “Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, Discourse 7”; Sermon 116, “Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity.
- Whitney, Donald. (1991). “Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life”. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress.
- Willard, Dallas. (1991). “Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding how God Changes Lives”. New York: HarperCollins.

New Arrivals



Congratulations to Rev. & Mrs. David Wise on the birth of a son Jared Wesley. Jared was born on October 25th.



Congratulations to Rev. & Mrs. Frederick Baker on the birth of their daughter Cloe Elizabeth. Cloe was born on Dec. 12, 2008.



Wisdom from Unexpected Sources

DAVID WISE

I want to wake up all the people that are asleep! Though great evangelists of the past must have felt this way, this comment came from a rather unlikely source. On Sunday afternoon, the ABC Hour had just finished at the Berwick God's Missionary Church. Some afternoons we have just three or four kids, but this particular Sunday there were twelve pre-teen participants making a mad dash for the 1985 Ford fifteen-passenger van. The much-sought-after prize was the shotgun seat next to the weary pastor. The winner of this wild race was a little eight-year-old boy with blond hair, blue eyes, freckles, and a lot of spunk. Mikey doesn't come every week, but when he does the atmosphere is a little more electric. After the whole gang had somewhat settled down into their seats and the ride home had begun, one of the little girls started to scream at the top of her lungs "Aaahhhhhhhhhooooo!" This seemed to be the secret signal that was to let the more wild among them know that it was time—time for what we are not completely sure but there followed for the next minute or so a chorus of shouts, screams, and blood-curdling yells that raised the blood pressure and anxiety level of the pastor. Apparently there was no reason for it except to let off a little steam. It was at this critical point in the ride that Mikey rolled down his window and did his part to awaken the community to the fact that, yes, there is a God's Missionary Church in Berwick and that we have Sunday School in the afternoon. When asked why he needed to yell so loudly out the window, he calmly responded with his very practical statement about the need to awaken the sleeping masses.

While there is little evidence that our young evangelist had spiritual motivations when he responded to the question about his vocal exercises, his statement does raise a few questions for the rest of us. Are we truly awake spiritually in this dark hour of our nation's history or have we become a victim to the spiritual fog that has settled down upon so much of the American church? Yes, we are doing much better than the rest of the Evangelical church, but are we pleasing our Lord? Young people are not given a pass in this area. Earnest-hearted teenagers around the world are being called upon to take a stand for the faith in the most difficult of situations. It matters not whether the dominant culture is militantly Muslim, radically Roman, hatefully Hindu, or even seductively secular; the enemy is pressing on all sides and Christian youth are being brought to the witness stand. Holiness young people in the United States will not escape this test in the days ahead. It may have been easy to ride grandma's coattails in the past, but the forces at work in this generation are bringing us to a point where our young people must be as out-and-out for God as the children of this world are for the things of this world. A clear testimony to the saving grace of God is a must in this hour. The need after this is a life of discipleship made *(continued on page 10)*



The Standard Pulpit

SERMON THOUGHTS FROM GMC MINISTERS PAST AND PRESENT

The Christian Warfare

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. —Ephesians 6:12

I. The cause of this warfare

- The fall of man
- Man became a victim of sin
- A candidate for hell

II. The two armies or kingdoms

- God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the angels, and all Christians
- The devil, fallen angels, wicked spirits and unconverted people

III. Each side is interested in:

- The soul of man
 - its value - is worth more than the whole world
 - its destiny - doomed
 - its condition - poisoned

IV. The text tells us that there is:

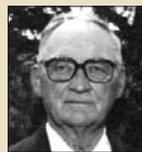
- Wicked force at work
- The guns of hell are set against the church of the living God
- Satan does not waste his ammunition on the unsaved

V. The Divine command

- Put on the whole armor
 - Get on unto perfection (Hebrews 6:1)
 - Get filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)

VI. The object of putting on the whole armor

- That we might be able to stand against the wiles or darts of the devil
- The source from which we can expect our greatest trouble
 - from those that are blind to spiritual blessings
 - from false professors of religion 



BY GEORGE I. STRAUB

QUOTES

The sign of Christianity is not a cross,
but a tongue of fire. —*Samuel Chadwick*

Most joyfully will I confirm with my blood that
truth which I have written and preached. —*John Huss*

The primary qualification for a missionary is
not love for souls, as we so often hear,
but rather love for Christ. —*Vance Havner*

The more God's people reckon with the devil in
their praying, the more they will taste of the liberty of
the Spirit in dealing with issues of life. —*F. J. Perryman*

One of the greatest evidences of God's love
to those that love Him is to send them afflictions,
with grace to bear them. —*John Wesley*

It was a storm that occasioned the discovery of the
gold mines in India. Hath not a storm driven
some to the discovery of the richer mines of
the love of God in Christ. —*John Owen (early Puritan)*

Prayer is the acid test of devotion. —*Samuel Chadwick*

Tearless hearts can never be the heralds of the Passion.
—*Dr. J. H. Jowett*

(from page 8) possible by that second blessing where that perverse old man-fearing spirit is dealt a death blow and our young people have the liberty to stand for the truth in a sweet, sanctified manner.

Mikey's challenge to our neighbors this past Sunday was not his first exhortation from the shotgun seat. The last time he had gained this most coveted prize, an incident had taken place at nearly the same spot in town. We had

stopped at a stop sign near a local pizza place and some older teenage boys started yelling at our van and making fun of "church kids". The weather was warmer and the window was down, so Mikey wasted no time in sticking his little blond mop outside the van and giving those boys a piece of his mind. While certainly not said in the spirit of the Master, this little rascal proceeded to tell those older bullies that church was a good thing and that they should go too.

The pastor, while cringing a little bit at his actions, had to admit that this little guy had some grit and that he would make a great Christian. May the Lord help all of us, young, old, and middle-aged alike, to demonstrate to the world around us that, yes, we are awake spiritually and that we have a message of full salvation for this sin-sick planet—a message so wonderful that we can't contain ourselves. Even if that means rolling down the window a little bit. ■

Obituaries

Donald Swingle passed away on Tuesday morning, Oct. 14, 2008. He



was born Dec. 6, 1939, in Sugar Run, a son of the late William and Lenna (Justin) Swingle. On Jan. 23, 1971, he was married to Royetta Swingle. He was a member of Beavertown God's Missionary Church, where he had served as an elder, an usher, and greeter, and at the time of his passing, was serving on the church board.

Rev. E. Paul Hosier, 96, of McClure, caught his flight and went home to be with his Lord, whom he loved and served for many years, on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008, at the Manor at Penn Village, Selinsgrove, where he had lived since July.



He was born Sept. 5, 1912, in White Haven. He was married on Dec. 25, 1939, to the former Gladys Rushik, who survives.

He was a member of God's Missionary Church. He served with God's Missionary Church for 30 years as a pastor and evangelist. He also was a pastor with Free Methodist Churches throughout New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan

during his 55 years of preaching. He also served as conference superintendent for several years with the Free Methodist Church and was instrumental in the building of several churches and parsonages.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two daughters and sons-in-law: Ruth and Gordon Alexander of Beaver Springs and Rebecca and Frederick Shetterly of Elizabethtown; three sons and daughters-in-law: Edwin P. and Olesa Hosier of Jacksonville, N.C.; George and Sandra Hosier of Correy and Myron and Rhett Hosier of Delta Junction, Ark.; 17 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; two sisters, Mytel Vogel of White Haven and Leona Hosier of Weatherly; and one brother, John Hosier of Sparta, Tenn.

Christian S. Fisher, 68 went home to see his Jesus on Friday, November 28, 2008. Christian was a retired carpenter. He attended God's Missionary Church of Coopersburg and enjoyed woodworking and served for seven years on the board of Fellowship Camp of Hanover.

William Anthony went to be with Jesus on Thursday, December 11, 2008. He was the husband of Ethel Jane Dinger Anthony. Born in Berne, Berks County, on July 12, 1922, he was the son of the late Hardie C. and Elizabeth A. Berger Anthony. He worked in shipping/

receiving for Hershey Chocolate, retiring after 46 years of service. Bill was a member of Annville United Zion Church and attended the Gospel Center and the Lebanon God's Missionary Church.

Harold F. Plank went home to be with the Lord, December 10, 2008. He was a veteran of World War II, serving in campaigns in Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. As



a D-Day veteran, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for bravery in climbing the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc as one of Colonel Rudder's 2nd Ranger Battalion. Later, as part of the 99th Infantry (sep), he fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Upon returning from the Army, he married his wife, Hazel Houghtaling on September 13, 1946 and moved into the house where they have life for 62 years. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law, Rev. Harry F. and Rachel Plank of Middleburg, Thomas H. and Diane Plank of Westfield; grandsons and wives: Rev. James and Marie Plank and family, Jon and Alicia Plank and family, Andrew and Kara Plank and family; grandsons: Matthew Plank, Michael Plank. ■



Travel Notes

HARRY F. PLANK

Oct. 2-3: We spent two days of continuing education with the Penn View's teachers at the Willow Valley Conference Center for the annual teacher's convention.

Oct. 4-5: We enjoyed being with pastor Rob Dicken and family and the good people at Delmar. Many who have been so faithful over the years are no longer able to help like they used to and others have gone on to their reward. Thank the Lord for those who work so hard to keep the bus ministry going, teach Sunday School, etc. This congregation is blessed to have such a beautiful church and parsonage.

Oct. 6-8: We traveled on to Harkers Island to visit with Rachel's Dad and step-mother. We are so blessed to have Mom Frances in our family.

Oct. 12: I preached three times: 9:30 A.M. at the Lebanon Gospel Center, 11:00 A.M. and 6:30 P.M. at the Lebanon church. We were treated royally in the homes of Leonard and Sharon Raub and Dwight and Lois Rine.

Oct. 13: I conducted a General Board meeting in the conference room.

Oct. 14-19: It was good to renew old acquaintances while preaching a revival meeting at the Portage Wesleyan Holiness Church, with pastor David Walter.

Oct. 21: I didn't accomplish much because of my visit to the dental surgeon in the morning. Unpleasant, but necessary.

Oct. 26: I preached at the Shamokin church for the morning service and also conducted a dedication service for their "new" van. A very special thank you to the anonymous donors for this very lovely vehicle.

Oct. 28: We made a trip to northern Pennsylvania to visit Rev. Fred. Watson. Unfortunately, as we were about to depart and while Bro. Watson was following us to the door, he accidentally fell which resulted in a trip to the hospital for several stitches on his face.

Nov. 2: What a beautiful fall morning to travel to the Lehigh church! It is thrilling to be with this congregation and enjoy the

lovely facilities that the Lord has entrusted them with. It is a compliment to pastor & wife and the congregation that several people from the community are faithful to worship with them. In the evening, I preached to the fine folks at the Duncan church, although we were sorry that Pastor Jeremy Fuller and family were away.

Nov. 4: Rachel and I exercised our American rights to vote, as much as possible, for Christian principles and against wrong, during this year of presidential elections.

Nov. 5: I rode along with Home Missions's director, Jacob Martin to Chambersburg to tour a possible facility to use for a church building there.

Nov. 8-9: It was good to be with the people of the Mahaffey church on Sunday morning and was encouraging to see the good group of young people. I trust they will always serve Jesus and follow the special plan that God has for each of them. We accepted the invitation from Pastor Dorman and came on Saturday. I enjoyed the evening 4-wheeling in the woods with part of the Dorman family and some great guys from the church and the community.

Nov. 10: I attended a board meeting for Penn View through-out the morning and part of the afternoon. The board meeting was still in session when I left to travel to Indiana, PA to attend the viewing of Rev. Ray Satterfield, a very dear friend. Our prayers and sympathies are with Sis. Melodie Satterfield and the family.

Nov. 11-16: I preached a revival meeting at the Montgomery Brethren In Christ Church. It was a joy to be in the home of Pastor and Mrs Dennis Ritchey and their precious little foster babies.

Nov. 21: With tears of joy, we welcomed our son Andrew safely home from Afghanistan's war zone. What a joy to see him with his little 10 month old son Clayton who he had only spent about a week with before leaving.

Nov. 23: We attended revival meeting with Henry & Jan Miller at the Mountain Road church.

Nov. 30: Thank the Lord for a safe trip to the Berwick church as we traveled through freezing rain. We passed several accidents along the way. It was my honor to dedicate little Jared Wesley Wise to the Lord on this Sunday morning. There were several who traveled on icy roads to be there for this special occasion. It was nice to have met Grandpa and Grandma Barnard along with uncles, an aunt and cousins, who had traveled all the way from the state of Indiana. We were with the good folks at the Elkland church for the evening service along with the congregation from Wellsboro Community Chapel.

Dec. 1-2: I enjoyed a couple days of deer hunting on my parent's farm along with most of our family. We were all either hunting or helping to make good things to eat for the hunters. I was rewarded with a doe on day one and, with the help of my grandson, Jamison, a nice eight-point buck on the second day.

Dec. 6: Our son Jim and I made another trip to my parents, to check on my dad, since he was becoming increasingly weak and my mother was no longer able to care for him alone. Upon arriving, we realized the situation was serious. He was then taken by ambulance to the Wellsboro hospital.

Dec. 7-13: These days were mostly filled with our family traveling to and from the hospital. At 2:30 A.M. Wednesday the 10th of December, my hero and father went on to be with the Lord. We are so thankful for the clear testimony he left behind. Friday and Saturday was the viewing and funeral at the Jemison Valley Brethren In Christ Church. A sincere thank you for the phone calls, cards, flowers, and visits and to those who made the long trip to Tioga County for the viewing or funeral. A special thank you to Rev. & Mrs. David Blowers who have faithfully made visits to my parents over the last few years and who spent many hours with our family through out these very sad days. ■



Tribute to Hazel Reiff

GABRIEL MORLEY

Not often do 69 year olds inquire about becoming conference ministers, but then, not many live to be a hundred! Hazel Reiff, who will become a centenarian on May 20, 2009, joined God's Missionary Church with her husband Marvin in 1978 and served our conference till death separated this partnering couple of 52 years in 1984.

One of eleven children, Hazel grew up on the plains of Nebraska where almost ninety years ago she gave her heart to Jesus at a sod schoolhouse revival and dedicated herself to God's work wherever that would lead. She was highly intelligent and earned good grades in school, in spite of milking cows in the morning and being very sickly in her earlier years.

Hazel turned down university scholarships and enrolled at a Bible College in Colorado Springs where she struggled to pay her bills but managed by singing evangelistically with another young lady. At college, she met and married Marvin Reiff, an aspiring pastor.

The Reiffs first pastored in Nebraska, and this church was the launch of a multi-state ministry. Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, South Dakota, Kansas, Iowa, Arizona, Michigan, and lastly Pennsylvania all were home to the Reiff's ministry involving Immanuel Missionary, Wesleyan Holiness, and God's Missionary churches over a period of 50 years.

According to one former parishioner, never did any other pastor and his wife work as such a multi-talented, united team. Marvin certainly found a helpmeet in Hazel, and that harmony left a fragrance remembered longer than songs, supplications, sermons, and Sunday school lessons.

Hazel was called mother by Esther, Wayne, and Harold. These children observed a woman who was "always loving and caring", a "prayer warrior", one who "backed her husband 100 percent", whose "number one desire was to please the Lord." Her children not only called her blessed, but they are believers and followers of her God.

Hazel was also called teacher by many Sunday School students. She loved teaching children and even created her own flannel graph to illustrate Bible stories. In her older years, she taught Sunday school in Ollrichs, South Dakota even though she endured heart trouble and occasionally passed out teaching! But that old heart kept beating, and she determined to wear out, not rust out. She strengthened her teaching ability with her voracious reading.

Hazel blessed congregations not only with teaching, singing, and piano playing, but she also helped erect buildings. She assisted with the blueprint of a

church in Michigan and taught the parishioners how to mud drywall.

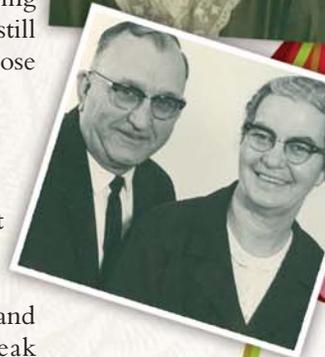
This saint was a superb seamstress, making her own clothes. If she saw it, she could design it, and not only did she sew the quilts for her bed, she manufactured the bed and the corresponding furniture at her wood-working shop...while in her seventies! Her children and grandchildren all enjoy quilts that she made while thinking lovingly of each recipient.

After retirement age, the Reiffs became acquainted with God's Missionary Church through George Straub, Arthur Thomas, and others. The Reiffs were persuaded to join God's Missionary after being asked to pastor the Coopersburg church. Though they served our conference only 6 years, they left their mark at two churches and beyond: from character-building and carefully-crafted kitchen cabinets at Coopersburg to burden for souls and beautiful music at Berwick.

Following Marvin's death, Sis. Reiff lived out West and in more recent days in her own apartment. Earlier this year she fell and was admitted to a nursing home in Greeley, CO. Her long-term memory is still vigorous, and she's able to communicate with those she loves. She can be reached via mail at:

Hazel Reiff
1022 31st Ave
Greeley, CO 80634

Sis. Reiff was adorned with a meek and quiet spirit; was a woman professing godliness with good works; continued in faith, charity, and holiness with sobriety; was a teacher of good things and gave none occasion for the adversaries to speak reproachfully. No wonder her children honor her and her husband praised her. Let all God's Missionary Church realize that truly a virtuous woman has been found. ■



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