

**The Historical Society
Of the Bible Fellowship Church
August, 2011**

I was looking through the earliest of the publications of the Historical Society. I began writing letters during the 1980s. They really began as newsletters to inform the members of the Historical Society about events and news. Somewhere along the way, and I am not sure when even though I was a part of it all, we moved from keeping you informed to printing material of historical interest. I suppose that now as the years have passed (28 since the Historical Society was formed), even our society has become an object of our history. Along the way, we have removed a lot of dust, brought the past to life and told some stories. We are about to do it again. I hope you enjoy what you read and even learn from it. Let's start with the Civil War.

**The Evangelical Mennonites and the Civil War
Richard E. Taylor**

What Civil War?

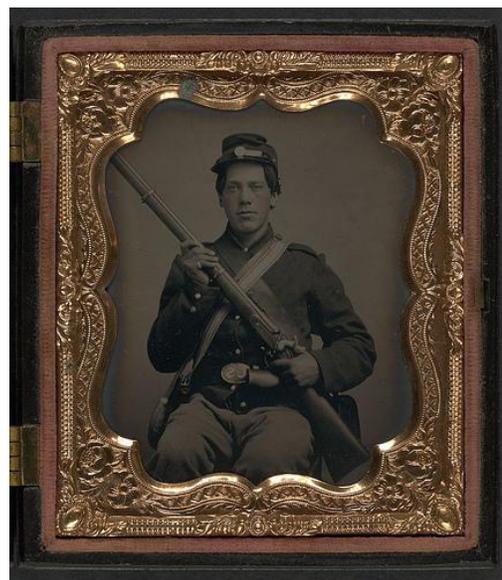
The minutes of the Evangelical Mennonite conferences from 1861 to 1865 give little indication that we were a nation at war with itself. The Evangelical Mennonites were part of a tradition that had little time for things political and no time for things military. They came from a history of non-resistance and had convictions against involvement in any violent struggle. So, no one should be surprised that almost nothing was said about a war that continued for four long years.

The Civil War, or if you are from south of the Mason Dixon line, the War between The States, took place 150 years ago. This means that for the next four years you will be hearing about anniversaries of the significant events which shaped the conflict. If you have no appreciation of history, you will soon tire of hearing about what was happening. If you understand the importance of this turning point in the history of our nation, you will follow the commemorations with interest. I thought we might get a jump on the remembering by considering how this war affected us as a church.

We can trace our roots to the pre-Civil War turmoil that created a national sense of anxiety. Those seeking the abolition of slavery were becoming louder and louder in their calls for an end to the terrible institution. Those from the south whose agricultural economy apparently depended on a work force of slaves made it clear that it was their right to own slaves. As the argument grew, so did the concern which began to show

itself in a renewed spiritual vitality. A revival of sorts grew from our national anxiety and began to take shape around the holding of prayer meetings. That revival found its way to southeastern Lehigh County's Hosensack Valley where a number of Mennonites were caught up in praying for their communities. Out of these prayer meetings, the Evangelical Mennonites, now the Bible Fellowship Church, had its birth.

The only reference to come in one meeting, the semi-annual conference held in June, 1863. The first shots of the war had come nearly two years earlier in April, 1861, resulting in the surrender of Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. The first battle came on July 21, 1861, at Bull Run near the town of Manassas, Virginia. The war had gone on for two years before it received a mention.



On June 3, 1863, two years after the beginning of hostilities, and one month prior to the Battle of Gettysburg, they finally spoke. The first reference of the meeting stated: "The conditions in the land were considered and after some discussion the following was decided upon: We should adhere to the law. We shall do our duty in regard to the authorities, praying for them in sincerity, pay our taxes, and live under their protection a quiet and peaceful life in all Godliness, respectability, and honesty." (Verhandlungen, page 33). Two scriptures were quoted, 1 Timothy 2:2 and Romans 13:5-8. At the following conference in November, 1863, the minutes recorded the following: "It was examined whether the resolution, passed by the Conference, to do our duties toward the authorities and to pay our due taxes, etc., was carried out and followed. With dismay it was found that one brother had not adhered to this important duty. After a brotherly admonition it was decided to demand an open confession from him." (Verhandlungen, page 35) They did not take lightly their decision or their responsibilities.

Whenever the Mennonites faced the prospects of a country at war, they were between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, they refused to take up arms because they were to be peacemakers, not war makers. On the other hand, they were citizens and knew they had obligations to the country where they lived. Our statement shows they followed the Mennonite line of thought and would fulfill their responsibilities while refusing to participate in war.

While we have little information about how the war affected the lives of young men in our church. The diary of the melancholic Levi Jung gives us some sense of the personal impact of the war on him. In 1863, he was listed as a preacher with us. His diary for that year says almost nothing in spite of the fact that Pennsylvania had been invaded by Confederate troops. The enemy was only about 100 miles away. On Friday, July 3 (the final day of the Gettysburg battle), he writes, "This morning we put ash in corn. Then we worked at the hay and hauled home 7 load of hay. In the evening I was in Weaversville. Today the report came that Wm. H. Beaver was wounded on the battle field." Beaver was Levi's neighbor and was killed on July 1 at Gettysburg in the very early moments of the fighting. On Saturday, July 11, Levi wrote, "Today true reports came that Wm. Beaver was killed in battle July 1 in the vicinity of Gettysburg Pa. and is now buried in a cemetery in Gettysburg though at first was buried by the rebels. He cannot therefore be at present taken home for burial [Beaver is still buried at the National Cemetery in Gettysburg]. Thus another of my friends has gone to the land of spirits and left me here in the vale of tears. Whether he has gone to heaven, God alone positively knows. It has been affecting to me during the last few days to think that Wm. Beaver is no more. This case reminds me of my own death which is perhaps nearer than I imagine." On Sunday, July 12, he notes, "In the afternoon I was in Bath where Rev Fuchs and Heisler preached the funeral sermon of my friend Wm. H. Beaver." While it would be difficult to maintain that Levi's emotions were typical, his mourning is a reminder of the wrenching agony that family and friends experienced at the death of a soldier [remember 640,000 deaths affecting nearly as many families]. On July 25, Levi reports, "Today the soldiers of the 153rd Regt. P. V. came home who were not killed and died during their absence but alas my beloved friend Wm. H. Beaver was not among them. It sometimes almost seems impossible that this can be but so it is and I will say, The Lord's will be done."

Levi also experienced another side of the conflict for a young man who identified with Mennonite ideals. In June, 1863, he was registered for the draft. Conscientious objection to war was not an option. However, men who chose not to be enrolled could pay a fine of \$300.00 which allowed for the hiring of a substitute who would serve instead. On Saturday, October 3, 1863, Levi says, "We were at Geissinger's at noon. My aunt Geissinger gave me \$200.00 to pay my fine next Sat. My heart was indeed filled with gratitude towards the Lord. My prayer has been partly answered." On Friday, October 9, he writes, "In the evening, Stephen Trumbauer gave me \$70.78 cts which I earned during the summer and also gave me \$10 more for which I gave Webster's Dictionary and the Comprehensive Commentaries for security till I can pay him again. I now have the \$300.00 to pay my fine tomorrow if I am found able for military duty. To God be praise that he furnished me with means to do so." On the next day, October 10, Levi had his appointment. "This was a day which I shall not soon forget. At half past 3

o'clock I left home and went to Catasaqua to go to Easton to report. I was examined but found able to [be] a soldier. At about 9 o'clock I left Easton and went to Bethlehem with the cars and at the latter place paid my \$300. At noon I got my dinner at my uncle's S. Geissinger. ... In the afternoon I went to Easton again and there got my certificate."

You can be sure that other young men of this small group of Mennonites who shared Levi's experience were willing to pay the \$300.00 and not take up arms. The June, 1863, draft also recorded a young Jonas Musselman. Jonas would most certainly have paid the fine.

Returning to the minutes of the conference of June, 1863, a second reference was made. "We believe that slavery (the institution of slave holding) is sin in the eyes of God and a curse on the land when it is tolerated. Therefore be it Resolved: That we use our influence against it, in Christian spirit, with word and deed, after our confession of faith." Abraham Lincoln did what many feared he would do in September, 1862. Following the battle at Antietam where he could claim victory, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation which freed the slaves of America and which became effective on January 1, 1863. With the Proclamation, Lincoln was able to make the Civil War a moral conflict about slavery. But in many places, the Proclamation was not well received. Obviously, the Confederate States ignored it. But many in the North were not sympathetic or supportive. Churches had one of three choices. They could oppose it, ignore it, or support it. To oppose or ignore were virtually the same response. Many churches needed to express themselves to let their members and their communities know where they stood on this significant issue. And so, the Evangelical Mennonites took their stand six months after the fact with no other option open to them.

The two references to the war recorded in June, 1863, are the only indication from the minutes that our nation was at war. No mention of prayer for the conflict is given. No thanksgiving is offered for the end of the hostilities. That is all.

While the church had nothing much to do with the war, in later years men would show the effects of having served. It is not possible to know how many men sat in the pews of Evangelical Mennonite meetinghouses who had served. They were not inclined to talk about it since being a veteran was not something to be recognized or talked about.

George Campbell, one of our preachers, made brief mention of his war service in a letter to the Gospel Banner. His purpose in mentioning it was to speak of how God began working in his heart while recuperating from having been a prisoner of war. He did not mention his service in the 2nd Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery, how he was captured during an assault on Richmond, how he was held for 6 months at the prison in Salisbury, North Carolina, or how he was wounded in the leg during an attempted prison break. And he did not speak of how his health had deteriorated to the point that he received a pension that most certainly supported him when he entered the ministry.



George Campbell

William Ellinger did speak of his service and even admitted to being “compelled to kill a rebel.” His war account is reprinted in our book, What Mean These Stones. [You can also read my article on him in our newsletter of May, 2003.] Ellinger was a man who lived on the far side of the law and tells of many law breaking experiences, apparently to establish his bona fide sinner credentials. One wonders whether some of the tales were embellished. Ellinger began to experience a problem with his hip and applied for a pension. It is uncertain whether he ever received it or not. He had been wounded in the foot and had apparently lost a toe to amputation. How this affected his hip and led to his increasing complaints that he was unable to work is not clear.

We simply don’t know how many other men did not tell their stories. This personal side was talked about in the privacy of their homes.

Thus, the Civil War came and went with little said among the Evangelical Mennonites. Sometimes silence speaks.

LeRoy Wilcox has been digging around in family history again. He presents us with the story of the Deppe family. Once again, you see how families and their ties were significant in our church.

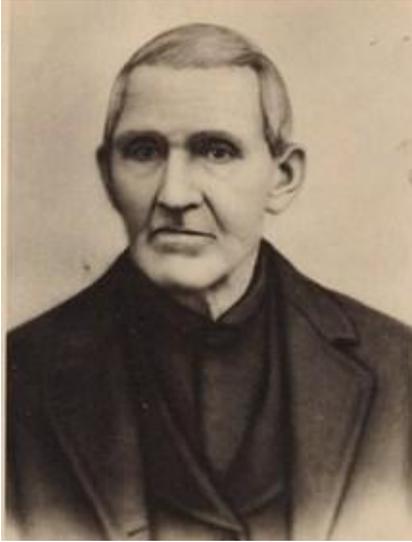
The Deppe Family - LeRoy Wilcox

Sources for name origins state that the name is derived from the Germanic "depp", a nickname for somebody who played practical jokes, or who may have been a professional comedian. Such names were commonly associated with the early theatres, where actors took as their surnames the parts for which they were best known. Johann Herman Heinrich Deppe was born on June 29, 1773 in Lippe, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Prussia, in an area of Reformed Lutheran strength. On December 03, 1797 he married Anna Marie Elisabeth Bohlhoefer in Lippe, Nordrhein - Westfallen, Germany. Anna Marie, born on June 09, 1773, died on February 26, 1814, having given birth to nine children. She died six days after giving birth to the last child. Johann Herman then married Anne Marie Elisabeth Vundeis who bore him four children, the last one being Karl August. Johann, a noted watchmaker and artist, died on January 11, 1848 in Germany.

Karl August Deppe was born on May 29, 1822 in Bielefeld, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Prussia. On January 2, 1848 he married Hanne Fredericka Blome, daughter of Berend Heinrich and Anna Maria Blome, who operated a baker shop. Karl became a boot maker.

Karl desired to emigrate to America where land was cheaper and opportunities more plentiful. He had been corresponding with a relative, John Henry Deppe, who had settled at Aquashicola in Carbon County. John's father was an officer in the Prussian Army and hoped his son would likewise follow a military career. However, he and his mother were against it. Consequently she secretly financed and assisted in finding his passage to America. He was the first Deppe to come to the United States, having arrived on May 29, 1848. A farmer and millright, he became a builder and built the first cement mill in the Lehigh Valley of PA. He married Sarah Hoffman on September 17, 1854.

Karl, his wife (whom he called Reeka), their two children, her mother, Anna Maria (now a widow), and her son, Heinrich Wilhelm Blome, embarked on the sailing vessel "Alfred", from Bremen, Germany. The crossing took 30 days and Reeka became very seasick and despondent. Karl, wanting to brighten her spirits, promised that he would give the name of Albert to the first son born in America.



Karl Charles Deppe 1822-1896 Hanne Fredericka Blume 1826-1902

The group landed in New York City on January 9, 1854 and at the immigration center his name was recorded as Charles. They boarded a passenger train and went to Easton where they had a wagon waiting for them, driven by Mr. Leaser, the foreman for John Deppe. They traveled through the Lehigh Gap, their travel made easier by a load of fresh straw, and settled on a farm near Weissport on Big Creek, now called Pohopoco Creek, near a settlement called Walksville. When the fifth son was born Reeka reminded him of his promise and that she was nearing the age when she could no longer bear children, so he named the boy Alfred.

When the Civil War broke out, both Karl and his brother-in-law, Heinrich Wilhelm Blome, volunteered for service. Karl entered the Civil War as a substitute for a man named Davis Boyer and served as a private from November 8, 1862 to June 2, 1863, in Company I, 176th Regiment, PA Volunteers. Heinrich fought at Chancellorsville and was wounded. Infection resulted in his death and he was buried on the battlefield. Karl was sent to South Carolina to work on fortifications but he suffered sunstroke and was honorably discharged on June 02, 1863 by order of General George Hunter Beauford.

Shortly after his return he went to Mahanoy City, PA and became a coal miner, working for the firm of Bowman & Lentz. He tended a furnace in the air shaft and also loaded coal. After leaving the mines he returned to his former home near Weissport and resumed farming. Finding his farm too small to support his family, he sold it and bought a larger tract of about eighty acres, in the same locality. He acquired a saw mill in the swamps at a place known as Bear Creek, about eight miles north of Mauch Chunk (now Jim Thorpe), continuing in this business about four years. He then resumed farming as long as he was able.

He and Reeka once went to hear a preacher who was known to single people out and Karl soon realized he was a target because of his heavy drinking. Though furious,

he drank lightly afterward, afraid of again being the target. Many peddlers stopped at the farmhouse where they received an evening meal, a night's lodging and breakfast in return for much - needed household items, such as dress materials, needles and thread, etc. Karl died on April 15, 1896 and Reeka died on May 2, 1902. Both are buried in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery at Big Creek in Carbon County.



Alfred Deppe 1865 - 1917

Delilah Deppe 1869 - 1951

Alfred, the fifth son, was born in Weissport on September 18, 1865. He was taught German reading and writing from the Scriptures and in 1897 was licensed as a lay preacher. It is reported that he received nice comments from those who heard him. On April 22, 1888 he married Delilah Ann Deppe, daughter of John Henry and Sarah, his first cousin once removed, in Aquashicola, Carbon County, the marriage performed by Rev. J. S Newhart.

Their first child, Henry Charles, was born on February 23, 1899 in East Mauch Chunk (now part of Jim Thorpe). Tragically, he died of a ruptured appendix on July 19, 1905. The funeral was conducted by our pastor at Leighton, Robert D. Dreisbach, showing an affiliation with our church at that time. The next child, Dennis Franklin, born on December 22, 1890 in Franklin Township, only lived until August 10, 1891. The third child, Raymond Webster, was born in Mauch Chunk (now part of Jim Thorpe) on March 14, 1892. He entered the military, moved to Washington D.C., and married Mary Agnes Nalley of that city. After her death, September 12, 1963, he married Pearl McIntyre. He died on August 07, 1978 in Washington and is buried in the Cedar Hill Cemetery, across from Washington in Maryland, beside his first wife, Mary.

The fourth child, Burton Albert, was born in East Weissport in Franklin Township on March 24, 1894. On June 17, 1914 he married Ella Amanda Becker, who was born on September 02, 1894 in Walnutport. Burton, a carpenter, also worked as a silk weaver and in retirement made rocking cradles and card tables with a built-in chess board. Burton served at times as the delegate to Annual Conference from the Walnutport

church. He died on February 16, 1994 in Kutztown Manor and is buried in the Fairview Cemetery in Northampton.

A daughter, Faith Victoria, was born on April 3, 1896 but she died on November 18 of that year. The funeral was held by one of our pastors, H.B. Musselman, who preached from the text "He feedeth amongst the Lillies".



The next child, Wesley Newell, was born on June 20, 1897. He never married and lived at home, dying on February 11, 1963. Another son, Arthur William, was born on April 02, 1899. He served as a delegate to our Annual Conference for many years, his name first appearing in the 1930 Yearbook. On June 15, 1915 he married Florence Rachael Henry in the borough of Walnutport and after her death married Pauline Adams on June 23, 1963. Arthur died on February 01, 1984 in Allentown Hospital. Florence, born on April 28, 1890, died on June 23, 1963. A son,



Russell Deppe 1902-1982

Donald Arthur, who married Jane Cates, attended Nyack Institute and Princeton Seminary. He received a bachelor's degree from Lafayette College, a master's degree from Maryland

University and a doctoral degree from the University of Chicago. After teaching in several colleges he worked with the federal government. Donald died in Goldsboro, NC on May 26, 2004 and is buried in Wayne Memorial Park.



Irene (Rex) Deppe 1904-1979

Another daughter, Esther Naomi, was born on July 22, 1900 in Union Hill, just outside Weissport. In October 1925 she married Timothy Gehret, whose wife, Beulah nee Lutz, had died in 1924. Timothy Doney Gehret, better known as T.D. Gehret, was born in Terre Hill on April 28, 1895 to Adam and Ida (Doney) Gehret when Adam was serving as pastor at our church in Terre

Hill. Two children were born to Timothy and Esther, a son, Lloyd, and a daughter, Marilyn Mae. Lloyd, born on March 26, 1934, was a member of the Cedar Crest Church. After serving in the Air Force he operated the Dudsy Coin-Op and was also a self-employed carpentry contractor. He died in Allentown on July 19, 2001. Marilyn, who never married, attends our Cedar Crest Church. Timothy died in the Allentown Hospital on November 21, 1971 and Esther died in the Allentown Osteopathic Hospital on October 19, 1980. Both are buried in Memorial Park in Bethlehem.

A son, Russell Ellsworth, was born on August 19, 1902 in the borough of Weissport and at the age of 12 he was baptized in the Lehigh Canal by our pastor at Weissport, Oswin S. Hillegas. In World War I he joined the navy and served on a submarine as a wireless operator. On August 01, 1925 he was joined in marriage to Irene Fianna Rex by the pastor at our Northampton church, Harvey K Kratz. Irene was the daughter of James and Cora (Handwerk) Rex. She was known for her love of cooking and baking pies. Born on June 27, 1904, in Emerald, Lehigh County, she died in Allentown Hospital on January 27, 1979. The funeral was conducted by David E. Thomann, Director of Pinebrook Bible Conference. Russell died on January, 18, 1982. Their first son, Robert



Cora Handwerk 1870-1918

William, married Jean Shirley Smith on February 03, 1950. She died on May 20, 2002 and both she and Robert accepted Christ near her death. Irene's sister, Elsie, married Raymond Evans of the Bethlehem church on June 01, 1947 in Bethlehem. He was first married to Josephine Weiss. A son of the first marriage, Raymond, married Elsie Wagner, whose brother, Darwin, married Lilas Butler, who attended Berean Bible School from our former Scranton church. Darwin served as a delegate from our Harrisburg church for a time. The mother of Irene and Elsie, Cora Elizabeth Handwerk, was a niece of Sabina Handwerk, who married Nathan Kemmerer. Their daughter, Violetta, gave birth to Richard Woodring, who became a pastor in our Conference, as did his son, Allen.

Richard's daughter, Dora, married Rudy Gehman, who served as a pastor with our Conference until he died of a heart attack while serving at our Lancaster church. His son, Richard, named after Richard Woodring, served for many years as president of Scott Theological Seminary in Kenya, Africa. Now retired, Richard and his wife, Florence, live in Florida.

Another son of Alfred, Alfred James, was playing in the Lehigh River with his brother but drowned while trying to cross. His body was recovered and Russell's brother-in-law, Oliver Beil, took Russell to the body, which was then removed to the funeral home. Alfred was only six years of age.

A daughter, Clara Olive, was born on December 15, 1903 in East Weissport, Franklin Township. On November 27, 1929 she married Oliver William Beil. Oliver, son of Henry and Jenny (Bartholomew) Beil, was born on March 11, 1909. Clara gave birth to a daughter, Pauline, and a son, James Alfred, the middle name no doubt given for Clara's father. Pauline married Rev. William Cordes and lives in Chattanooga, TN. James, born in Northampton, was graduated from Berean Bible School and then attended Moravian College, earning a degree in biology. He entered the ministry in the Bible Fellowship Church, serving at Binghamton, Scranton, Harleysville and Graterford. He then became the founding Administrator of Fellowship Manor and Fellowship Community and also served as Chairman of Annual Conference and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bible Fellowship Church. James married Gail Lenore Zimmerman in August, 1956. She died on May 14, 2000 at Fellowship Manor and James then married a widow, Sandra Sharer nee Campbell. He died on October 23, 2010 at Fellowship Community and both Jim and Gail are buried in our Zionsville Cemetery. Clara was killed in an auto accident on November 25, 1966 and is buried in the Allen Union Cemetery at Northampton. Oliver married two more times after Clara's death and died on June 18, 2020 at Fellowship Manor. He is buried next to Clara.

Harvey Allen was born on April 28, 1906 in East Weissport in Franklin Township. He died on July 04, 1909 after a scratch on his knee developed into lockjaw. Oswin S. Hillegas, our pastor in the area, officiated at the funeral and Harvey was buried in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery at Big Creek.

The last child, Helen Irene, was born on January 16, 1907 in Cementon in Lehigh County. She married William Kenneth Cressman of our Bethlehem church on December 25, 1933. He was born in 1907 in Bethlehem Township, the son of Jacob and Hannah (Moyer) Cressman. His niece, Renee, married James Bigley and they served in Kenya as missionaries for many years.

Alfred died on May 31, 1917 and is buried in the cemetery at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Carbon County. Sarah then married Edwin Hoffman in 1919,



Railroad John

Another son of Karl, given the name of John, worked for the railroad and was known as "Railroad John". In 1880 he married Catharine E. nee Klotz, the widow of J. Stettler and they had seven children, the first being Charles Emmanuel. He married Kate Louisa Diehl on August 17, 1901 and they had six children, the fourth being Richard John. Richard, born in Big Creek, Carbon County, married Dorothy Amelia Theresa Engler on November 18, 1932 and after her death, Lena Mae Albitz, in January 1947. Richard, a member of Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, served as an elder and deacon. He died at home in

Whitehall Township on October 08, 1995. Lena then married a Bible Fellowship retired pastor, 89 year old David Ernest Thomann, who had conducted the funeral for Irene (Rex) Deppe in 1979. They were joined in matrimony by David's son, David A. Thomann, pastor of our Lancaster church, on November 18, 2006. David E. died on October 03, 2010 at Fellowship Manor and Lena continues to reside there.

The Deppe family never supplied a regular preacher to our Conference but was definitely an integral part of it. Many were active Christians, serving in their churches and some serving as delegates to Annual Conference. Through intermarriage they connected some key families of our Conference. Truly they made a difference.

Information was gained through personal research and data supplied by Russell E. Deppe (1902-1982) to his granddaughter, Rochelle Lavoie, who also supplied photos and additional facts. Further information was gained from the book "The House of Deppe" by Lt. Col. Robert E. Deppe (1915-2007).

Arlington L. Seifert was the last of those who served as District Superintendent in the Bible Fellowship Church. Following his service as a pastor and District Superintendent, he was our first director of Pinebrook Bible Conference. In 1948, he was just beginning his ministry. His son, Dale, has passed on some of his papers to us. The following was included.

The Ministry of Reconciliation Arlington L. Seifert

[Given at the Gospel Herald Convention in
Binghamton, 1948]

The portion of Scripture which has been assigned for this topic is found in II Corinthians 5:18 with which I would like to incorporate a portion of the 19th verse. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Way translates this passage in the following manner: "And of all this God is the source. He reconciled me to Himself by the mediation of Messiah; and He has assigned to me the office of this reconciliation, the Charter



whereof is -- God was present in the Messiah Reconciling to Himself the world, Cancelling the record of their transgressions."

The blood of Jesus Christ has procured for us many blessings which might be included in the word "Redemption." Reconciliation necessarily takes first place among these blessings and is the starting point or origin of the multitude of blessings which are ours through the Redemptive work of Christ. It is of primary importance that the believer who has already received reconciliation should obtain a deeper and more spiritual conception of its meaning and blessings.

The basis of reconciliation is, "Him who knew no sin, He has made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (II Corinthians. 5:21) "That He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Ephesians 2:16) These are wonderful words and deeper than we can altogether fathom. Christ stood before God as identified with the sins of others which He had taken upon Himself, endured the judgment of it, and thus the message of reconciliation can go out to all. This is the great message of the true minister, and all believers can be true ministers proclaiming the message in Christ's stead and pointing sinners to the cross, where He who knew no sin was made sin for us, where redemption full and free is offered to all.

Christ has witnesses that are to speak for Him. The apostles sent in the first place direct from Christ, fulfilled this purpose, in the most complete and authoritative way, but we must not for that reason overlook our own part in it -- a part which every Christian has. The work of reconciliation is not indeed, a mere question of something entrusted to us, but of hearts that know God's grace and know man's need of it, which must necessarily, therefore speak of what they know. As we are told, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"God is already reconciled to the world of men and is only waiting for them to be reconciled to Him. By the inspiration of God the scriptures were written, which contain the word of reconciliation, showing us that peace was made by the blood of the cross, and instructing us in the means to be used in being reconciled. Since God is willing to be reconciled to us, men ought to be reconciled to Him. It is the great end and design of the gospel, word of reconciliation, to prevail upon sinners to lay aside their enmity against God. He hath committed to men the ministry of reconciliation and commissioned them to be His ambassadors.

Matthew Henry states, "Reconciliation supposes a quarrel, or breach of friendship; and sin has made a breach, it has broken the friendship between God and man. The heart of the sinner is filled with enmity against God, and God is justly offended with the sins of the sinner. God has appointed the mediator of reconciliation. He has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." He has reconciled us to Himself through Christ. He has brought us out of all the estrangement natural to us. There is not distance, there is nearness. By the very fact that He has brought us to Himself and

made Himself known to us, He has given us the power also of making known to others that with which our own souls are filled and of bringing others to Him. We have received the reconciliation; and what we have received, we have not received for ourselves alone but to minister with it. It is not a question of how far this might be effectual, of how far men, in fact, respond to it. On God's part through Christ Jesus complete reconciliation has been made possible and men are free to accept or reject the offer.

In Christ's work of reconciliation, God's object is the removal and destruction of sin. Knowledge of sin is necessary for a knowledge of reconciliation.

Sin has had and still does have a twofold effect. It has an effect on God, as well as on man. We are informed in God's word that "Sin is the transgression of the law," (I John 3:4) and that, "All unrighteousness is sin." (I John 5:17). Sin is an offence. It is rebellion against the sovereignty of God, a contradiction to His nature and an insult to His holiness. Sin consists essentially in the want of conformity to the will of God. Man through sin has not only become wounded, he has become alienated from God; he has been brought into an attitude of positive antagonism to God. Sin is not something which appeals to pity only, a mere misfortune. It deserves punishment, for it is rebellion against the purity, goodness and majesty of God. Sin is disobedience, contempt of the authority of God; it seeks to rob God of His honor as God and Lord. Sin is determined opposition to a Holy God. It not only can, but must awaken His wrath.

How can we be delivered from the guilt which is heaped up before God? Can the guilt of sin be removed? Can the effect of sin upon God in awakening His wrath be removed? Can sin be blotted out before God? It is only through reconciliation that the guilt of sin can be removed. It removes the guilt of sin, so that man can draw near to God.

The Lord Jesus Christ was the first to completely carry out the perfect ministry of reconciliation. Reconciliation must be the satisfaction of the demands, of God's holy law. The Lord Jesus accomplished that by His death and resurrection. By a willing and perfect obedience, He fulfilled the law under which He had placed Himself.

In the Old Testament the satisfaction of God's holy demands was set forth in the laws of the offerings. A clean beast took the place of a guilty man. The man's sin was laid, by confession, on the head of the victim which bore the punishment by surrendering its life unto death. The blood of the animal made reconciliation and covered the sinner and his sin because it had taken his place, and atoned for his sin. Here was reconciliation in the blood, but the blood of cattle or of goats could never take away sin; it was only a shadow, a picture of the real reconciliation.

Blood of a totally different character was necessary for an effectual covering and removal of the sinner's guilt. Nothing less than the blood of God's own Son could bring about reconciliation. As head of mankind and as mankind's representative (being perfect and without any spot of sin) He became their surety. Perfect satisfaction of the

demands of the law was accomplished by the shedding of His blood. This is true reconciliation—the blotting out of our sins.

This is the ministry of reconciliation which Christ's servants are to preach and which has been given us by none other than God Himself. It is applicable to all men everywhere for "There is none righteous" and "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It is indeed the responsibility of all those

already reconciled to make use of this ministry of reconciliation to bring others into this proper relationship with their Lord and creator. As we use this ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit it becomes the responsibility of each individual to accept the only reconciliation God offers. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son has been shed and atonement for sin has been made. When this reconciliation is accepted peace is restored and a change takes place in the heart and life. For those who receive the reconciliation sin has been brought to naught. The wrath of God turns round and hides itself in the depths of divine love. The full extent of all this is unfathomable by our mere finite minds.

When the ministry of reconciliation is properly carried on and accepted the righteousness of God no longer terrifies the individual. It meets him as a friend, with an offer of complete justification. God receives with pleasure and approval the penitent sinner who draws near to Him and He invites him to intimate fellowship. He opens for him treasures of blessing and rivers of mercy unceasing and everlasting drawn from the eternal fountain of all blessings—our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. After reconciliation there is no longer the dark separation but communion and fellowship. Reconciliation brings about a perfect and eternal salvation.

In the ministry of reconciliation we offer to all men everywhere a full and complete pardon and forgiveness. The Scriptures use many illustrations to show the fullness of forgiveness, and to convince the fearful heart of the sinner that the blood has taken away his sin. We are told in Isaiah 44:22, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins. "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" is the assurance given in Micah 7:19.



A. L. Seifert and J. E. Hartman

In our ministry of reconciliation we may assure those who believe that their sin is so completely covered and blotted out that God looks upon them as entirely righteous. The acquittal which he has received from God is so complete that there is absolutely nothing to prevent him approaching God with the utmost freedom and confidence. He may now look towards heaven which formerly was black with God's wrath, and a coming awful judgment, and find that the black clouds have been removed by the glorious light of God's love as manifested in the person and work of His son Jesus Christ.

Those who have had the ministry of reconciliation committed to them need to pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit may continually reveal the wondrous glory of this reconciliation. They should pray for enlightened hearts to see how completely the accusing and condemning power of sin has been removed. The heart should be opened to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the glorious effects which the blood has had. Through the living Christ the powerful effects of the blood will be increasingly manifested in the heart and it will be understood what it means to walk in the full light and enjoyment of forgiveness and reconciliation.

The one truly carrying out the ministry of reconciliation is an ambassador for Christ. An ambassador does not seek to attract others to himself but represents the king and honors him. It is profitable for those engaged in this work of reconciliation to study the example of John the Baptist. He was willing to have the lowest place if only men would see the glory of Christ. Speaking of Christ he said, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to bear or unloose." His aim was to have Christ increase and himself decrease. Christ's own testimony regarding John the Baptist was, "Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist". True humility is one of the signs of true greatness and is an important requisite in conducting Christ's work. Our Lord stated, "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Myself". Paul testified that he died daily and also that he was crucified with Christ, nevertheless he lived, yet not he but Christ lived in him. It might also be said that Christ lived through him giving that life to others by his faithful ministry. The ministry of reconciliation must attract men to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords—the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.

The ministry of reconciliation is a tremendous responsibility but God's grace will always prove sufficient to carry it out. The arm of flesh will fail in this ministry. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit", is the divinely appointed method of conducting this ministry.

The hymn writer has well expressed the ministry of reconciliation in these words:

I am a stranger here, within a foreign land,
My home is far away, upon a golden strand;
Ambassador to be of realms beyond the sea,

I'm here on business for my King.

This is the King's command, that all men everywhere,
Repent and turn away, from sin's seductive snare;
That all who will obey, with Him shall reign for aye,
And that's my business for my King.

My home is brighter far than Sharon's rosy plain,
Eternal life and joy throughout its vast domain;
My Sovereign bids me tell how mortals there may dwell,
And that's my business for my King.

This is the message that I bring,
A message angels fain would sing;
"Oh, be ye reconciled" Thus saith my Lord and King,
"Oh, be ye reconciled to God."

The following was submitted by Ethel Herb, daughter of E. E. Kublic. Her sister, Dorothy Kublic Zellner wrote this before her death on October 13, 2007. Her comments take you into the life of the Kublic family. This article allows me to correct a mistake in a previous article in which I displayed a photograph which I identified as the Kublic family but was in reality the E. J. Rutman family. Enjoy.

E. E. Kublic
By Dorothy Kublic Zellner

Early immigrants to this country faced almost insurmountable hardships. Family separations were common. The husband and maybe a son could travel first, go to work, scrimp and save enough money to re-unite the family. A long voyage, under extreme stress and less than desirable conditions; the heartache of a loved one buried at sea; arriving to the joyful sight of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island; at last, the family reunion. The Kublics were no exception as they journeyed to and settled in the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania near Hickory Swamp.

All the male members became miners, working diligently in unison, so eventually they could become sponsors for others to come to this wonderful land of opportunity and freedom.

Eventually, after several traumatic mining accidents, each found a different occupation. When God called E. E. to the ministry, he answered that call with the same undaunted devotion and determination that brought them here.

E. E. was not satisfied to confine his preaching to the pulpit. He had a passion for the less fortunate, reaching out into homes and areas where he could reach those who, either by choice or circumstance could not attend a service.

One afternoon a week found him in a local hospital to shake a hand, comfort, bring a ray of hope and to say a prayer if that was acceptable.

Every Wednesday afternoon he went to jail. Other ministers had held services, taking turns, but gave up because they were ignored by inmates. After E. E.'s first visit, he was welcomed. Inmates left their cells to sit in a group where they talked. E. E. listened and encouraged them with thoughts and prayers that they could find a more fulfilling way of life when their term was over. And many did.

Two Sunday afternoons a month, weather permitting, a small group from church went to the County Poor Farm where they were greeted by the residents with happy anticipation. The services consisted of group participation in singing old familiar hymns and writing familiar Bible verses, bringing an enthusiastic response from those present.

Even though the Kublics were soft spoken and quiet by nature, E. E. had the unique ability to project his voice and enunciate his words to be heard and understood at great distance. This came in handy when, during early camp meeting days, a thunderstorm would knock out the P.A. system. He could be called on, at a moment's notice, to preach the sermon so all in the huge tabernacle could hear.

Walking was his choice to get from one place to another. Many marveled at his ability to cover a distance in no time flat and wondered how he did. He had no tolerance for waste, be it time, energy, food, material or even footsteps. It was essential to fulfill his purpose for being, to the best of his God-given ability, and to give back in some measure the blessings received from God and America.

Preachers' kids facing the challenge of growing up, were not without turmoil because much was expected of them. Most adjusted but when rebellion reared its ugly head, E. E. met it with endless patience as he tried to understand and explain why not.



Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Kublic

One remark remains etched in memory, “It may be alright now, but once we let down the bars, when will it end?” How intuitive he was as we look around today.

Each in his own way touched a multitude of lives. We could continue with glowing comments about their achievements. But reflecting back on our individual memories of our heritage, we all find an indomitable spirit, without stain, leaving an indelible mark of the highest standard and setting example so those who followed could proudly say – I am a Kublic!!

That’s all for now. As always, question, comments and memories are welcome.

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Pinebrook Dedication - Were you there?