



STEWARDSHIP CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter for Financial Connections Within the Anabaptist Community

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Surviving Prosperity, PART 1

By Ivan Bender

There he lay. His motionless body no longer resembled the healthy young man he had been. The mark on the forehead revealed where the dead ash tree had inflicted the blow that ended Jacob Miller’s life. As we solemnly filed by his coffin to pay our last respects, reality hit home. Life really is fragile. Life truly is short.

As we visited with Jacob’s loved ones throughout the evening, we could see a lot of support for his family. The women in the church brought meals. Fellow church brothers dropped their work and willingly pitched in with the farm chores, hauling manure, and looking after the animals. Jacob’s immediate and extended family could rest assured that all was taken care of.

A discussion was held on how his calf business would survive; after all, Jacob’s oldest son was only six years old. Plans soon developed for one of the nephews to stay with the family for a while to run the calf operation. Perhaps changes would have to be made eventually, but the church structure was in place to help implement and facilitate those changes. It would all work out.

Yes, there would be huge adjustments and times of sorrow; only those who have walked the path of young widowhood could truly understand. But it was evident that Jacob’s church consisted of a vital brotherhood. It was a church structured on the foundation of

Jesus Christ. This church did not express its love in flowery words and embraces, but rather in *doing*. Oh, to be sure, this church setting wasn’t perfect; it was no heaven on earth. But it would be fair to say that Jacob Miller’s home church was surviving prosperity.

The Foundation

The true strength and overall soundness of Jacob’s church amidst an increasingly godless and self-serving society justifies more scrutiny. Just what is the foundation of this church, revealed through the above united expression of love? Let’s dig around a little and see if we can’t uncover some foundational principles.

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”
John 13:34-35

Let’s face it—we all have different tastes and preferences. We all have various ways of viewing issues and solving problems. Working together like Jacob’s church may be quite easy during unexpected calamities like a death. But unless a church is able to work through its differences during the more monotonous seasons of life, it will eventually lose the “togetherness” that we hope to pass on to the

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next generation. It is only when individual church members make it a priority to lay down their will for the will of the whole that the church can perform as the true church of God.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

God seeks a separate people, a people separate from the evil world as a disciplined brotherhood. It is a solemn call to suffer for Christ as He submitted to God on Calvary. As a flock of sheep standing in a protective circle with their heads pointed inward, a united, disciplined church is a haven from the world of evil for the sincere Christian. When taken into this context, the church guidelines become a privilege and not a burden. It is an opportunity to witness to the world that we are willing to bear a few material inconveniences to belong to a united church that fulfills the commandment to be a separate people.

“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Matthew 10:37-39

As a flock of sheep standing in a protective circle with their heads pointed inward, a united, disciplined church is a haven from the world of evil for the sincere Christian.

Self-denial is a very important part of any sincere Christian’s life. In denying self, one is following Christ’s example. If self-denial is not one of the foundational principles of a church, it cannot survive like Jacob’s church did. True love cannot be practiced without self-denial.

The above is not an all-inclusive list of critical foundation stones a church needs to be built on, but it is intended to create somewhat of a framework. If we hope to understand what it will take for a church to survive prosperity, we need to first understand the foundation it is built on. In other words, we will need to understand our core and original identity. We will touch more on this later.

As we study the above few, but incomplete list of foundational church values, I think we could all agree that establishing and maintaining a church’s foundation goes fully against human nature. Just like constant water running over a rock will eventually erode the rock, human nature, if not denied and crucified through the power of Christ, will erode and eventually destroy the church’s foundation. And just like it will take much time for water to erode stone, it can take a few generations for the fruits of human nature to do their damage to the church.

Culture and Prosperity

Now that we have looked at the foundation for surviving prosperity, let’s look at the structure. Times of plenty, times of leisure, and times of extra money aren’t usually seen as a threat, but rather as a blessing. In some ways these things are a blessing, but dangers come with prosperity. Of course, one can survive

prosperity physically, but can we survive it spiritually and culturally?

What do we mean by “culturally”? The definition of culture is “the concepts, habits, skills, arts, instruments, institutions, etc., of a given people in a given period.”¹ We cannot escape culture. Every person alive today is part of a culture. We live in an American culture, and within that culture is our church culture. The type of culture we are a part of influences our personal habits, and therefore has an influence on our spiritual health.

We Anabaptist people are extremely blessed to be part of a church culture that upholds Christian values such as Scriptural church structure, humility, love for others, absence of divorce and remarriage, and church-imposed regulations to keep out what is considered detrimental to our spiritual welfare. The Anabaptist culture in itself does not provide a one-way ticket to salvation, but it serves as a vehicle to bring us to salvation through the teaching we receive by it. It brings structure to the Christian’s life as long as the culture conforms to God and not vice versa. In contrast, the prevalent American culture of today is riddled with an entitlement mentality (*give me, give me*), extreme individualism, instant gratification, justification of grossly immoral practices, and patriotism.

Defining Prosperity

Exactly what is prosperity, and why do many of us who are concerned about our heritage refer to it in a negative way? Is prosperity bad?

The dictionary defines prosperity as “a prosperous condition; good fortune; wealth and success.” But what does that look like in a practical sense? Do you have to be the owner of a thriving business to

¹ Johnson, S. “Changing the Culture of Care.” *Mich Health Hosp.* 2003 Jan-Feb;39(1):38.



ANABAPTIST FOUNDATION

New Leadership at Anabaptist Foundation

By Richie Lauer, Charitable Gift Fund manager and former Foundation administrator

As of July 1, 2023, Mark Anthony Peachey assumed the leadership role at Anabaptist Foundation. As the new administrator, Mark Anthony will provide general oversight to our programs, services, and staff; he will also serve as the Foundation's primary link to the AF board of directors and administrative team, and to our church constituency. This transition has been planned for several years, and we're eager to see what the Lord has in store for Anabaptist Foundation under Mark Anthony's leadership.

I first came to know Mark Anthony as one of the board members for the Missions Interest Committee, a Beachy-Amish charity, and later as a board member at the Central Pennsylvania Clinic. At the REACH convention in April 2017, while walking from one workshop session to the next, we fell into conversation about the importance of AF's Young Family Finance seminars. That marked the start of a personal friendship. Before long, I asked him, "Have you ever thought about working for AF?"

At the time, Mark Anthony was a partner in a family-owned business called Pennstone Supply. It took about a year, but through the process of prayer and seeking counsel, the family decided to sell the business. One thing stood out to me in that process: Mark Anthony repeated a perspective his father held as founder of the family business. His father viewed the business as a tool to enable a family member to serve God and never as something to stand in the way of what God was calling a family member to do next.

Mark Anthony started working part time for Anabaptist

Foundation in February 2018 and was full time by August of that year. His role at the Foundation has grown over time. He serves as caseworker for anonymous donors in our Charitable Gift Fund Program, oversees the Charitable Solicitation Registration Program for nonprofit organizations, and takes the lead role in our Planned Giving services. I see his personal strengths as being:

- A firm personal commitment to Biblical stewardship
- A genuine interest in people and their lives
- A willingness to tackle issues and find solutions to long-term problems

Several people have remarked, "It must be difficult to step away from the lead role at the Foundation, since it is something you've been involved in since the beginning." I don't experience it as a difficult transition. As I like to reply, "*When you find someone who can do your work better than you can do it, the best thing you can do is to get out of their way!*" I also appreciate the old tongue-in-cheek saying, "*You should let go of what you are doing before everyone else wishes you would.*"

I care about the mission and work of Anabaptist Foundation. The Foundation provides an avenue for the anonymous and generous support of church work and charities, and it offers other needed services within our conservative Anabaptist church communities. Because this work needs to continue and grow, I'm eager to see a younger man take responsibility to build upon what already exists.

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Learn to Transition

Nonprofit leaders must learn to transition. Within nonprofit organizations, leadership transition should be planned but it begins with leaders being willing to transition. Orderly transition to qualified successors is one of the best things a leader can do. This principle flows through all leadership roles.

Family leaders must learn to transition. One of the most difficult periods in a man's life occurs as his children mature into young adults. A tug-of-war often occurs within a man's heart between holding on and letting go. Years of living life together have been invested, and the bonds of affection are strong. But a boy who followed you around must become a man who leads in his own home, and a girl who bounced on your knee must become another man's helpmeet and a competent mother in her own right.

A good father can learn to become a good in-law and grandfather, but only after he learns to let go. When done correctly, "authority" is replaced by "influence." In the end, influence is more meaningful and powerful than authority.

Business leaders must learn to transition. The man who built a business in the 1990s does not always maneuver as deftly in the 2020s. Also, men get tired. When men tire, they default to models and patterns that may not work as well as they once did. (Biblical principles for operating a business remain steady and sure over time, but the specific skills required for overall business success may change.) With several families depending on a business for their livelihoods, it is not wise for it to be led by a tired man. Business leaders must learn to transition.

Church leaders must learn to transition. In 2 Timothy 2:2, the Apostle Paul admonished Timothy, the bishop at Ephesus, to prepare for the future of the church under his care. "The

things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Recently in our local congregation, we ordained a younger minister and deacon. The older ministers and deacon still provide valuable leadership and continuity, but it is exciting to see the energy younger men bring to preaching and church work. If churches do not ordain qualified, younger ministers and deacons, the leadership bench will be weaker when it comes time to ordaining a new bishop.

Transition is only a question of "when" and "how" it will happen, not "if" it will happen. Leaders should transition the weight of day-to-day authority and responsibilities before they have to. A planned transition with good mentoring is far better than a resisted or sudden transition out of necessity.

Leaders who transition to a qualified successor before they have to become free for whatever God has next for them, whether that is serving as a helper to the new leader or moving to tackle one more good thing while still mentally and physically able. Years of experiences are not wasted when they are harvested to serve God and others in meaningful ways. Proverbs 16 provides both a promise and a warning: "The hoary (gray) head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Older people with experiences may possess something valuable to share with others, but only if those experiences are used in ways that honor the LORD.

Mark Anthony and his wife Shirley live in McVeytown, PA, and are members at Valley View Amish Mennonite Church. They enjoy being active in their community and making new friends. You may wish them well at markpeachey@afweb.org. I'll be staying with the Foundation for the time being, working in the Charitable Gift Fund program and supporting Mark Anthony in his new role. 🙌

UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 21** McAlisterville, PA Budgeting seminar
- August 29** Berne, IN Budgeting seminar
- September 12-13** Arthur, IL HR workshop
- September 12-13** Versailles, MO Sales workshop
- September 19** East Earl, PA Business seminar
- September 20** East Earl, PA Employee seminar
- September 21** Chambersburg, PA Business seminar
- Sept. 26-27** Millersburg, OH Business Succession workshop
- October 10-11** New Holland, PA Marketing workshop
- October 17** Goshen, IN Employee seminar

- October 20** Owen, WI Employee seminar
- October 28** Lexington, IN Young Family Finance seminar
- October 28** Lexington, IN Budgeting seminar
- Oct. 31-Nov. 1** Munfordville, KY Business Planning workshop
- Oct. 31-Nov. 1** Memphis, MO Marketing workshop
- November 14** Hutchinson, KS Business seminar
- November 14-15** Middlefield, OH Sales workshop
- November 14-15** New Holland, PA Accounting workshop
- November 14-15** Middlebury, IN HR workshop

be prosperous? I don't think so. I believe we could say that prosperity is when we have our needs met, and even have more than what we need.

We can think of different times of prosperity in the Bible. In the time of Noah, they were "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (Matthew 24:38). One has to wonder how different it would have been if they had not necessarily discontinued what they were doing but simply kept it in moderation, given God the glory, and worshipped Him in thankfulness.

Repeatedly, prosperity was experienced and then taken away as sin took over. Again and again the Israelites rose and fell as a nation until they eventually were scattered among many nations.

That we see prosperity as a bad thing stands to reason. In the Old Testament, God would bless His people when they turned to Him and served Him, but so often they then turned to idolatry, and God would take those blessings away from them. For example, God told the Israelites in Exodus 19:4-6, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." But so many times, when God's people enjoyed this prosperity, they would inevitably turn away from God. God therefore warned His people about this before they entered the promised land of Canaan—the land that was "flowing with milk and honey." The warning is found in Deuteronomy 8:6-14:

"Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a

land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

Later on, in verses 19 and 20 of that same chapter, He warns them, "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God."

The Biblical example in Deut. 8:6-14 is prosperity almost at its fullest. The Israelites were promised to lack nothing. But God knew they would easily be distracted by these things, and He knows we can quickly be distracted as well. Yet, at times He allows us to be blessed with prosperity. In the New Testament, however, we do not see material blessings as an indication that we are blessed by God.

So is prosperity bad? The choice is ours. We should not feel guilty if God allows us to live in prosperity, but we need to be aware of the dangers that go along with that blessing. If we enter the battle alone, prosperity will be bad. But if we enlist the Lord's help and allow others to speak into our lives, we can flourish. *To be continued*

So what is the Anabaptist people's true identity?

Is it straw hats and beards? Is it women's coverings and modest dresses? Is it neat homesteads and successful businesses?

Do we recognize the true identity of Anabaptism?

Upholding Family Values in Business

Adapted from an AF business seminar presentation given by Wayne Wengerd



Which comes first, my business or my family?

Perhaps this is the wrong question to ask. Too often we say the family comes first but then give priority to the business. If you must choose between the two, only one will get your focused attention. What happens if, instead, we ask, “How can we balance the needs of *both* our family and our business?” In Anabaptist farming history, this balance happened more naturally. Family and faith, work and worship were all intertwined. Today, with fewer families farming, the challenge is more prevalent. How can we successfully combine and balance family and business?

Intersection of Family and Business

In our world today, we face a great need for wholesome work. Over half of the Amish population is under 20 years old; our young families need work to support themselves. Not only do they need work, they also need work environments that help build the kingdom of God. This need can be fulfilled with thriving businesses within the plain community.

Neither strong families nor successful businesses happen by accident. It takes a keenly focused vision accompanied by a strong action plan. Noah’s story in Genesis repeatedly mentions not only Noah, but also his wife, his sons, and his sons’ wives. They were obviously a strong family unit. Noah’s family was blessed and able to accomplish great work for the kingdom. Building the ark required more than wishful thinking or just hoping. It took an intentional long-term focus, a plan, and diligent effort.

Family and business don’t blend automatically. It takes practice to get everyone to sing in harmony. Some children might seem to be singing offkey and seemingly can’t blend well into the family business. Make sure they understand that this is okay and that they are not required to join the family business. They may fit better somewhere else. Let them go if they find fulfillment elsewhere, or you could even help them start their own business.

Employing family members creates some unique challenges. The employed child can never be allowed to be a spoiled brat on the job and not required to do his share; other employees will be frustrated and feel cheated. If the family is dysfunctional, it will invariably show up and impact the business negatively. Even good strong families will have struggles and challenges. Responding promptly to resolve family issues and challenges minimizes their impact on the family business.

Family Needs

What family needs must be met? What are some basic requirements for building strong families?

- Time away from the business – schedule time to do things as a family outside the business. Keeping it simple makes it easier to accomplish. Take the family fishing at a local pond, plan a picnic lunch by the creek, or spend a half day at a local auction or swap meet. These are ideas to get started; there are many others. Involve the family and use your imagination.
- Meals together – strong families eat together as much as possible. Schedule at least one meal daily with everyone present. This can be your “family time” with all family members sharing and contributing.
- Spiritual leadership – schedule time for family devotions. Read God’s Word together. Sing together. Pray with and for each other. Encourage all family members to participate.
- Rest and recreation – these are essential, but in a proper order of priority. They should come after work and sacrificial serving. The goal is to rest, to unwind, and to be personally edified. Shun mere entertainment and amusement.

Upholding Family Values in Business

It has been said that “the first generation starts a business; the second generation runs the business; the third generation ruins the business.” Sadly, this happens far too often, but it doesn’t have to.

There are reasons that some families work together successfully for generations while others struggle in vain. In my observation, here are a few things that are key to the long-term success of your family and business:

- Have a clear vision with a long-term plan.
- Be very diligent about communication.
- Teach and train your children with purpose.
- Every child is born with a need to belong and a need to be part of something greater than himself. Be sure that need is met in your children.

In our family business, we occasionally get tourists who want to tour our shop and visit with us. Comments and questions from them have helped me appreciate our Anabaptist heritage. They have also provoked me to think seriously about what we truly value. I tell them our values are faith, family, and community. Our faith is a kingdom focus that guides everything we do. Our family is a God-designed structure where children are brought into the world and provided a safe environment to grow up in. Our community is primarily the church and working together in brotherhood.

What Anabaptist traits do we identify with? We should determine and define values for the family and the business. Following are some key Anabaptist tenets and teachings utilized by strong families to work together in harmony.

Vision

Solomon in his great wisdom stated, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish...*”¹ Losing vision is a far greater loss than the business closing or the barn burning. Some of us are so busy getting the work done we forget the important matters. Let’s ponder our motives, asking, “Why am I in business?”

Every business and every family needs a vision and mission statement. A vision statement defines where we want to go or what we want to accomplish. For example, the greatest vision statement ever is found in John 17:12, that “*none of them is lost.*” This was God’s vision. The mission statement defines how we will accomplish the vision. For example, the greatest mission statement ever is found in Luke 4:18: “*to preach the gospel to the poor... to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*” Put your vision and mission statements in writing and periodically refer to them. It will help you stay on track.

Leadership

Successful businesses need strong leadership. Leaders lead—they go first; they set the bar for everyone in the organization. They take the blame when things go wrong. Remember, if things go wrong in business, we owners or managers failed somewhere. It is our responsibility to resolve problems. Strong leaders are quick to share the credit when things go well. They lead with humility and a servant attitude. Jesus set the example and modeled this for us.

Discipleship

We are followers of Christ and obedient to His teachings. We live and demonstrate Sermon on the Mount principles in our daily interaction with others.

Integrity

In Switzerland, where the Amish originated, Anabaptists were known for their firm dedication to abide by the New Testament standard of truth. They were known as “men of truth.” Their commitment to faith and integrity was more precious to them than family, home, or life itself. Living our values and teaching them by example happens simultaneously. We have been taught to live by the Golden Rule and insist on honesty and integrity in everything we do. Your children are watching every move you make. Integrity is not something we can practice ninety percent of the time. Either you have integrity, or you do not.

Accountability and Transparency

Develop written business policies and agreements. Do this while you still like each other; that way, you are more likely to continue liking each other. Be clear on expectations, terms, and conditions. This prevents misunderstandings and confusion. Then, when questions arise, you can go back and see what the agreement was. In every business, even in strong families, there will be misunderstandings and things that go wrong. Conflict is a given, but combat is optional. Don’t fight. It wastes energy and impedes progress. And it is both selfish and sinful.

Witness

There is no greater opportunity to share the hope within us than in the marketplace, and especially within our businesses. Every day in business provides opportunity to share the Truth. Christians are willing to share the Gospel but also ready to provide a listening ear. Witnessing in a quiet way can be very effective, but there are times that we need to speak up. There is a time to listen and a time to speak.

¹ Proverbs 29:18

Community

We rely on mutual aid instead of insurance. We emphasize generosity, empathy, and sharing. For example, one of our employees had a barn fire this summer, and within two weeks after the fire, his barn was replaced with a new one and filled with new equipment and harnesses. His own Amish brotherhood was prompted to meet this need. Other Anabaptist and non-Anabaptist churches in the area came alongside as well. This was a strong community in action, a trait that was passed down from our forefathers.

Hospitality

One of the better things we can do for our children is to practice hospitality with them to a wide variety of people. This broadens their horizons and makes them more aware and understanding of other cultures. It provides many teachable moments. Take your guests with you to church or family gatherings. The experience may do more for you and your family than it will ever do for them.

Frugality

When our children were all still at home, my industrious wife raised a large garden in the summertime. Some years it produced more than we needed, so rather than throw food away, she would send the children to the shop with bags of extra produce which they shared with customers, truck drivers, or mail carriers. The principles of frugality and not wasting will stay with children all of their lives.

Spouse Support

Many spouses do not work in or even know much about the family business, but I can assure you that my wife is vital to our business. She may not know much about the business, but she knows a lot about me. Some days everything seems to go wrong. It feels like the entire world is working against me, and I tend to get discouraged. We business owners need at least one person that cheers and claps for us on days like this. That one person is my wife. I need her, and I need her support in my business.

Code of Conduct

One of the most essential tools you can give your children is a family code of conduct. Compile a list of absolutes, deciding what your family will or will not do, where you will or will not go, what you will tolerate in the home and what you won't. Make it a list of wills and won'ts rather than one of do's and don'ts. Include your growing family when creating your list, and write it down. A written family code of conduct empowers children to resist peer pressure and temptations when they are on their own.

Compensation

Everyone wants to be paid for their work and that includes your children. How do you pay your children as they grow up and become more involved in the business? Graciously compensate them for their performance. Be firm and fair. Make sure they understand there are no shortcuts to the top, that there is no "free lunch." We don't fall to the top of the mountain; we climb there. Guard against your children's tendency toward entitlement. Teach them that *more* is expected of them because they are the boss's children. They might not agree at the time, but teach them anyway, not only because it's the truth but because it will help them become an asset to your business and the community.

Develop A Hundred-Year Plan

Planning with purpose is very different from wishful hoping. A man in an airport watched a woman with small children anxiously waiting for an arriving plane. Both their appearance and their actions caught his eye. He observed them joyfully welcome the father and husband who came off the plane. Finally, he could resist no longer and went over and said to them, "If I ever have a family, I hope to have what you have." The father replied, "Hoping is not enough. You have to decide and plan."

An old proverb says, "If you plan for a year, plant rice. If you plan for ten years, plant a tree. If you plan for one hundred years, *educate your children.*" In the end, we conserve only the things that we love. We love only the things we know. We know only the things we are taught. We teach by what we say; we teach more by what we do; but we teach most by what we are.

Teach your children the facts of life. Teach them money management skills and the perils of debt. Teach them social skills and servant leadership. Provide sound reading material. Nurture and admonish your children rather than hover and pamper. Children don't come with good traits built into them; good traits must be taught. Teach them to wait their turn or wait until last. Teach them to serve others, to respect authority, to be ladies and gentlemen. Deuteronomy 6 gives the directions on whom to teach, when to teach, what to teach, and how to teach. Be diligent in teaching.

Children are a gift straight from God's hands. They are the sole possession we can take to heaven. Worldly ideas can creep in, convincing us that children are an inconvenient intrusion into our lives—a project for our spare time. That is not how we should view the one thing we can take with us into eternity.

What is the greatest thing we can give our children? How can we ensure they will grow up to be godly adults? An Amish bishop answered this question by saying, "Make sure that you as Mom and Dad love each other. If that is firmly in place, the

FALL 2023 BUSINESS WORKSHOPS

Each day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Lunch included.

Expand your business knowledge in a classroom setting with seasoned Anabaptist instructors. These two-day business workshops focus on a single area of business content. Workshops utilize the classroom setting of 30 students or less with both lecture and hands-on learning. Taught by two experienced Anabaptist businessmen. Below are the workshops offered in the fall of 2023.

HUMAN RESOURCES WORKSHOP

September 12-13, 2023

*Yoder's Kitchen, 1195 E Columbia Street, **Arthur, IL** 61911*

November 14-15, 2023

*Das Dutchman Essenhaus, 240 W US 20, **Middlebury, IN** 46540*

BUSINESS PLANNING WORKSHOP

October 31-November 1, 2023

*Hart County Fairgrounds, 2184 S Dixie Hwy, **Munfordville, KY** 42765*

BUSINESS SUCCESSION WORKSHOP

September 26-27, 2023

*AF Community Center, 6834 County Road 672, **Millersburg, OH** 44654*

MARKETING WORKSHOP

October 10-11, 2023

*PA Yoder's Restaurant and Buffet, 14 Tower Road, **New Holland, PA** 17557*

October 31-November 1, 2023

*Hillcrest Mennonite Community Center, 23098 State Rt. M, **Memphis, MO** 63555*

SALES WORKSHOP

September 12-13, 2023

*Crossroads Community Building, 15000 Highway C, **Versailles, MO** 65084*

November 14-15, 2023

*Mary Yoder's Amish Kitchen, 14743 North State Street, **Middlefield, OH** 44062*

ACCOUNTING WORKSHOP

November 14-15, 2023

*Yoder's Restaurant and Buffet, 14 Tower Road, **New Holland, PA** 17557*



PARTICIPATE in a small-group, hands-on setting for maximum learning and practical application



GAIN new business skills and knowledge through peer learning, discussion, guided practice, and case studies



HEAR seasoned instructors teach from an Anabaptist, Biblical worldview



APPLY proven business management tools, using your real business situations and challenges

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY! CALL 267-368-4628

rest is not as hard. If that's not settled, you need help." Children desperately need a safe and secure environment. They need rest, rhythm, and order. We parents are responsible to provide that safe haven—a structured home.

Four hundred fifty years ago the Mennonites wrote a 33-article *Confession of Faith*, which we find in the *Martyrs Mirror*. These articles express their faith and convictions. Not only did these Mennonites believe these articles, but they also practiced them and taught them to their families.

Developing Your Children


Our goal is to raise what I call free-range children. Encourage your children to ask questions. Arouse their curiosity. Encourage adventure. Discourage entertainment and social media. Assign tasks and responsibilities early. Make your expectations clear. The more responsibility you give them, the more responsibility they will assume. Trust your children; they usually perform beyond your expectations. Allow them to take risks: it builds confidence and develops character. When they ask to do something, don't say no unless it is absolutely necessary; rather, help them arrive at the right decision. Children need fewer rules and clearer boundaries.

Let them chase some wild ideas. Don't rain on their parade—rather a broken bone than a broken spirit. Encourage enterprise; it develops leadership skills. Finance their projects if you want to, but do not pay for them. If their projects fail, help them pick up the pieces and cry with them, but don't shield them from reality.

We have a fair-sized woodlot and cut lots of firewood. When the boys were young, it always looked more appealing to be running the chainsaw than picking up brush or carrying wood. For each of them, there came a time when I had to decide: are they mature enough to run the saw? If I had waited until I felt they were mature enough, I would still be the only one running the chainsaw. But I knew that allowing them to take risks is important. I would go over the safety aspects of running the chainsaw and show them how it worked, and at some point, I would hand over the saw. Sometimes I saw mistakes coming, but I had to let them learn by experience. I learned that way, too. Nobody has Dad's hand on their shoulder all through life. Learning to function on one's own is invaluable.

Planning Your Exit

And finally, plan your exit. "*Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live*" (Isaiah 38:1). Begin planning your exit the day you open for business. Involve your family in developing your exit plan. Exit with dignity. Read Gary Miller's book *Going Till You're Gone*. Most parents leave some money and maybe a few assets to their descendants, but far more important is that we leave a legacy of tenets and teachings for the next generation.

God *knew* Abraham and was confident Abraham would instruct his children after him. Does God *know* you? Instructing your children in truth brings joy not only to God, but also to you. "*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth*" (3 John 4). 

Young Family Finance and Budgeting Seminars

These seminars are geared toward youth and young families. The Young Family Finance Seminar lays a Biblical foundation for giving, saving, borrowing, spending, and working together. The Budgeting Seminar offers practical advice in setting up a budget to help avoid financial pitfalls.

AF's Stewardship Resources partners with communities that have a heart for this kind of teaching. If you're interested in hosting a seminar in your area, please contact Jason Sensenig at jasonsensenig@afweb.org or 570-468-1357.

Upcoming Seminars

Budgeting Seminar on Monday, August 21 at 6:00 p.m.

Fayette Fire Company, 461 Main Street, McAlisterville, PA 17049

Budgeting Seminar on Tuesday, August 29 at 6:30 p.m.

Lehman Park Pavillion, 212 Park Ave, Berne, IN 46711

Young Family Finance Seminar on Saturday, October 28, at 9:00 a.m.

Budgeting Seminar on Saturday, October 28 at 12:30 p.m.

Living Waters Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall, 8722 W Jones Rd, Lexington, IN 47138

There is no cost for these seminars, but we appreciate if you register a week before the event to ensure adequate seating, handouts, and free resources. Please call 267-368-4628 and leave a message with how many will be attending, or email seminars@afweb.org.



Business and Employee Seminars

Come learn, grow, and connect with other Anabaptist business owners and leaders!

BUSINESS SEMINARS

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

at Shady Maple Banquet Center, East Earl, PA

Thursday, September 21, 2023

at Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, Chambersburg, PA

Have you “heaped treasures together for the last days?” · Wyatt Peg

Building Culture—A Leader’s Responsibility · Rodger Weaver

Navigating the Weight of Leadership · Mark Schlabach

Iceberg! Right Ahead! Hidden hazards can doom our marketing message · Dean Martin

Boards That Work · Gary Miller

Effective and Noble Selling · Ivan Schrock/Roy Herr

Leading Effective Meetings · Gary Miller

Managing Your Business During Times of High Interest and Inflation · Nathan J. Siegrist

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

at Pleasantview Activity Center, Hutchinson, KS

The Power of Business in the Kingdom of God · Ellis Miller

The Value of Effective Communication · TBD

Everyone Is In Sales · Ivan Schrock

Listening, Asking, and Engaging · Shane Iwashige

Breakout A: Early Stages — Starting and Growing a Business · Wes Miller

Breakout B: Accuracy and Clarity: Business Accounting That Tells You What You Need To Know · Dan Drake

Breakout C: (for women only) Business Ownership — A Wife’s Perspective of the Journey · Rose Nissley

Church, Family, and Business: Prioritizing Our Time · Ellis Miller

EMPLOYEE SEMINARS

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

at Shady Maple Banquet Center, East Earl, PA

What? Bless My Employer? · Wyatt Pegg

Learning to Rest · Myron Yoder

Dealing with Negative Feelings About Your Work · Warren Bauman

Give It Your Best · Elmer Stoltzfus

You Mean I Have to Work With Him? · Melvin Sauder

The Golden Rule in the Workplace · Keith Burkholder

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

at Clinton Frame Church, Goshen, IN

Building God’s Kingdom in the Workplace · Ivan Chupp

Serving the Kingdom as an Employee · Steve Jones

Finding My Place on the Team · Eddie Wengerd

A Dynamic Team — Meshing Employee and Employer Goals · Leon Yoder

A Productive and Efficient Team · Eddie Wengerd

Effective Communication · Leon Yoder

Friday, October 20, 2023

at Green Grove Mennonite Fellowship Center, Owen, WI

Fulfillment at Work · Travis Martin

Living the Culture · Robert Shetler

Serving the Kingdom as an Employee · Duane Mast

A Dynamic Team — How to Mesh Employee and Employer Goals · Leon Yoder

The Faithful Follower · Nathan Miller

Effective Communication · Leon Yoder

To register, call 267-368-4628 or register online at afweb.org/resources/business-seminars.



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