



Stoltzfus Christian Library

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OUR 6TH YEAR

ANNUAL UPDATE

Dear Library Patron,

12/1/2020

Indeed, it has been an interesting year! I don't ever remember having gone through a year quite like this one. Shutdown, businesses closing, no church for weeks on end, quarantine, masks, racism, plundering, looting, stealing, and finally, elections.

Through it all, one thing is certain: **GOD HAS NOT CHANGED!** Nor has His Word. Nor has his Justice. Nor has His Salvation. Nor has His Sustaining Power. Nor has His Mercy. Nor has His Amazing Grace.

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Psalms 119:89 "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

Isaiah 56:1 "Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed."

Isaiah 55:6-9 "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Psalms 55:22 "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

James 4:6 "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

Another thing is certain: **NOW, is the time to stand up for what is right**, to know where we stand, and to do everything, to stand. (Ephesians 6:10-20) Christianity, especially True Christianity, is being attacked from all sides. Compromise is running stronger than ever, and often what is left: is a lukewarm, powerless, watered-down version of Christianity. It's time to get back to the Bible, it's time to get back to the radical life-changing teachings of Jesus Christ, it's time to get back to our history—the history of the Anabaptist people, it's time to get back to the powerful Transforming Words of Life. It's time, to Face the Master!

Do you have a need today?

I don't know exactly what you may be struggling with or facing today. But I want to draw your attention to someone who does:

Maybe it's financial.

Or physical.

Or emotional.

Or spiritual.

Maybe somebody close to you is sick.

Maybe your temptations are almost harder than you can bear.

Maybe you have failed your Lord miserably and you have a hard time forgiving yourself.

Maybe there is a huge problem in your church.

Maybe someone close to you is walking away from the Lord.

Maybe somebody has just rubbed you in the dirt and you can hardly get over it.

Maybe your best friend betrayed you.

Maybe a loved one was snatched away in death and you dread to face tomorrow.

I don't know what your need is.

But God does. Jesus knows perfectly well what you are facing right now.

Maybe there is a part of your heart that is cold and dead. And you need a new spurt of life from the Eternal Life giver called Jesus.

Bring it to Christ. Find a quiet nook where you can meet with Jesus alone. He wants to be in that room alone with just you.

No interruptions.

No distractions.

Allow Life to surge into the area of need. Brand new Life in Christ. And although the storm might still rage on for a fortnight, there will be a deep peace within your heart knowing that everything will be alright.

Philippians 4:19 "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

The Library

Thank you to each one of you who have given your support and continue to contribute in whatever way it may be! Amazingly, this past year we were able to more than reach the goal of 500 new books in the library! Through God's grace and your faithful support, in the past 5+ years since the library has been in operation, we have been able to nearly meet some of the goals that we set out to accomplish when starting the library. One goal is to have most, or all of the books from major Anabaptist Publishers available in the library. For example: TGS (Christian Aid Ministries), CLP (Christian Light Publications), Rod & Staff Publishers, and Pathway Publishers. Next Spring, we still want to purchase a lot of Rod & Staff Publisher's books to finish their selection, but we have most of the others. We will also branch out into some of the other smaller Anabaptist publishers like: Ridgeway Books, etc.

Lord willing, someday soon if someone wonders which books, we have, all they will need to do is look in one of the aforementioned publisher's catalogs. If it is a book that they publish, we should have it in the library. If you are looking for a certain book that they publish and can't find it on the shelves, feel free to ask us if we have it. If we don't, (as long as it meets our standards) we should be willing to purchase it for everyone's benefit.

New Programs

Lord willing, we will continue adding many new books in the library each year. But as we are meeting some of the basic goals that we set out to accomplish, we believe it is time to further develop the library into other opportunities of outreach and ministry. Here are some new programs that we would like to implement, in the future, as the Lord leads and provides:

- Start a book subscription service to local schools. We would check out a tote full of books for the maximum amount of time (6 weeks) and deliver them to various local schools in the area. The children would be able to read the books during break time, or between classes. We would do a 6-week rotation of books. Starting at the first school, after six weeks they would then be taken to another school, and a fresh tote of books would start at the first school, and so on, until the rotation is complete to all the schools which sign up for this program. If you have interest in a program like this, please give us your feedback and comments on how to do this most effectively.
- Start a literature program to equip the community and local evangelists with Christian literature to effectively reach souls for Christ. We will have free Gospel tracts, booklets, and CDs available in the library. Feel free to help yourself to them for your own personal benefit, and to pass them out to your neighbors, friends, and family. Also, we will start putting up racks with free Gospel literature at various stores and businesses. If you are interested in having a Gospel literature rack installed at your store or business, we will be happy to do so, and will keep it stocked for you free of charge. We are enclosing a copy of the book: "What Every Person Needs to Know" We hope you will be encouraged and blessed by reading it. Feel free to keep it or pass it on to others. It is this book, and many others like it, that will comprise of our free Gospel literature selection.

➤ Start doing some translation work of Christian literature for foreign countries. When it comes to books and literature, the English language has by far the most! Often, we take our resources for granted! After working on the mission field in Haiti for 2 ½ years, I have come to realize the desperate need that a lot of other countries have for good quality, Biblically sound literature. As I was talking to one of my Haitian friends about the desperate situation in Haiti. I told him: “The Haitian people don’t lack the will to learn and to do what is right, they lack the knowledge.” He replied: “Yes, there are some that lack the will too, but there are many more that lack the knowledge!” Imagine, being raised in a country where you grow up in a cycle of illiteracy and poverty! You are poor, your parents are poor, and your grandparents were poor too! It is all you ever saw and knew! Then you hear of other countries like the United States where people receive a good education, are much wealthier, and more prosperous. But it always feels a little too far away—just out of reach. No wonder it’s often hard for people like that to see hope. Often, they just need proper teaching, training, and encouragement to be able to see light at the end of the tunnel. Many times, people from wealthier countries make the mistake of throwing money at the problem, which often creates dependency; instead of working on teaching and training towards real development. Just like the old saying: “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” The best way to truly help someone, first of all, is to offer him the Good News of Salvation Through Jesus Christ. What was Jesus’ command to us in the Great Commission? It was to go and make Disciples. (Matthew 28:18-20) The fact is: that a True Christian will have a lot better panoramic worldview and perspective on life, than a non-Christian. Why is this? It is because God’s design works. God created us, so of course He knows what is best for us. The way we find out how He wants us to live and follow His design, is through reading and studying His Word: “The Holy Bible.” Secondly, often the best way to help someone who is dealing with chronic poverty, is in their own time, money, and resources. This is no excuse to us not to give to the poor: We are commanded over and over in the Bible, to give to the poor. Certainly, there are times, especially in natural disasters, war, and famine, where people have great needs! They need money, water, food, clothing, and shelter, or they will face certain sickness, or even death! It is our responsibility to step in and help wherever we can. In the book: “The Other Side of the Wall” by Gary Miller: He does a good job in explaining the differences between “Critical Need” and “Chronic Need”. Many times, people who are facing “Chronic Needs” will think that their needs are “Critical Needs” but really, what they need in their lives, is ongoing teaching, training, and Christian Discipleship. Then, often, their perspective will change and the current situation that they are in, will not look as hopeless. This, however, takes of our time and energy as we invest in people’s lives. Sometimes the easier thing to do is give money. Sometimes the best thing to do is invest our time in people’s lives. We are hoping to start out by doing a few small translation projects into Haitian Creole. Lord willing, the enclosed book: “What Every Person Needs to Know” will be one of the first translation projects. One of the biggest Anabaptist Literature programs in Haiti, is operated by Life Literature. Life Literature is one of the missions that are supported by Haiti Benefit Auctions. Even then, their book selection and resources, are extremely limited, and need a lot of development. On a recent trip to Haiti, I was able to meet

the director of Life Literature. I asked him about the possibility of getting some books and tracts translated into Haitian Creole. He said that if we are able to get the proper copywrite permissions and fund the translation work; they would be willing to fund the printing and distribution part of it. For now, we will not be taking funds from the General Fund (where most needed) to finance translation projects. But we are hoping to be able to start out with a few small projects as the Lord leads and provides. If you would like to help bring the Good News of the Gospel to the Haitian people through this literature translation project, please note the reply card.

Back to Haiti

As I have mentioned in a previous newsletter; sometimes it is hard to understand God's plan and his leading in our lives. He asks us simply to step out in faith and follow Him. If our lives are truly laid on the altar for Christ, we will be ready and willing to respond to God's call when it comes. As the prophet Isaiah of old, we will say: "Here am I; send me."

Isaiah 6:8 "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Once again, I feel God's call to serve in Haiti. I have been asked to help during a staff transition for about 6 months, but plan to stay somewhat indefinitely. Lord willing, I plan to leave for Haiti around mid-January of 2021. I don't exactly understand why God is calling me back to Haiti, but I trust that He sees the bigger picture. I feel, As the chorus of the song "Is Your All on the Altar?" goes:

Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?

Your heart does the Spirit control?

You can only be blest,

And have peace and sweet rest,

As you yield Him your body and soul.

-By Elisha A. Hoffman

The only way that I can have true peace and sweet rest, is, as I yield Him my body and soul. That is what God asks and expects of us—His children!

As far as the Library is concerned; if you, or anyone you know of, have some extra time, we are always looking for volunteers to help us out. By God's Grace, over the past years, we have been able to build up much better staffing, support, and resources, than when I left for Haiti the first time. So, you don't have to worry that much will change. You can expect that the service will remain mostly the same during my absence.

Library Changes

We are always looking for new and improved ways of handling books and making it easier for the Library Patrons. Here are some changes that we are making:

- When coming to the library, all books **must** be checked out properly. If you are unable to print a receipt with all of the books listed, then most likely they are not checked out properly. If you are a new patron, or need help with the checkout process, please let us know, and we will be happy to help you. For new patrons who are signing up, often if you ask us, we can give you your library card and show you how the system works right away.
- We will extend the checkout period from 2 weeks to 3 weeks. Previously, the books were due to be returned or renewed at 2 weeks, then you were able to renew them 2 times, for a maximum of 6 weeks total. Now you will need to return or renew your books at 3 weeks, and you will only need to renew them 1 time, to get the total of 6 weeks.
- When returning books, you will now be given the option to check them in right away. The check in process will be similar to the checkout process. We encourage patrons to use this new option, it will greatly assist us in keeping records clear concerning which day that the books were returned. Also, when checking out new books, the old book titles will not be displayed on your receipt, since they are checked in. So, when checking out new books, if all the old books are returned and checked in properly, it will only display the titles of the books that you are taking and/or renewing when checking out.
- Now is a great time to double check your bookshelves for any books that are overdue or haven't been returned to the library. During the month of December 2020, we will wave all late book fees. We realize that over the past few years there have been some books that went missing. We plan to do inventory over the next couple months to help bring our records up to date. It will greatly assist us if you are able to bring any lost or overdue books that you may have found, back to the library! Plus, no fees will be charged.

Book Review Committee

This past year we were able to form a Book Review Committee for the library. We are concerned about the book selection and what we offer in the library. The Book Review Committee has been able to greatly assist us when it comes to the review process! When we have a question about certain books, we place them in a tote for review by the Committee. They also periodically check the bookshelves and scan through books. This has been a highly effective way of helping to ensure the soundness and quality of the books. Here are some guidelines from the Library's Standard Operating Guidelines:

1. GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR BOOKS

- A. We endeavor to promote high Christian standards in the books and materials that we offer. Books should be screened in order to maintain a high Christian standard that is Biblically accurate.
- B. The Book Review Committee should help us maintain a high Christian standard in the books and materials that are offered in the library. They should help us especially in the following areas:
 - i. Suggesting new books for the library.
 - ii. Screening new books being purchased from an unknown or questionable author or publisher.
 - iii. Where appropriate, screening books that are already on the shelves.
- C. Books should serve a purpose of spiritual edification, education, vocation, etc.
- D. Books with no real purpose or just simply for entertainment should be avoided.
 - i. Absolutely no nude, vulgar language, etc. should be accepted.
- E. We recognize that there are some books that are available, that are good, and are written by Christian authors, but are intended to be read by older teenagers or adults.
 - i. Where applicable, the Book Review Committee should advise us in this area.
 - ii. There will be two age levels in which we will clearly mark the covers of the books, it will be: “Teenager or Adult” (books that are suitable for teenager or adult reading) and “Adult” (books that are suitable for adult reading only).
- F. Once a book has been screened, the one reviewing the book should give a brief report by filling out a Book Review Card.

Testimonies of Encouragement

Thank you, for the many words of encouragement that you have sent our way and for the notes left in the library again this year! Often, they come at the right time, and give us the encouragement that we need!

Here are some of the comments that we are receiving. To protect our patrons, we are not mentioning names:

- *We are excited to learn about this Christian Library! We will eagerly await our card in the mail! God Bless.*
- *Thank you. I am enjoying the books; and I am glad that someone like you does a library like this, it's such a blessing!*
- *We appreciate a library with healthy Christian books! God bless you and your work.*
- *Thanks for all you do in your library. The children enjoy your books.*
- *Thank you so much for having a Christian library. We really, really, do appreciate it!*
- *Thank you for all you do in the library! You do a good job. Keep up the good work.*
- *We enjoyed the books from your library. You are doing a great job!*

6th Anniversary Celebration

You are invited to our 6th anniversary celebration! This past April, we were planning a bigger all-day event, for our 5th anniversary celebration. Unfortunately, that was right over the time of the “lockdown” when Covid-19 restrictions were strict, so we had to cancel it. Lord willing, if nothing else gets in the way, we will now reschedule it for: **Saturday July 10, 2021**. Please check the invitation flyer to see the program that is being planned! Each year, we have full staffing and invite neighbors and library patrons to come for free coffee and donuts. The open house day is a great time to come with any questions that you may have; since we have staff available to help you. It is a good time to become familiar with the self-checkout process, etc.

It will be a first of a kind for the library, so we are excited about it! All are welcome and you don't need to register in advance, so please bring your friends and family! Come prepared to participate!

Once again, we want to thank you for your support! It is greatly appreciated! Whether it was volunteering your time to help in the library, borrowing books, donating books, giving donations, or praying for us. Whatever it may have been, Thank you very much! May God bless you richly, without your support, we could not continue to operate a Christian Library for the local community.

May God bless you as you continue to serve him!

Sincerely,



Samuel Stoltzfus, Administrator

P. S. We are again enclosing a contribution reply card and envelope for those of you who want to help with keeping the library in operation. Please place a checkmark on the appropriate box stating what you want your donation to help for, and please specify whether or not you would like to receive a tax-deductible receipt. If you are considering a year-end tax-deductible donation, it must be postmarked in 2020. Stoltzfus Christian Library is an official 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization; and is funded by your donation. Thank you, and may God bless you!