

The Amish Voice



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PART X—What Is The Church

The Church Ordinances: Baptism and Communion (Part 2 of 2)

The English dictionary defines an ordinance as simply “a law or rule which was made by one in authority”. In this case and study, our authority is the Founder and Builder of the Church, Jesus Christ.

In our study today, we are going to mainly focus on the second ordinance that Christ left for the church. And might I add, He only left the church two ordinances.

But first, let’s look at why baptism and Communion are ordinances and foot washing is not.

Ordinance #1: Baptism

FIRST: Baptism is an ordinance because in Mat 28, Jesus commanded the disciples to go into all nations and baptize converts.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them... (Mat 28:19)

Second: In Romans 6, the Word of God teaches us that baptism is symbolic (a picture) of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.



Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with Him by bap-

tism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom 6:3-4)

So we see, baptism is first of all a command from Christ, and second, it is a very personal, as well as an outward act in which each and every believer is buried and raised (with Christ) in newness of life.

Third: The early church continued to practice BAPTISM, just like Christ had commanded them to.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: (Acts 2:41)

But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12)

Ordinance #2: Communion

FIRST: Christ made it very clear that we (the church) are to break bread and drink of the cup **as a remembrance of Him**.



After the same manner also He [Jesus] took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This

cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (1 Cor 11:25)

Second: And again, Christ very clearly states that the church is to continue the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup **until He comes back**.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come. (1 Cor 11:26)

And just like the first ordinance, the taking of the bread and cup is a very personal and outward act, in which each and every believer identifies with his/her Savior.

Third: The early church continued to practice COMMUNION, just like Christ had commanded them to. See 1st Corinthians 11:17-34.

Foot Washing

Before we get into our study on communion, please allow me to address foot washing and why that particular act of ministry is not considered by all churches to be an ordinance of Christ. However, foot washing is one of the greatest acts of service and humility that anyone could ever show



each other. For instance, think about the fact that Jesus Christ washed the feet of men, even one who was hours away from betraying Him as a murderer.

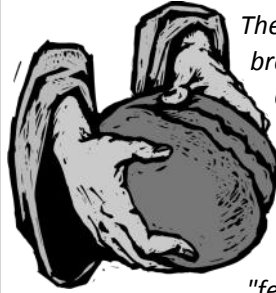
Even though He was King of kings and Lord of lords; and even though He had come from God, He knew and lived in all the splendor and glory of heaven, and yet the Bible tells us that He laid His clothing aside and began to wash the feet of men.

But unlike baptism and communion, Jesus doesn't tell the disciples "do this in remembrance of me" or "do this until I come back". Neither does it symbolize in the same ways that *baptism* and *communion* do. It was simply an act of servant-hood and humility that Jesus practiced, right before His death on the cross. Therefore, not all church bodies consider foot washing an ordinance that was given out by Christ.

But as stated at the very beginning, we are going to study the ordinance of communion today. It is important that we understand that the Communion Service is called by

different names. Here are the different names and what they mean:

1. COMMUNION—this name is found in 1 Corinthians 10:16



The bread which we break, is it not the COMMUNION of the body of Christ? (1 Cor 10:16b)

This word means "fellowship, participation, the sharing of a common life." COMMUNION is not something that just the Bishop and Elders and Deacons share in, but it is something that all the believers share in and participate in. The Bible says...

...for we are ALL partakers of that one bread. (1 Cor 10:17b)

It is our privilege to enjoy FELLOWSHIP with our risen Lord and with one another (1 John 1:3 and compare 1 Cor. 1:9).

2. THE LORD'S TABLE—this name is found in 1 Corinthians 10:21

"ye cannot be partakers of the LORD'S TABLE, and of the table of devils. (1 Cor 10:21b)

It was at a table that the Lord Jesus first instituted Communion. It was at a table that the Lord first broke the bread and passed the cup. A "table" reminds us of FELLOWSHIP (compare Revelation 3:20)

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with HIM, and he with ME. (Rev 3:20)

Those who sit at the same table partake together of the same food. All believers partake of the same Savior. All believers are trusting His shed blood. All believers are sharing His life.

3. THE LORD'S SUPPER—this name is found in 1 Corinthians 11:20

On the night before He was crucified, Jesus

Heart to Heart with Joe Keim

I have been absolutely amazed beyond words at the outpouring of responses that we have received because of the *baptism article* that was printed in the January edition of the Amish Voice.

Some of the responses questioned our motives and were filled with anger and judgment while other responses were filled with great joy, telling us that they had never read a better article on baptism, and encouraged us to continue on. For more on the responses, please read: "Our Readers Respond".

So what should my response be? I have prayed that the Lord would help me to understand and respond in wisdom and with the right words. And I guess I would first of all like to say this: we do not have any hidden motives in writing the Amish Voice. It's just that I have for years been very burdened to encourage my people (the Amish) toward a more passionate relationship with our Lord and Saviour. I have no intentions of arguing with anyone, but I do appreciate your honest and valuable input and feed back.

The Lord is my witness, I have no desire to talk Amish people into leaving their culture, and I don't claim to know it all when it comes



to the Word of God; I desperately desire your prayers and scriptural insights. The people who are involved in making the Amish Voice happen will tell you that a lot of prayer goes into the Amish Voice. We take this ministry very seriously, knowing that we will one day give account to God.

I appreciate those of you who are being cautious; you should be. But can I also encourage you to do what the church did in Thessalonica —**Act 17:11 says, ...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.** In other words, don't just take my word for it, search the scriptures and see for yourself what God says. Because in the end, when it is all over and done with, we will not be concerned with who got out on top; No! No! No! — we will only have one concern: What did God say about it?!?!

I think it would be good to end our "heart to heart" with the same **QUESTION** that the Apostle Paul asked; hopefully we can answer in the same manner that he did. He asks himself in **Galatians 1:10** **For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.**

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W E A R E Since our beginning in 2000, many people have written to us, asking to be added to our mailing list while others have sent us names of their friends and family members. *The Amish Voice* is a free subscription and is totally funded by readers from across our great country, who appreciate the ministry and care to support it.

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shared in a **SUPPER MEAL** with His disciples. After this **SUPPER** Jesus instituted the bread and the cup. See Luke 22:20

Likewise also the cup AFTER SUPPER, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:20)

4. THE EUCHARIST—this is a Greek word which means "giving of thanks"

Before breaking the bread and passing the cup, Jesus **GAVE THANKS** to God.

And He took bread, and GAVE THANKS, and brake it, and gave unto them... (Luke 22:19)

And He took the cup, and GAVE THANKS, and gave it to them... (Matthew 26:27)

The Communion service ought to be a special time when believers thank God for what Christ has done for them.

5. THE BREAKING OF BREAD

This is what Jesus did (Matthew 26:26) and this is what the followers of Jesus continued to do in Acts chapter 2.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in BREAKING OF BREAD, and in prayers. (Acts 2:42)

COMMUNION: INSTITUTED BY CHRIST

The Communion service was instituted (established) on the same night the Lord Jesus was betrayed. On the very next day Jesus would go to the cross, suffer and shed His blood for us. We read about what Jesus did on this night in the gospels (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

Notice the (underlined) commands that we find in 1 Corinthians 11:24-25:

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, TAKE, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this DO in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new



testament in my blood: this DO ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (1 Cor 11:23-25)

The reason we observe Communion is because Jesus Christ has told us to! Jesus said it and the Church must obey it!

WHAT DOES COMMUNION PICTURE?

Just like Baptism, Communion presents a very important picture.

1. The bread is a symbol (a picture) of Jesus' body...

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. (Matthew 26:26)

2. The cup is a symbol (a picture) of Jesus' blood...

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mat 26:27-28)

What did Jesus mean when He said, "THIS IS MY BODY" and "THIS IS MY BLOOD"? There are churches today that believe that the communion bread actually changes and becomes the body of Christ. They believe also that the wine actually changes and becomes the blood of Jesus.

Suppose a man has a picture or a photograph of his wife. One day he shows it to a friend and says, "Look, this is my wife." What does he mean? Obviously he does not mean that this small piece of photographic paper is actually his wife. He is merely using a common figure of speech called a metaphor. What he really means is: "This represents my wife. This is a picture of my wife. When you look at this picture you will think of my wife."

This is exactly what Jesus meant. Jesus said, "THIS IS MY BODY" and the meaning of these words is: "This bread represents My body. This bread is a picture (symbol) of My body. When you look at this bread you will think of My body and what I did for you when I died on the cross." What did Jesus

mean when He said "THIS IS MY BLOOD"?

A TIME TO REMEMBER

The Lord Jesus has told us **why** we should observe Communion. He has told us why we should eat the bread and drink the cup. He said...



"This do in REMEMBRANCE of Me"

(1 Corinthians 11:24 and 25)

God knows that people are apt to forget. We tend to forget even important things! But there is one thing that God never wants us to forget. He never wants us to forget what our Savior did for us on the cross:

1. **HIS BODY WAS OFFERED AS A SACRIFICE FOR SIN:** (See 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
2. **HIS BLOOD WAS SHED SO THAT OUR SINS COULD BE FORGIVEN:** (See Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 1:5)

For over 2,000 years, the communion service has been a time when the church stops and thinks back to the cross and remembers what Jesus did for us when He died in our place.

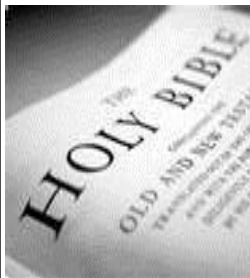
WHO SHOULD PARTAKE OF COMMUNION?

In Acts 2:41-46 we learn that "**all that BELIEVED were together**" (verse 44) and it was these people who were "breaking bread" (verses 42 and 46).

Before you take Communion you should make sure of these four things:

(1)

Make sure you are saved. Make sure that you are a believer in Jesus Christ and that you are trusting Him and what He did on the cross for your eternal salvation.



(2)

Make sure you know that you are saved. Many people do not have assurance of salvation. They may think they are saved or hope they are saved or feel like they are saved, but God wants

us to "KNOW" that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13).

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life... (1 John 5:13)

(3)

Make sure you examine yourself and are ready to eat and drink in a worthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27-31). Parents sometimes have a rule for their children that goes something like this: "You can't eat supper without washing your hands!" So also the believer must not eat at the Lord's Table without clean hands. Sin and the Savior cannot come together. A holy God cannot have fellowship with an unclean believer (compare John 13:8; 1 John 1:5-9).

Before partaking of Communion the believer needs to realize this: "Apart from Christ I am dirty and I have no access to God. I cannot come to God as I am. Sin and the Savior cannot come together. I thank God that I have a Savior who makes me clean. I thank God that the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing me from all sin (1 John 1:7).

The only way that I can approach God is through Christ and through His cross. I need to come to God this way (through the cross) and this is the only way that I can come. Thank you Lord for making me clean. Thank you that I am able to have fellowship with a holy God. Thank you for what Jesus did for me on the cross to make this possible."



(4)

Make sure that you are ready to take Communion in the right way. Communion is a serious time. It is a time to think about our Savior and what He has done for us. It is a thoughtful and a thankful time. It is not a play time. It is not a time to "have a snack." It is not a time to play with the bread with your fingers. It is not a time to take a huge swallow of wine. Those who do such things are showing that they are definitely not ready to take communion.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD COMMUNION BE OBSERVED?

The Lord Jesus did not say how often believers should observe Communion. He said it should be done "OFTEN" (1 Corinthians 11:25-26) but He did not say how often. Some churches have Communion every week. Some have it every month. Some have it every other month and others have it twice a year.

There are two dangers that churches need to avoid:

DANGER #1

Having Communion Too Often

If Communion is observed too often, then it is possible that the service could lose some of its meaning. The Communion service should be as meaningful as possible. When something is done too often it can become a ritual (doing something out of habit without really understanding what you are doing or why). The Communion service should always be something very special and very meaningful. If we do observe Communion often, then we need to make sure that we make every effort to keep before our minds and hearts the significance of what we are doing, remembering our great God and Savior.

DANGER #2

Not Having Communion Often Enough.

If Communion is not observed often enough, then we lose the blessing of it. Also we are not obeying our Lord who told us to remember His death and to do it often (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). We don't want to neglect our duty to remember our Lord as He commanded.

THE FOUR "LOOKS" OF COMMUNION

A BACKWARD LOOK—looking back to the cross to see and to remember what the Lord Jesus has done for me by the offering up of His body and the shedding of His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18-19; 2:24; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 26:28).



AN UPWARD LOOK—looking unto Jesus who is presently doing a work for me as my **Intercessor** (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34) and **Advocate** (1 John 2:1-2), having sat down at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 1:3; 8:1).

A FORWARD LOOK—looking for Jesus (Titus 2:13) and expecting and waiting (1 Corinthians 1:7-8) for what He will do as He comes again to complete the great work of salvation which He began in me (Philippians 1:6; 3:20-21). Paul said that when believers partake of Communion they are showing (proclaiming) the Lord's death till He COME (1 Corinthians 11:26). Thus Communion looks back to the cross and looks ahead to His coming again.

AN INWARD LOOK—looking at what Jesus is doing in me (1 Cor. 11:27-32; Phil. 2:13).



If I happened to show up on your door step crying, would you care?

If I called you and asked you to pick me up because something happened, would you come?

If I had one day left, to live my life; would you be part of that last day?

If I needed a shoulder to cry on, would you give me yours?

Do you know what the relationship is between your two eyes?

They blink together, they move together, they cry together, they see things together and they sleep together.

The believer must "EXAMINE HIMSELF" (1 Corinthians 11:28). This means that I must put myself to the test. I must put myself on trial. I must examine myself to make sure my heart is right with the Lord. I must recognize that "*in me dwelleth no good thing*" (Romans 7:18) but I also must recognize that I have a great Savior who makes me clean (1 John 1:7,9)!

The believer must also "JUDGE HIMSELF" (1 Corinthians 11:31). This means that I must judge myself thoroughly. I must confess any known sins and also acknowledge that I am GUILTY before a holy God. I must also confess that my Savior died for me and paid the penalty for ALL my sin.

I cannot shake hands with God (as it were)

apart from Christ, but through Christ (and because of His cross) I can have access to God and I can enjoy fellowship with God.

If a person fails to "*examine himself*" and if a person fails to "*judge himself*" and if a person fails to come to God through the cross, then this person is partaking of the Lord's table in an unworthy manner (1 Corin-



tians 11:27). He is missing out on the blessing and the meaning and the fellowship of the Communion service and God

may need to chasten him ("spank him", a reference to the Father's loving discipline) —see 1 Corinthians 11:30-32.

The next time you take Communion you can think about these four "looks":

1) A BACKWARD LOOK--"Thank You Lord for what You did for me on the cross."

2) AN UPWARD LOOK--"Thank You Lord that You are my Savior and my Lord and my Helper and my Keeper right now."

3) A FORWARD LOOK--"Thank You Lord that you are coming again, perhaps even today."

4) AN INWARD LOOK--"Thank You Lord that if I confess my sins You are faithful and just to forgive my sins and cleanse me from all unrighteousness" (See 1 John 1:9).

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God... (John 1:12-13)

He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (1 John 5:12)

No Perfect Church

It is related that a man once came to Charles H. Spurgeon, and asked that great preacher if his church was a pure church. He said he was looking for a pure church that he might belong to it.

Mr. Spurgeon said that he did not know about his own church; but he did know that there were many good people in it—saintly people and truly Christian people.

But there might possibly be a Judas among them, as there was in the company of Jesus' first apostles. And there might be some deceivers and idolators and those

who walk unruly, as there seemed to have been in the churches of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Thessalonica, and



all the others to which the New Testament epistles were written.

On the whole, he thought that his church was not the one his brother was looking for. Instead, he did not know that there had been such a church in all history.

"But," said Mr. Spurgeon, "if you should happen to find such a church, I beg of you not to join it, for you would spoil the whole thing."

—Bernard Bain

BAPTISM

COMMUNION

Done only once	Done many times
Done at the beginning of the Christian life	Done throughout the Christian life
Key Word: UNION (identification) See Romans 6:3-4. The believer is identified with Jesus Christ.	Key Word: COMMUNION (fellowship) See 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:28,31 The believer is able to fellowship with Jesus Christ.
Because of the cross I have a new life!	Because of the cross I can enjoy the new life that I have!
I am a new creature in Christ!	I need to walk as a new creature in Christ!
My STANDING and POSITION in Christ is perfect! God sees me in His perfect Son!	My actual STATE is not always what it should be. I need to "examine myself" and "judge myself" to make sure that I come to God through the cross and stay in fellowship with Him (1 Cor. 11:28-32; 1 John 1:5-9).

The Bible Can Be Trusted

If my compass always points to the north, I know how to use it; but if it veers to other points of the compass, and I am to judge out of my own mind whether it is right or not, I am as well without the thing as with it. If my Bible is right always, it will lead me right; and as I believe it is so, I shall follow it. —C.H. Spurgeon.

The Time is Nearing, Are You Ready?

Matthew 25:1-13



Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five of them were foolish. Them that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made. Behold the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him.

Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: And the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of

man cometh.

This story, I believe, gives us the clear instructions about being ready for the return of Jesus. Anyone who is diligent enough to be aware of what is happening around the world today will know the time is very close for the return of Jesus. These Virgins all believed in Jesus and were waiting for His return. Some of them were too lazy to do what they needed to do to be prepared to meet Jesus. The others spent time preparing and when the time came they were ready to go with Him, while those who weren't prepared were left behind. When they came back and knocked on the door the reply was, "I don't know you".

Many believe Jesus is coming back for His bride, the church, but only some are willing to do what is necessary to be ready for when He comes.

I believe being prepared to meet Jesus is having a relationship with Him now, so He won't have to say to us "I don't know you".

To have a relationship with Jesus, you have to spend time with Him in prayer, reading God's word, and listening to Him as He speaks to your heart. You have to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself.

Remember, God hates sin but He gave His only Son Jesus as a sacrifice for the sinner. Judge not, that you might not be judged and remember God will judge you with the same judgment with which you judge others. We have no right to judge anyone. We are all to work out our own salvation.

**Barbara Keim
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Amazing Facts In The Bible

The "long day" of Joshua 10:12-14 is one of several miracles in the book of Joshua. The "long day" was a day that is unique in human history.

"And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel" (Joshua 10:14).



The emphasis of the passage is that the great victory that Joshua and Israel achieved that day was because of the prayer of Joshua and the power of God. The book of Joshua describes the conquest of the promised land by the Israelites. The battle of Joshua 10 came as the result of a pact

made between the Israelites and the Gibeonites. As Israel came to aid the Gibeonites who were under attack by the Amorites, Joshua sought the Lord's aid. God rained down huge hailstones on the Amorites, so that the Bible says, *"they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword"* (Joshua 10:11).

After the miraculous intervention of God, Joshua *"said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon"* (Joshua 10:12).

So the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day" (Joshua 10:13).

(The book of Jasher, an ancient book that is lost and unknown to us, has never been considered a book of inspired scripture.)

Scientifically speaking, this miracle, as is true with all miracles, is difficult to explain. The nature of miracles is such that they are outside the normal course of things, and as acts of God are to be accepted whether or not they can be "explained."

The problem with this particular miracle is that if the rotation of the earth stopped, it would not just have an effect at this battlefield, but would have devastating consequences for the whole earth.

David said, *"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein"* (Psalm 24:1). Since God created the world, He certainly would have it within His ability to either stop or slow the rotation



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Amazing Facts (continued)

of the earth in such a gradual way that Joshua's "long day" might have been forty-eight hours rather than the normal twenty-four. The text does not demand a sudden "standing still" of the sun.

Other explanations of how God might have caused a long day include a miraculous tilting of the earth on its axis, or a miraculous refraction, or bending of the sun's rays so that daylight continued for many hours beyond a normal day. (The normal tilting of the earth's axis today produces twenty-four periods of sunlight near the north pole.)

But in the end, why try to explain away a miracle? What do we prove? Certainly not that we're smarter than God! Either we believe in a God who can do anything, or we must accept a Christian faith that's non-miraculous; and that does away with the inspiration of the Bible, the Virgin Birth, and the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Certainly there's room for honest questions about the nature of this miraculous act; but for the humble Christian believer, there's never room for questioning the reality of the miraculous.

When I say, I am a Christian...

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I'm not shouting 'I'm clean livin,' I'm whispering 'I was lost, Now I'm found and forgiven.'

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I don't speak of this with pride. I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I'm not trying to be strong. I'm professing that I'm weak and need His strength to carry on.

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I'm not bragging of success. I'm

admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are far too visible, but God believes I am worth it.

When I say... 'I am a Christian' I still feel the sting of pain... I have my share of heartaches, So I call on His name

When I say . . . 'I am a Christian' I'm not holier than thou, I'm just a simple sinner, who received God's good grace.

A woman's heart should be so hidden in Christ that a man should have to seek Him first to find her.

Who Is My Neighbor?—By Eli Stutzman

The following parable is probably the most well known of all parables. To many it is known as the parable of the Good Samaritan.

In order to fully understand the impact on the listeners, we shall look in depth a little more. An expert in the Jewish law started the question of 'who is my neighbor'. Let's listen in beginning at Luke chapter 10 verse 25;

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Lawyers were an essential part of life in that time and culture. The laws of Moses needed constant explaining.

Then Jesus did what so often was his method; ask another question.

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? ²⁷And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. ²⁸And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. ²⁹But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (Luke 10;26-29)

Now we begin to get to the bottom of the whole parable, which is the important question; *Who is my neighbor?*

Simply put, to most of us, it is the person living nearby. If we have good neighbors, it is easy to say "We have done that."

Neighbors come in many different varieties. Often they are more concerned with their welfare than being helpful as we believe they should. And the lawyer was about to discover a neighbor was not what comes to your mind right away.

The story begins with a man falling victim to thieves along the road.

First a priest comes along. Priests served in the temple offering the sacrifices brought by the public. Everybody knew who they were and they were highly respected.



They were Jews, our kind of people, highly respected and important religious figures. A lot like we would respect a bishop.

Next comes the Levite. They served in the temple as custodians keeping the place clean and in order. Also, if you were to try to enter the temple, you would have to pass by a Levite gatekeeper, as anyone not a Jew would be kept out. Levites too were well known and respected in Jewish life. These two passed the victim by and hurried to get where they were going.

Now comes a Samaritan. These people were not liked and did not like Jews. They were of the other 10 tribes of Israel, many years back, but had mixed marriages with outsiders and were now despised as traitors who had sold out their religion and joined the outside world. The common feeling was like we feel about someone who betrays us. So the words 'Good Samaritan' were never used in the same sentence. These people were abusive to Jews and deserved to be shunned.

This story would have had a jaw-dropping effect on the audience because now they understood that outsiders to the faith were to be the neighbor that they were to love. So now I leave you with the question; who is my neighbor?

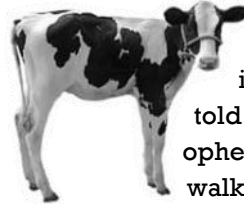
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10 Little Known Facts About The Human Body

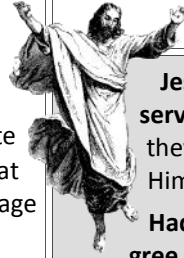
1. An average human scalp has 100,000 hairs. (A human being loses an average of 40 to 100 strands of hair a day)
2. A cough releases an explosive charge of air that moves at speeds up to 60 mph.
3. A sneeze can exceed the speed of 100 mph.
4. According to German researchers, the risk of heart attack is higher on Monday than any other day of the week.
5. An average human drinks about 16,000 gallons of water in a lifetime.
6. A fingernail or toenail takes about 6 months to grow from base to tip. Fingernails grow faster than toenails.
7. It takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown.
8. Babies are born with 300 bones, but by adulthood we have only 206 in our bodies.
9. By age sixty, most people have lost half of their taste buds. By the time you turn 70, your heart will have beat some two-and-a-half billion times (figuring on an average of 70 beats per minute.)
10. Humans shed about 600,000 particles of skin every hour - about 1.5 pounds a year. By 70 years of age, an average person will have lost 105 pounds of skin.

Don't Strike!

Gentleness often wins when harshness fails. There is a story told of a philosopher who was walking along a road one day when he saw a young man vainly trying to get a calf through a gate. The man pulled the calf, and failed. Then he tried to push it,



and also failed. He was angry by this time and was ready to thrash the calf when a gentle voice behind him said, "Oh, don't strike it." The speaker came forward, put his finger into the calf's mouth and led it through the gate while it contentedly sucked his finger. Whether we are dealing with animals or people, gentle ways are often the best.



Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master.
Had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.
Had no medicines,

yet they called Him Healer.
He had no army, yet kings feared Him.
He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.
He committed no

crime, yet they crucified Him.
He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.
I feel honored to serve such a Leader who loves us!

Life Is Like Two Rails On A Railroad Track

People ask me, what is the purpose of life? And I respond: In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven.

One day my heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of my body-- but not the end of me. I may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but I am going to spend trillions of years in eternity. My life on earth is only the warm-up act. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity.

We were made by God and for God, and until you figure that out, life isn't going to make sense.

Life is a series of problems: you are either in one now, you're just coming out of one, or you're getting ready to go into another one.

The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort.

God is more interested in making your life holy than He is in making your life happy.

We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness.

I used to think that life was hills and valleys - you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth. I don't believe that anymore. Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life. No matter how good things are in your life, there is always some-

thing bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for.

You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems. If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, "which is my problem, my issues, my pain." But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others.

After finding out that my wife had cancer, we discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of many people, God was not going to heal her or make it easy for her. It has been very difficult for my wife, and yet God has strengthened her character, given her a ministry of helping other people, given her a testimony, drawn her closer to Him and to people.

We need to ask ourselves: Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity?

Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life)?

When I get up in the morning, I sit on the side of my bed and say, God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better. God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do. That's why we're called human beings, not human doings.



Katie's Korner

How many of us have something in common? I know we as humans are all created different from each other, yet I believe we can all relate to the same thing, one way or the other.



For example, we sometimes feel empty, sad, lonely, or like no one cares. It may even seem like no body wants to listen to what we have to share.

But then other days, we are happy and ready to take the next step in life. It's almost like we got more power, everything seems easier. Some might feel like their mission is accomplished, while others think it's not over yet.

I believe life is like a treasure hunt, always trying to find something, once we find what we were looking for, the journey starts over. And I think that's a good thing.

For some of us we might be looking for that one thing throughout our entire life. We may never find what we were looking

for, or understand why things happen the way they did (do).

Some of us may carry a heavy load with us, we all know it's not easy to go on a vacation with too much luggage. Always worrying about all the bags, or did you get this, or honey there's another bag. How many can relate to that? Just think about it; it's so much easier if we just take what we need.

That's how we need to go on our daily treasure hunt. Just take what you need and leave the rest behind. What I mean by that is, don't take worries, attitudes, unfaithfulness, and most of all, don't look back. Just go and forget about what lies behind.

But still, we don't always find what we were looking for. That's when we need to understand that God is in control, not us. When the time is right, God will show us every last detail. Then it will make more sense to us.

I believe I sometimes stumble over the exact thing I'm looking for. That can hap-

pen so easy, if we are not paying attention, what else is going to happen.



Let's go back to our real treasure hunt story. If we were to go find a hidden treasure, and everyone is

excited, and then all of a sudden it's not as easy to find as we thought it was, then what? We give up, or we walk past it, or even step over it and don't see it. WHY.... Because we are not paying attention.

I encourage all of you, if you don't feel complete in Christ, head out to some fun treasure hunting, but remember just take what you need. Don't carry a load on your shoulder, because you can't get around as fast like that. And watch for what you are looking for, don't let it slip by.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:33, *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...*

Katie Hershberger, 26047 Harvey Lavigne Rd, Ponchatoula, LA 70454, 567-674-6219

Our Readers Respond

Kentucky

Please take us off your mailing list as we regret the extent of subtle deception you are promoting. May you benefit of the Lord's mercies and repent in this precious time of grace. The Lord be merciful to us all and help us through this deceptive world where Satan tries to be an angel of light.

Indiana

I have a special request today. I received your last Amish Voice and the best one I have received yet. I have been sharing mine actually. Would you be able to send this January '09 copy to the following people....

Ohio

Dear Joe, In response to your last issue about Baptism. I looked up the word baptize and it does indeed say to "sprinkle" with or immerse in water. You must not be very smart or you would not use the word Baptize to bury your chicken. Bury means to conceal by covering with earth. To place a corpse in a grave, to cover from view and hide. To absorb, to put away. I have never heard of baptizing a chicken. So what happens when a person comes out of the wa-

ter after being submerged? Is he now unbaptized? Bury and Baptize shouldn't even be used in the same sentence. You are just trying to degrade the Amish people and want them to convert to your belief. It isn't going to happen. Why do you call your paper the Amish Voice? I can tell you are not even Amish. You are saying to baptize a person (or chicken) is to completely cover it with dirt or water so it is no longer visible to the eye. "Nonsense"!!! Grow up and get a life.

Ohio

Dear Joe, I was very blessed to read the study on baptism in the January Amish Voice. I believe this is the best I've ever read. I grew up Amish and at age 17 I was saved. At age 18 I was baptized by pouring. As I grew in the Lord I began to study the scriptural meaning of baptism. Since the New Testament was written in Greek, I studied the meaning of these words in Greek. In 1977 in obedience to God's word, my wife and I were both baptized by immersion. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward experience. I asked those who

believe in pouring, what the inward experience was that is symbolized by pouring water on your head. According to the scriptures, baptism symbolizes that we have died to our old selves and have been raised to a new life in Christ. (Rom. 6:1-14, Col.2:12, 3:1-17). I believe sprinkling and pouring have their roots in Catholicism. Thank you for your commitment to accurately communicate the word of God. —II Tim. 2:15

Wisconsin

Hello, Greetings, we have been receiving the Amish Voice for sometime. Please take us off your mailing list. I do wish to remain true to the vows I made with the Lord and His church in my youth. I see the guide lines of the church as a help to me in living a Godly life and not as a lot of hard man made rules.

Ohio

I am very pleased with the Amish Voice and want you to know that I have learned a lot. Thank you for standing with the scriptures and not traditions. Keep up the great work and make sure you keep me on your list.

There Are 230,000 Amish Living In The U.S.



Dark States: Amish Communities
Light States: No Amish

" We cannot choose the weather. We cannot control the economy. We cannot choose how we look. But...we can choose where to spend eternity.

The big choice God leaves to us."

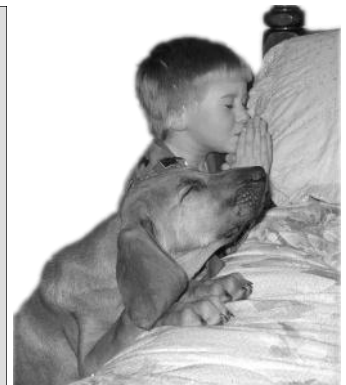
A Story a boy and some prunes: A little Scottish boy wouldn't eat his prunes, so his mother sent him off to bed saying, "God is angry at you." Soon after the boy went to his room a violent storm broke out. Amidst flashes of lightning and peals of thunder, the mother looked into the boy's room, worried that he would be terrified. When she opened the door she found him looking out the window muttering, "My, such a fuss to make over a few prunes.

Patience Pays Off: "My dear boy," said a father, "take a word of advice from an old man who loves peace. An insult is like mud; it will brush off much better when it is dry. Wait a little till

you both are cool; then the broken relationship will be easily mended. If you go now, it will be only to quarrel." That is good advice for you and for me—patience will induce peace.

MONOPOLY Fun Facts

1. In its first year, 1935, the MONOPOLY game was the best-selling game in America. And over its 65-year history, an estimated 500 million people have played the game of MONOPOLY!
2. Over 250 million sets of the MONOPOLY games have been sold to 103 countries and 37 different languages.
3. The longest MONOPOLY game ever played was 1,680 hours long. That is 70 straight days!
4. The total amount of money in a standard MONOPOLY game is \$15,140.
5. The three most-landed-on properties are Illinois Avenue. "GO" and the B&O Railroad.



How Can I Resolve Conflict Well in My Marriage?

—Continued from outside cover—

We are all self-centered; we all look out for number one, and this leads directly to conflict. As James 4:1-2 says,

From whence come wars and fighting's among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. (James 4:1-2)

This is the heart of what makes our conflict ugly. Our sin and selfishness focuses us on our own agenda like the sharpshooter who with the crosshairs of his rifle finds a target. Left to our devices, we will go for what we think is important every single time. And, as you might imagine, when two spouses are focused only on what they want, there is no real hope for peace ... only the real expectation that things will get worse.

The answer for ending selfishness is found in Jesus and His teachings. He showed us that instead of wanting to be first, we must be willing to be last. Instead of wanting to be served, we must serve. Instead of trying to save our lives, we must lose them. We must love our neighbors (our spouses) as much as we love ourselves. In short, if we want to fix selfishness, *we must give up, give in, and give all.*



To experience oneness, you must give up your will for the will of another. But to do this, you must first give up your will to Christ, and then you will find it possible to give up your will for that of your mate.

Resolving conflict requires pursuing the other person:

Romans 12:18 says, *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* The longer I live the more I realize how difficult those words are for many couples. Living peaceably means going after peace. It means "taking the first step" to resolve a difficult conflict rather than waiting for the other person to take the first step.

To pursue the resolution of a conflict means setting aside your own hurt, anger, and bitterness. It means not losing heart. My challenge to you is to "keep your relationships current." In other words, resolve that you will remain in solid fellowship daily with your spouse—as well as with your children, parents, coworkers, and friends. Don't allow Satan to gain a victory by separating you from someone you care about.

Resolving conflict requires loving confrontation:

Confronting your spouse with grace and tactfulness requires wisdom, patience, and humility. Here are a few other tips we've found useful:

1. **Check your motivation.** Will your words help or hurt? Will bringing this up cause healing, wholeness, and oneness, or further separation?

2. **Check your attitude.** Loving confrontation says, "I care about you. I respect you and I want you to respect me. I want to know how you feel." Don't hop on your bulldozer and run your partner down. Don't pull up with your dump truck and start unloading all the garbage you've been saving. Approach your partner lovingly.
3. **Check the circumstances.** This includes timing, location, and setting. Don't confront your spouse, for example, when he or she is tired from a hard day's work, or in the middle of settling a squabble between the children.
4. **Check to see what other pressures may be present.** Be sensitive to where your spouse is coming from. What's the context of your spouse's life right now?
5. **During the discussion, stick to one issue at a time.** Don't bring up several. Don't save up a series of complaints and let your spouse have them all at once.
6. **Focus on the problem, rather than the person.** For example, you need a budget and your mate is something of a spend-thrift. Work through the plans for finances and make the lack of budget the enemy, not your mate.



Above all, focus on understanding your spouse rather than on who is winning or losing. When your spouse confronts you, listen carefully to what is said and what isn't said. It may be that he is upset about something that happened at work and you're getting nothing more than the brunt of that pressure. In other words, you are not the problem and all your spouse is trying to do is express some pent-up frustrations and feelings.

Resolving conflict requires forgiveness:

No matter how hard two people try to love and please each other, they will fail. With failure comes hurt. And the only ultimate relief for hurt is the soothing salve of forgiveness.

The key to maintaining an open, intimate, and happy marriage is to ask for and grant forgiveness quickly. And the ability to do that is tied to each individual's relationship with God.

About the process of forgiveness, Jesus said, *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:14-15)*

The instruction is clear: God insists that we are to be forgivers, and marriage—probably more than any other relationship—presents frequent opportunities to practice.

Forgiving means giving up resentment and the desire to punish. By an act of your will, you let the other person off the hook. And as a Christian you do not do this under duress, scratching and screaming in protest. Rather, you do it with a gentle spirit and love, as Paul urged: *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath for-*

Current Resident

Focusing on The Family

How Can I Resolve Conflict Well in My Marriage?

(Dennis and Barbara Rainey)



Few couples like to admit it, but conflict is common to all marriages. We have had our share of conflict and some of our disagreements have not been pretty. We could probably write a book on what not to do!

Start with two selfish people with different backgrounds and personalities. Now add some bad habits and interesting behavior, throw in a bunch of expectations, and then turn up the heat a little with the daily trials of life. Guess what? You are bound to have conflict. It's unavoidable.

Since every marriage has its tensions, it isn't a question of avoiding them but *how you deal with them*. Conflict can lead to a process that develops oneness or separation. You and your partner must choose how you will act when conflict occurs.

Resolving conflict requires knowing, accepting, and adjusting to your differences:

One reason we have conflict in marriage is that opposites attract. It's strange but that's part of the reason why you married who you did. Your spouse added a variety, spice, and difference to your life that it didn't have before. But after being married for

awhile (sometimes a short while), the attractions become repellents. You may argue over small irritations—such as how to properly squeeze a tube of toothpaste—or over major differences in handling finances or raising children. You may find that your backgrounds and your personalities are so different that you wonder how and why God placed you together in the first place.

It's important to understand these differences, and then to accept and adjust to them. Just as Adam accepted God's gift of Eve, you are called to accept His gift to you. God gave you a spouse who completes you in ways you haven't even learned yet.

Resolving conflict requires defeating selfishness:

All of our differences are magnified in marriage because they feed what is undoubtedly the biggest source of our conflict—our selfish, sinful nature.

Maintaining harmony in marriage has been difficult since Adam and Eve. Two people beginning their marriage together and trying to go their own selfish, separate ways can never hope to experience the oneness of marriage as God intended. The prophet Isaiah portrayed the problem accurately more than 2,500 years ago when he described basic human selfishness like this:

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

—Continued on Page 11—