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The Raw Cost of Becoming a Disciple of Christ

—by Joe Keim

Dear Friend:

During the month of November, I was freshly reminded of Luke 14:26-27:

“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

Tonight I sat and listened to an Amish man pour out his heart. While Ray shared his testimony of losing his entire family because he got saved, his wife sat behind me crying, because it was so raw, so hard, and so difficult. The price was great, and yet they were so confident in their faith.

I also recently shared the gospel at the ministry with 26-year-old Jake. We sat and talked for 6 hours! After I prayed over him, his taxi driver took him back home to Indiana. The next day he got up and read scripture until the Holy Spirit opened his eyes! He accepted Christ right there on the spot! Within just a few days, Jake started sharing his faith with his father. His father got very angry that he would start to believe something other than what he was taught. When his father found out that I was involved, he asked his son to have nothing to do with me. Through more conversation, both his father and his mother ended up coming to Ohio themselves!

Jake’s parents came to our house, and we talked until midnight. They stayed overnight and asked to resume the conversation again at 6 AM. We talked for another two hours before they left. We really didn’t get too far with the gospel, and they left without making a decision. A few days later they asked Jake to move out of their house, so he began sleeping in the shop.

Hardly a day has gone by that Jake and I have not communicated via phone—in some cases we have talked for hours at a time and worked through several of the *ABC’s for Christian Growth* studies. Just tonight, Jake contacted me by text and let me know that he was very discouraged—and yet he was hanging on to his faith. Sometime in the near future, I believe Jake is going to share his testimony with you.

In another case, an Ohio father called who had just recently received Christ. He has eight children with the ninth one on the way. When he got saved, his wife turned against him. She gathered members from both sides of the family together to try to talk her husband out of his new belief, but he remained confident in the reality of his faith.

As we talked, Luke 14:26 came up. We read it several times together and couldn’t help but take it at face value. Does a man who has eight children leave them and his

wife for the sake of Christ? We were left with a lot of questions, but again, if we take it at face value, it would seem that a father, a mother, brother, sister, or any child must be willing to hate his family to follow Christ. It is a very thought-provoking command from Jesus.

Eventually, the father surrendered to his family and admitted himself into the Amish counseling center in Pennsylvania with hopes that somehow his wife would reconsider her stand against the gospel, and at least read and try to understand where he is coming from. As I write, He is at this counseling center and will remain there for at least a week.

In yet another case, a young buggy Mennonite has been faithfully coming to our church for 6 weeks. He attends Wednesday night, Sunday school, and Sunday Worship. This morning, when one of the church members arrived to pick him up for church, his father came to the door and said, “Aaron is not going anywhere. We don’t want him leaving the Old Order Mennonite church.”

But, when I came to church, there were two other Old Order Mennonite young men present. It just goes to demonstrate that no matter how hard “religion” tries to shut minds down and keep them from knowing the one true gospel, it cannot succeed. It is not possible.

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Girded with Gladness

—by Samuel Girod

Dear Friend,

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness; To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever.

Psalms 30:11-12

Has the Lord girded you with gladness? He has girded me with gladness and my heart is full of His greatness. Wow!

The year is coming to an end already. So much has happened this year. Our Twila went to be with our Savior four months ago already. She wasn't here for her first birthday, but we celebrated anyway! We were thankful that God let us have her for the short amount of time that He did.

On Oct. 4th, I was at work. At noon I got a phone call from Polly saying that our new 40'X60' garage caught fire! It was started by our new RV that we had just bought in July. Everything in the garage was totaled except for a few tools. It also burned both



of our vans that were parked in there. We were able to save some of the garage framework and are now rebuilding. The garage was not attached to the house. We are very thankful that no one was hurt and that the house didn't catch on fire.



Joe Keim had asked me to pray for a young man from western Indiana who was spiritually searching and had visited him at MAP. He got saved! Last month, I drove three hours to have lunch with this man. His story is so much like mine when I left the Amish nine years ago! This man came home with me, spent the night, and went to church with us! I have such a burden to help people like this!

Walter is still living here with us in our ministry apartment. As of last week, another young man moved into the apartment also. His parents left the Amish when he was nine years old to join with another rigid religious sect. He is now 21 and has left that sect. Please pray for him.

So many broken young men and women need healing in Jesus.

Merry Christmas,
The Girods

STEP OUT OF THE BOAT CONFERENCE

God rarely keeps us in the same season for long, because His desire is for us to grow in our faith and fully depend on Him.

How do you respond when God calls you to step out of your comfort zone and all you have to hold onto is the faith you have in God?

One of the best ways to increase our faith is to listen and hear what happened to others when they stepped out into the unknown and God did a mighty work through them.

To learn more, visit our website:
mapministry.org/step-out-of-the-boat

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