

# The Amish Voice



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## How Do I Deal With Every-Day Problems?

—Joe Keim

God has given us specific information on how to handle the difficulties of life. All believers are surrounded by persons, places, events, situations and problems. As we live and move among people and problems, God has told us what we should be doing.

Instead of coming to God with our problem, we often get caught up with the problem and caught up in the problem. Just as with a tornado, we allow the problem to suck us up into itself and we are overwhelmed by it. We get **overly** and **excessively** concerned about someone (spouse, parent, in-law, child), about some place (home, work, church) or about something (a problem at home, an illness, the loss of a friend, etc.). All of our efforts and energies are concentrated and **focused on that one problem** to the neglect of the whole situation.

**Please take a look at the black dot on the sheet of paper:**

The spot is quite easy to see on the white background. It stands right out. If you were to hold it up to someone and say, "What do you see?" s/he would probably say, "I see an ink spot!" But the spot is only one small part of that sheet of paper. There is much more than just a spot. The problem is that we tend to see only the spot and



nothing else, and the little spot becomes bigger and bigger to us.

How many people live on your road? Entire county? Your state? How does this number compare to 6.3 billion people in the world today? Is not the number of people who live on your road a tiny speck compared to the whole?

Is there a problem in your home with your family? How many homes and families are there in the world? Was an unkind word spoken to you today? How does that compare with all the words spoken all around the world? Was an unfriendly look sent your way? What is that compared to all the many unpleasant looks worldwide? When we begin to see the whole picture, then our little problem is only a very tiny speck!

The problem is that I can so easily get all wrapped up with ME, MYSELF and I, and I forget that there is something more than ME, MYSELF and I. It is always "my church, my opinion, my schedule, my spouse, my parents, my grandmother, my soap, my bed, my letter, my trip in the buggy, my \_\_\_\_\_, and my \_\_\_\_\_."

The world is more than just ME! It is BIG and IMMENSE and your part of the whole

is but a tiny little microscopic speck! Instead of looking at only one piece of the puzzle, we must learn to look at the WHOLE PICTURE, which is made up of thousands of pieces.

For example, you may receive a letter in the mail, which **to you** may seem like the most important event in the world! This letter totally occupies your mind so that there is no room for anything else. It is all you think of and you lose your proper perspective. The



whole world becomes ONE BIG LETTER IN THE MAIL! If someone were to ask, "What's going on today in the world?" you would immediately cry out, "I RECEIVED A LETTER!" A very **minor event** (compared to the whole) has now become a very **major event**, and that letter becomes the only thing you see. We do this all the time with many different things.

**And when this happens...**

1. I lose my **confidence** in God. My problem has become very big and my God has become very small.
2. I lose the **confession** of my lips. I can no longer say, "For this I have Jesus!" It is not on my lips and it is not in my heart. All I can say is, "My problem has me!"
3. I lose my peace and joy and replace it with worry and fear.

4. My physical health could suffer because even my physical system may be affected by how I handle or fail to handle my problems.

God meant us to face reality and solve problems. The spot on the paper is very real and must be faced. But the danger comes when we get too close to the problem and lose our perspective and fail to see the whole picture. My whole life *is not* one letter, one boss, one spouse, one twenty dollar bill, one weekend, etc. My situation, problem, event, or crisis is only one tiny part of my life.

Often an event passes *in time* but not *in mind*. We cannot or will not stop thinking about it, and thus we are unprepared for the next moment of time. ---*A boy buried his dead cat and then every day he dug it up to see how it was doing!* We often do the same

thing with yesterday's events and problems.

For the rest of this article, I would like to take a look at several different examples of people in the Bible who became wrongly focused on **ONE THING**, and how that ended up affecting their lives in a painful way; oftentimes, it also affected other people's lives who were totally innocent.

The first example is found in 1 Kings, chapter 21, where the Bible tells us of a king that wanted his neighbor's vineyard so badly that he couldn't think of anything else. All he could think of, day after day, was the **ONE THING** he did not have — his neighbor's vineyard.

What makes this story in first Kings even more strange is that King Ahab owned many

vineyards in his kingdom. The truth be told, the King had pretty much everything he could ever want in life. He had fame. He had fortune. And he, most likely, had more possessions than anybody else in the kingdom. It is probably fair to say that he had more stuff than anybody else in the whole land of Israel. But the **ONE THING** he did not have was the vineyard that belonged to his neighbor Naboth. All he could think of was the **ONE VINEYARD** he did not have.

Let's read the story, and then I would like to make a few simple comments. Oh, and while reading it, let's not point fingers at the King, but rather, let's look at ourselves and be reminded that we have probably done the very same thing, even as adults.

*1 Kings 21:1-4*

*And it came to pass after these things,*

## Heart to Heart with Joe Keim

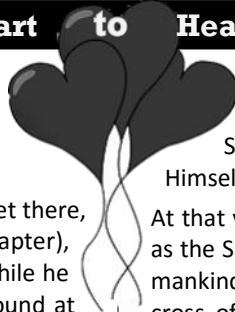
A while back, a friend of mine pointed something out to me that I thought was very interesting; something I had not really thought of before. So without further ado, today, I would like to share it with you as well.

In a minute, we are going to look at John 19, but before we get there, I would like to point out that in previous verses (same chapter), John described how our Lord was nailed on the cross, and while he was hanging there, a few of His followers were standing around at the foot of the cross. As for the rest of His disciples, they had all run away and hid out of fear. Among those at the foot of the cross that day, were Mary (Jesus' mother) and John (the one whom Jesus loved). So let's read the Scripture and then I would like to make several points that I think are very interesting.

*John 19:25-27 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.*

*When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.*

Notice that Jesus did NOT call Mary "Mother"; He called her "Woman". You ask, "what is so interesting about the fact that Jesus called His mother "woman" in stead of "mother"?" Well, it could have meant several things, but let me point something out to you that I think really makes sense as to why Jesus called His mother woman.



See if you agree.

I truly believe that it had to do with the fact that Jesus, the Savior of our sins, had to cut His relationship off and separate Himself from His earthly mother. Here is why that makes sense:

At that very same moment, Mary had to acknowledge her son Jesus as the Savior and the forgiver of her own sins, just like all the rest of mankind. It may also have been at that very moment beneath the cross of Jesus Christ, that the relationship between Jesus and His mother, Mary, changed from a *flesh and blood relationship* to a *spiritual relationship*. The two are separate and totally different in nature. Understanding this correctly, will help us realize even more --- just because God used Mary to bear the Son of God, does not mean that she was any different from all other child bearing mothers in the world. Mary was a lost sinner and needed a Savior to cleanse her from all her unrighteousness, just like all other mothers in the world.

And just like all other mothers, Mary's physical body died one day and was buried, but her living soul went on to stand before her Creator, where she too gave account of her life on earth.

Here's something else to consider: It is almost certain that Mary, the earthly mother of Jesus, was the only (blood) family member at the cross that day. Because of what verse 27 says, it is pretty clear that Joseph, for whatever reason, was NOT in the picture anymore. And according to history and Scripture, Jesus' half-brothers did not accept Him as the coming Savior until after His resurrection. And for that reason, the Apostle John took Mary into his own home for the rest of her days on earth.

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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. We think it is important for us to tell you that the cost of *The Amish Voice* is \$.45 a copy and is totally funded by readers from across our great country, who appreciate the ministry and care to support it. If the Lord would lay it on your heart to come along side of us, by helping with expenses, it would be a great benefit as well as highly appreciated. In order to continue receiving the *Amish Voice*, please keep us informed of any changes to your address.

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that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel...

And [King] Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.



KING AHAB SPEAKS TO NABOTH ABOUT HIS VINEYARD

And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

Wow! What a silly story! Have you ever heard of such a miserable story? The King did not get the ONE THING he wanted. So what does he do—he lays on the bed, buries his face in his pillow and refuses to eat.

Wouldn't you agree, most children, if they acted like this, would have received a spanking and been told to grow up.

You may also be thinking along the lines that I am—"how in the world did such a big baby ever become a king?"

But the story does not stop there. As you will see here in a minute, because the King was not able to get his mind off the ONE THING, it caused other innocent lives to be hurt forever.

We are told in verse 5 that his wife Jezebel came into the bedroom and asked the king, "Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?"

The king replied to her, "because Naboth refuses to give me his vineyard—I tried to pay him money and he still refuses. I also tried to exchange a vineyard with him and he continues to refuse to give in"

His wife, Jezebel, said to him, don't you worry, I will get you that vineyard. And in verse 9-12, we are told that Naboth was set up to look as if he blasphemed against God and the king. And in the end, he was stoned to death. Yes! Killed because the king could not get his mind off the **ONE THING**.

The Bible says in chapter 21:16, And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Before we say too much, let's take a few minutes and look into our own life. How many times have we done something similar to what the king did? Oh, maybe not to this extent, but ... Sure we have! Probably more often than we would want to believe. And when we do get so focused on the **ONE THING** in our life, we hardly ever hurt just ourselves, we also hurt our loved ones who are totally innocent by-standers.

Ok, let's shift gears here and look at some other stories in the Old Testament where certain people became so focused on ONE THING that it got them and many others in trouble.

For instance, think about Samson. Samson was a strong man who was born for the very purpose of delivering the Israelites from the Philistines. And we are told in the Bible that in order for Samson to become strong, and stay that way, he could never cut his hair, touch a dead body or drink of the vine.

Samson grew into adulthood and eventually we get to the saddest part of Samson's life. It's the part where Samson laid eyes on a Philistine woman one day and from thereon he could NOT get his mind off of her. All he could think about was the **ONE THING** he wanted more than anything else in life.

In Judges 14:2 we are told that Samson came to his father and mother and told them what he had in mind:

And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.

When his parents heard about the woman, they warned him NOT to marry her but he would not listen.

You see, Samson was in the very same predicament that King Ahab was—all he could think of was how beautiful she looked and how badly he wanted to be her husband.

Long story short, the day came when his Philistine wife

answered Samson's

riddle, and that in turn, led her to cut his hair.

And from that moment on,

Samson lost all

his strength and his eyes were eventually cut out. But that is not all the pain and suffering it brought; as a result of his marrying into the Philistine religion, many innocent lives suffered and died.

I can't help but wonder, had Samson known the outcome, would he have been able to let go of the **ONE THING** on his mind?

Is there something in your life that you are hanging onto? Possibly, your most trusted friends have informed you that you need to let go and move on, but you have told yourself, I can't.

You have told yourself over and over again that nothing else in life really matters except the **ONE THING** you are hanging onto. And you are willing to lose friends and family members, if that is what it takes. In fact, you have told yourself, "I will do whatever and anything that is necessary to NOT let go of it."

Well it is quite possible that you may very well regret not letting go, particularly if your family and friends have advised you to do so.

Let's look at another story in the Bible that goes right along with the stories of King Ahab and Samson. It's the story about Adam and Eve.

God told Adam that he could eat from EVERY tree in the garden except ONE.

Genesis 2:16-17

*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it...*

Did God make Himself clear enough? Most certainly He did, because later on he informed Eve about it too.

However, we are told in Genesis 3:1 that the devil came along in the form of a serpent and had a meeting with Adam's wife, Eve.



*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

And just like Eve, when the Devil comes along to tempt us, we sort of hang around and chit chat with him. We tell ourself, "surely I am strong enough to handle anything that comes my way!"

May I remind you that the Bible is clear about trusting in your own heart. Proverbs 28:26 says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool..."

But none-the-less, Eve hung around and carried on a conversation with the Devil.

In the next two verses, Eve is going to tell the Devil that she and Adam are allowed to eat from ALL the trees in the garden EXCEPT the **ONE** which is in the middle of the garden. Let's listen in on their meeting.

Genesis 3:2-3

*And the woman said unto the serpent,*

*We may eat of the fruit of [all] the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

Before we go further in our story, let's take a good look at what may have been taking place at this very moment in the garden.

1. It appears that Eve may NOT have been at Adam's side and was alone when the Devil approached her.
2. Another thing that seems quite clear is that Eve was standing next to the forbidden fruit and may have been wondering how tasty and pleasant looking the fruit was.

Isn't it interesting how Satan always knows exactly when to come along and tempt us; he knows just when to catch us off guard.

1. It happens at a time when we are walking outside God's protection.
2. It happens when we are at our weakest point spiritually.
3. It happens right when we are standing under our own tree of forbidden fruit.

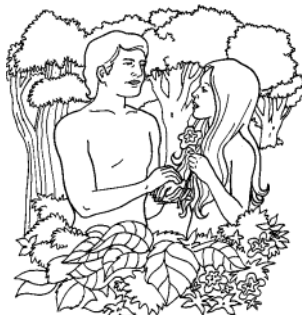
No one knows just how much time went by after the Devil and Eve had their meeting. It could have been days and it could have been years. But one thing we do know, Eve most not have been able to get the **ONE TREE** out of her mind.

Again and again, she walked past the forbidden fruit, and each time she wondered to herself, "oh, if only I could have one bite?" She may have had thoughts like, "surely one bite is NOT as bad as eating the whole fruit."

The Bible tells us that the day finally came and Eve just could NOT hold back another minute.

Genesis 3:6

*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*



Again, I would like to make a point that was

already made several times before in this article. When Eve and Adam finally took of the forbidden fruit, they brought unbelievable disaster to billions and billions of innocent lives.

If only Eve could have kept her eyes and mind off of the **ONE THING** she was not allowed to have, then...

1. Broken lives, diseases, sorrow, pain and death would never have had to happen.
2. Murder, hate, cursing God, lying, cheating, homosexuality and sexual abuse would never have had to happen.
3. Jesus would not have had to come and die on the cross to redeem God's creation back to Him.
4. The pain of child bearing, sweat, thistles and weeds would never have been a problem.
5. Millions would not have had to go into eternity and spend forever in the Lake of Fire, separated from God for all eternity.

And oh so many other terrible and evil things would never have been, IF ONLY Adam and Eve would have stayed away from the tree.

The Bible says in Romans 5:12, *Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*

Yes! Just **ONE** person opened the flood door for sin to com into this world. But regardless of how terrible the story sounds, there is hope.

The Bible also says that because of **ONE** person, Jesus Christ, we can now also be saved from our sin and from being cast into the everlasting lake of fire.

Romans 5:18-19

*Therefore as by the offence of **ONE** judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of **ONE**, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

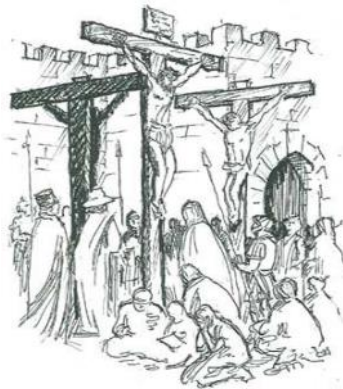
*For as by **ONE** man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of **ONE** shall many be made righteous.*

And dear reader, just like the Scripture points out, only Jesus can get us back on track and make us right with God. Nothing else can make us right.

The next portion of Scripture is one of the most welcomed and exciting passages for all of breathing man-kind. Please read carefully and understand what Almighty God is saying.

2 Corinthians 5:19-21

*...God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses [sin] unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation...be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be*



*made the righteousness of God in Him.*

Will you accept God's required sacrifice and payment for sin, by believing that Jesus Christ, God's only Son came and died, was buried and raised again the third day so that your sin could be paid for in full?

Just like the Scripture pointed out in Roman's 5:18, to be delivered from your sin is a *free gift* and does not cost you anything. All you have to do is believe it.

Since we have been talking about **ONE** a lot, there is **ONE THING** I would like to point out to you, before we end this article, and that is, the Bible does point out in two places that there is **ONE THING** that we should focus on.

The first one is found in Psalms and the second one is found in Philippians.

In Psalms 27:4, David writes:

**ONE THING** have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

And later, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 3:13-14:

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this **ONE THING** I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

—End of Article—  
Written by Joe Keim for the Amish Voice

## Who Is God? —Written by Levi Schwartz

1 John 4:7

*Beloved let us love one another: for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

1 John 4:8

*He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

1 John 4: 16

*And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

Then 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 goes on to explain that love is the indispensable and crowning grace!!! Galatians 5:22 says, Love is a fruit of the spirit.

We claim God as perfect. It is essential that we know and teach that God is unequalled in love and power. That is why he wants us to trust in him for everything in our lives! If we really do trust him, then we love him. If we really do love him, then we trust him. If we worry, it is a sign we don't quite trust God.

If we trust God, we stand on the promises He made. If we stand on the promises he made, we are positive. If we are positive, we have love.

We put love in everything and we get excited about it. If we get excited about the greatness of God, we read the Scriptures and find for ourselves His promises and greatness.

It is very interesting to read in the Old Testament about how every time the people strayed from God, there were severe consequences; every time they trusted God there was victory!!!!

A true Christian does not go to Church, worship God, read the Bible, do good deeds, tithe, give offerings, because he has to, but much rather because he loves to!!! If one has to be demanded to do good then it is a law.

The point is that we teach the greatness and goodness of God and show it in us which is the love, and love has more power than any-

thing else. It has the power to get deep into people's hearts and turn them to love!!!! This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

I like the way Joseph Prince states it; "the law is demanding, grace is power!!!!"

Jesus is the end of the law. We are saved through faith in grace. If this is true then we no longer have to be demanded. We have faith and receive grace and that is when we have power to overcome any and every obstacle that we are confronted with.

John 4: 23, 24

*But the hour cometh and now is, when true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.*

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## Heaven —Written by Cindy Miller

<p>1.</p> <p>The Place for all the Saints A place of ultimate beauty Where not one shall over faint Free from trials and of duty</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>The Place that holds all treasure Where Sun or Moon will no more be Eyes shall behold, riches beyond measure By rivers of water, Life upon a tree</p>	<p>3.</p> <p>The Lamb of God, there dwell Upon a Throne like Jasper shine He paid the price, saved me from Hell The crown of life is now mine</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>Everlasting and Eternal glory Pearly gates, streets of gold Telling sinners this true story Help me God, to be ever bold.</p>
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# Excommunication and Shunning

Response and Follow up on the January Article

—Written by Joe Keim

In all the years that we have been writing the Amish Voice, I don't believe that we have ever received as great of a response as we did on the January article, Jacob Amman, Excommunication and Shunning.

Quite a few of you called or wrote to let us know how much you appreciated the whole January magazine. And I might add, a large number of people requested that we send their friends and families a copy, and we did. In fact, we went one step further and added your friends to our active list of subscribers.

Since excommunication and shunning is such a powerful discipline tool within the Amish church, various ones were also troubled by some of the things that were written about excommunication and shunning. Here is one such response that I appreciated, and at his request, am putting it in the this issue.

Thank you, *Deacon of the Plain Churches*, for sharing your honest thoughts—I want you to know, I appreciate your thoughts and willingness to share your interpretation of the Scriptures. Together, we can learn and grow in the One we serve and love.

**Second:** *Titus 3 vs 10 writes that a heretic needs only one or two admonitions.*

**Third:** *According to 1 Corinthians 5, I would understand that an open offensive sensual sinner who is already condemned by the word of God needs no admonition before the brothers of the church should keep no company with him. Apostle Paul did not instruct them to first admonish the one who had his father's wife three times before delivering him to Satan.*

*Please reflect upon what the scriptures say without hypocrisy.*

*A deacon of the Plain churches.*

*PS. I challenge you to put this in your next issue.*

I would like to first comment on your interpretation of Matt 18.

Deacon writes: *I do not understand Matt 18 vs 15-18 to extend to all offensive carnal sinners to whom the eternal sentence of death is already pronounced, but is reference only to the short comings between brother and brother. Notice in Matt 18 vs 15 the trespass is against thee and not against God...*

After again reading your and my article on excommunication, as well as Matt 18:15-18, I have to agree with you on your interpretation of the Matt 18 Scripture.

Matthew 18:15

*Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone...*

Like you pointed out, this is speaking about one church member offending another. And as you also pointed out later, Jesus clearly said that we need to be ready to forgive the offensive church member seven times seven.

Thank you for pointing this out. I believe that we would all agree that your interpretation is a better one than mine.

I want to thank you as well for shedding more light and understanding on the difference between a church member offending another member vs. a church member sinning against God. Since you did not specify any Scripture reference, I am guessing that you are referring to 1 Cor 6:15-20.

**Note:** Reader, I encourage you to read 1 Cor 6:15-20 before proceeding.

Without going into all the details and looking up the various Scriptures that refer to this passage, I think we would agree on the following:

1. The moment a person is born again, the Spirit of God moves into his/her body and starts to dwell there, just like He did in Solomon's temple.—1 Cor 6:19
2. When a Christian becomes involved in a sexual relationship outside of a marriage relationship, the Bible calls it fornication.
3. When a Christian commits fornication with his/her body, she/he is committing a sin against the Temple of God (body). For that reason, 1 Cor 6:18-20 says:

*Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body.*

*What? know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

According to the last three words in that passage, **if we have been born again, our body and spirit belong to God.** And for that reason there is a difference whether we sin against another church member or sin against God. And as a result of that difference you, Deacon of the Plain Churches, interpret Scripture as only God can forgive the sin of fornication.

Again, thank you for shedding some light on this subject. If my understanding of your interpretation is correct, than you have been a help and a blessing to me, and I am sure others too.

There are, however, some things I would like to add. And hopefully I do not confuse anybody with what is on my mind.

There was so much more to my article on excommunication and shunning. And I feel as if it would be unbalanced, even wrong, if all we do is end the discussion at this point.

Not because I want to be right on something, or that there is pride in me. God forbid!!! Some day, I am going to stand in front of God and give account as to how I lived my Chris-

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*Hello, I received your publication of the Amish Voice and was surprised with your view of Matt. 18 vs 15-18. You point out that if a brother was caught doing a great sin by another brother (was compared with adultery) he should then take the three steps of Matt 18 vs 15-18.*

*Here are some reasons why I could not agree.*

**First:** *I do not understand Matt 18 vs 15-18 to extend to all offensive carnal sinners to whom the eternal sentence of death is already pronounced, but is reference only to the short comings between brother and brother. Notice in Matt 18 vs 15 the trespass is against thee and not against God. According to Luke 17 vs 3 you can forgive your brother if the sins against you. This would be the hundred pence. Matt 18 vs 28.*

*The scripture plainly teaches that none can forgive the ten thousand talents but God himself. Fornication is a sin against the temple (your body) in which God lives. Can I according to step 1 forgive this sin or is this Gods job? (Holy Spirit) As it seems this sin would be against God.*

tian life. And like you, I'm sure, it is my utmost desire and passion to be as close to right on everything as I possibly can be. So help me God!

I would at this time like to ask some of the same questions I asked each one of you in the January issue:

1. What gives a church leader the right or power to cast one of their members over to Satan if they choose NOT to follow a man-made standard?
2. Is a man-made standard, such as "thou shalt NOT own or drive a car" the same as a God-made standard, "thou shalt NOT commit fornication"?
3. Does the church have the right to excommunicate and shun a church member for six weeks, even if or after that person has clearly repented of their sin and been forgiven of God?
4. Do the plain churches believe that in order for God to completely forgive the sinner, the church must, on top of the sinner's sincere repentance, also excommunicate and shun him/her for a season—sort of help God in His process to completely finish forgiving the repentant sinner?

Or is it possible (please, I beg you to hear my heart), that as the non-Amish community has, in the past 75 years, made some radical changes in how they live and survive on earth, such as drive cars, own phones, use electricity, computers, radios, etc. that the leadership of the Amish community has decided that in order for them to keep their members from going that route, they are going to keep them fenced up by using the same level of discipline that God uses for fornicators, drunkards and murderers—in hopes that it will keep them living in the horse and buggy days?

These are questions that we must be just as honest with. As I mentioned in the January issue of the Amish Voice, this kind of thinking and action will one day have to be answered to, when they as leaders appear before God. IF they are right, they have nothing to worry about, however, IF they are wrong, they have everything to worry about.

Here is why (please hang with me, because in the end, I want to make a finishing point):

1. There is ONLY ONE rule book.
2. There is ONLY ONE standard.
3. There is ONLY ONE measuring stick.

No, it is NOT the Martyr's Mirror, alt-

hough we can read many stories of our forefathers and how they died horrific deaths for taking a Christ honoring stand.

No, it is NOT the Articles of Faith, although, if understood correctly, have a lot of Biblical truth in it.

No, it is NOT the Amish Voice, for as it has already been pointed out by *Deacon of the Plain Churches*, it contains misunderstandings of the Scriptures.

#### **It is the ONE and ONLY Book we call the Bible!**

Every Word in the Bible is inspired (God breathed), and very capable of instructing and developing God's person into a mature Christian man or woman.

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. —2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Every Word in the Bible is as powerful as any two edged sword and will cut and pierce all the way to the heart of hearts.

*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

—Hebrews 4:12

Every word in the Bible, when read or shared, will make a difference. Yes, even when it does not seem that way!

*For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. —Isaiah 55:10-11*

By now, you are probably wondering, what does all this have to do with what we were talking about earlier. With God's help, I will try to connect the dots for you.

1. Man's standards must never take the place of or replace God's standards. We dare not, as leaders, force our followers to go by two measuring sticks; two standards; two rule books. Only God's stand-

ards can change the inner heart of man!

A religious leader might use his own force and scare tactics to make his followers submit to his standards and traditions but that can NEVER change the inner heart of man or woman. In other words, a church member can have all his ducks in a row, so far as outward appearance is concerned, however, that does not mean that his ducks are lined up on the inside.

2. God's Word must be studied, discussed and talked about wherever we go. We must NOT limit it to the following times and places:
  - ◆ Only when we sit in church on Sundays
  - ◆ Only when the preacher thinks it is the right time to talk about it
  - ◆ Only when the family is gathered around in their own home

In conclusion, I have an ever so important question. Why is it that I hear so many of my people making statements like...

1. Some of us were getting together secretly to study God's Word, but then it came out in the community and our church leaders threatened to use church discipline on us if we didn't stop immediately?
2. You have to be careful that you don't get too caught up in God's Word, because in the past, it has led some of our members away from the Amish community.
3. The Word of God was written long ago, therefore, if it contradicts with the Amish standards and traditions, you must choose to go with the Amish standards.

Hundreds, possibly thousands of our people have in the past 10 years been turned over to Satan and shunned as unbelievers for studying and standing on the Word of God rather than following the standards and traditions of our forefathers. Some day, my dear friend, even the sincerest of people will have to answer to God for making decisions like that.

In Acts 17:11-12, we are told, *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks,*

—End of article—

**Romans 12:2 Says, And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

I have been meditating on this scripture for quite a while and I am sure most of us have heard this verse quoted many times. But have we ever really stopped to think what this verse is really talking about? What is Paul referring to when he is talking about not being conformed to this world?

Well I have learned to always take a scripture in its context if we could just take portions of scripture and make a doctrine out of it, we could make hanging yourself scriptural. In one place it says, "**Judas went out and hanged himself.**" And in another it says, "**Go and do thou likewise.**"

In the text immediately following: **Be not conformed to this world, it says but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.** So in context he is saying that we need to start thinking differently than the world.

So what does the world think about or how do they think? I heard a man say one time during the stand-off in Waco, Texas that in most cult leaders, you will find at least two of these three basic, sinful characteristics; sexual perversion, a hunger for power and control and a love for money.

So if this is the basic, sinful nature of man, let me ask you. How much time do we spend thinking about these three things? I am not talking about a fleeting thought. I am talking about actually fantasizing about them and spending hours worrying and contemplating about it.

I tell you, " We must get rid of our stinkin thinkin and put on the mind of Christ."

In 1 Corinthians 2:16 Paul says, "**But we have the mind of Christ.**"

So how do we get the mind of Christ? Well, we need a total transformation. In the next phrase he says, "**by the renewing of your mind.**"

In saying our minds need to be renewed, he is saying that our minds need to be transformed into its original state. We can not renew something that we never had. Which causes me to believe we lost more than our connection with God in the fall of mankind.

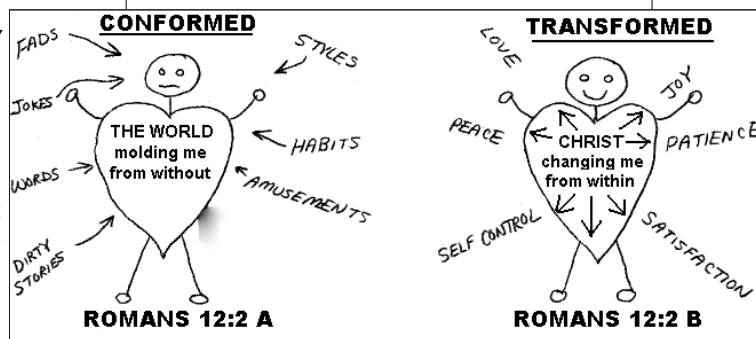
Herein is the secret to understand what is worldly. Sometimes it helps to understand something if we think about what is the opposite of it. The opposite of worldliness is spirituality.

So what is a spirit? Is it something we can see with our physical eyes? Is it something we can handle or point to. It is something of a different realm; something that is of a different dimension than the carnal things of this world.

Bottom line is we must set our eyes on the heavenly things. At the center of our focus we must have Jesus, the resurrected Christ.

Desiring what he wants, loving what he loves and hating what he hates.

I heard a man say once, "What Jesus talked much about, I want to talk much about; what Jesus talked little about, I want to talk little about." This has really helped me to get my focus on the things that he really cares about the most.



We were originally created in the image of God, which was more than just mere physical appearance. I believe we were born to be creative. When our consciences are cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we start thinking differently. We start thinking about spiritual things and we set our affections on things above, not on things of this world.

In Romans 8:5-6 Paul says, **For they that are after the things of the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

There is a great old hymn that goes, **Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in his wonderful face, And the things of this earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of his glory and grace.**

May you be richly blessed as you seek the King of the heavens and the earth and may he reveal to you what is his good, acceptable and perfect will to you as you turn your eyes upon him.

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Dundee, NY 14837  
(607) 244-4168

## To Kill a Lion

**Destroying the Power of Lust From the Root**

This is a new book by Bruce Lengeman designed to help men find the roots of their sexual addiction. The theme is "Men cry out, I know it is wrong, but why can't I stop!" The book is for both counselors and strugglers. *To Kill a Lion* will help men understand their own sexuality, and what makes it operate "out of alignment" with God's design. You'll learn why it is healthy to be sexual as a man, but in a pure and Godly way. Though this book was not written for women, many are reading it and getting understanding of things they never knew about sexuality. There are three way you can order this book:

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The price of the book is \$12.99 plus \$3.95 S&H



Psalm 139:14-16

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

*My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*

*Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*

1. How often do you think about your kidneys?
2. Do you know where they are or what they do?

Most people think of kidney stones when they think about the kidneys. We will talk more about that later.

Your kidneys are two bean-shaped organs, each about the size of your fist. They are in the middle of your back, just below your rib cage, on either side of your spine. They weigh about 0.5 percent of your total body weight. Although the kidneys are small organs by weight and size, they receive 20 percent of the blood pumped by the heart.

Most people know that a major function of the kidneys is to remove waste products and extra fluids from the body. These waste products and extra fluids are removed through the urine. The production of urine involves a very complicated process. This process is necessary to maintain the proper balance of different chemicals needed by the body.

Your kidneys receive the blood from what is called the renal artery. Once the kidney receives it, it filters out the waste and unwanted items. The filtering part is made up of several things. The first thing is water. It is also made up of sodium (salt), potassium, chloride, glucose (a type of sugar) and other small items.

The kidney filters approximately 45 gallons of blood per day! That means that the kidneys clean all the blood in the body 20 to 25 times per day. Once the blood has been cleaned it is return to the body through

what is called the renal vein. The body now has clean blood to use as needed.

As stated above, the wastes and other unwanted items become urine. Urine goes from the kidneys to the bladder. In the bladder, the urine is stored until it is expelled from the body. All this filtration makes approximately two quarts of urine as the waste product.

When the kidneys don't work like they should, there are many difficulties that take place in the body. Waste in the blood which are supposed to be removed, is not and the body becomes ill.

God has designed this whole process to keep the body on track. Some of the things that the kidneys regulate are:

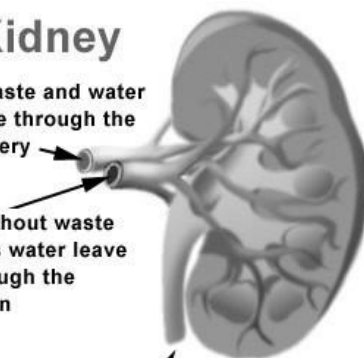
- ◆ Remove waste products from the body
- ◆ Remove drugs form the body
- ◆ Balance the body's fluids
- ◆ Release hormones that regulate blood pressure
- ◆ Produce an active form of vitamin D that promotes strong, healthy bones
- ◆ Control the production of red blood cells
- ◆ Maintain your body's calcium levels
- ◆ Regulate the composition of your blood

## A Kidney

Blood, waste and water enter here through the Renal Artery

Blood without waste or excess water leave here through the Renal Vein

Excess water and Toxic Waste in the form of Urine leaves here via the Ureter



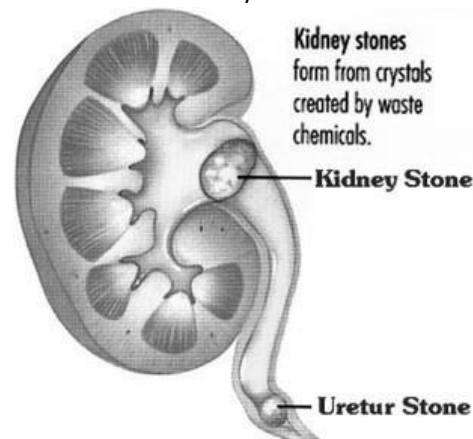
Earlier we mentioned kidney stones. Just what is a kidney stone?

A kidney stone is a hard mass that builds up from crystals and separates from the urine within the urinary tract. Normally, urine contains chemicals that stop the crystals from forming. These do not always work for all people. If the crystals remain tiny enough, they will travel through the urinary tract and

pass out of the body in the urine without being noticed.

What causes kidney stones?

Doctors do not always know what causes a



Kidney stones form from crystals created by waste chemicals.

Kidney Stone

Ureter Stone

stone to form. While some foods may help stones form in certain people—those same foods may not cause stones to form in other people. A person with a family history of kidney stones may be more likely to develop stones.

Not drinking enough water can allow kidney stones to form. When you don't drink enough water, the salts, minerals, and other items in the urine can stick together and make a stone. This is the most common cause of kidney stones.

Just as God created a part of our body so complex and important in our earthly body, He is concerned that our spiritual "body" functions just as well. We need to take steps to filter out spiritual dirt and debris. For this, God has given us His Word. We are told in Psalm 119:9:

*"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy Word."*

It is God's word and His alone that leads us to all truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 says, *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

In this verse we are instructed to study God's Word. That means we take time to look at it, read it and understand it. By knowing God's Word and listening to what He says in His Book, we can filter out sin and wrong teachings of men.

## So Why is it so Important to Believe That Jesus is the Son of God?

—By Eli Stutzman

*Acts 4; 12, the Bible says: Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

The church was just in its very early stages of growth. Peter and John had been imprisoned overnight for preaching Jesus as the most important person ever in God's dealing with men. If you read Acts 4, you will realize that the above statement was part of a very short statement as to who Jesus Christ is and was. The most important reason to believe Jesus is the Son of God is that there is no salvation possible any other way.

As I pointed out earlier, almost all Christian churches have declared Jesus to be the son of God through the ages. The Catholic Church certainly did that, but also demanded that their practices had to be followed. It was a sad day when the church of that day began to forbid members to disagree on practices not given in the Bible. Many were called heretics and tortured and killed. The church and its practices had become more important than believing in Jesus! There is still pressure today to simply cling to practices and not promote the importance of Jesus being the bedrock of faith that brings salvation.

We can listen to all of Jesus' great teachings and then try to practice self denial and love for others. We can observe communion, live a hard life, wash feet, and sing hymns, pray three times a day, feed the poor etc. and not think about Jesus being the son of God. All this can be done even if we simply regard Jesus as a great teacher. Yet according to what is written in Acts this Lordship of Jesus is a key belief in Christianity. Everything rises or falls on this statement.

What does a church look like if Jesus is not actually regarded as God? Sadly, not a lot would change in many churches. The power of the Holy Spirit would be absent, for one thing. New believers would not be encouraged and helped to grow in understanding of what they are in God's sight. The faith that once was vibrant would falter. Peo-

ple would be taught to follow our example and teaching and to not worry. The Bible would not make much sense to those who chose to read it. Preaching about salvation would lack power. Sinners might even feel right at home sitting under a gospel message. Healing of the sick and deliverance would not happen. The entire Christian religion would be undone. The Old Testament law would still be in effect. Priests would still have to offer sin sacrifices, first for themselves, then for others.



...lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. —Matthew 3:17

When we sin, the only one who can forgive is God himself. To suggest your sin is forgiven is simply foolishness unless God has authorized it. Jesus Christ has been authorized to forgive and bring into the kingdom those who come to him. As you know, I cannot act on the behalf of someone without being authorized to do it. If you owe \$25,000 to uncle Henry, only Uncle Henry can forgive the debt. For instance if cousin Bill came and told you he forgave the debt, it would not mean anything. You cannot experience being set free from sin unless you ask the One who has the power to do it, namely Jesus Christ.

Because Jesus was a man that experienced life as you and I do, he understands. He paid a high price for salvation for you and me. Don't miss it because you are afraid to ask.

John 6; 37 says; *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

And in verse 40 it says; *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

The offer still stands. I too was a sinner that found grace when I asked Jesus for his priceless, yet free, gift!

Eli Stutzman — Ontario Canada  
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## Lord Prop Us Up!

Every time I am asked to pray, I think of the old fellow who always prayed, 'Lord, prop us up on our "leaning side." After hearing him pray that prayer many times, someone asked him why he prayed that prayer so fervently.

He answered, 'Well sir, you see, it's like this.... I got an old barn out back. It's been there a long time; it's withstood a lot of weather; it's gone through a lot of storms, and it's stood for many years.

It's still standing. But one day I noticed it was leaning to one side a bit.

So I went and got some pine poles and propped it up on its leaning side so it wouldn't fall.

Then I got to thinking about that and how much I was like that old barn.. I've been around a long time.



I've withstood a lot of life's storms. I've withstood a lot of bad weather in life, I've withstood a lot of hard times, and I'm still standing too. But I find myself leaning to one side from time to time, so I

like to ask the Lord to prop us up on our leaning side, 'cause I figure a lot of us get to leaning at times.

Sometimes we get to leaning toward anger, leaning toward bitterness leaning toward hatred, leaning toward cussing, leaning toward a lot of things that we shouldn't. So we need to pray, 'Lord, prop us up on our leaning side, so we will stand straight and tall again, to glorify the Lord.'

We all need to be propped up from time to time, the Lord will do that for you, if you ask Him.

## What Does the Bible Say About Ghosts and Haunting?

The answer to this question depends on what is meant by the term "ghosts." If the term means "spirit beings," the answer is a qualified "yes." If the term means "spirits of people who have died," the answer is "no." The Bible makes it abundantly clear that there are spirit beings, both good and evil. But the Bible abolishes the idea that the spirits of deceased human beings can remain on earth and "haunt" the living.

Hebrews 9:27 declares, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"

That is what happens to a person's soul-spirit after death—judgment.

The result of this judgment is heaven for the believer (Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23) and hell for the unbeliever (Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:22-24).

There is no in-between. There is no possibility of remaining on earth in spirit form as a "ghost." If there are such things as ghosts, according to the Bible, they absolutely cannot be the disembodied spirits of deceased human beings.

The Bible teaches very clearly that there are indeed spirit beings who can connect with and appear in our physical world. The Bible identifies these beings as angels and demons. Angels are spirit beings who are faithful in serving God. Angels are righteous, good, and holy.

Demons on the other hand, are fallen angels; angels who rebelled against God. Demons are evil, deceptive, and destructive. According to 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, demons make it appear as if they are "angels of light" and as "servants of righteousness." Appearing as a "ghost" and/or making a person (who is still alive) believe that they are a loved one that had already passed away, definitely seems to be within the power and abilities that demons possess.

The closest biblical example of a "haunting" is found in Mark 5:1-20. A legion of demons possessed a man and used the man to haunt a graveyard. There were no ghosts involved. It was a case of a normal person being controlled by demons to terrorize the people of that area. Demons only seek to "kill, steal, and destroy" (John 10:10). They will do anything within their power to deceive people, to lead people away from God. This is very likely the explanation of "ghostly" activity today. Whether it is called a ghost, a ghoul, or a poltergeist, if there is genuine evil spiritual activity occurring, it is the work of demons.



What about instances in which "ghosts" act in "positive" ways? What about psychics, people who claim to speak with the dead and gain true and useful information from them? Again, it is crucial to remember that the goal of demons is to deceive. If the result is that people trust in a psychic instead of God, a demon will be more than willing to reveal true information. Even good and true information, if from a source with evil motives, can be used to mislead, corrupt, and destroy.

Interest in the ghosts and magic is becoming increasingly common. There are individuals and businesses that claim to be "ghost-hunters," who for a price will rid your home of ghosts.

Palm readers are increasingly considered normal. Human beings are innately aware of the spiritual world. Sadly, instead of seeking the truth about the spirit world by communing with God and studying His Word, many people allow themselves to be led astray by the spirit world. The demons surely laugh at the spiritual mass-deception that exists in the world today.

—continued from back cover—

### **Anabaptist Movement Thrives in North America**

A colony might have some vans and a truck, but no one would own a car. They are very big on modern farm equipment, and they use computers to run their farms and businesses."

Dr. Kraybill was familiar with the Anabaptist groups in the U.S. and Canada but hadn't visited any in Latin America for 30 years. He was amazed at some of the growth there. Most is the result of Mennonite missionary efforts since the 1950s.

About 5,000 K'ekch' Indians in Guatemala have formed their own National Evangelical Guatemalan Mennonite Church.

"They have maintained their Indian culture, but they relate to conservative, plain-dressing Mennonites, though not horse-and-buggy Mennonites," Dr. Kraybill said.

The Amish have no communities in Latin America. One that they planted in Honduras in 1969 was gone 30 years later. The Amish and the most conservative Mennonites are leery of missionary efforts.

"If plain-dressing Mennonites go to most of these countries, they first try to impose their dress on the local people. But after 20 or 25 years, that changes. Then [the missionaries] come back and aren't sure that dress matters that much anyway," Dr. Kraybill said. "It's why some of the Amish are skeptical of mission work. The Old Order Amish say that if you go into mission work, it brings changes back home."

Some mission congregations have survived under duress.

"My second big surprise was that there are three groups in Cuba," Dr. Kraybill said. "One was there through the Castro revolution. It went underground but has resurfaced."

The three Mennonite groups have 79 congregations with 3,300 members, in what Dr. Kraybill calls "a sizeable house church movement." All members and leaders are native Cubans.

"Apparently they have not been persecuted. They have been careful about what they say and do," he said.

Haiti has 68 Anabaptist congregations with 4,000 members.

"A lot of those would be involved in social needs having to do with the earthquake, even though their primary interest is evangelical outreach," he said.

Even though the Amish don't travel to Haiti, they support the relief and mission work there.

"Each year in Lancaster County and in Holmes County, Ohio, the Amish have a Haiti Auction to support various ministries in Haiti," Dr. Kraybill said. Through the sale of quilts and other crafts "they contribute significant funds to various conservative Mennonite groups that are active in Haiti."

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**Current Resident**

**Anabaptist Movement Thrives In North America**

By Ann Rodgers, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

From horse-and-buggy Mennonites in Mexico to Amish in Arkansas, a new study reveals the variety of Anabaptist culture in North America.

"The biggest surprise was that there was a Mennonite group in the Bahamas," said Donald Kraybill, senior fellow at Elizabethtown College's Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, who did the research.

But that plain-dressing group isn't lounging on the beach in bonnets and suspenders.

"They're doing evangelical mission work and have two congregations. But they also have an industrial training school and are teaching occupational skills to native people there," he said.

Dr. Kraybill, who published his findings in the new "Concise Encyclopedia of Amish, Brethren, Hutterites and Mennonites" from Johns Hopkins University Press, found Anabaptist groups in 17 of the 23 North American nations. It is the first study of all Anabaptist groups. Anabaptists descend from Swiss and German radicals of the Protestant Reformation who insisted on adult baptism, rejected state control of the church and practiced nonresistance despite brutal persecution.

The study found 809,845 Anabaptist adults. Children would raise the total to an estimated 1.3 million. More than two-thirds -- 578,195 -- live in the United States, with the next largest group of 144,000 in Canada.

Mennonites are the largest group with 509,150. The many Brethren groups are next with 177,520. The Amish have 104,050 adult members, mostly in the U.S., but with 2,450 in Canada. Hutterites are by far the smallest group, with 19,125 adults.

Mennonite lifestyles range from quasi-Amish to fully-assimilated urban dwellers.

"There are Mennonite professors at Harvard and Mennonites who operate software companies. There is a vast spectrum in the Mennonite world, and also in the Brethren world," Dr. Kraybill said.

One Mennonite group in Mexico is actually more traditional than the Amish, he said. These German-speaking Old Colony Mennonites migrated from Russia to Canada in the 1880s, then moved to Mexico in the 1920s after Canadian authorities required them to teach in English rather than German. They kept their schools as they were then, while Amish teachers in the United States incorpo-

rated insights from research on childhood development.

"In recent years Old Order Amish teachers from the United States and Canada have gone to Mexico to help upgrade the schools of these Old Colony Mennonites," he said

Another new finding was that about 256,000 Anabaptist children and adults speak the Pennsylvania German dialect as their first language and for worship.

Hutterites, who are just 2 percent of all Anabaptists and live mostly in Canada, are little-known in the United States. They came from Austria and Russia in the 19th century and have about 500 colonies of about 100 people each. Each colony owns 5,000 to 10,000 acres of farmland.

"They have no private property, there are no individual checking accounts. They are the oldest Christian communal group, apart from the monastic orders," Dr. Kraybill said.

"Their dress is somewhat similar to the Amish, but they embrace high technology.

—Continued inside back cover—