

MINISTRY UPDATE

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The Dying Preacher

Recently, a man told me one of the saddest stories ever told. He said, "Joe, my dad was an Amish preacher all his life and during that time, he preached hundreds and hundreds of sermons. Eventually, the day came when he found himself bed ridden and at death's door. It was at that point that he called me to his bed side to let me know he was very frightened about dying and going into eternity, for he said, "I have little hope of reaching heaven."

My first thoughts were, oh, if only the Lord would allow good intentions and a sincere heart to be enough of a payment for sin.

I am constantly reminded of how hard religious people work at fixing the heart's condition on their own. Some go to great lengths and severe struggles, and yet, at the end of the day, they feel just as guilty and condemned as ever.

I have been thinking a lot about the scripture passage in Ezekiel, where God said:

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you...Ezekiel 36:26

God does what mankind cannot do; He removes the old heart and spirit, and then He replaces them with brand new ones.

2 Cor 5:17 says, Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:

-----Great Ending-----

Just days before slipping into eternity, the dying preacher called out for Christ to save him—they said, he died in peace.

Dear Friend:

Millions of dads and moms have watched their children leave the nest and go out on their own, and if the truth be told, we wouldn't want it any other way—that is what we raised them to do.

This week, as we were moving Jonathan's last load of belongings to his own house in town, our family sat down on the couch for a few moments and re-lived the past.

1. It seemed like just yesterday that Esther and I had made our way to the hospital to welcome our little bundle of joy into the world, and now, almost 20 years later, we are moving him out of the house. But it is with great joy that we can say, Jonathan has a clear sal-



vation testimony, is living for the Lord, and is involved in the ministry at church.

2. We were also reminded of the harsh judgment that was handed out to us, by parents, when we first started our family outside the Amish culture. We were told with assurance that our family would split up and the children would end up not belonging to any church. Having been young in the Faith (at that time), those were fearful moments for us. It was at that time that we decided to put all our trust in the Lord and His Word. And, over the years, God has protected us, provided tons of grace, and answered many prayers.

Harley's Hog Roast



For the second time, the Lord has laid it on one of our men, Harley, to set up a Hog Roast for the former Amish and some of his close friends. And, I might add, when Harley does something, he goes all out and treats everybody like kings and queens. This year was no exception.

The young people all went out and played games while us older ones sat around and caught up on the latest and greatest.

When Harley left the Amish, eight years ago, he

came to the MAP ministry with little more than the clothes on his back. While helping him get his social security card and drivers license, we also shared the good news that Jesus saves, and one day, he accepted salvation by God's grace through faith. Today, he is living out a great testimony for others, as he serves his Savior.



My Trip to Lancaster PA

In October, Andy Geesey, founder of Plain New Life Ministry—Lancaster PA, invited me to teach a Bible lesson to his Saturday morning group. The group is made up of mostly Amish men who have gotten saved and desire a greater understanding of the Scriptures than what the Amish church can provide. I found out that most of these men get up between 4 and 5am in the morning and make their way via taxi drivers to the Saturday morning study, every week.

Later that weekend, I did a "Amish: They Are Our Friends, But Are They Our Brothers?" seminar at a church, located near the place where the Amish children got shot, exactly three years before. I was told that one of the girls, who came out alive but is physically disabled for life, gets a weekly visit from the mother of the shooter. This mother has for the past several years made her way over to the Amish girl's home, tucked her into bed, and read a bedtime story to her.

Amish Names

The more conservative Amish groups are (by church rule) limited to certain names they can choose from, for their children.

- Names like Natalie, Robin, Garrett and Tyler are considered worldly.
- Having two first names is worldly and forbidden.
- One family named their daughter *Rhoda* and the church made them go back and change the birth cert to *Rodie*, which, according to the church, sounded more plain and simple.

Most of the time, the children are named after grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc. This in turn causes problems, such as the following:

In an Amish settlement near Kalona Iowa, there are more than 50 'Mary Yoders' living in the same area; the Budget (an Amish newspaper) tells the story of a young man who was courting one of the Mary Yoders, and one day, he sent a love letter to the wrong Mary. She was in her 80s; he was in his late teens. He was amused; Mary's husband was not.

During my own years of growing up, there were 3 Joe Keims in my community, so we became known as *little Joe*, *big Joe*, and *brick Joe*. I will let you guess which one was me.

To find out how many of [you](http://www.HowManyOfMe.com) there are in the US, go to the following web site: www.HowManyOfMe.com. You might be surprised.

About a year ago, a young man named Joe, moved from NY to our area in order to get help in his transition to an English life-style. We soon found out that he was a quite guy with a very bright and captivating smile that got everybody's attention.

Within a couple of weeks, someone brought him to our Saturday morning Bible study, but because he was not able to read, we could not give him a Bible or a study book. Praise God though, none of this kept Joe from coming to the Bible studies and church. Month after month went by, while all of us prayed, "Dear Lord, Help Joe desire salvation." As time went by, he would get letter after letter from his parents, asking him to come home.

Dear son... best wishes and we are willing to open doors for you anytime.

Dear Joseph... [today] we got a letter from you and I just sat back and cried for our dear son. I cannot put into words how hard it was, because we are still feeling so close, you are still our son, we do care as much for you.

Dear Joseph... Dad got up this morning and ask me if I would send a letter off to you. We both wish to see you again, but it is really hard on us if you come and leave again. Please keep in contact with us and don't forget us.



Oh Joseph... We have plenty of room for you here, door is open for you any day, any time, any minute. We all love you. Wish I could see you, Please don't forget us, stay close to us. Only from lonely Dad, Mom, and Family.

Dear Son... Don't let others give you a different meaning out there of what you were learned. We love you our

dear son. ...hang up everything out there in the world and join your dear Mom, Dad, Bro and sisters. All we would look forward to is you, you wouldn't need to have any belongings, just you, and if you

would need help to get rid of something, we would help you in any way. We have a hard time to get back to our normal life since you left us.

Oh Joseph... I walked out to the mailbox yesterday with a surprise, there was a letter from you. Oh, I just held it. I didn't even tell the others right away. I am gonna carry that letter with me where ever I go. Oh Joseph, take care out there, we worry a lot. Let's stay close to each other's heart.

Dearest Son... I am gonna send you a copy of how it could go if someone goes out in the world and marries an English lady. Uncle Jacob told me how it was for Jacob when they married. It was the very first night after the wedding that he had an awful

time already. He said he cried and talked a lot that night. His English wife couldn't understand him, and asked him what he is trying to say—he had said something about homesick.

Our life on the earth is not long, even if we get to 100 years old. Compare that to one day in fire. They do say 1,000 years in fire is not even a start ...because it's gonna be like that for ever.

Oh, I also wish I would more and more think this over and over. ...as long as we can, we want to try and be a help to each other, before it is forever too late. I do talk to the rest of the kids like this too, we all want to try and help each other. Joseph, we do get really lonely when we don't hear from you. If you would even just send a few words that we would know that you are still somewhere.

**Only Mom and Dad
to our dear son**

These are, without a doubt, heart wrenching letters from a mother that has lost all hope that her son would ever reach the glories of heaven.

About two weeks ago, Joe bowed his head and cried out to the Savior of the world for salvation. We were overjoyed for his decision and have praised God many times. On the other hand, our hearts ache for his parents and the great love they have for their son. Wouldn't it be great if the parents also got saved and were then able to reconcile with their beloved son? Let's pray that God will do a miracle!

2009 has been a very difficult year for finances at MAP. More then once, during the year, our staff and volunteers stepped up to the plate and helped pay for postage and other needs within the ministry. Also, for the very first time since the ministry's

beginning, we had to borrow money, which has not yet been paid back. We would like to ask you to consider two things: (1) Pray that God would provide. (2) Would you consider giving a special gift toward the work at MAP this Christmas?

Bible Studies and Prayer Meetings in Indiana

—Willard Martin

Willard writes: God’s irresistible and amazing grace came upon Devon and he received it and has been different ever since. After a time of attending our church and relating to him, the time came when I approached him about having a Bible study; he accepted it.

Once a person comes to know the truths of the Bible, and how to apply those truths in a practical way to his own life, the result is always the same: peace, victory, success, and fruitfulness. People who would like to be Christians, but are weak, fearful, discouraged, and defeated, can be disciplined to learn how to study the Bible for themselves and apply its teachings in a practical way to their lives. God says, in Hosea 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” The Bible study has allowed Devon and I to get to know each other and to become good friends.

It has been very encouraging to see God’s spirit moving in our community, giving opportunity for various discipleship involvement. My wife Judy and I, lead a discipleship class of 7 people on Tuesday evenings. Six of them are from the Amish.



Devon

Willard

Also, we have 3 young men’s prayer groups meeting in different areas on Saturday mornings. Most of the guys are from the Amish and the prayer focus is the Amish community. It’s wonderful to see these brothers in Christ have such a burden for their own people that they are willing to sacrifice their Saturday morning “sleep in” to get up and drive a few miles to gather and pray. Someone has said, “Where prayer is focused, power falls!”

Testimony by Devon Miller

Through and through I’ve made my share of mistakes, thinking I could always make my own way in life. Then I realized, my way always took me back to jail, and that got old. And then God got a hold of my life and delivered me from sin.

Having been in prison has made me a mean person, so it was hard to change. But through friends and family, and with God’s help, it was possible. I love the life that God has given me and look forward to the life I get to live through Him. Praise God! ~ Devon

MAP Ministry Moves Into 21st Century

—by Bill Dunn



MAP, put up the finances to build a rest room facility.

For several years now, the MAP office building had no running water or rest rooms. Recently Bill & Sharon Kline, long time supporters of

We had to run a 150 ft sewer line from the church’s main sewer line and cut through 4 inches of concrete at the MAP Office in order to install a toilet, sink, and wash basin. With this new facility, volunteers and staff will not have to brave the inclement weather to travel over to the church building for rest rooms and running water. This is important, because most of our volunteers are seniors and this provides more safety for them during the winter months. Our heart felt thanks go out to all those who labored hard and donated their time to make this happen. —Bill Dunn

SonLight Club Awards Program Changes Hands



and with much sorrow and regret we have accepted her decision.

Mary this is our tribute to you, for you have done an outstanding job. God chose the perfect person, when he chose you to do our Awards Program. You have been a blessing to MAP and we know that God will use you to be a blessing to others in some other way. —The MAP Team

Mary writes: Five years ago, Joe asked me to design an awards program for the SonLight club students. It has been a challenging but interesting experience. My family assisted me with the project until the task became too big for us. I then recruited help from a

For over 5 years, MAP has been blessed by a volunteer from Missouri, named Mary Schrock, who did our SonLight Club Awards Program for us. But, after much prayer, Mary has decided to give up the Awards Program, which has not been an easy decision for her or us. She put her heart and soul into this program

few close relatives—John, Mattie, Joe and Rachel. After I sorted the list of the student’s, names who earned an award, and made other necessary preparations, they faithfully prepared the awards for mailing.

The students earn awards at 1,000 point increments. Finding appropriate awards at a reasonable price was one of the greatest challenges I faced.



It was a blessing to watch the students climb the “ladder” as they did the SonLight Club lessons, however, the greatest blessing was to hear that another student has received Jesus Christ as Savior!

I shall forever treasure these memories, as the program now continues in the hands of the faithful volunteers at the MAP headquarters. I’m thankful that I had the privilege to be a part of this ministry for about six years.

May the Lord keep his hand of blessing upon the future of the awards program and the MAP ministry. —Mary Schrock



Crime Within The Culture

It is not my intention to offend anyone, but rather to show a side of Amish culture that is very much a reality.

About eight out of ten girls that come to MAP for help have been abused sexually by their father, uncle, teacher, brother, etc. It is a serious problem that the culture has

been able to hide in the past, however, that is changing quite rapidly. Just in the last year, about 8 Amish men have gone to prison for child molestation.

The victims are often expected to go on in life without counseling or protection, such as what happened in the cases below.

Pray for us; MAP is involved in the lives of four girls who were abused, of which two are trying to take their abusers to court right now. As you might imagine, the emotional pain is sometimes unbearable for these young girls. —Joe



Six charges have been filed against 36 year old Johnny Schwartz from Sey-

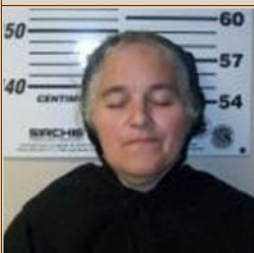
mour MO who has been sexually abusing two of his daughters. The alleged acts happened between 2000-2007, when one of the girls was between six and eight yrs old; it took nine years for these stories to come out. It wasn't until an outsider, a driver for the Amish, brought these allegations to law enforcement.

The girls both say the church has already punished Schwartz more than once, when he made confession to the church, two years ago. The church officially shunned the couple, but no one reported the crime.

"They feel their religious laws trump our legal system," Cole said. "They were very receptive, very open with me. Their eyes were opened to

many things. This (mandatory reporting law) is completely beyond their realm of understanding. They don't know who to call — they don't have phones.

Now Johnny's wife, Fannie Schwartz, 47, who knew about the abuse is also being charged with not reporting the sexual contact to law officers. Although she did, at different points in time, report it to the church and the church took care of that situation by excommunicating and shunning Johnny for a period of time.



The Sheriff's Department says another problem is the Amish children's education. Cole

says he's not sure if they have proper access to emergency help, or if they know the right outlets if they're in trouble. The Sheriff hopes to address these issues with community.



Weaver, who worked with another woman to plan and execute the murder of his wife was sentenced Wednesday morning to 15 years to life in prison. I'm very sorry for what I did and I hope everybody can forgive me for what I did," Eli told Judge Brown and a packed Wayne County Common Pleas court room during his sentencing hearing.

Eli and his girlfriend, Barbara, were charged in the June 2 shooting death of Eli's wife, Barbara. She was found dead in bed at her home in Apple Creek OH with a gunshot wound to her chest.



Eicher, from Adams County Indiana, pleaded guilty to 5 different counts of incest and child molestation, including charges that he had sexual intercourse with his three daughters.

The Prosecuting Attorney said the case was heinous and was close to being the worst of the worst. In the end the judge agreed to hand Eicher a near maximum sentence. It turned out to be 14 years in prison and 10 years on probation.

The Prosecuting Attorney for this case said, "What worse thing could a father do, especially that it is in the Amish community where it can be a closed community giving the children nowhere to turn."