

# MAP Ministry Update



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## Special Needs

—1—

When a family leaves the Amish culture, they are faced with a tough question, "What do we do with our children and the furtherance of their education?" Sending them to public school is often out of the question, because of the huge gap in language and culture. Sending them to Christian school is also out, because of the huge cost that is involved. Home schooling is about the only option, but here lies another problem; the mother is not "state qualified" to teach, because of her own lack or minimum level of education.

With that in mind, would you pray with us that if it is God's will, He would provide our area with a self-supported and qualified school teacher.

—2—

There is a great need for a missionary to work among the former Amish in Columbia MO. I have personally been in the area on several occasions and met up with young people who have moved there from 4 to 5 states; it seems to be the hot spot for so many.

We have been praying on a regular basis that God would burden and call someone out, to come along side these older teenagers and young couples and help them with their spiritual and daily needs. The opportunities are indeed great!

The clinic for Amish and Mennonites in Seymour MO, is now open for patients. More clinics to open, in the future.

## Dear Friend:

We have stayed very busy this summer, not only as a family but also as a ministry. In August, Rachel (dau) spent a whole week in NYC on a missions trip. Jonathan (son) on the other hand, decided it was time for him to buy his own house, and Lord willing, if things continue as planned, he will be in his own house before long. As for Esther, she has been working a lot of overtime, helping with weddings, doing Bible studies, helping with church presentations, and entertaining visitors who stop by for a meal or the night.



Our family tries to take a week off every year and go on vacation. This year Jonathan didn't go along, but Esther, Rachel, and I traveled all the way to Vermont and back. Our 2,300 mile journey reminded us again and again of God's beautiful creation. Along the way, we saw the mighty ocean, tall mountains, sky scrapers, and thousands of cab drivers—they can keep their job! Our ultimate goal was to drive through each capitol in the New England states. But, as always, it was great to come back to home sweet home.

## Weddings: Topic of the Neighborhood

Weddings, premarital counseling, showers, rehearsals, and bachelor/ette parties have been a hot topic over the past few months.

In July, my pastor and I teamed up and did the wedding for my brother Perry and Maryann.

In August, I was again privileged of teaming up with an area pastor and doing a wedding for Bennie and Mattie.

The four of them had come to the ministry for help and support when they left the Amish, several years ago; both girls lived with us.



Each one of them invited their Amish families to come to the wedding but none of them showed up. One parent responded via letter...

*"We received your letter to invite us to your wedding. Don't expect any of us there. Just wish you would be getting married Amish so we could all be there. You wrote that there will be music before the wedding starts, we wouldn't want to be involved in that anyways, as we and you were brought up that, that is something that leads to a prideful spirit. And we still feel so. When the end of the world comes, we can read that there will be a racket too, from the cries of the people that God will send to Hell."*

It was interesting and very rewarding to watch as various individuals from the church

body stepped up to the plate and took the place of parents and grandparents. Many others jumped in and helped with the organizing, cooking, cleaning, etc.

Without a doubt, the greatest event of all happened during



one of our premarital counseling sessions when Bennie and Mattie gave their hearts and lives over to Christ. Many people were involved in spreading the Seed over the past year and had prayed for this moment to take place.

The changes after the great event were evident. First, they went forward and made it public to everyone in the church. Secondly, a few weeks later, they were baptized in a pond, along with three others.

September 2009



**Financial Update**

God continues to supply for His work at MAP, although, there have been some hard times this summer. We appreciate those who gave extra when there was nothing left in our bank account and bills were over due.

Three new churches and one individual have taken MAP on for support.— Thank you!

Our bathroom project has finally gotten approved by the EPA. How nice it will be, when this project is completed!

**Summer Intern**

We had Shane, a college student from New Tribes Missions—WI, serving as a summer intern for MAP.

He landed on our web site after doing some research on the Amish and immediately had a burden to reach out to them with the gospel. At first, his plans were to become Amish but eventually, he gave it up.

After many phone conversations, emails, and an application process, the board agreed to have him come and help out for the summer.

A good portion of his time was spent on putting a DVD promo together for MAP. He also helped out with Bible studies and work around the office.



**Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost**



This summer, more than any other time in the ministry, we have seen young men, women, husbands, and wives step out of their comfort zones and ask to be baptized. Every time I think we have seen the best, something even greater and more exciting happens. As you can see here, quite a few of the ones who have committed their lives to Christ, have also followed the Lord's command in baptism.



The fifth one down on the right was in the SonLight Club, while she was still Amish. To our knowledge, she is the first student to follow the Lord in baptism.



**Salvation Testimony**

*Mary writes: When I got saved on Mother's Day, the tears just rolled—I had never experienced so much joy in my life. And since my salvation, I just can't get enough of God. I find myself wanting to share the gospel with everybody I come in contact with. Joe, I want to know, can you print me out a spiritual birth certificate, so that I can hang it on my living room wall; it will remind me of that special day I asked Jesus into my life.*



**Salvation Testimony**

*Abe writes: I grew up Amish and the Amish are very strict.*



*couldn't do it. My dad always told me, we can't know whether we are saved or not, but I know the promise of God which I found in 2 Cor 5:17: "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature..."*



**Most, if not all are involved in a mentoring and discipleship group. They are growing and becoming giants in the Faith. No, it does not come without a huge cost, but as I am learning more and more, standing for genuine Christianity requires a price to be paid—why are so many unwilling to pay the price? ~ Joe**



**Letter from Parent**

*Son, we feel very sorry for you, and you know that we don't want you to get baptized out in that sinful world. God put us in this world to work and to obey His rules. He does not want us to be lost. So at this point you are on the outside of our family and you don't belong in the family anymore. So whether it's a wedding or a funeral, you don't belong in the family. You know you can't come home again. ~ Dad and Mom*



**Letter from Parent**



*Son, ...I still wouldn't have hopes for myself or any of my children to leave the Amish and go out in the world and seek the modern things that are forbidden.*

**Quote from Abe**



*"They [my parents] love me so much, that they would rather see me die before I get baptized then after."*

*It's like they think it's all the good works that lets them enter the gates of Heaven, instead of trusting and believing what Jesus Christ did on the Cross. Their rules got me to realize that I have a lot of sin in my life and I got very frustrated, angry, and depressed, because I thought I had to work myself into a good enough position in order to be forgiven, and I*

### Mentoring and Discipleship Conference

By now, you know the great passion I have for mentoring and discipleship. In August, one of my dreams became a reality when we had our very first conference, and it went very well.

In all, there were about 40 adults that showed up for this one day event, held at our home church. Several people traveled in from the PA and IN.



We started out at 8:30 on Sat morning and finished up around 5pm. Some of our topics were...

1. A 5-yr Plan For MAP
2. Why Mentoring and Discipleship
3. Mentoring vs. Discipleship

4. How Does Mentoring and Discipleship Relate to Scripture
5. Three Cheers for the Mentor

Through out the day, we had breakout sessions which allowed people to go off in groups of three and discuss various questions and ideas that concerned mentoring and discipleship.

At least twelve different people shared about their experiences and activities in mentoring younger converts who have left the Amish. Truly, it was an awesome day. Yes, we have definite plans on doing more of these conferences in the future.

### Testimony

#### SonLight Club Student

This is such a great Bible lesson on being religious, because we just got saved from the Amish and my Grandparents and Aunt and Uncles are giving us a real hard time.

So keep us in your prayers and we just pray and have faith that God will set them free. John 8:32  
~ Wayne

### The Lord Send Two Angels to Bring Dan Home

About five years ago, MAP started receiving a monthly support check in the amount of \$68. I always knew there had to be a story behind this odd dollar amount. Well, in time the Lord worked it out for me to meet face to face with the man behind the \$68 support checks.

In short, I will tell you, this man whose name was Dan Byler, would impact me for the rest of eternity. He was a man on fire for God and had faith that could move the most difficult mountain.



Dan and his family of 12, left the Old Order Amish, years ago. In his gospel tract "Unshackled", he describes a time before they left the Amish. He writes: "For the next seven years of our married life alcohol put myself, wife, and our oldest children, parents, sisters and brothers through much shame and disgrace. It was a living hell on earth for me."

On December 25, 1957 Dan spent the night in jail. As time went on, he would spent times in the hospital because of alcohol and depression. The day came when he joined Alcohol Anonymous to try and gain victory. He did fairly well for a while, but eventually, alcohol would again get the best of him. One day, the Lord sent a man that explained salvation to him and that day, Dan got miraculously saved.

About two months ago, Dan called to say his last good bye. I asked him not to die, before I came to Jackson OH to see him. Several days later, I found myself at his bed side and as we

were discussing the idea of letting MAP have the copyright to his gospel tract, he looked at me and said, Joe, "I am not sure why, but there are 4 empty pages in the back of my gospel tract that aren't filled. Do you have any idea what we can put there?" And it was as if the Lord just gave me the answer. I said, "Dan, you know how the Amish always say that we (former Amish) use the Bible and Christianity as a crutch? And, do you know how they always say that we will not stick with anything, as far as church and family is concerned?" Well, I said, "Dan, you finished well, all the way to the end and your readers need to know that."

All of a sudden, the tears just poured down his cheeks. Finally, he looked up and said, Joe, "that's it, I must tell the readers that I kept my eyes on the finish line, all the way to the end."

On July 31st, Dan woke up from a lengthy coma, just long enough to tell the family that two angels were at his bed side to take him home. Soon after that, Dan Byler drew his last breath on this side of eternity and went to be with the Lord forever more.

My thoughts, since than have gone to II Timothy 4:7-8, where Paul writes, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

### Former Amish Reunion



As you can tell by looking at the photo, the annual *Former Amish Reunion* was well attended this year.

### Trip to Pearisburg VA



During June, I had the exciting opportunity of spending four days in Virginia. This was a trip that was in the making for over a year. Three families have come out of the Amish, and like so many, the emotional and spiritual needs are almost greater then some can bear. While in the area, I spoke at several churches and did a Tue night seminar on how to reach the Amish. Before leaving, we established a Bible study between the Amish and English. I appreciate all those who so willingly, jumped in to help.



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**Light of Hope Ministries**

This summer, we received a visit from the Lapps, two Amish families who were traveling from Pennsylvania to Indiana. No, they were not traveling by horses and buggies, nor did they hire a taxi driver—each family was traveling in their own motor home.

Steve and Jake shared how God birthed *Light of Hope Ministries* out of a painful accident that took place in 1999, when Steve fell out of a barn and broke his pelvis. *Light of Hope Ministries*, which is now based out of Ephrata PA, got an even greater jump start in 2005, when the Lapp families had an opportunity to take a course on how to reach out and meet the emotional and physical needs that so many people have. By 2006, the Amish church had kicked the Lapps and a few other families out of the church, fearing that they would influence and lead other church members astray.

Today, the Lapp brothers have ministered in the Countries of Iraq, Switzerland, France, Turkey, and Canada, as well as all over the US. Their calling and passion in ministry is to bring healing to

those who are hurting and then build a bridge that connects them with the rest of the Body of Christ.



Like any ministry, they live by faith that God will provide their daily bread. When they were in Ohio, I asked them, “how are you doing financially, to which Steve replied, “well, we just used our last money to fill up the gas tanks in our motor homes and we really don't know where the next money is coming from.” I might add, that was three months ago. Today, while communicating via phone, I learned that they were ministering in the state of Iowa. I am

reminded of what Hebrews 10:38 tells us, *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*” As Christians, we must live our life by faith, not by sight.

Before they all left, we learned that several of the children were enrolled in the SonLight Club. At one point, I asked the children, “raise your hand, if you got saved through the SonLight Club”, and one of the older girls raised her hand and said, “I did; I received the Lord as my Savior, after I did one of the Bible lessons.”

**Softball Playing—Coming to an End**

They practiced hard! They often had the biggest group of cheer leaders! Their hearts were in it, all the way! Everybody had lots and lots of fun, sometimes more then they could handle! But when it came to scoring, they did not always do so well. How-

ever, there is always next year. In this photo, the two teams played each other for the first time, and when that happened, everybody came to watch the great event. We are all so proud of their hard work and great sport.

