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A New Beginning

—by Mattie Miller

Dear Friend:

My name is Mattie Miller. Three years ago, at the age of 26, I left home, family, and friends. Here is my story.



I grew up as the 10th of 12 children in the Amish community of Middlefield, Ohio. From an early age, I was tender, soft-hearted, and easily brought to tears at the slightest pain. I had a good home life. I was taught about Jesus and was already calling out to Him for help before I truly knew what it meant to be born again. My Grandma led me to desire to know Jesus like no one else ever did. There were times that no one understood me... yet I always felt better after unloading to Grandma. I didn't recognize that I was struggling with anxiety and depression until I was in my twenties.

At the age of 24, against my parent's wishes, I sought help from a chiropractor for some on-going health problems. For some reason, the chiropractor began asking me questions about my life. I truly believe that he knew I was about to completely lose myself, have a breakdown, or snap. I did not spare details and was pretty open about my depression and the struggles of my life.

After a blackout/anxiety attack, my doctor sent me to the ER, despite my begging to go home. At the time, I was angry with him, but I am now thankful. Aside from the day of my salvation, this would prove to be one of the best days of my life—the day that I finally got a rest from it all. I stayed in the hospital 16 days.

After leaving the hospital, I became a resident at Woodside Rest, where I would receive counseling for 9 1/2 weeks. Since my family was not entirely supportive of me receiving counseling, I then moved in with a married couple for 3 months.

While there, I had a complete breakdown and attempted suicide. I was trying to comprehend the cold hard facts—my family would never be the same, no matter what I did. I asked forgiveness. I said that I was sorry. Still nothing. I felt unloved, disconnected.

After being discharged from the hospital, I was taken to Wind Song Hill. I not only found answers, but also found peace with God. I realized the need to repent of my sins and ask Jesus in my heart and life. I cried out to God and He gave me peace beyond words—a joy that can't be described. I began seeing things in a new perspective. I was fighting principalities and powers, not flesh and blood.

In time, darkness began weighing on my heart. After three weeks of wrestling, I decided I was leaving home—the Amish

community—for good. I headed to Holmes County. My family and friends were very upset. I did not know it felt to be shunned or excommunicated up until then. I do now.

After some time, I again found myself at the ER after overdosing on sleeping medications. I promised God that I would not attempt to take my life again if He would spare me. I also promised that I would help others, no matter what the circumstances, because I knew the pain firsthand. This time I spent 5 1/2 weeks at Operation 6:12 receiving counseling.

I returned to the Amish for a time in 2020 and left again before becoming a member of the Amish church. I returned to Operation 6:12 and learned even more about making choices. I began anew. I had a relationship with God and saw Jesus in a new light.

A friend told me about MAP Ministry and New Beginnings Homestead. I talked with Joe Keim many times before coming to live here. I wanted discipleship training and to have a better understanding of who God is so that I could one day make disciples and counsel others. New Beginnings provides that. I would like to get my GED, have my own vehicle, a place to call my own, and continue growing, serving and helping others. I am excited to see what the future holds for me here at New Beginnings! —Mattie Miller

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Baptism Testimonies!



Growing up, I was told about God and the life of Jesus Christ, but I didn't take the time to study the Bible a whole lot for myself.

I have always desired a close relationship with God,

but allowed life to make me too busy. Everyday obstacles and struggles seemed overwhelming, and many times, I would turn to alcohol.

This past years' Good Friday and Easter services really gave me the desire to make God the center of my life. Yet, life again presented another big obstacle. However, God put it in my heart to focus on Him this time and not to turn to alcohol. Matthew 11:28-30 stuck out to me through this time:

"Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The day that I gave my life to God, I instantly felt the weight that I was dragging along being lifted off of my shoulders. I decided to become baptized today because Jesus Christ was perfect, and He showed us by example to do so. —Duane Miller

Before I left the Amish, I was so depressed that most days, all I did was get out of bed, go to work, come home, and go to sleep. I had no desire to socialize with anyone and did not want to cause conflict between my parents, so I spent most of my time in my room sleeping and reading. I found myself working more and more until I became sick from stress and some other things that were happening. God seemed big and scary to me.

I spent close to a year trying to regain my health and search for answers. In the process, I met a lot of interesting people and found someone that had researched the Bible in depth and was not scared to call me out on some of the things that I believed. He always did it in a nice way. Nevertheless, it started to get the wheels rolling in my head and got me to do research on my own instead of blindly following traditions and what I had been taught as a young child.

In May of 2020, things started to get heated in my family. My mother was talking about leaving my father because he would choose to talk to me instead of her. It did not seem to matter how many times I asked him to go to my mom to tell her things instead of coming to me. This continued until the day that my mom blamed me for creating the marriage problems between her and my father. Unbeknownst to my mother, my father had sexually abused me when I was nine and ten years old.

Through all the times of changes and trials in trying to figure out how to live in the English world on my own, this verse continuously popped up, and I believe it has been my saving grace: *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not on thine own understanding"* (Proverbs 3:5). I saw my need for salvation through Bible studies and through watching my parents live without it.

I decided to get baptized today because the Bible says it is necessary. God has placed a longing in my heart to commit to and follow Him in every way. I desire to be a shining light for God. —Rosella Graber



Rosella has been living at New Beginnings Homestead and serving at Beyond Measure Market since February 2021. You will meet her in the deli, serving customers with a smile and a testimony. She introduced signature milkshakes and the best biscuit and gravy you'll find anywhere. Come out and meet her. Both Duane and Rosella have been faithfully going through the ABC's for Christian Growth. This week, we are studying the Holy Spirit and learning the very important role He plays in our daily lives. —Joe and Esther Keim