

The Amish Voice



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Handling Sin and Wrongdoings With Each Other

—by Robert McCallum

This is a subject that covers much of what God talks about in His Word as well as what the believers deal with every day in their lives. Conflicts among believers are not a new difficulty. Take a moment and think about your life. Have you ever had disagreements with family, friends, and other people in the church or community? Have you been offended or have you offended someone by what has been said or done? Sometimes these things are done by accident. Sometimes they are done without knowing. Other times people purposely do what they know is wrong or with the desire to hurt someone else. The Bible is full of such problems in both the Old and New Testaments. As long as we live with other people there will be conflicts. Even as Christians, we find ourselves sinning against God and each other. The conflict between people does not need to drive them apart. It does not need to make them enemies. As a matter of fact, God's Word shows us that we can grow closer to God and each other through these experiences. One of the joys of being a Christian is the fact that we can handle conflicts in a way that honors God and makes us stronger in our faith.

As humans we are tempted to handle such problems in an ungodly way. Our old sin nature takes us away from God's rules and pushes us towards reacting in a way that would satisfy ourselves instead of our God. We react to being offended by gossip, going to others to get their support, or just trying to bury

our hurts. Other ungodly reactions include being angry, offended, sad, moody, as well as many others.

We must remember that all sin is first against God. Yes, if someone hurts us the sin is against us, but it is first against God. God's Word tells us about Joseph. He was sold into slavery by his brothers and taken down to Egypt. Once he got there, he became a slave to a man named Potiphar.

Genesis 39:2 tells us: *"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master."*

An interesting side note is that Joseph was in God's will and even though he was in a position that most of us would consider as bad, God blessed him in that position.

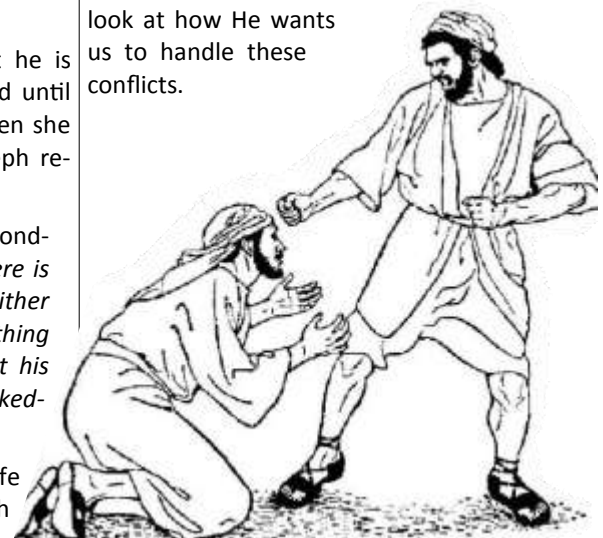
It is at this time in Joseph's life that he is tempted to sin. Potiphar's wife waited until everyone was out of the house and then she asked Joseph to lay with her but Joseph refused to do so.

Genesis 39:9 tells us that Joseph responded to Potiphar's wife by saying: *"There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he [Potiphar] kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God."*

This is Joseph talking to Potiphar's wife when he is tempted by her to sin with

her. Notice how he responds. He says very plainly that this sin would be against God. Joseph is not denying that the sin would be against himself, Potiphar and Potiphar's wife but he shows us the real victim of this sin. How many times do we think about this? Yes I can sin against myself and others but the real person I am offending is God. It is His rules I am breaking. It is His commandments I am setting aside. It is God that we take lightly when we choose to sin. This is an important principle to keep in mind. It does not matter if we are the person doing the sinning, or the one being sinned against. Sin can break man's rules; however, it always breaks God's rules.

Understanding that it is God we must honor when conflicts happen, let's look at how He wants us to handle these conflicts.



Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus clearly explains what should be done. He says; *“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”*

God gives us very clear instructions when it comes to conflicts between believers. Our first duty is to speak to that person specifically. There are no other options given. We can look all we want, but nowhere in God’s Word does He give us the option of dealing with this in another way. It is always, first, go to the person involved. Satan will tempt us to handle things in a different way, and we often

have excuses for doing this, however, none of our excuses can change what God has said concerning this.

God is so clear on this matter; He does not even want us to worship Him if there is an unsolved conflict with another brother.

Matthew 5:23-24 says: *“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”*

These are very strong words. God does not even want our worship if we have unfinished business with another person. Think about this for a moment. The God of all eternity,



the God of the universe, the God who created man for one reason – to worship Him – tells us he does NOT want our offering until we have done our best to be right with our fellow man. Jesus tells us to stop worshiping Him and make things right with our brother.

⇒ How should that change our dealing with each other?

⇒ How should that change our worship to God?

Look closely at that passage again.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

Jesus is speaking to a person who is already doing right. How do we know this? Because the man is bringing his gift to God’s altar.

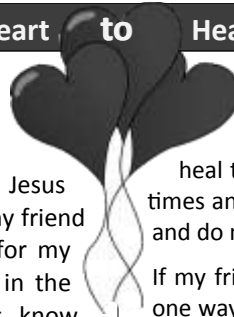
Another interesting thing that should be

Heart to Heart with Joe Keim

As I sit here pondering and praying to God about what I should write in this column today, I all of a sudden have this desire to pray for you. I would like to do that right now.

Dear Father in heaven, I come before you in the name of Jesus Christ, asking that You would hear my prayer on behalf of my friend who is reading this. Father, the reason I desire to pray for my friend today is because I desire more than anything else in the world that You would allow him or her to know You. Yes, know You like he or she knows their best friend. If my friend has never experienced the second birth like you have explained it in John chapter 3, then it is my passionate and greatest desire of all that You would allow my friend to be drawn to Your side and have his or her eyes opened up to salvation as You have revealed it in the Bible.

And secondly, dear heavenly Father, it is my prayer that You would come around my friend right now and help him or her to feel Your awesome presence. If my friend is going through something difficult in his or her life right now, than I ask that You would give him or her all the courage and strength needed to get through it. Father, in the name of Jesus, stop the evil one from beating on my friend and add a hedge of protection around his or her mind and body. Give my friend great portions of wisdom and a patient heart. Help my friend to let go of the all the battles and place them all in Your hands. Yes Lord, we ask this all in Your most powerful name.



Also Lord, it is possible that my friend has physical problems and would like to be healed. And right now, if that is the case in my friend’s life, then I would like to request that You heal their body completely. Lord do a miracle like You did in Bible times and just say the Word and my friend will be healed. We believe and do not doubt that You can heal the greatest sickness.

If my friend has been physically or emotionally or sexually abused in one way or another in their life, than oh Father, I pray that You would help him or her gain victory over their pain and come free from their suffering. Father, let nothing stand in the way of them coming free; not the devil, not their own self and not anything else in life. Bring a godly friend into my reader’s life that will support and love my friend like You do. Help my friend to feel special and important in life.

And Lord, I have one last request for You. If my friend today is living in sin or running from You, then I pray that You would have mercy upon him or her. Oh Father, allow my friend to overcome and stop making excuses. Please let my friend see their sin as You see it and immediately turn their back on it. Father, help my dear friend to go to a person that he or she can trust and ask for help and accountability. —Amen

Yes, even now at this very minute, may you dear friend, drop the Amish Voice and go seek help. And if you desire to do so, please call my cell number at (419) 651-6813. Let’s talk about it and let’s seek the Lord together. With God’s help we can overcome! Many have, you can too!

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W E A R E 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.

pointed out about the Mathew 5 text is the fact that Jesus says that it is the other person who has the problem. For the sake of reminding ourselves, let's read it again:

"and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee."

Have you ever had a conflict with someone and felt or maybe even told them they are in the wrong and need to come to you first? This may be a natural reaction but it is not a Godly reaction.

As pointed out before, in Jesus' illustration, the person bringing the offering is not at fault. However, in spite of the way it happened, Jesus tells the person at the altar to stop his worship and go to the other person. The first word in verse 24 is an action word, which means it requires the reader to do something. In order to make things right with our brother we need to act. We need to act immediately. We also need to act personally. For a person to do this, he must humble himself before God and man. Only a proud person would refuse to put his feelings second and go to another person like Jesus instructs.

Solomon tells us in Proverbs 13:10:

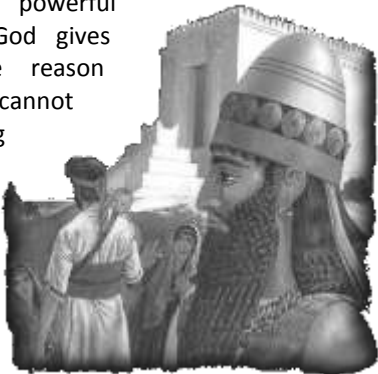
"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."

What a powerful verse! God gives only one reason that men cannot get along and that is Pride.

When two people are at odds with

each other, the Bible always has the answer. If God has the answers (and He does!) there should never be a problem between two people that cannot be worked out.

The idea of "contention" is not just having a problem with someone else. It means a problem that one or both sides refuse to settle. It is not always a sin to disagree. There are several cases in the Bible where believers disagreed with each other without one side or the other being wrong or in sin. There are times when it is ok to see things differently than someone else. The question is; how do we handle that in a way that



makes God happy?

A good example is Abraham and Lot. In Genesis 13:1-9 we read;

"And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. ²And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. ³And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; ⁴Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. ⁶And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. ⁷And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren. ⁹Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

The problem in Genesis 13 was that Abraham and his nephew Lot were blessed by God. They were farmers and herdsman. They had so many cattle that the land could not grow enough food and the wells could not give enough water to support both of them. Because of this the men that worked for Abraham and Lot were fighting with each other for the grazing land and water. Please look at what Abraham did.

First, he spoke to Lot personally. It does not seem that Abraham and Lot had a problem with each other. It was the men working for them that had the problem. Abraham knew that he was responsible for going directly to the other person in charge, and that was Lot.



Second, Abraham looked at the problem in the right way. It is important to see what he did as well and what he did not do. He did not look out for his own interest first. He did not put his earthly goods above his relationship with his nephew. Sometimes when we speak with someone else we do so in a

selfish way, to protect our pride, our feelings, or our property. If we truly want to have a good relationship with others we have to be willing to be unselfish. Abraham also did not try to blame Lot for the problem. When we speak with others, we sometimes do so to prove we are right and they are wrong. Abraham had one concern; solve the problem with his nephew

so that they could both serve God. He wasted no time on who started the problem or who was to blame. Abraham, as the older leader and as the head of the family would have had every right to tell Lot to leave or submit to Abraham and his herdsman. That was well within his rights at that time.

Third, Abraham was wise in his solution. He understood that the land could only support so many cattle and people. As much as he loved Lot, he knew that unless they separated, the land would fail and they would both lose cattle and maybe their own lives. In the area at that time, there was the very real possibility of starving or dying of thirst if the wells ran out of water. Some might say; "yes, but they separated; Abraham just wanted to get rid of Lot." The Bible gives us NO indication of this. Abraham goes so far as to give Lot the first choice for the best of the land.

Lastly, we should see that God provides us an example of how two powerful wealthy men settled their difficulty in a way that honored God. During this time in history, it was standard practice to kill each other in a situation like this. In this part of the world at this time, no one would have objected.

With this example in mind, let us look at a few Biblical principles God gives us in His Word for dealing with each other.

First; it is our responsibility to reach out and get along as best we can.

Romans 12:18 reads;

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

It is our job to get along. We do not wait for others. We do not avoid others. We do not gossip about others. God also knows that it is not always possible. We are responsible to follow God's commandment, but we cannot always control the outcome.

Notice it says; "if it be possible" and "as much as lieth in you." This is not an excuse for us to break God's rule. God knows that man has a free will and can chose not to do what is right. He can choose not to respond to the truth of His Word. If the other person refuses to respond in a Godly way, than the fault lies with them, but we must do our part.

Second; we are to reach out in the correct manner. God's Word says in Ephesians 4:15:

"But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

We can say the right words but with the wrong attitude or spirit. How we do something is just as important as what we do. When we are working with a brother (in

Christ or in the flesh) we need to do so in the Spirit of God, not in our flesh. It is a good idea to take some time to talk with God before we talk with man. Ask God to give you the right spirit and words to say so that the problem can be worked out in a way that glorifies Him and strengthens your relationship with your fellow man.

Third; believe what the other person says. I Corinthians 13:7 talks about love and what it does and does not do. Verse 7 says that charity or love;

"beareth all things, believeth all things."

By nature we can be very distrusting. The hurts of life and the disappointments that people bring into our lives can cause us not to trust. God says that if we love someone we need to accept what they say until their words contradict their words or until their actions contradict their words. If they are not telling the truth or trying to deceive you then that is a sin that God can take care of.

In Ephesians 4:32 we read;

"And be ye kind one to another, tender-

hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Luke 17:4 ; "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him."

Just as Christ forgives our sins, we should also forgive others. Many times this can be the most difficult part of being a Christian.

Is this possible in the flesh? No, as sinners by birth and by choice we do not have the power to love and forgive the way God loves and forgives us. The beautiful part of this is that by trusting in God and taking on the mind of Christ, we can be what we need to be through the power of God.

Philippians 4:13;

"I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me."

God never gives us something to do without also giving us the power to do it!

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How are You Spending Your Winnings?

Imagine that you had won the following prize in a contest:

Each morning your bank would deposit \$86,400 in your private bank account for your own use. However, this prize has rules, just as any game has certain rules.

The first set of rules would be:

- ⇒ 1) Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you.
- ⇒ 2) You may not simply transfer money into some other account. You may only spend it.
- ⇒ 3) Each morning upon awakening, the bank opens your account with another \$86,400.00 for that day.

The second set of rules:

- ⇒ 1) The bank can end the game without warning; at any time it can say, "It's over, the game is over!"
- ⇒ 2) It can close the account in an instant and you will not receive a new one.

What would you personally do? You would buy anything and everything you wanted, right? Not only for yourself, but for all the people in your life, right? Maybe even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself and the people in your life, right?

You would try to spend every single cent, and use it all up every day, right?

Actually, this game is a reality, but not with money!

Each of us is in possession of such a magical bank. We just don't seem to see it.

The MAGICAL BANK is TIME!

Each morning we awaken and receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of life, and when the day is done, any remaining time is gone and NOT credited to us. What we haven't lived up to that day is lost forever. Yesterday is forever gone.

Each morning the account is refilled, but the magical bank can dissolve our account at any time....WITHOUT WARNING.

SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds? Think about that, and always think of this: Enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than we think. Take good care of yourself, and enjoy life. Live each day to the fullest, be kind to one another, and be forgiving. Harbor a positive attitude and always be the first to smile.

Here's wishing you a wonderful, beautiful day, each and every day!!!

Luke 12: 19-21

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.



1. There are six eggs in a basket.
2. Six people each take one egg.
3. How can it be that one egg is left in the basket?

Answer

The last person took the basket with the egg in it?

Is it Acceptable to Pray Repeatedly for the Same Thing?



Let's go to Luke 18:1-5 or our answer.

And He [Jesus] spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said

within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?

There was the unjust judge

He had no fear of God and cared even less for what men said. The idea is that he took bribes and gave favors to persons who held position and authority. He did not care for conscience or law, for morality or justice. He was out to fill his pockets and to gain honor and esteem, recognition and position from those who were influential and held position, power, and wealth (cp. Eccles. 3:16).

There was the poor widow

- ◆ She was poor, without money to bribe the judge.
- ◆ She was a widow, a woman all alone in a man's world, with no man and no money to secure legal counsel to plead her case.

- ◆ She held no position or authority, no rights to commend her to the judge.
- ◆ She was persecuted, being taken advantage of and abused by some adversary.

Note what she did: she let none of this stop her. She came to the judge and asked him to avenge her, to get rid of her adversary.

There was the silence of the judge

The judge did not move to help her. His heart was hard and harsh; he had no interest in helping anyone who would not benefit his career or fill his pockets.

The point is this: the judge gave in

He "would not for a while," but the poor widow kept on coming and coming, pleading and pleading. She would not let the judge rest. Now note the stress. The judge...

- ◆ did not fear God,
- ◆ did not regard man's opinions,
 - ...yet he gave in to the widow and avenged [delivered] her of her adversary.

Why? Because of her "continual coming." He could not get rid of her. She would not accept silence, nor take *no* for an answer. She kept coming and coming. The judge said, "Lest she wear me out". She was persistent—refusing to let the judge go!

Therefore, Christians go before God as the just Judge of the universe. They are one of His own elect, and they cry day and night to be avenged of their adversaries (spiritual as well as human adversaries). They plead and plead their case before God. They do not let God remain silent nor let Him refuse His delivering power.

In Luke 21:36 we are told, *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

July

Amish Population by State

2010

| State/Province | # of Settlements | # of Church Districts | Est. Population | State/Province | # of Settlements | # of Church Districts | Est. Population |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Pennsylvania | 53 | 401 | 59,350 | Maryland | 3 | 10 | 1,350 |
| Ohio | 52 | 434 | 58,590 | Colorado | 4 | 6 | 810 |
| Indiana | 23 | 310 | 43,710 | Montana | 5 | 5 | 675 |
| Wisconsin | 46 | 120 | 15,360 | Oklahoma | 2 | 5 | 675 |
| New York | 33 | 89 | 12,015 | Virginia | 4 | 4 | 300 |
| Michigan | 35 | 86 | 11,350 | Arkansas | 3 | 3 | 225 |
| Missouri | 38 | 81 | 9,475 | Maine | 3 | 3 | 225 |
| Kentucky | 31 | 62 | 7,750 | West Virginia | 3 | 3 | 225 |
| Iowa | 20 | 51 | 7,190 | Nebraska | 2 | 2 | 150 |
| Illinois | 19 | 49 | 6,860 | Florida | 1 | 1 | 75 |
| Ontario | 15 | 35 | 4,725 | Mississippi | 1 | 1 | 75 |
| Minnesota | 14 | 25 | 3,150 | North Carolina | 1 | 1 | 75 |
| Tennessee | 6 | 17 | 2,125 | South Dakota | 1 | 1 | 75 |
| Kansas | 7 | 11 | 1,485 | Texas | 1 | 1 | 75 |
| Delaware | 1 | 9 | 1,350 | Total | 427 | 1,826 | 249,495 |

(Continued on the next column)

The table includes all Amish groups (Old Order and New Order) that use horse-and-buggy transportation, but excludes car-driving groups such as the Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites. Of the 1,826 church districts, 1,758 are Old Order and 68 (3.7%) are New Order.

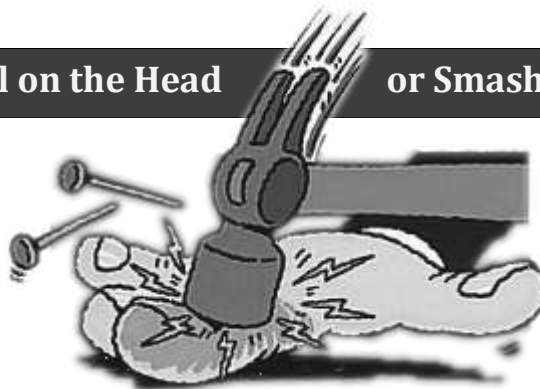
Sources: *Raber's Almanac*, reports of correspondents in Amish publications, the annual migration report in *The Diary*, state and regional settlement directories, and informants in settlements.

I have three good friends who left the Amish several years ago. All are brothers. Just recently, I found out that one of them was killed in a tragic accident. I was very saddened, because I didn't know if he had received eternal life or not. That's not for me to judge, but I was even more saddened when I heard how his parents handled the situation.

The surviving brothers had decided to divide his belongings amongst themselves: car, truck, power tools, etc. But no, the parents decided they would just take everything for themselves. If I recall correctly, their exact words were "We don't want his things; we just don't want you to have them". Their reason was, they didn't want to encourage the two brothers to stay out there (in the world) by letting them have the belongings. Little did they realize that they did far more damage than good. The brothers were furious! I found out later they said they are never going back now for sure. How sad!

That got me to thinking: the parents used a time of tragedy to try and get their lost sons to come back home. But did they hit the nail on the head and drive it home to where the brothers would have a longing to come back home, or did they smash their thumbs and cause them to scream in pain, (so to speak)? I personally believe they smashed the thumbs. There is a fine line between calling the lost ones home with love and true heartfelt concern for their salvation, and trying to force them into behaving.

First, we must consider the circumstances.



The brothers left the Amish, and probably ninety percent of the ones who leave, go because of rebellion. They already can't stand the rules, so force is not going to work. If we have loved ones that have left or are lost, let's try leading them, and not shoving them around. Let's be a light to them by letting Christ within us shine. Let's live a life that would put a desire in their hearts to also have that peace and joy. Maybe we can shine if we put the Lord first in our lives by praying to Him constantly and asking Him for help. He is the one that can lead them back home if that's His plan for them. Remember, as far as the heaven is above the earth, so much higher are His ways than ours.

We can't do it by force or by using our rules to convict them.

Jesus Himself said in John 6:44:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...

So why do we even try to do it on our own, trying to force our conviction onto them? They need to know they're loved and that we care for them.

Ephesians 4:31- 32 says: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clam-

or, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us."

Though the two brothers' bitterness towards the Amish seems wrong and uncalled for, is there a reason for it? Do we still have the true love of God in our hearts for each other? There is a kind of love that only comes from our Lord; not from man. I would also like to ask you this question: would you rather have your loved ones come back Amish for you and the church's sake, or would you rather see your loved ones receive Christ into their hearts and live for Him? For once they live for the Lord, then He will convict them of what is right and what is wrong. If and when they come back, it will be their desire to do so for the Lord. I believe the conviction they will receive from the Lord will be much stronger, and will plant them on much firmer ground, than any man-made conviction.

So I (in my own weakness), would beseech you to pray earnestly for their salvation, love them unconditionally, and put all of your trust in the Lord that He will direct them to the right path. He is the one, and the only one, that can change their hearts, as He is doing every day, in many people's lives.

He can do the same for you. Be patient. May the peace and love of the Lord be within you always. God bless.

—A Brother, M Raber

Who Am I?

God made Adam out of the dust,
But thought it best to make me first.

So I was made before the man,
according to God's Holy plan.

My whole body God made complete,
without arms, or hands, or feet.

My ways and acts did God control,
but in my body He placed no soul.

A living being I became,
and Adam gave to me a name.

Then from his presence I withdrew,
for this man Adam I never knew.



All my Maker's laws I do obey,
and from these laws I never stray.

Thousands of me go in fear,
but seldom on the earth appear.

Later, for a purpose God did see,
He placed a living soul in me.

But that soul of mine God had to
claim,

and from me took it back again.

And when this soul from me had fled,
I was the same as when first made;

without arms, legs, feet, or soul,
I travel on from pole to pole.

My labors are from day to night,



and to men I once furnished light.
Thousands of people both young and old,
did by my death bright lights behold.

No right or wrong can I conceive;
the Bible and it's teachings I can't believe.

The fear of death doesn't trouble me;
pure happiness I will never see.

If you get your Bible and read with
care; you'll find my name recorded
there.

Who am I?

(Find answer on page 11)

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Psalm 139:14 says, *"I praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*

This verse talks about our bodies and how perfectly they are created. It tells us how wonderfully our physical bodies are made. This idea of "fearfully" means that we have respect for what God has made. God has made something (our bodies) that show just how smart and powerful God is. The word "wonderfully" agrees that what God has created is good.

The human body is one of the most complicated things God has created in the world. We are not just eyes, legs, arms, hands, feet, ears and head. Our bodies are created in a way that all parts work together at one time. We can work our hands while our feet are moving, our mouths are talking and we are thinking about something else. At the same time all of this is happening on the outside, our insides are working also. Our kidneys are cleaning out impurities, our stomach is digesting food, our blood is bringing air to our organs, and the brain is directing all this action.

What mind it must have taken to make such a being! We look at a beautiful piece of

wood work or beautiful craft or sewing item and see the ability it took to make it. Should we not be amazed at our creator for making something as complicated as the human body? Every part of the body, down to the smallest part, shows that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.



The human brain is an amazing organ, fearfully and wonderfully made. It has the ability to learn, reason, and control so many automatic functions of the body; such as heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing. The brain also can maintain our balance to walk, run, stand, and sit, all while concentrating on something else. Each time your heart beats it is because your brain tells it to. You can imagine what would happen if the brain simply stopped telling the heart to beat. It is more than just telling the heart to

beat. The brain sends an electrical signal to an organ called the "sinus node". The sinus node then sends the signal in just the right way to the heart. If the sinus node does not communicate with the heart, the heart will stop beating.

The brain also has an amazing ability to adapt. In an experiment, when people put on glasses that made the world seem upside down, their brains quickly reinterpreted the information they were being given to perceive the world as "right-side-up." When others were blindfolded for long periods of time, the "vision center" of the brain soon began to be used for other functions. When people move to a house near a railroad, soon the sound of the trains is soon filtered out by their brains. People get to the point where they hear the train but do not realize it and they go on as if the train does not exist.

Truly, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. How grateful we are to know the Creator—through His Son, Jesus Christ—and to marvel not only at His knowledge but also at His love.

—Written by Robert McCallum

Can You Find Me?

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You can't tickle yourself

Well, you can try, but you won't laugh. The body's sensory nervous system is active all the time, allowing us to hear our own breathing or feel the weight of our body on our feet. Yet, these are background sensations; our sensory attention is reserved for signals from the external world such as a honking car or a kiss on the cheek.

Eyeballs and the Brain

If someone were to open up your skull and remove your brain (carefully, please), your eyeballs would come with it. That's because your eyes are hardwired to a lobe at the back of the head responsible for sight information. Bundles of optic nerve fibers connect the retina,

where images are received, directly to the brain's occipital lobe. The other four senses send their signals through convoluted pathways and nerve networks, but vision has a straight line into the brain, like a keyboard connected to a computer.

- ◆ 85% of your brain is water.
- ◆ Humans shed about 600,000 particles of skin every hour – about 1.5 pounds a year. By 70 years of age, an average person will have lost 105 pounds of skin.
- ◆ The human body can survive longer without food than without sleep. While starvation takes a few weeks you would die after about 10 days without sleep.

- ◆ Humans shed and regrow outer skin cells about every 27 days – almost 1,000 new skins in a lifetime.
- ◆ It is impossible to kill yourself by holding your breath.
- ◆ Butterflies taste with their feet.
- ◆ The strongest muscle in the human body is the tongue.
- ◆ The lifespan of a human hair is 3 to 7 years on average.
- ◆ The original name for butterfly was flutterby.
- ◆ A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.
- ◆ Elephants are the only animals that cannot jump.



The Three Types of People Who Call Themselves Christians

The Lord revealed three different scenes to me. Each of the three scenes had a car traveling down a road that had 55 mph speed limit signs posted periodically, as many of our roads do.

- * The road represents this life and our travel through this life.
- * The 55 mph speed limit signs represent God's law or commandments.
- * The policeman represents God who knows everything.

Scene #1 is a picture of Christians living under the law.

Scene #2 is a picture of Christians living under a false gospel.

Scene #3 is a picture of Christians living in the true gospel.

In the first scene I saw a man driving down a road in a older model, dull, gray colored car. He was gripping the steering wheel tightly and leaning forward in a posture of frustration. He was gritting his teeth in impatience and anger because everything in him wanted to go faster than 55 mph.

By sheer force of his will he made himself obey the law even though he hated it and he was not always successful in his obedience. He obeyed the speed limit because he did not want to pay the ticket that would be the consequence of his disobedience. Secretly, if he would have thought he could get away with it, he would have gone just as fast as his unsaved heart desired to go, but the tickets were expensive and he knew he always had to struggle to come up with enough to pay them. So he forced himself to go 55 mph, but he greatly resented it and he also resented the speed limit law and the policeman who was always watching.

This as a picture of a Christian living under the law.

In the second scene there was a woman driving down the same road in a late model sleek red convertible. Her hair was blowing in the wind and she had a scarf around her neck that was blowing backwards as she drove along. She was happy, smiling and singing with the radio that was turned up. The song that was playing was about freedom and I heard "I'm free, I'm free!"

She was going at least 75 mph with no concern at all, because she had been taught, and she believed there was a kind of magical bubble around her that she called "the blood of Jesus". Because of this bubble she was sure the policeman would not even notice her speed, but if by chance he did notice, it would be nothing to worry about.

Her tickets, past, present and future had already been paid for and if she did get a ticket, she believed the policeman would just credit her account and it would be cleared off of her record. She personally never had to deal with a ticket and they really didn't cost her anything. She had no respect for the speed limit law and no fear of the policeman.

This is a picture of a Christian living under a false gospel that is prevalent in America today. It sells books by the millions and fills churches numbering thousands and is sending people to hell.

In the third and final scene I saw another man driving down this road called life. He was driving a nice, blue car that was luminous in color. The sun was a little low on the horizon and emitting warm, golden beams that were shining through his windshield and onto his face. His countenance was a picture of peace and joy. He had one hand on the steering wheel in a very relaxed posture and he was enjoying the drive immensely.

There was a small smile on his face, and as I looked at him, I could see he was in "another world". I knew he was in sweet fellowship with the Spirit of God and they were talking to each other and enjoying each others company. Even though his thoughts were somewhere else, he was driving in a safe and orderly fashion. He was driving 55 mph but he was not aware of it. In fact, he was hardly aware of the speed limit signs as he passed them because there was nothing in him that desired to go faster than 55 mph.

He had made the decision to obey a long time ago and it was now so much a part of him that he hardly ever thought about obeying or not obeying.

Those old desires had been crucified with Jesus on the Cross when he had realized his lost condition, fallen at the foot of that cross and repented of his sins. He had been converted and God had given him a new nature.

God's nature and this man now hated any thing that broke the sweet communion and the relationship he enjoyed daily with the Lord. He still had to go back to that cross sometimes to deal with things but he knew he would always be lovingly met there and changed again and even more to a new level of glory that would result in ever sweeter fellowship. He no longer served the slave master called Sin or the insatiable appetites for the things that are of "this world" that are called Flesh and he was free from bondage to the Law.

This is a picture of a Christian living in the true gospel. Sadly, it is a gospel no longer clearly declared in much of America today.

Quoting Martin Luther "Anywhere the truth of the Gospel is boldly and clearly declared, there will be conflict."

—Geneva Yoder, Loogootee IN

Liberty and Freedom in Christ

Hi there, ladies,

I have to admit to you that I have changed my way of praying before writing—instead of saying, "God, what do they need to hear?", I ask, "God, what do I need to learn?"

When I think of laying on the floor, all tied up with heavy chains and balls, unable to move at all, what does the word "freedom" mean to me? What if I were on the ground outside in the hot sun, or in the snow, on maybe in a dungy little shack full of spider webs, mice and snakes?

What if I could see and hear my husband and children but couldn't do anything but lay there in bondage? And what if it wasn't just a couple of hours, but days or weeks or months or years?

Close yours eyes
and truly imagine with
me how that would
be....

What if it was my fault that I was in this situation in the first place... would that change the fact that I am laying here helpless?

Then, what if I would hear someone come walking closer and closer, and I would shudder, what is this person going to do to me? I would moan and beg for mercy because, remember, I am totally helpless, I have NOWHERE TO TURN! And, what if the person would come up right beside me and stop?

And then, what if he would bend down and gently begin to cut the chains off of me?

What if I could finally move my hands... and then my feet... and then I could sit up? And then, oh, the glorious moment that I could stand to my **feet and walk... and run!!**

What would I do first? I hope that I would turn to the person that could have walked on by, but stopped and rescued me. And I hope that I would shower him with gratitude and praise... for after all, if it wasn't for him I would still be laying there, right? So I owe him my life, right?

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,

and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren,

ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Galatians 5:1 & 13



I hope that I would go tell others what this person did for me.

"Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him." Luke 8:39

I hope that I would live the rest of my life, giving my life back to the one that saved me... am I doing that?

—Until next time, Love, Joy

Joy Knepp is a regular writer for the Amish Voice and lives in Loogootee, IN.

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Quit Interrupting!

Most people react badly to being interrupted. They often feel disrespected and small when you talk over them. People who tend to interrupt others generally do so for one of these reasons:

They don't place enough value on what the other person has to say.

They want to impress others by showing how smart or intuitive they are.

They're too excited by the conversation to let the other person finish talking.

If you are in the habit of interrupting other people, examine your motives and determine to make a change.

Give people the time they need to express themselves.

Don't feel that one of you has to be speaking all the time.

Periods of silence give you a chance to reflect on what's been said so that you can respond appropriately.

Pennsylvania Deitsh Testament

If you would like to obtain a New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs in Pennsylvania Deitsh, they are available for \$13.95 postpaid from the **Committee for Translation, 3864 Township Road 162, Sugarcreek, OH 44681. Phone 330-852-4663.**



You do not need to send money ahead of time; they will bill you with your order. Your local Christian bookstore may also have them available.

In making this translation, the committee's purpose was two-fold: 1) to adhere as closely as possible to the Textus Receptus Greek text, which is closely associated with Luther's (German) and the Authorized (English) version, the two versions most commonly in use by the Amish, and 2) to make the translation in fluent

everyday Pennsylvania Deitsh as it is spoken in the home.

The translation procedures and principles used in this translation are basically those employed by the Wycliffe Bible Translators, and the exegesis closely follows their series of in-house "Exegetical Helps". The final manuscript was checked for exegetical accuracy by New Testament Greek specialists from the Translation Department of the Wycliffe Bible Translators.



The story that I am about to share with you only happened once in the history of mankind. And when it happened, it was so special and so precious that for the past 2,000 years, mankind has not been able to stop talking about it. The story that we are going to read in a minute is one that has been preached millions upon millions of times all over the world. Tens of thousands of books have been written about it and for many generations, fathers, mothers, boys and girls have passed this priceless story on to the next generation. It is the story that never grows old and will continue to be spoken of throughout all eternity.

Please understand too that our story today has caused more families and friends, and yes, even churches, to split up than any other story in the history of mankind. Oh, and it has caused more people to die than all the wars put together.

It is the birth story of Jesus! Yes, Jesus! That beautiful sweet name that is ever so precious. The name, when mentioned by someone, causes us to sit up straight and pay close attention. And when we handle His name, we are ever so careful that it comes out clearly and not in a jumbled up way. It's the name that every human being will bow to and confess. The Bible, when it speaks about the name of Jesus, tells us clearly that "...there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"—Acts 4:12

There is a song that goes like this:

Jesus Jesus Jesus, there's just something about that name. Master, Saviour, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, let all heaven and earth proclaim Kings and kingdoms will pass away. But there's something about that Name!

But as you know, Jesus has so many other names that He goes by. That's because He

fills so many different positions. Just like one man can fill the position of a father, a husband and a son all at the same time, so Jesus can fill many positions all at the same time. In fact, if you were to count up all the different names (or positions) that Jesus has been given in the Bible, you would find that there are a total of 136.

Here are just a few of the more popular names that were given to Him:

*Messiah, Christ Jesus, God our Savior,
Lord and Savior, Savior of the World,
Seed of the Woman, Advocate, Anointed,
Author and Finisher of our Faith,
Author of Eternal Salvation,
Beginning and End, Beloved Son,
Bread of God, Bread of Life,
Bright and Morning Star, Chief Cornerstone,
Christ-the New Adam, Deliverer,
Door of the Sheep, Eternal Life,
Faithful and True, Friend of Sinners,
God Manifested in the Flesh, Gift of God,
Head of the Church,
Head of Principality and Power,
Holy and Righteous One, I AM,
Image of the Invisible God,
Judge of the Living and Dead,
King of King and Lord of Lords, Lamb of God,
Lamb without Blemish, Light of the World,
Mediator, Only Begotten of the Father,
Resurrection and life,
Son of God and Son of Man,
Son of the Most High God, Teacher,
The First and the Last, The Life, The Truth, The
Way and The Word of God.*

But now that we have this small introduction, let us go to the Bible and read the story that I mentioned at the very beginning. As you read it, try to place yourself in the story. Think about how it must have felt like to be in

the Angel Gabriel's shoes or sweet little Mary's shoes.

In Luke 1, verses 26 through 30, we are told that Gabriel, one of God's angels was ordered by God to go to planet earth and find a small town named Nazareth. I'm just guessing that the town of Nazareth in today's world might have had one or two stop signs but no stop lights. It was probably the kind of town that if you blinked while driving through in a car, you would have missed it. It was small enough to mostly go un-noticed by the rest of the world; however, Almighty God was very much aware of it. He had a universe sized plan for this little place on the map. And so we are told that God had a heavenly meeting with Gabriel and in that meeting He said, Gabriel, within that small town of Nazareth, you are going to find a young teenage girl named Mary. I want you to go to her and deliver a message for me. Oh, and when you get there, you are going to find that my little girl, Mary, has never had any children, but she is engaged to a young boy named Joseph.

Can you almost feel the excitement that God and Gabriel were feeling as they discussed this very important meeting that was about to take place down there on earth? It is my guess that all of heaven was jumping for joy and shouting praises from every rooftop and corner of heaven. Yes, this was the moment that all had been waiting on. But hold it for a second, let's imagine for a moment what life on earth must've been like for little Mary at this very same time. I'm guessing that Mary was just going about her daily life, possibly thinking about her future. And I'm sure that if she was like any other teenage girl, she was thinking about her wedding day and a time when she and Joseph would start a family of their own. But while all this heavenly and earthly planning was going on, Luke writes...

Luke 1:28 *And the angel came in unto her [Mary], and said, Hail, thou that art*

highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

I'm almost sure that there must have been a thousand thoughts and ideas go through Mary's mind as she listened to the words of Gabriel. In verses 29 and 30, we are told that Mary was very troubled and fearful, but the angel Gabriel reminded her a second time, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God."

Wow! How would you like it if one of God's angels came whooshing in, uninvited, and tell you, "hey, the God of all creation sent me to tell you that He has found favor with you?" What would you think? How would it make you feel? Would you doubt it? Or, would you believe it with your whole heart? Maybe I need to remind you that God does love you. He loved you so much that He gave His only Son to die in your behalf so that you could live forever.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world [so loved you], that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life..*

Oh what great love the Father in heaven has for you and me. It's so big that we can't even begin to wrap our mind around it. Jeremiah 31:3

tells us, "I [God] have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

Well, let's keep reading God's message to Mary.

Luke 1:31-35 *And, behold, thou [Mary] shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest... Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

Now there are several things I would like to look at, but first of all, did you get those last few words? Let's look at them again, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" Wow! Let that sink in for a moment. Here's Mary, a young teenage girl, her whole life before her and all of a sudden, out of nowhere, an angle appears and what he tells her will change her whole life

instantly and forever. The baby she was going to have was not an everyday baby! No, not at all! The baby she was going to have was the Son of God Himself.

And secondly, have you realized by now that this baby would never have an earthly father. Nope, absolutely not! This baby was going to be born in a way that was unheard of. He, Jesus, was going to be placed into Mary's womb by God Himself, without any involve-



ment from Joseph or any other man on earth.

When Mary heard these things, she immediately had a question that all of us would've had, and that was, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" What Mary was trying to say is, Gabriel, what you are telling me is humanly impossible. No woman, since time began, has ever had a child without the involvement of a man. But the angel said in verse 37, Mary, "with God, nothing is impossible."

And friend, those words in verse 37, the ones we just read, are well worth keeping in mind for our own life; "with God, nothing is impossible."

A while back, a young lady was talking to me about a huge challenge she had going on in her life, and she said, "Joe, the challenge is too big, I will never get out of this one!" It was at that point that I said, "Verna, why don't you open the lid and let God out of your tiny little can?" In other words, let Him out of the pen and let Him live in the big wide open universe. He wants to do universe sized miracles, such as what He did in Mary's case. BIG! So big that all of creation can't help but

stand back and say WOW! That is huge!

In ending, I would like to read verse 35 one more time and then ask ourselves the following some questions:

Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

In looking at the virgin birth of Christ, mankind needs to think deeply and honestly. One question needs to be asked. Why would God's Son have to enter the world through a virgin? Or more simply put, why was Christ born of a virgin? Why was a virgin birth necessary?

The birth of God's Son required a miracle. He could not be born through the natural process as other men are. If He had been born as other men, His very birth would indicate that He was no more than mere man. Very simply, any person who enters the world through a man and a woman is a mere man or a mere woman. He or she can be nothing more. But this is not so with Christ. **Christ already existed.** Therefore, if God willed to send His Son into the world, He would have to choose another way. All Christ needed was a body. As He Himself said to God the Father: "A body hast thou prepared for me" (Hebrews 10:5).

The birth of God's Son required a combined act on God's part and on woman's part. If God's Son was to become a man and identify with men, He had to come through the process of conception through a woman. Why? Because man can only come through the woman. Therefore, if God willed to send His Son into the world as a man, He would have to perform a miracle, causing Mary to conceive by an act of His divine power.

A question needs to be asked. Why is it so hard to believe that God can cause Mary to miraculously conceive? Why is it so hard to believe that God exists and that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)?

And with that said, let us end with a Scripture verse that comes in handy when thinking about the great and mighty works of God.

Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

—Written by Joe Keim

Answer to 'Who am I' on Page six is a whale!

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How the Anabaptists Kept Their Focus (faith)

Can you imagine a group of 53 men and women put into one dungeon with no outside contact whatsoever, except for a narrow slit in the door that was opened twice a day as food was slid in on a tray.

Think for a moment...53 men and women... getting along?... or do you think they had several different worship groups in there?

Maybe several denominations?

Did they need to argue their view on a certain doctrine? How did they maintain their sanity... their faith...their love for the Lord as well as their love for one another?

Every day this group was singing praises to the Lord... most of the day every day. They composed their songs and their melody as they continued from day to day... week to week... month to month... year to year... for 5 whole years... yes, 5 years that these 53 people were in a single dungeon cell... pour-

ing out their hearts in deep gratitude and praise for God's grace.

There were guards posted at the front of the entrance to the dungeon to prevent the captives from receiving information and literature from other Anabaptists that may be nearby. These people sang their songs with such reverence and power... with such deep spirit of worship ..that they continuously needed to change the guard... because the guards were being convicted by the Holy Spirit and joined the Anabaptists Brethren and gladly gave their lives for their new-found faith.

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. —Rev 14:3

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. — Rev 14:4

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. — Rev 14:5

I'll share my interpretation for the verses above... That song is being sung today by the redeemed and no one will be able to sing that song except for the born again believers. They aren't defiled with women.. in other words they are saving themselves for their King when He returns... they are fully committed to Him.. as a virgin is preventing anything that will defile her. She will follow the King wherever that may lead her. Their words were pure, sacred, without deception, filled with reverence... and without any falsehood... before the throne of God.