

MISSION TO AMISH PEOPLE

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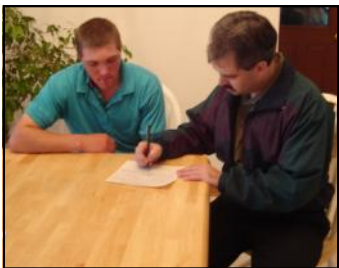
Dear Friend,

May 2006

Jesse James hide-out! Jesse James Wax Museum! Jesse James this and Jesse James that...coming up! Those were the bill board signs our family saw for miles as we traveled along Route 44 towards Branson MO. I couldn't help but wonder in amazement at how the life of Jesse James has stayed alive for over a century. I can still hear my Amish Bishop preach in his sermons how that little Jesse started out by stealing a pencil when he was in grade school. This is a true reminder that *sin will take you further then you want to go, keep you longer then you want to stay and charge you more then you want to pay.*

Our family is here in Branson MO for a couple days of vacation. One of the main reasons for coming here was to take in the *Worldview Weekend Conference* and then spend some time enjoying the attractions. We've had some great times but found out early on that Branson is no place to be if you are trying to save money.

Alive But No Birth Certificate



Jonas prefers to go by Josh because it doesn't sound as Amish. After 3 months of struggling through the court system and making phone calls to Columbus we are finally getting closer to getting a birth certificate for him. Jonas was born at home and his parents never registered his birth, and now he is 18 years old and has to prove that he is who he says he is. The hard part of course has been to do all this without any support from his dad and mom.

Peter, (not pictured) has been trying to get his birth certificate for over a year, and from the looks of it, everything has been approved. Since he was born in Canada, he had to deal with both the Canadian and the US governments.

Fussner Family



Chris and Lovina had been considering the idea of leaving the Amish church for several years already but they took their time. A couple months ago Chris was excommunicated for using power tools and driving in a vehicle with a former Amish man. Since his wife Lovina knew about it but didn't say anything to the church she was excommunicated too. Several weeks ago their whole family came to the Tuesday night prayer meeting and after everyone else had left, Chris and Lovina shared some of their deepest fears and struggles. Lovina was heart broken over the fact that she would not be allowed to go to any more family gatherings. She has a twin brother that she is very close to. You may find it interesting to

know that Chris' dad was born and raised English and then joined the Amish when he was still young.

To Be Almost Saved Is To Be Totally Lost

[educational tidbit...] Salvation for an Amish person is more of a process then an event because first of all, Amish people are often limited in their understanding of the basic Bible words, like *salvation*, *grace* and *faith*. Secondly, an Amish person almost has to go through a mental process of undoing everything he/she has been taught about works salvation before he/she can begin to grasp and understand that salvation is a totally free gift that cannot be earned. During that mental process of undoing, the person also has to come to a very difficult conclusion: Their Amish ministers are not teaching the pure gospel—grace alone, faith alone, and Christ alone, for salvation. ***Galatians 1:6-8 says, I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.***

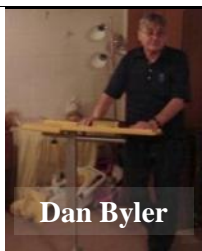
Levi Yoder who helps out at MAP, writes... Last week we were again reminded how the Amish view those of us who have left the Amish, especially if we're involved with a Bible believing evangelical church that puts emphasis on witnessing and sharing the gospel. Joe and I went to share the gospel with a 30 year old Amish man (Menno) who was married with six children. He had left the Amish for a week but then came back. Joe shared his personal testimony and the gospel in such a nice way. While we were still talking, his Dad who lived close by, and who must have been alerted by

someone, came in to the room and told us we had to leave immediately. They see us as very dangerous deceivers. It is truly sad. Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees, *"But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisee's, hypocrites! For ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."*

Update on Menno... Several days after our visit he left his wife, family, and the Amish and took off for Colorado and has been gone for three weeks now. It has been our prayer that he comes back to his family. It is also our prayer that Menno would find true freedom and salvation by putting his faith in the Lord.

Dan Byler's Testimony

Every once in awhile our Tue night prayer group does something special. In April, Dan Byler (formerly Amish) from Jackson OH came and shared his testimony with us. Dan's life was radically changed from living as an alcoholic to getting saved and spreading the gospel. He is the author of a gospel tract called "Unshackled" and in it he shares some of the struggles he went through as an



Dan Byler

Amish person, addicted to alcohol. You might consider inviting him to your church or SS class to hear him share in person.

Vulnerable and Sometimes Abused

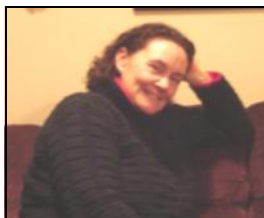
Lydia (center) will be moving into our apartment the 15th of this month because her boyfriend started taking advantage of her and was dealing in drugs. The first time she called us she feared for her own life. The second call came from mom (still Amish) two days later, asking us to help Lydia because her boyfriend nearly choked her to death the night before. It looks like we may already have a job lined up for her. She still needs her drivers license.



About 15 yrs ago, Esther and I had the special opportunity of leading a young girl named Lizzie (not pictured) to Christ. Over the years we kept in contact. She went through a divorce and then got remarried. Three weeks ago she called us asking for help. Her husband had been put in jail and the children were taken from her.

Our Friend Judie—From North Carolina

I found MAP [on the internet] early last winter quite by accident. I have always had a love for the Amish people and many years ago I prayed that God would find a way for me to touch Amish lives with His love so that these special people could be saved too. He answered my prayer from so long ago and I thank him for that. Early December [and again in March] I took a huge step and flew to Ohio. That was a long weekend I will never forget and am so thankful that the Lord paved the way. I stayed with two families while I was there—Levi Schwartz and his family and Joe Keim and his family. Both stays were experiences I will always treasure. When I left on Monday, I left a lot of my heart up there but know that I now have "family" up there too. The family of God is not limited to state or country borders.



You may be surprised to know that people from over 30 countries have visited the MAP web site.

Thank You For Being So Faithful In Your Giving!

The MAP finances continue to do fairly well and it looks like we may be getting very close to seeing a 3-yr old dream come true and that is to print our very first edition of *The Voice of the Amish*, sometime in 2006. We are looking into several cost efficient ways of getting the magazine printed and mailed to some or all 25,000 Amish addresses that we have stored in a computer database.

WE HAVE TWO VERY IMPORTANT NEEDS... WILL YOU PARTNER WITH US IN PRAYER?

- (1) We need a person to help us design, edit and prepare *the Voice of the Amish* publication for printing.
- (2) We need several acres of land so that we can build our desperately needed office space, volunteer work area and a class room—I will be meeting with a local farmer later this month. Also pray for a local business man that sounded interested in helping with the costs of a new building.

Joe, Esther, Jonathan and Rachel Keim

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