



MAP ♦ P.O. Box 128 ♦ 575 U.S. Highway 250 ♦ Savannah, OH 44874 ♦ (419) 962-1515 ♦ September 2015

Fornication, Adultery, and Homosexuality

—Joe Keim

Throughout my growing up years, I was very much aware that one should not use the word “sex” in public. Let me go one step further. I was of the mindset that the word itself was dirty—right up there with all the other swear words. Furthermore, it was my understanding that only moms and dads were allowed to use the forbidden word, and then only behind closed doors. I’m not sure why I felt that way. Somewhere, somehow, someone taught me to think that sex was connected with the dark side and was sinful.

From the time I was old enough to carry on a conversation to the time I got married, I don’t recall any mature grownup ever sitting down with me and explaining even the smallest detail about married life, sex, and pregnancy. No one! Not even my parents.

As I remember it, when mom got ready to deliver another baby (she had 14 in all), we were led to believe that somehow the Lord just dropped baby Johnny in my parents’ laps. Johnny could have come from ten different places and we would not have known! No trustworthy, mature grownup ever took the time to explain it;

that is, until I reached my early teen years.

I was just a youngster when I first heard the word “sex.” It happened while some of my first cousins and I were hanging out behind the barn. My oldest cousin, Paul, knew more about sex than the rest



of us. As he shared bits and pieces of what he had heard, we laughed. Each one of us boys laughed and joked until tears rolled down our cheeks.

I could go on, but you get the drift. From the very beginning, my view of sex was twisted. It was at best half-truth and half-lie. Had a mature grownup talked to me about this topic, I would have been ready to discuss it with truth and confidence.

But wait! Consider if all of us cousins had learned the truth about sex from our parents. The barn yard discussion would never have taken place the way it did.

Let me go one step further. If mature grownups—specifically our parents—would have taken the time to sit down with each one of us and discuss the truth about sex and pregnancy, we may very well have looked at sex as the gift from God that it is. Rather than sex becoming a joke and a dirty word, we may have started our life out looking at sex as something beautiful and worth waiting for until we got married.

Instead, everything but that happened.

It is not my desire to offend anyone; however, I feel the Lord is leading me to write about the topic of sex for the following reasons:

1. God’s Word talks a lot about sex. If it is important to Him, it should be for us also.
2. Sex is not a dirty word, but a gift that God gave

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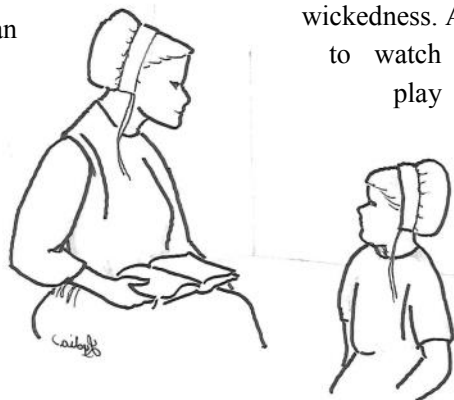
to married couples for enjoyment and to replenish the earth.

- 3. Sex was not created for couples outside of a marriage relationship. In fact, the Bible calls fornication (sex before marriage) sin and goes on to say that anyone who practices fornication will not inherit the kingdom of God. (See I Cor 6:9-10.)

As much as sex is a gift of God, it can also bring an immense amount of emotional pain to those who refuse to heed God's guidelines. Not only does it affect the one who commits the sin, but it also affects other individuals, family members, and friends, who may be totally innocent in the matter. Whenever you and I walk away from God's original plan of living out our lives and do it our own way, we will pay the consequences. There is no way around it. We will reap what we sow.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Galatians 6:7).

Look at your own life! Look at people around you! Many of us have been deceived into thinking that somehow we will get away with sin, somehow the Lord will overlook, wink at us and let us slip by. It is a lie, my friend! There is no such thing! "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."



Sadly, many young people refuse to listen to the message of *saving sex for marriage*. Later in their marriage, the couple will suffer the awful consequences of disobeying God, and their children will also. Why is it so difficult to follow God's simple guidelines?

- 4. Every culture in the world, including Amish and Mennonite communities, is affected by the sin of sexual wickedness. A man does not have to watch sex-filled movies, play ungodly video games, or be around women who are immodestly dressed to fall into sexual temptation and wickedness.

I'd like to share something with you that I've learned in the past 10 years. It appears the more legalistic or rigid a person becomes with man-made rules, the more he will struggle with masturbation, incest, fornication, and yes, even sex with animals. Rigid and unnecessary rules can lead to depression. Depression can lead to sexual wickedness. It is not uncommon for the three (rules, depression, and sexual wickedness) to go hand in hand.

The final reason I want to discuss the topic of sex is something that has recently happened in America.

- 5. On Friday, June 26, 2015, the highest court in our country, the Supreme Court,

passed a law that all 50 states in the union must recognize same-sex marriages. This means it is now lawful for men to marry men and women to marry women. If you or I openly refuse to cater to gay people, we become law breakers. The court now has the right to punish a person for hate speech by putting him or her in prison.

Hate speech is speech that offends, threatens, or insults groups, based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other traits.

For the rest of the article, I'd like to discuss the Supreme Court ruling and same sex marriages.

You might be thinking that since I'm Amish:

The Supreme Court ruling will not have any effect on me or my family.

I'm separated from the world around me and have my own rules to go by; I don't have to submit to the government laws.

My family and I are protected from all the stuff that goes on in the outside world. They (the outside world) need police, judges, lawyers, and prisons. We don't.

As you reflect on these things, it might give you reason to feel puffed up and think of yourself as a little bit better than outsiders. Should you or I feel that way, let me remind both of us what the Lord says in His Word:

There is none righteous, no, not

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one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one (Romans 3:10-12).

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

As you read the next scripture verse, please do so carefully and let the Apostle Paul's words sink deep into your heart. In fact, I ask you to read it twice. Slowly.

But by the grace of God I am what I am (1 Corinthians 15:10).

This scripture first became real to me when I was just 25 years old. I had been invited to serve as one of several leaders at our church congregation. At the time, I felt far too young and wet behind the ears; however, I accepted the invitation and asked the Lord to use me for His eternal glory. Soon thereafter, a member in our church fell into the sin of adultery. Everyone was devastated and sought the Lord for direction. The church leaders came together and discussed the biblical way of handling this member who had fallen. As we sat there in a circle, each man taking his turn to share, an older

gray-haired deacon named Bill raised his head and said the words which would profoundly impact me for the rest of my life: "but for the grace of God, there go I."

Dear reader, with that humbling thought in mind, may I challenge you to consider this fact: if you have never been tangled up in the sin of sexual wickedness, such as masturbation, incest, dirty magazines, loose talk, fornication, adultery, or homosexuality, then you might do well to agree with the Apostle Paul and my gray-haired deacon friend when they say: *But by the grace of God I am what I am.*

Let us continue our discussion on same sex marriages, the Supreme Court ruling and how that is affecting every person in America, including those who live in the Amish and Mennonite culture.

Many of us, including myself, have had our heads buried in the sand when it comes to Amish and Mennonite homosexuality. We have said it just won't happen in these two cultures. But the truth is, it is happening in those two cultures! It is happening everywhere. It is happening in all tongues, nations, and cultures. Sadly, the Scripture tells us clearly; it will get worse before it gets better.

Consider the following portions of God's Word:

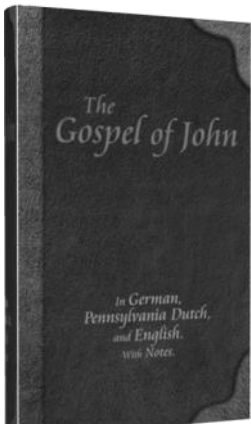
This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...without natural affection...despisers of those that are good...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (II Timothy 3:2-4).

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie...For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another... (Romans 1:24-27).

I am not aware of any Amish churches in America accepting gays into membership. However, that is not the case with all Mennonite churches. There is one Mennonite conference (Mennonite USA) that not only accepts the

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The Gospel of John in three languages, plus notes

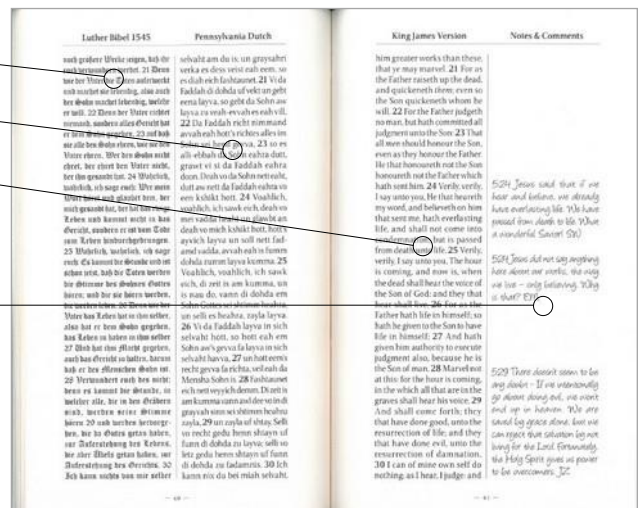


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homosexual lifestyle, but appoints homosexual leaders in church positions. Other church denominations in America are also bowing under the pressure, and giving in to the loud and forceful homosexual crowd.

You may be surprised to know that a man, originally from the Amish, runs a gay and lesbian website. When you first go on his home page, you will read the big bold headlines:

WELCOME TO LGBTAMISH.COM, THE WORLD'S FIRST AND ONLY NETWORK FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED AMISH AND EX-AMISH.

The owner of this website, James Schwartz from Michigan, goes on to say that his ultimate goal is to reach out to Amish, former Amish, and Mennonites who are living in the closet. He believes there are many.

How in the world did we ever get to this place? Not only are the scriptures clear about God's view of sexual wickedness,

but the very act of homosexuality is far removed from common sense. Two men cannot reproduce, and neither can two women. How blind and ugly can it get? When will all this crazy stuff end?

Think of the wicked cities known in the

Bible as Sodom and Gomorrah. According to the New Testament book of Jude, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities were burned to the ground for two reasons:

1. Sexual wickedness
2. Our example

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:7).

If we look at Genesis, chapter 19, we find that brimstone and fire came down from heaven. When Abraham looked

toward the cities, he saw what looked like a smoldering furnace.

Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah

brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven (Genesis 19:24).

And Abraham got up early in the morning ... looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace (Genesis 19:27-28).

In Matthew 11:24 Jesus said: *But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment, than for thee.*

Is it possible – Oh, God forbid – that someone in my family or yours would ever turn out to be gay or lesbian? The thought sends shivers down my spine! It all seems dirty, impossible, and just plain sick to the core! But when I consider the scriptures, I am reminded again that no person, no family, no community, and no culture of people will escape the last days of horror.

My comfort and strength comes from knowing I am born of the Spirit, as Jesus said in John chapter 3. Also, I find great comfort in knowing that others before us were able to endure because they had their eyes set on Jesus and His kingdom. Consider Hebrews, chapter 11:10, 13-16:

For he [Abraham] looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

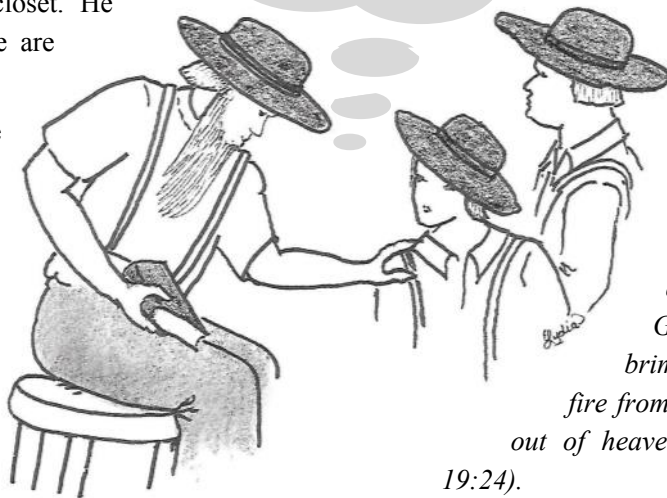
These all [Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah] died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

—Written by Joe Keim

END

My precious sons, the Lord is very clear that we are to flee sexual sins. I Cor 6:18



Attention Reader!!!

If you have just finished reading *Fornication, Adultery and Homosexuality*, we would like to encourage you to go straight to pages 11 and 12. Once there, you will find some great resources you can buy for your family library.

Part 4

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS

As the world continues to turn its back on God, we want to take a look at what the future holds according to the One who is the Beginning and the End—God! We hope you

enjoy and benefit from this series, courtesy of Middletown Bible Church. Follow along, fill in the blanks, and look up! May we all be ready for the return of Jesus Christ!

You will need a Bible for this lesson.

The True and the False

What should we expect in the days and years before Jesus Christ returns for His believers (John 14:3)?

War or Peace?

Did the Lord Jesus tell us to expect war or peace on this earth in the coming days (Matthew 24:6)? _____

Circle the correct answer from Matthew 24:6. Jesus said that wars and rumors (reports) of wars...

- Will not come to pass
- May not come to pass
- May come to pass
- Must come to pass

Should the believer be troubled by this prediction (Matthew 24:6)? _____

Are the nations of the world going to be at peace with each other (Matthew 24:7)? _____

Jesus has told us what to expect. Should we be surprised or shocked when we hear about such things in the news? _____

Think of yourself in school. If you came

to class thinking that there will not be any quiz, would you be surprised if the teacher handed out paper and gave you a quiz? Would you be ready for it? But if the teacher had warned you a week before that there would be a quiz, would you be surprised when the paper was handed out? Would you be prepared? If you are not prepared, whose fault would it be? The Lord Jesus said that wars must come to pass. The believer knows what to expect.

Should we expect wars to last forever? In Isaiah 9:6 (at the end of the verse) the Lord Jesus is called "The Prince of _____."

When the Prince of Peace comes to this earth, will wars continue or will He put an end to war (Psalm 46:9; Isaiah 2:4)? _____

Poverty

Our world is filled with poor people—people who lack food and clothing and money. Have you ever seen people who are poor? Have you ever seen people begging for food or money? Have you ever seen pictures of starving children?

In John 12:3, we learn that Mary took a expensive ointment and poured it over

Jesus' feet. Was Judas glad she did this for the Lord (John 12:4-5)? _____

Judas said that the ointment should have been sold and the money given to the _____ (John 12:5).

Was Judas really concerned about the poor (John 12:6)? _____

Who did he really want the money to be given to (John 12:6)? _____

Jesus then said that Mary had done the right thing (John 12:7-8). According to Jesus' words, should we expect to have poor people around today? _____

Should we be surprised when we see poor people? _____

Disease, Decay, and Death

Our world is under a curse and God put this curse on the world because of man's sin. You can read about this curse in Genesis chapter 3. All of creation is affected by this curse. In Romans 8:22, we learn that "the whole

_____ groaneth and travaileth in _____ together until now."

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All of the animals and plants are in bondage to the laws of disease and decay and death. The animals are killing and being killed. They are eating and being eaten. Plants are being eaten, too, and those that are not eaten soon die and decay. EVERYTHING IS UNDER THE CURSE OF DEATH (including animals, plants, and people).

We learn in Romans 8:19-23 that the creation will not be delivered or set free from this bondage until Christ returns. When Christ is on earth as King, things will be quite different.

Read Isaiah 11:6-9. Are these animals killing and being killed?

Is the description of Isaiah 11:6-9 an accurate description of the animal kingdom today? _____

The story is told of a Russian zoo keeper who once said, "We keep a wolf and a lamb together in the same cage!" The people who heard this said, "How can this be?" He then explained: "It's really true, although we have to put a new lamb in every day!" But when Christ is King over all the world, the lions and wolves and tigers and bears will not even need to be in cages!

There are many people today who think that man will somehow solve the problem of disease and death. It is true that scientists have made many wonderful discoveries and have found cures for many diseases, but no one has solved the problem of death. ALL MEN DIE, including the scientists and the doctors.

The Bible says that "death passed upon _____ men" (Romans 5:12).

The curse in Genesis 3:19 says: "*For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*"

All men will die and go back to dust!

There are people today who believe the problem of death will someday be solved. Some are even having their bodies frozen when they die. These frozen bodies are then stored in a very cold place. These people hope that someday someone will invent a cure for death so that their bodies will be thawed out and restored to life.

Should we expect this to ever happen?

Who is the only Person who can call forth the dead (see John 5:28-29)?

said, "In the world ye shall have _____ (trouble, difficulty, distress, problems)" (John 16:33).

Jesus never said that the road ahead would be an easy road. Read what Jesus told his own disciples (John 15:18-21; 16:2).

Even though the times are difficult times, do we need to be troubled or afraid (John 14:27)? _____

Is there peace in the middle of the trouble (John 16:33)? _____

Do we have to fear what men might do to us (Hebrews 13:6)? _____

Do we have to face the difficulties alone (Matthew 28:20)? _____

Do we have the strength that we need (Philippians 4:13)? _____

Man's Sinfulness

Let's look at 2 Timothy 3:13: "But _____

men and seducers shall wax _____ and _____ deceiving and being deceived."

Why isn't the world getting better and better? Why are conditions getting worse and worse? The evil men and women who live on planet earth are the problem. The only way to have a better world is to have better people!

Why are the last days going to be so perilous and difficult (see 2 Timothy 3:1)? _____

Is it because the government is so bad? Is it because our rulers and leaders are so bad? Is it because Russia or Iraq or China or North Korea or some other country is so bad?

THE END IS ~~NEAR~~ HERE

We are living in a world of disease and decay and death, and this will not change until Christ returns. We should expect this to be so! Someday things will be different and God will give His believers bodies that will never die or never decay and never have diseases (see 1 Corinthians 15:52-54)!

Difficult Days

God has told us just what to expect in the days ahead: "This know also, that in the last days _____ times shall come" (2 Timothy 3:1).

The word "PERILOUS" means "hard" or "difficult." We should not expect easy times! The Bible tells us that the days ahead will be hard and difficult.

Jesus told us to expect the same thing. He

Continued next page

Men always try to blame someone or something else for the difficult days we live in, but the real reason is found in 2 Timothy 3:2-4. Why are the last days so difficult and hard? _____

It is because of sinful, selfish men and women!

For Men Shall Be . . .

1. **Lovers of their own selves**—selfish, self-centered, seeking to please self
2. **Covetous**—lovers of money, greedy, worshipping the dollar bill
3. **Boasters**—those who love to brag about themselves and about what they are going to do
4. **Proud**—a person who considers himself above others and tries to lift himself above others, even if it means stepping on others
5. **Blasphemers**—those who speak against God, and drag His good Name into the mud, and speak of God in an irreverent way
6. **Disobedient to parents**—those who do not obey or honor their parents,

those who are rebellious in the home

7. **Unthankful**—ungrateful, not appreciating all the blessings received, not thankful for all of God's goodness (Rom. 1:21)
8. **Unholy**—no respect for anything that is sacred
9. **Without natural affection**—without that love and affection that should be shown in the family (the love that a mother has for her child, that a father has for his son, or that a young person should have for his brother or sister or parents)
10. **Trucebreakers**—those who refuse to make peace, who would rather be at war with you, who would rather be your enemy than your friend
11. **False accusers**—those who say false things about a person
12. **Incontinent**—not having self control
13. **Fierce**—savage, brutal, untamed like a wild animal
14. **Despisers of that which is good**—no love for what is good and right
15. **Traitors**—one who betrays another (like Judas), pretends to be your

friend, but later he lets you down and is not your friend at all

16. **Heady**—those who do things in a hasty way without much thinking; they will act first and think later
17. **Highminded**—puffed up, swollen with pride, conceited
18. **Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God**—pleasure seekers rather than God seekers —2 Timothy 3:2-4

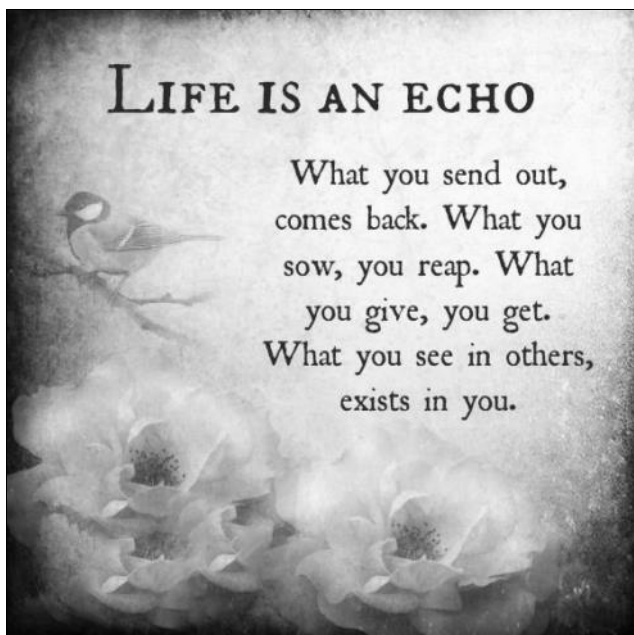
Men shall be sinful and selfish! As you think about this list, think also about yourself. ARE YOU PART OF THE PROBLEM? Are **you** guilty of any of these things (see especially numbers 1, 6, 7, and 18)? If so, what should you do about it? What *are* you going to do about it?

The world's greatest problem is not something on the outside, but it is something on the INSIDE (see Mark 7:21-23).

To be continued in the next issue of the Amish Voice

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Comments and Prayers Welcome!

1. If you have any comments, ideas, suggestions, questions, prayer requests, or might want to contribute a possible article for the *Amish Voice*, please let us know.

2. If you enjoy the *Amish Voice* and would like to help us with the cost of printing and postage or if you know

of others who might benefit from the *Amish Voice*, please contact us.

3. Please pray for us and with us that we would all grow nearer to God.

This letter was written in January of 2015, and later sent to area ministers in Northern Indiana.

We write to you today concerning an issue in our Amish churches. After praying and feeling God's guidance in this matter, we feel we must bring this subject to light.

This is concerning the use of the German language in our churches today. We know this tradition (some would call it a heritage) has been passed down from generation to generation from our forefathers, but what is of the fact that most of our people no longer understand this language? We no longer use this language anywhere but in church. Our main language is Pennsylvania Dutch, but before we go to school we must learn the English language, and we must speak this language if we are to have a job or any communication with the world around us. Why is it then that on Sundays we are clinging to this tradition of using the German language? Most of us know how to read this language either from attending the Amish school or from Deitsh School, but sadly we do not know the meaning of the words. How sad it is to sit in church on Sunday feeling the need to praise God in song but not knowing what the song we sing means (we have Our Heritage Hope and Faith book and Hymns book which would be ok, but we cannot take these books to church with us).

A lot of preachers today are making an effort to explain these scriptures in our everyday language (although many do not), but we feel this is not enough; our young adults and children understand close to nothing! Is it any wonder than that many are choosing not to stay Amish? Let's take a look at what God says....

1 Corinthians 14:18-19: *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.*

Mark 7:6-8: *He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This*

people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

Revelation 3:15: *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

We ask the question: If our churches were not lukewarm, would we not be content to sit and sing songs of which we do not know the meaning? Would we be content to preach the Good News of Jesus in a language that most of us do not understand? We understand that our Amish heritage has many traditions that are worth holding on to, and we are thankful for these things; but we must ask ourselves when our traditions stand in the way of people hearing and understanding the gospel of Jesus, is it worth it? I fear our children are paying the price.

A word of encouragement... *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.* Philippians 1:9-11

In closing, for fear of being written as such, we feel we must clarify: we are not part of Revive Indiana, or a Bible study group or any organization of any kind. We are simply an Old Order Amish couple with a concern for our church.

Please pray and seek God's will on the matter.

A concerned Brother and Sister

We have chosen to withhold our names for fear of being shunned by the people for speaking boldly what God has laid on our heart.

END

In Hosea 4:6, the Bible says of the Israelites: *my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...*

Jon Courson explains that verse as follows: Because God's people had grown bored of

His Word, they would no longer be priests, no longer serve Him. As in Hosea's day, I am convinced that the great need of the body of Christ is to know the Word of God. Churches are in confusion, caught up in

odd doctrine all for lack of knowledge. It seems people don't want to hear the Word and study the Scriptures. They want to get on a pet doctrine and ride it until they've missed the point completely.

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4. **Topical Study:** Many people struggle with fear, anger, pride, doubt, loneliness, and disbelief. Others struggle with worry, faith, and a healthy prayer life. If you fall into any one of these pits, please consider signing up for this course. Join others who have signed up and are receiving the spiritual help and encouragement they need.
5. **Foundational Study:** Is your heart set on the Christian home? How can you gain victory over a certain sin in your life? Do you have questions about the new birth? Brokenness? Biblical separation? This course provides you clear answers straight from the Bible.
6. **Basic Basics:** Does the Bible tell us how we can know we are going to heaven? The answer, of course, is yes! God is very clear about it. If you have any doubts at all about your salvation, please ask for this study.
7. **Life's Struggles:** Most Christians struggle with fear, pride, doubt, anger, and/or worry. So the question is, can a person overcome these struggles? We believe that God's Word does tell us how to overcome these struggles. This study guide will help you find the answers. Go ahead and sign up for lesson one, and don't stop until you have completed all five lessons in the course.



Tear This Page Out!

Circle the number of the course you want to begin

ABC Study

1

Book of Books

2

Verse-by-Verse

3

Topical

4

Foundational

5

Basic Basics

6

Life's Struggles

7

- Life's Struggles**

 1. *Fear and Doubt*
 2. *Pride*
 3. *Anger*
 4. *Worry*

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Mail this page to: Plowman's Academy, PO Box 128, Savannah, OH 44874

If more than one of your family members and friends are interested in taking our courses, you can all sign up! Simply send us the mailing information and course title for each person on another piece of paper! You can even use these courses to study God's word together!

Mail this Page Back to Us!



This article goes right along with another one I wrote for this issue of the Amish Voice, called *Fornication, Adultery, and Homosexuality*. If you read it first, this one will make more sense to you.

Having children and raising a family is not easy—it takes time, patience, sweat, tears, sleepless nights, prayer, and lots of training. As parents, we know we only have a limited amount of time—perhaps 19 to 20 years—before the child is fully grown and ready to go on his own. During that limited time, parents will do their best to teach each child to refrain from lying, stealing, swearing, and fighting with their siblings. Most parents will go to great measure to teach their children how to work hard, be responsible, get an education, eat right and follow God. Why? Because our goal is to prepare them to one day make it on their own.

Sadly, though, many parents stop short of teaching their children anything about sex, pregnancy, and the birth of babies. To some parents, these topics are forbidden outside a closed bedroom door and should only be discussed between husband and wife. To others, using the word “sex” in front of a young single adult is almost as bad as swearing. Today, however, I would like to challenge you to think differently.

1. Most children will hear about sex and having babies before they are 15 years old. Where do they get their information? From friends who heard it from other friends. In most cases, the topic is treated as a joke, and everybody laughs about it. Most of the time, they only learn half the truth; the rest is

twisted and misunderstood.

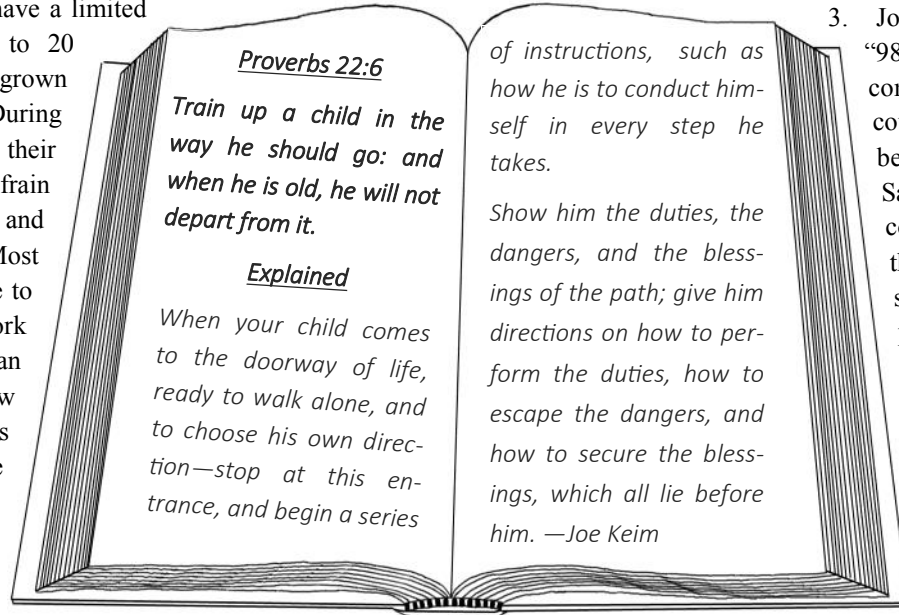
2. If kept within God’s guidelines, sex can be a pleasurable bonding time between husband and wife. However, God’s gift of sex can also turn into pain and shame when used outside of His guidelines. Some readers know what I’m talking about, because they have been there and are now paying the price.

3. John Regier says, “98% of couples who come for marriage counseling had sex before marriage.” Sadly, most of these couples started out on the wrong path, simply because parents did not sit down and prepare them.

This leads me to share something personal with you that took place in our own family.

When our children turned seven years old, Esther and I sat down with each one separately and read *The Story of Me* (Book 1). When they turned eight or nine, we read *Before I Was Born* (Book 2). By the time they reached 12 years old, our children knew everything about God’s design for their bodies, the gift of sex, and how babies are born. Not one stone was left unturned.

The books I just described are listed on the next page and can be ordered from us. They are Christian-based and were used as a guide that led us into family discussions.



Turn Page...

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Continued from previous page...Equipping our children for life

We learned how certain changes would start taking place on their bodies as they approached their teenage years. We also learned how those changes would not only affect the body, but also the mind. There would come a time when the child would pull away from dad and mom and become the person God intended. We said, when that happens, dad and mom will want to hang onto you and not let you go. But, as normal children, you will continually seek to pull away. We spent a great deal of time discussing and brainstorming ways that we as parents and children might handle those times of pulling away and holding back. At one point, I remember our son Jonathan bursting into tears, fearing that things would turn out badly between him and us.

Without a doubt, the books and discussions were one of the best things we ever did as a family! It drew us together and strengthened our relationships in a way nothing else could have. It gave both parent and child the feeling that we could discuss

anything, and while doing so, feel very much comfortable and at ease.

Let me say again, it is my belief that we as parents must teach our children about sex and having babies. It was never God's intention that we hide this truth from them.

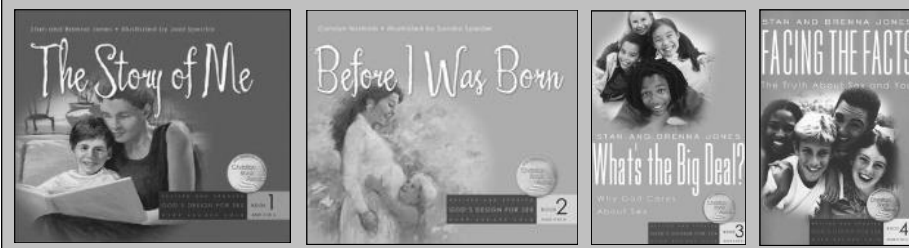
I would suggest that if you choose to follow our pattern, consider that mom goes through the books with her daughters and dad goes through the books with his sons. Let it be a time of bonding and growing together in life. You'll be glad you did. I promise!

– Joe Keim

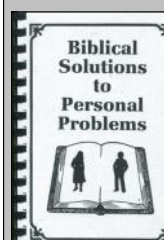
The books mentioned in this article are listed below. We are making them available and would like to encourage you to order your own set. If your children are grown, you could always give them to someone you love.

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Teaching and Equipping Our Children for Life

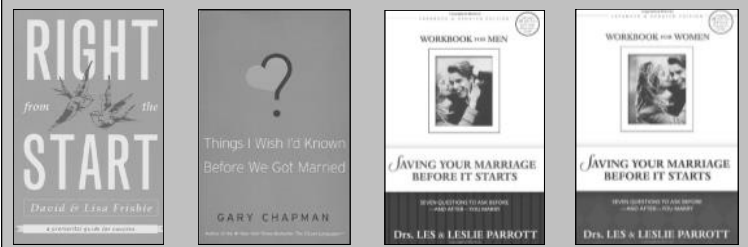


Workbook: Marriage and Personal Struggles



Each of the twenty-three chapters has questions regarding specific problems. Scripture references and a space to write are provided to encourage individuals to research the answers.

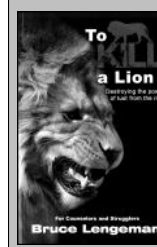
Dating Years



Already Married



To Kill a Lion



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by Bruce Lengeman

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- Things I Wish We Would Have Known Before Marriage—\$9
- Save Your Marriage Before it Starts (Men)—\$8
- Save Your Marriage Before it Starts (Women)—\$8

To Kill a Lion

- To Kill a Lion, by Bruce Lengeman—\$15

Workbook: Dealing With Marriage and Personal Struggles

- Marriage and Personal Struggles, by John Regier—\$20

Salvation Without Regeneration

Regeneration literally means "spiritual rebirth". Have you ever heard Christians talk about being "born again"? They are referring to undergoing a spiritual rebirth (regeneration). In John 3:3, Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jesus was talking to a man named Nicodemus, who then asked:

How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Many people today seem to be asking the same question. They don't understand that Jesus was referring to a spiritual rebirth – not a physical rebirth. Jesus is saying that we must be spiritually born again.

To be spiritually born again requires that you put your old life to death. A transformation must take place just as one did when you left your mother's womb during physical birth. In Romans 6:3-4, the apostle Paul writes:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the apostle Paul writes:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he

is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

According to Jesus and the apostle Paul, we must undergo a spiritual rebirth before we can receive salvation. Unfortunately, many so-called Christians have never been born again. There has never been a spiritual transformation in their lives. They have never made a conscious decision to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, and thus initiate their spiritual rebirth. They mistakenly believe they can receive salvation without regeneration.

fact. Although I have not done the research, I'm quite sure that most governments throughout history have been founded somewhat upon Godly principles. Most laws have their roots in God's Ten Commandments.

There is no doubt that politics in America and around the world has tried to move away from God and His principles during the 20th century. This movement accelerated during the last half of the 20th century. It's gone so far that they have rewritten the history books used to teach our children. At one time, the Bible was the primary history book used within our

schools. Believe it or not, biblical morality was taught in public schools until the early 1960's. Now, however, we have history books that don't even mention God and His place in the history of America.

Anytime religion is mentioned within the confines of government, someone will cry, "Separation of Church and State". Many

people believe this statement appears in the first amendment of the United States Constitution – and therefore must be strictly enforced. This statement does NOT appear in the first amendment. In fact, the first amendment does not even contain the words: "separation", "church" or "state." The first amendment reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ."

The colonists (early Americans) knew what would happen if the government established the church

CHRISTIAN

without

CHRISTIAN = I Am Nothing

John 15:4-5 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Many people also mistakenly believe they can inherit their parent's salvation. They believe that since their parents belong to a certain church or denomination, they are automatically in. WRONG! God does NOT have any grandchildren! He only has children. To become a child of God requires that you be born again – just as Jesus told Nicodemus. You CANNOT have salvation without regeneration!

Politics Without God

The United States of America was founded by Godly men and upon Godly principles. That, my friends, is an historical

Turn Page...

like it had in England. England went so far as to forbid worship in private homes. All church activities were sponsored and controlled by the English government. People were forced to go to the state-established church and do things that were contrary to their conscience. No other churches were allowed. Mandatory attendance of the state-established church was compelled under the Conventicle Act of 1665. Failure to comply could result in imprisonment and torture.

Our founding fathers wanted freedom of religion—NOT freedom from religion. That is why many of them had come to the American colonies in the first place. Those who scream, "Separation of Church and State" have absolutely no idea what they are talking about.

The United States Constitution was founded on biblical principles and it seemed to be the intention of the authors for this to be a Christian nation. The Constitution was put together by 55 people, of which 52 were evangelical Christians. Research indicates that 94% of all quotes by our founding fathers were based on the Bible. The founding fathers took ideas from the Bible and did their best to incorporate them into our

government. Unfortunately, things went downhill from there.

In October 1961, the Supreme Court of the United States officially removed prayer from our public schools. If our founding fathers didn't want prayer in government, why did they pray publicly at nearly all official meetings? Since that Supreme Court decision of 1961, there has been much effort to forbid reading from the Bible in school – even silent reading during free time.

In recent years, the first amendment has wrongly been used to remove displays of religious texts like the Ten Commandments from public areas and government buildings throughout the United States. There is talk about removing the phrase "In God We Trust" from our currency. This is NOT at all what the First Amendment is about.

What are we allowing to happen? I don't think you can argue with the fact that as we have removed God from our politics, our government, and our educational systems, there has been a very dramatic decrease in the morality and the integrity of the American people. It appears to me that our society is slowly degenerating into a corrupt system in which people misuse the authority of the government to obtain what they want at the expense of others. If we don't bring God back into our politics, this once

great nation of ours is doomed to fall apart.

“All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men do nothing.”

Edmond Burke (1729-1797)

I can't say that our politics and our government are completely void of God, because we still have Godly people in politics and in our government. We still have Godly teachers in our school systems. However, we have many less Godly people in place than we had 50 years ago.

Friends, it is time to take a stand and to make a difference. Let us be more earnest in prayer and in support of our leaders who really do know and love God. We need to back and support leaders who are Godly men and women.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

Don't just GO to church; BE the church

In the next issues, we will be looking at the last of these chief dangers. In the meantime, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Corinthians 7:1

END

Cont from back page...Mormon Beliefs

Smith, p. 345). They believe God the Father has a “body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:22). Brigham Young taught that Adam actually was God and the father of Jesus Christ—although this teaching has been abandoned by modern Mormon leaders.

In contrast, Christians know this about God: there is only one true God

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10; 44:6–8). He always has existed and always will exist (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17). He was not created but is the Creator (Genesis 1; Psalm 24:1; Isaiah 37:16). He is perfect, and no one else is equal to Him (Psalm 86:8; Isaiah 40:25). God the Father is not a man, nor was He ever (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Hosea 11:9). He is Spirit (John 4:24), and Spirit is not made of flesh and bone (Luke 24:39).

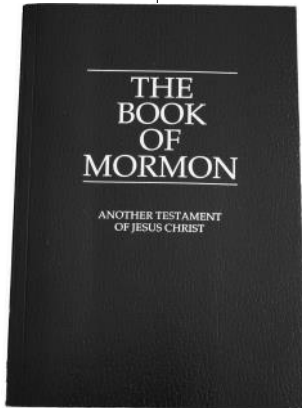
Mormons believe that there are different levels or kingdoms in the afterlife: the celestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, the telestial kingdom, and outer darkness (Mormon Doctrine, p. 348). Where mankind will end up depends on what they believe and do in this life (2 Nephi 25:23; Articles of Faith, p.79).

In contrast, the Bible tells us that after death we go to heaven or hell based on

Continued next page

whether or not we had faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. To be absent from our bodies means, as believers, we are with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-8). Unbelievers are sent to hell, or the place of the dead (Luke 16:22-23). When Jesus comes the second time, we will receive new bodies (1 Corinthians 15:50-54). There will be a new heaven and new earth for believers (Revelation 21:1), and unbelievers will be thrown into an everlasting lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). There is no second chance for redemption after death (Hebrews 9:27).

Mormon leaders have taught that Jesus' incarnation was the result of a physical relationship between God the Father and Mary (Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, p. 115; Mormon Doctrine, p. 547). Mormons believe Jesus is a god, but that any human can also become a god (Doctrine and Covenants 132:20;



Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 345-354). Mormonism teaches that salvation can be earned by a combination of faith and good works (LDS Bible Dictionary, p. 697).

Contrary to this, Christians historically have taught that no one can achieve the status of God—only He is holy (1 Samuel 2:2). We can only be made holy in God's sight through faith in Him (1 Corinthians 1:2). Jesus is the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16), is the only one ever to have lived a sinless life, and now has the highest place of honor in heaven (Hebrews 7:26). Jesus and God are one in essence, Jesus being the only man who existed before physical birth (John 1:1-8; 8:56). Jesus gave Himself to us as a sacrifice, God raised Him from the dead, and one day everyone will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:6-11). Jesus tells us it is impossible to get to heaven by our own works and that only by faith in Him is it possible (Matthew 19:26). We all deserve eternal punishment for our sins, but God's

infinite love and grace have allowed us a way out. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Clearly, there is only one way to receive salvation, and that is to know God and His Son, Jesus (John 17:3). Receiving salvation is not done by works, but by faith (Romans 1:17; 3:28). We can receive this gift no matter who we are or what we have done (Romans 3:22). "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Although Mormons are usually friendly, loving, and kind people, they are deceived by a false religion that distorts the nature of God, the Person of Jesus Christ, and the means of salvation.

(Author's note: many of the references in this article on Mormonism are Mormon publications, such as Mormon Doctrine, Articles of Faith, Doctrines of Salvation, History of the Church, Doctrine and Covenants, and so forth. Others are from the Book of Mormon itself, e.g., books such as 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, and Alma.)

END

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What Is Mormonism, and What Do Mormons Believe?

This article was taken from Got Questions?

The Mormon religion (Mormonism), whose followers are known as Mormons and Latter-day Saints (LDS), was founded less than two hundred years ago by a man named Joseph Smith. He claimed to have received a personal visit from God the Father and Jesus Christ (Articles of Faith, p. 35) who told him that all churches and their creeds were an abomination (1 Nephi 13:28; Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith – History 1:18, 19). Joseph Smith then set out to "restore true Christianity" and claimed his church to be the "only true church on earth" (Mormon Doctrine, p. 670; 1 Nephi 14:10). The problem with Mormonism is that it contradicts, modifies, and expands on the Bible. Christians do not have a reason to believe that the Bible is untrue or inadequate. To truly believe in and trust God means to believe in His Word, and all Scripture is inspired by God, which means it comes from Him (2 Timothy 3:16).

Mormons believe that there are in fact four sources of divinely inspired words—not just one: 1) the Bible "as far



Salt Lake Temple, Utah (Mormon church building in its main city)

as it is translated correctly" (8th Article of Faith). Which verses are considered incorrectly translated is not always made

clear. 2) The Book of Mormon, which was "translated" by Smith and published in 1830. Smith claimed it is the "most correct book" on earth and that a person can get closer to God by following its precepts "than by any other book" (History of the Church 4:461). 3) Doctrine and Covenants, containing a collection of modern revelations regarding the "Church of Jesus Christ as it has been restored." 4) The Pearl of the Great Price, which is considered by Mormons to "clarify" doctrines and teachings that were lost from the Bible (Articles of Faith, pp. 182–185), and adds its own information about the earth's creation.

Mormons believe the following about God: He has not always been the Supreme Being of the universe (Mormon Doctrine, p. 321) but attained that status through righteous living and persistent effort (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph

Continued on Page 14