



Testimony of Mahlon Detweiler

Presented in 2010

I was born and raised in an Amish family. The Amish claim to be peaceful people. However, their outwardly peaceful appearance often hides hearts that are in turmoil. In our family there were 7 children; 5 boys and 2 girls. Three of my brothers and both my sisters are older than I am. My mom was the stronger Christian.

The Amish seem to stress going to church more and joining the church or becoming a member of the church between the ages of 16-20. Personally, I never understood the plan of salvation, but I always thought that I would go to heaven even though, had I died then, I would not have. I was pretty wild and did the party scene for quite a few years.

When I was 15, I started working for my uncle Elmer who was a Christian. He taught me the masonry trade. When I was 25, I met Lou and we started dating. We got married when I was 29. We didn't go to church, but we used to say to each other that we should and we knew that we should. Praise the Lord; He had a plan.

In 1987, my dad got cancer and began receiving treatments. During that time, he went to Florida to recoup. During that time, the cancer returned and he decided that he wanted to come home. So my wife, Lou; my son, Shea; my daughter, April, and I went to Florida to bring mom and dad home. We picked up mom and dad and started for home on a Friday morning, February 19th. That afternoon, on our way to Ohio, our house trailer burned up and we pretty much lost everything. Two weeks later, my dad died.

On March 17th, Pastor Keith Merriman came to our apartment in Dalton and shared the Gospel with us. He explained how we are separated from God because of our sins. We have broken God's laws by lying, stealing, dishonoring our parents and wanting what others have. Because of this, we stand condemned and face the prison of God; namely, hell. But God so loved the world that He gave His One and only Son, Jesus Christ. God the Son became a man and died in our place to take our hell-deserving punishment. He rose again the third day to prove that His death on our behalf is accepted by God. As we heard the Gospel, the Lord opened our hearts to believe and all 4 of us were saved. It was the best thing that ever happened to us. That day the peace of God that surpasses understanding came into my heart. I realized that I was at peace with God. That understanding changed the way I responded to experiences in life.

Later on, our son, Shea, got married and he and his wife gave us two grandchildren, Jerod and Brittany. Some years later, April married Ryan Berg and now we also have Carter, Brodie and Stella. With grandchildren and many other duties, we were very busy...and, I think, too busy.

In the fall of 2009, I was going 100mph at work. I stepped on a scaffold plank and it went down with me. As I lay there in pain, it felt like the Lord was disciplining me for something. As I went through this ordeal, I can't describe how all you Brothers and Sisters in Christ, and my wife, comforted me with prayers, cards and visits. I still don't fully understand why this took place, but I just praise God for the healing and comfort and peace He gave me through all this.

Whenever I encounter difficult situations I rely on Jesus to provide peace in my heart. He is my comforter and my guide. He is My God.