

OUR FAITH WILL WORK BY LOVE OR IT WILL NOT WORK AT ALL



FROM CHAR'S DESK

Another year has come to an end but God always gives us a new beginning. We pray this year we, at Ex-Mormons for Jesus, will be used by Him to bless the lives of many Mormons as well as ex-Mormons. It is not always easy coming out of a cult but God is faithful to never leave them nor forsake them as He leads them out of bondage into the glorious freedom found only in Christ. The Mormons that come to know Him this year will truly experience what it means to have a "new beginning"! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

~ Jenell's Jots & Tittles ~

"DOUBT YOUR DOUBTS" ???

There has never been a time when so much information has become available to the public as in this day and age. Via the internet, social media and the likes, Mormonism's real doctrines, along with its history has become an open book for those who choose to investigate it. Therefore, Mormon leaders are having to encourage their people to just overlook the problems that come with finding out things that were previously hidden to them.

An example of this is found in the November 2013 "Ensign" magazine (an "official" Mormon source) when President Dieter F. Uchtdorf addressed some of the problems members might be having with their

faith. One of the problems he attempted to dispel was regarding the members who might be struggling because of having "unanswered questions". His solution was "patience" as follows: *"Sometimes questions arise because we simply don't have all the information and we just need a bit more patience."* (p.22).

He also acknowledged that, *"there have been times when members or leaders in the Church have simply made mistakes."* (ibid.). Further on in this article he pleaded with his people, *"please, first doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith."* (p.23, my emphasis).

Wow, what "mind control" when there are no real or honest answers forthcoming. This is how you get normal, intelligent people to give up their free will and follow like blind sheep. Jesus spoke of this: *"A blind man can not guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit?"* (Luke 6:39) Mormons fail to recognize the manipulation their leaders subject them to and often become unaffected even when proof is presented to them. Please take a moment and pray for them!

#

ALL GIFTS DONATED TO EMFJ ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED AS WELL AS YOUR PRAYERS FOR THIS MINISTRY



Thank You

MORMONISM'S CONCEPT OF SALVATION

Because Mormonism operates under the guise of Christianity but deviates from orthodox teachings, Christians have an obligation, a duty, to warn all who will listen. Giving reasons for our faith (apologetics) is not an option, it is an essential element of the biblical mandate (see 1Tim.1:3-5, 2Tim.4:2-5, Ezek.33:6-9, Jude 3, Titus 1:9-11, etc.). Mormons will twist scripture in an attempt to validate their false beliefs, but as followers of Christ we must lovingly yet firmly be prepared to answer these distortions – “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col.4:6)

Nowhere is the man-centered character of Mormon theology more clearly evident than in their concept of salvation. Mormonism teaches that God's grace refers merely to the resurrection of man. In his book, “Mormon Doctrine”, Bruce McConkie stated: “Unconditional or general salvation, that which comes by grace alone without obedience to gospel law, consists in the mere fact of being resurrected.” (p.669) “Immortality is a free gift and comes without works or righteousness of any sort; all men will come forth in the resurrection because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ...In this sense, the mere fact of resurrection is called salvation by grace alone.” (p.671)

They go on to teach that since Christ purchased their resurrection from the grave, they can then be saved through personal works of righteousness, as their “Third Article of Faith” declares: “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel” [meaning Mormonism's laws and ordinances].

The concept of doing all one can do and then believing that the grace of God will make up for what we lack greatly appeals to our culture today. Mormons are proud to be doing their part to make themselves “worthy”, however the abundance of clear biblical scripture leaves no room for man to think his own

works could save him in any degree. Before I discuss the scriptures Mormons try to use to make their point for a works based salvation, I will take the time to lay a biblical foundation of God's point of view:

“But we are all as unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...” (Isa.64:6)

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith Jesus Christ...for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal.2:16)

“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” (Gal.2:21, also see Gal.5:4)

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” (Rom.10:4)

“And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise works is no more work.” (Rom.11:6, also see Rom.3:27-28 and Rom.4:13)

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy [grace] he saved us...” (Titus 3:5)

Even in the face of this clearly defined edict, Mormons just don't seem to get it. They continue to place the emphasis on merit rather than on grace, God's free gift. One of their favorite scriptures is James 2:20: “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” However, James is not arguing for good works as a means to salvation but rather as a product of salvation. It might be put like this: “Faith alone saves, but a saving faith is never alone.” We are justified before God on the basis of faith alone (Rom.4:1-9) and before men on the basis of our works (James 2:18). So we can see that “works” are a result of a life lived out of love for God. But if one claims to be saved and shows no “works”, he is not truly saved.

Another scripture Mormons will use is Phil.2:12: “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”. Notice that it does not say “work for your

salvation” but “work out your salvation” (that which you already possess). The following verse tells us, “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” If the Apostle Paul were telling us we had to do works to be saved, he would be contradicting himself in the very next chapter, which says: “*And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*” (Phil.3:9).

In 2Cor.4:3-4 we are warned: “*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*” The “gospel” is, of course, the good news that Christ purchased our salvation for us. All there is left for us to do is repent, believe and receive and His works will be manifested in our lives. Obviously, Mormon theology sharply dissents from orthodox Christianity, but through fasting, prayer and speaking the truth in love, we believe they can be reached (we are witnesses of this).

CITATIONS OF CONCERN (From LDS Leaders)

“Young friends, we live in perilous times...If you do not yet have a firmly rooted testimony and conviction that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on the earth, now is the time to do what it takes to gain that conviction. To delay making the effort required to earn that kind of conviction can be dangerous to your soul. (Nov. 2013 article in the “Ensign” by Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Young Women General President”, p.76, my emphasis)

“In particular, I caution you not to view filthy images or give your attention to the false accusers of Christ and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Both actions create the same effect: the loss of the Holy Ghost and His protecting sustaining power...” (ibid. by Elder Adrian Ochoa Of the Seventy, p.102, my emphasis)

“FREE AGENCY?” (The Subtleness of Mormonism’s Authoritarian System)

Webster’s Random House College Dictionary defines authoritarian as: “*requiring complete obedience to authority...exercising control over the will of others*”. I believe this to be the case for Mormons without them realizing it. Some time back, I had two Mormon Missionaries visit my home. During the conversation I brought up the fact that LDS members are required to blindly accept and trust everything Mormon, from its leadership to its doctrines, and that to question or disagree puts them in great peril. They gave me a puzzled look and said that they had no idea what I was talking about and assured me that they had “free agency” to question .

They may have been sincere in their statement, because many Mormons do not recognize the brain-washing and intimidation of their leadership. Maybe only those who were once in the clutches of this cult, and have come out, can fully relate. I will let an article in the July 2000 ENSIGN speak to this issue. The article, “Finding the Abundant Life”, by President James E. Faust, stated: “*The ultimate evil is the closing of the mind or steeling it against truth, resulting in the hardening of the intellectual arteries.*” (p.2). Over the next couple of paragraphs, he went on to say that we learn through two sources, the divine and also the rational process which we learn in school and through study. A Mormon could point to this and say, “see, we are encouraged to think for ourselves”.

However, President Faust went on to say: “*But I cannot help wondering if members of the Church do not place themselves in some spiritual peril when publicly disparaging the prophetic call of Joseph Smith, his successors, or any of the fundamental, settled doctrines of the Church. Those who express private doubts or unbelief as a public chastisement of the leadership or the doctrine of the Church or as a confrontation with those also seeking eternal light have entered upon sacred ground. Those who complain about the doctrines or leadership of the Church but who lack the faith or desire to keep God’s commandments risk separating themselves from the*

CORRESPONDENCES

divine source of learning. They do not enjoy the same richness of the Spirit that they might enjoy if they proved their sincere love of God by walking humbly before Him, by keeping His commandments, and by sustaining those whom He has appointed to lead the Church." (ibid. my emphasis)

Do you see how he went from applauding an open mind to subtly exercising control over the members by putting them under the bondage of fear with words like "spiritual peril", "entering upon sacred ground" and even giving God displeasure if they expressed doubts or unbelief in anything Mormon? Even those who expressed "private doubts" were threatened with the risk of being separated from "the divine source" and might not be able to enjoy the richness of the Spirit should they fail to accept (sustain) their leadership.

The article went on to promise blessings for those who played it "safe": *"However, for those of enduring faith, judgment, and discernment, there is an invisible wall that they choose never to breach. Those on the safe side of this invisible wall are filled with humility. They willingly accept the supremacy of God and rely upon the scriptures and counsel of His servants, the leaders of the Church...More important, they [LDS Church leaders] hold a divine warrant and commission through which great and eternal blessings come to those who sustain and follow them. They are God's servants."* (ibid.)

This is only one little article, but I can assure you that this is just a sampling of pressure that Mormons are put under from the moment they are baptized into Mormonism. Because of the nature of our ministry, we have opportunity to talk to many who have, in spite of the threats, found the courage to quit committing intellectual suicide. Once this decision is made, it doesn't take long for them to uncover the obvious deception of this dangerous cult. Even then, however, many struggle because of the heavy burden of fear that was placed on them. I close this article with the comforting words from Psalm 146:3-5: *"Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God"* (NAS).

"Sign me up for your bi-monthly e-newsletter, send me a listing of resources available. Just pray that I can get my sister to get out of the LDS trap. She's a lifelong member (I defected in the mid-nineties) and she recently ambushed me in her living room after I got back from Afghanistan. I'm still trying to figure out who I am in Christ, but she won't let this go. HELP!" A.P.

+ + + + + + +

"I was previously an LDS Mormon and as a young man was a Deacon, Priest then Elder. I graduated from the 4 yr seminary studies. After high school I began acting on a Bible verse the Mormons used, James 1:5. Long story short, the Lord Graciously delivered me from this false religion. I have been a born again believer in Jesus Christ for over 25 years. I have a desire to help other Mormons/Ex-Mormons searching for Biblical truth. I live in the Kansas City area and could provide support in this area or via internet...." P.D.

+ + + + + + +

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

We hold monthly support group meetings at 7:30 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Our guest speaker for the month of **February** will be Carma Naylor. She was born and raised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was a Mormon for forty years before she became born-again. She will be speaking on grace, the grace she never knew as a Mormon. Carma also wrote a very interesting and enlightening book that helps others to understand the powerful, spiritual experiences behind a Mormon's testimony. The book is entitled "A Mormon's Unexpected Journey". It is in two volumes and will be available at the meeting.

There will be a question and answer time after the lesson followed by refreshments. All are welcome - those who have a burden to reach the Mormons, those who want to learn more, those who need support, and the Mormons themselves. The address is 240 W. Chapman Avenue in Orange and we look forward to seeing you there.