

# JESUS

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

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## FROM CHAR'S DESK



Every three months, we have a "movie night" at our Ex-Mormons for Jesus Support Group Meeting. Starting this year off, in January we showed the DVD "The God Makers." Afterwards, we had a discussion regarding the many changes that were made in the Temple Ceremony after this movie came out in the late 1980's. Shortly thereafter, the LDS Church authorities closed all of their temples and removed many things from the Temple Ceremony that proved to be troublesome once they were exposed.

We wondered why this didn't cause concern among the Mormons who had experienced the ceremony before, as well as after the changes. If the Temple rites are supposed to be sacred (and that is what Mormons always tell us), wouldn't their people wonder why they would even considered changing them? Yet, this is how one can know that a religion is man-made ~ their leaders have the liberty to make changes whenever it seems beneficial. May God help the dear Mormon people to question their Authorities when this occurs instead of just accepting that "when our leaders speak, the thinking has been done." ("The Improvement Era", June 1945, p.354)

### Jenell's Jots & Tittles

**YE SHALL KNOW THEM  
BY THEIR FRUITS**

Many Christians that we encounter have been surprised to find out that most Mormons have no problems with their conscience when it comes to being untruthful about their doctrines (or anything pertaining to Mormonism) if they think it will promote or benefit their church. It seems amazing that they can call themselves Christian while practicing this very un-Christian characteristic. Part of the answer, we believe, comes from the fact that because Mormonism was founded upon deception, it is easily sustained by deception. We know the principle of reaping what was sowed, so we should not be surprised to find this kind of "fruit" being harvested from the garden of Mormonism.

There is a mountain of evidence that Smith and his successors lied about everything from his so-called "First Vision" to his so-called martyrdom. And even if the average Mormon is not aware of this (which many are not), we can see this deceptive spirit continuing to permeate itself all through Mormonism.

One such example is found in their temple ceremony which includes the Genesis account of the fall of man. The drama shows Lucifer convincing Eve that the only way to evolve is to eat of the forbidden fruit. Adam arrogantly chastises Eve and then declares his loyalty to "Father's commandments". She then asks him, "*Do you not recollect that Father commanded us to multiply and replenish the earth? I have partaken of the fruit and by so doing shall be cast out, and you will be left a lone man in the Garden of Eden.*" ("What's Going On In There?" by Chuck Sackett, p.27)

Adam sees that he is caught in a most awkward dilemma – if he wants to *keep* God’s commandment and replenish the earth, he must *break* God’s commandment and eat the forbidden fruit. At this point Adam eats of the fruit “*that men might be*” (also see 2 Nephi 2:22-25). This corrupted and sad version of the Genesis account ends up making a noble sacrifice out of the first sin and teaches the Mormon people that the end result justifies the means. If it was permissible for Adam and Eve to disobey God’s commandment that good might come, then why not for all Mormons to do the same?

In regards to the point of Mormonism being sustained by deception, we only have to look at their “standard works” (KJV Bible, B.O.M., D&C and P.O.G.P.). There is not a single one that hasn’t undergone hundreds and even thousands of additions, deletions, and corrections, most without acknowledgment of any action ever having been taken. None of the dates are moved up to the time that the revisions were made and there is not a single heading or note in the *Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants or Pearl of Great Price* that clues the readers in. It is not even acknowledged openly by the church leaders that such changes were ever made.

In doing this article we hope to accomplish three things. **First**, to help you see that Mormonism is not just a harmless off-shoot of Christianity. They are what Jesus warned about, “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (Matt.7:15) that need to have their beliefs exposed so that the innocent and uninformed will not be taken in by them (Acts 20:28-29). **Second**, we hope this will better prepare you in witnessing to them. You might have to dig, prod, and challenge them in order to get straight answers, but don’t settle for less! **Third**, become aware of the spiritual battle and pray accordingly (Eph.6:12-18).

### CITATIONS OF CONCERN (From LDS Leaders)

*“We believe that we have a correct idea of the character of the Son from the writings of the Apostles, so far as they learned it. But while he was*

*tabernacling in the flesh, he was more or less contaminated with fallen nature. While he was here, in a body that his mother Mary bore him, he was more or less connected with and influenced by this nature that we have received...”* (Brigham Young, “Journal of Discourses”, Vol.6, p.95, my emphasis)

### THE LITMUS TEST FOR MORMONISM ~ THE “FIRST VISION”

In his last general conference (October 2007), the late LDS President Gordon B. Hinckley testified as follows:

*“I affirm my witness of the calling of the Prophet Joseph, of his works, of the sealing of his testimony with his blood as a martyr to the eternal truth.... You and I are faced with the stark question of accepting the truth of the First Vision and that which followed it. On the question of its reality lies the very validity of this Church. If it is the truth, and I testify that it is, then the work in which we are engaged is the most important work on the earth.”* (As reported in the Nov.2015 “Ensign”, p.131).

I assume most of our readers are familiar with what the LDS Church calls, the First Vision account. This is the story where Joseph Smith claimed to have a vision in which God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him in visible form (Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith History 1:5-20; this official account says this happened in 1920). However, if the “*very validity*” of the Mormon Church rests on this story, additional facts reveal that the Mormonism is in serious trouble. The following information is from a tract “New Light on Joseph Smith’s First Vision”, written by Wesley P. Walters.

*“In about 1832, Joseph Smith, began an account of the origin of the Mormon Church (the only one written in his own hand) that is considerably different from the official First Vision story he dictated some six years later. This 1832 account, which has been referred to as Joseph’s strange account, was never finished and for many years remained inaccessible to the public. It was published in BYU Studies, Spring 1969, pp.278ff, and*

is now cited on the official LDS website: [www.JosephSmith.net](http://www.JosephSmith.net).

*In this version Joseph presented himself as a boy who, between the ages of twelve and fifteen, was a committed and perceptive reader of the Bible. He claimed that it was his study of the Scriptures which led him to understand that all the denominations were wrong.. (yet in the **official account**, Joseph says there was a religious revival and he was seeking to know what denomination was right and which one he should join).*

*Six years later, when Joseph set forth his official First Vision account, he changed his story and no longer claimed his personal Bible study led him to the conclusion that all churches were wrong. Instead, he said that the Father and the Son told him that all the churches were wrong and he must join none of them (ironically, Mormon historians have documented the fact that Joseph Smith joined a Methodist church class in 1828...)*...

*“Still another version of the First Vision was published in 1834-35 in the periodical, Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate (Vol.1, pp,42, 78). This account was written by LDS leader Oliver Cowdery with the help of Joseph Smith. It tells how a revival in 1823 caused 17-year old Joseph Smith to be stirred up on the subject of religion. According to Cowdery, Joseph desired to know for himself of the certainty and reality of pure and holy religion (p.78). He also prayed if a Supreme being did exist, to have an assurance that he was accepted of him and a manifestation in some way that his sins were forgiven (ibid,78, 79). According to this account, an angel (not a deity) appeared in Joseph’s bedroom to tell him his sins were forgiven. The conflicts produced by this account are numerous.*

- *The date of the revival is given as 1823, instead of 1820 (as the official account states)*
- *If Joseph had already had a vision of the Father and the Son in 1820, why did he need to pray in 1823 about whether or not a Supreme being existed?*
- *The message of the angel is one of forgiveness of*

*sins, rather than an announcement that all the churches were wrong.*

*These widely divergent accounts raise serious questions about the authenticity of Joseph Smith’s First Vision story. Different people may have varying views of the same event, but when one person tells contradictory stories about the same event, we are justified in questioning both the person and the truthfulness of the story.”*

From its inception to the current date, the litmus test to validate Mormonism has always been the First Vision. Those in earlier times did not have the resources to prove or disprove Joseph Smith’s story. However, now there can be no excuse as an abundance of proof is available for anyone willing to look. The many problems surrounding Smith’s First Vision are not hidden and the LDS leadership **must be as aware of them as we are**. How then, can they say that they rely on this event to validate Mormonism when the facts prove it to be nothing more than a pure fabrication?

This article shows only a few of the many problems regarding Joseph Smith’s “First Vision”. Obviously, just these facts are enough to validate the untruthfulness of Mormonism’s beginnings, however, if you would like additional information, please call or write us and request the above mentioned tract. A donation to help with postage will be appreciated.

## GOD ~ AN EXALTED MAN

In reading the January 2016 “Ensign” magazine, an article entitled “Knowing The Godhead” quoted a sentence from Joseph Smith as follows: *“It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God.”* The reference given was “Joseph Smith, in History of the Church”, Vol.6, p.305. The article also quoted Smith as saying, *“I want you all to know Him, and to be familiar with Him.”*, citing the same reference.

Most counter-cult ministries are very familiar with volume 6, page 305 of “History of the Church”, as this is where the Mormon Prophet informed his people that God was an exalted man. We were very surprised

because by sharing those two sentences from his discourse, Smith's whole speech is being validated. The more blasphemous parts left out of the above "Ensign" article are as follows:

*"God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret...it is necessary we should understand the character and being of God and how He came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see. These are incomprehensible ideas to some, but they are simple. It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with Him as one man converses with another, and that He was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ Himself did; and I will show it from the Bible." ("History of the Church", Vol.6, p.305)*

Today, with the internet at everyone's fingertips, a whole new source for information has become available. No longer can the dark side of Mormonism be hidden so it seems smart of the LDS leadership to become more transparent. There are always those Mormons, that no matter what they hear, will remain faithful to their leaders, no matter how bad it gets. On the other hand, we pray that the honest seekers of truth will be set free from Mormonism by this type of information, especially when it comes from their own leaders!

## FEAR TACTICS & BRAIN-WASHING

The following quotes give an inside look as to how LDS leadership keep their people in line:

*"We declare in all solemnity, however, that we know salvation in the world to come is dependent upon accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints..." (the "Ensign", March 2002, p.4, my emphasis)*

*"...and you will understand that the world has no*

*access to atoning grace and salvation but through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints..." (the "Ensign", August 2014, p.36, my emphasis)*

*"I testify that **only** accepting and living the restored gospel of Jesus Christ [Mormonism] brings the peace the Lord promised in this life and the hope of eternal life in the world to come..." (The "Ensign", Jan.2009, p.9, my emphasis)*

*"...salvation in God's presence **requires acceptance** of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught in His Church." (the "Ensign", March 2002, p.7, my emphasis)*

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## SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

We hold monthly support meetings at 7:30 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month. Our guest speaker on February 9<sup>th</sup> will be ex-Mormon, Barbara Rojo. Barbara was born in Salt Lake City and her ancestry goes back to the beginning of Mormonism. They were converted under Joseph Smith and came over in the handcarts. Please invited your ex-Mormon friends.

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.

ALL GIFTS DONATED TO EMFJ ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

