

Ex-Mormons for
JESUS

*Our faith will work by love,
or it will not work at all.*

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NEWSLETTER - MARCH/APRIL 2023



FROM CHAR'S DESK

How often have we heard Christians say, "I don't talk about my religion, I live it; or religion is personal between God and me; or I worship God in my heart."

I feel this is too simple an explanation of why we don't speak up to tell others about our Lord. The Bible says, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." (Matt 12:34) or "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom 10:10-12).

The scriptures say that whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. Do we often keep our mouths shut because we are afraid to offend others, especially those that are in the cults. Hank Hannegraff used to end his CRI program with these words: "Are you willing to do for the truth what the cults are willing to do for a lie?"

Remember when we first fell in love with Jesus? It would have been difficult not to tell anyone about the wonderful new life we had because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. We were so full of the wonder of it all. But what after the initial reality wore off, we started to be silent Christians? Did we end up losing our first love? Could it be that the living water that once flowed through us became stagnant and who wants to give away stagnant water that no wants?

Let us not lose our first love because there are so many out there, especially those in the cults, who need to hear about Jesus so badly!

~ **STEVE'S CORNER** ~

Steve Welch called me and told me he had a bad eye

infection and he would be unable to write any articles for our newsletter this month. Therefore I am republishing an article by Sylvia Herrera on Baptism for the Dead.

DEAD WORKS

Although not mentioned in the Book of Mormon, baptism for the dead is an essential part of the Mormon religion. Teenagers and adult Latter-day Saints spend time being baptized over and over again while assuming the names of previously deceased people. This ordinance can only take place within a Mormon temple.

Mormons believe that everyone who has lived on the earth that hasn't accepted the doctrine of Mormonism in this life (possibly because they were not exposed to it) needs to have an opportunity to accept it in the life to come. They teach that people who have died are being taught the doctrines of Mormonism while in a place called "spirit prison". Then if they choose to accept that faith, someone must be baptized in their place while still here on the earth, because baptism is essential in order to progress in the next world (Mormon Doctrine, pp. 72, 73).

Another important thing to note is that Mormon's believe that as they baptize, they vicariously become saviors themselves. (Articles of Faith, p. 152).

My question would be that if those doing the baptism could be saviors themselves, what did Jesus die for? Let's think about that for a minute!

In my opinion, there is an even heavier burden laid on Mormons in the D&C 128:15. There it essentially says that if those needing baptism are not saved, those doing it will not be. That makes their eternal destiny tenuous at best, don't you think?

Let's take a look at what the Bible has to say about baptism. Does it really save us? In Rom 10:9-10, it says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." **There is no baptism necessary here.** Then in Eph. 2:8,9, it reads, "For by grace ye are saved, through faith; and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

So we can see from the above scriptures that the requirement for eternal life is only to accept God's free gift of salvation. The Bible also tells us that after death there is no second chance. In Heb 9:27, it says, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement." From this we can see that the choices have to be made while here on earth.

When attempting to justify their doctrine of baptism for the dead, Mormons use a scripture reference of I Cor 15:29. It reads as follows: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? Notice here that Paul is referring to the people being baptized as **THEY** not **WE**. Can you see that he is not referring to himself but to others, and not referring to Christianity at all? If the contents of this passage is examined, it is clear that he is referring to some other sect or something. In the next verse, Paul used the pronoun *we* and *they*. Obviously Paul is talking about people other than Christians here. I believe Paul is trying to ask why those people would practice such a thing if they didn't believe in a resurrection at all.

Mormons also use I Pet 3:18 to back up their beliefs about both salvation and baptism for the dead. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: which sometime were disobedient when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now also save us (not the putting away of filth of the flesh, but the answer of good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Please notice here that these spirits were both *disobedient*

and *imprisoned*. Hardly the kind that would be desirable by God's standards to be offered the gospel. And they were spirits. In the Bible, humans are never referred as spirits, only as having spirits. Peter said in the text that Christ went to preach to them. I suggest that Jesus appeared to these spirits to proclaim his victory over them when he was raised from the dead...

In I Peter 4:6, there is another difficult scripture that needs to be addressed. "For this cause *was* the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Notice the word *was*. The gospel *was* preached not *is* preached. These people did not hear the gospel when they were dead!!! They are dead now, but they heard it when they were alive!

Ps 49:7 says, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." The scripture is plain. No one can do it for us in any way. We must decide to accept Christ and be baptized while we are here. We cannot depend on anyone else to do it.

Remember the story of Lazarus in Lk 16? The rich man wanted to pass over the gulf between him and Lazarus, and Abraham told him he couldn't. One side was a pleasant place, the other wasn't. So we see that there is no way to change things after death. We better get it right while here!

Mormons have been baptized for Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Paul Revere, yes, and even Adolph Hitler and they are feverishly trying to baptize everyone that has lived on earth. They believe that whoever is missed will be baptized during the millennium. I think, and I hope you'll agree, time would be better spent learning who Jesus really is and how to spend eternity with Him!

IS MORMONISM CHANGING?

In the Deseret advertising magazine there is a book by John Hilton III called **CONSIDERING THE CROSS**. This is what it says: "*Would you believe that the scriptures emphasize the Crucifixion more than Gethsemane when speaking about the atonement? It's true! Explore this vital aspect of Christ's atonement and deepen your understanding of the Savior's love.*" Mormonism always emphasized Gethsemane!!

shine and it does its own defending by what it is up Jesus by word and by life and He defends Himself. “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.”

The difference between contending for the faith and commending the faith by lifting up Christ is the difference from “unchristianity and Christianity.” (In Christ, p. 104)

~ STEVE’S CORNER ~

Most people feel like they are a good person. However, according to God, there is no one good, no, not one. Christ came to save sinners. Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Recently in our country there have some horrific mass shootings which have resulted in the loss of many lives. In ancient times, the first child ever born, Cain, murdered his brother, Abel. Not much has changed.

In Biblical Christianity the heart of the matter is truly the matter of the heart. Man looks on the outside. God looks on the inside. We must continually come before a holy, awesome God with humility because we must realize our dependence on Him. Only God is good! Being a good person will not save anyone. It is only through our Lord Jesus Christ that salvation comes. His death on the cross and glorious resurrection is our only hope when we put our trust in Him.

Mormonism believes man is basically good. Some have even taught that a child is sinless until the age of eight when they are baptized. The LDS teaching that Adam and Eve fell upward when they sinned in the garden is not biblical Christianity. The Book of Mormon teaches in 2 Nephi 25, “Adam fell that men might be and men are, that they may have joy.” Their sin brought death and they were banned

from the garden of Eden.

When it comes to morality, we like to compare ourselves with other people. This may give us the deceptive idea that we are a good person. Biblical salvation teaches that we are sinners in desperate need of a savior. We cannot have salvation by trying to follow the ten commandments. It is only through repenting and trusting in Christ that we have a relationship with God in this life and in the life to come.

The next time someone tells you they are a good person, use this as an opportunity to share the true gospel of Jesus Christ!

FOLLOW CHRIST ONLY

The Mormon magazine, Liahona, June 2022, has a picture of LDS prophet Russell Nelson on the cover. It says, “We follow Jesus Christ and his prophet.” In Biblical Christianity, we follow Jesus Christ only. 1 Timothy 2:5 says there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ.” When any group says they follow Christ and _____ they are spiritually deceived.

In the Liahona, just mentioned, there is an article entitled “Choose the Lord and his Prophet.” On page 8, it states about Russell Nelson, “Like Samuel, today’s prophets, seers, and revelators are men of wisdom, much of which can only be acquired with age. President Russell Nelson is 97. As we review his inspired leadership, there is no doubt we have a prophet in Israel.”

Hebrews 1:1-2 states, “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He is spoken to us through His Son.” The law and the prophets were pointing and leading to Christ.

We have prophets today in the sense of Christians proclaiming truth from the Bible. But the time of Old Testament prophets leading to Christ has come and gone.

We must share with the precious Mormon people that we follow only the Biblical Jesus Christ and not Jesus AND a prophet. It is at this point that you must share who the Biblical Jesus is: Eternal God, virgin born, second personage of the Trinity, Creator, Savior and King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One mark of a cult is that they emphasize that you must follow their leaders, even if their teaching contradicts the Bible. Mormonism constantly denies the main teaching of the Bible and has another Jesus, another spirit and another gospel.

Why would I follow Russell Nelson when I can follow and worship Jesus Christ? The LDS prophets come and go, but the Biblical Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Your pastor is not the head of your church, Jesus Christ is!!!

CITATIONS OF CONCERN

(From LDS Leaders)

“When Adam and Eve were placed on the earth, they lived in the Garden of Eden. We do not know its dimensions, but the Prophet Joseph Smith, taught that it was located on or near Independence, Missouri.” The Ensign 1998, p. 16

LETTERS OF RESIGNATION

Periodically, we will continue to share portions of resignation letters we have on record here at the center in our newsletters. Hopefully it will be of some help for those who have gone through this or may be doing so in the future.

I...request the removal of all my membership roles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints immediately in recognition of the American Constitution of Rights to freedom of religion and in accordance with my wishes.

I renounce the L.D.S. church and any priesthoods or blessings real or implied. This request is strictly a formality to bring church records in line with what is already an accomplished fact.

I do not recognize your right to take any punitive measures, call any courts or any other legal procedures. However, I am aware that you will hold a Bishops Court whether I am present there or not and I am letting you know now that I do not intend to be there under any circumstances. I do not want the word excommunication used in any way with my name for the reason that the word excommunication means that it was by your choice that I am no longer a member of the church or that I have done something wrong and neither

is the truth. I have left the church on my own free will simply because I do not believe in any of its doctrine...I consider this matter to be complete and my membership totally withdrawn by the affixing of my signature to this document. I hope to receive a verification letter within 30 days from the date of this letter that this matter has been taken care of.

Thank you for your full cooperation and for respecting all my wishes. S.L.A.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

These meetings will have to, once again, be suspended until further notice. We especially appreciate your support through prayers and financial aid if possible.

Steve Article #2

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

We are excited to announce that our EMFJ Center will reopen Monday, November 15th. We will inform you when our support group meetings will resume.

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

