



September 1, 2010

H.I.S. Ministries September Newsletter, covering August 2010

Hard to believe that fall is already here – we just started summer, right? It has to be true that as we get older, time goes faster and faster – at least that is how it seems to us.

We were able to take a few camping trips this summer and we are planning on one more short trip – during the Labor-day weekend. Our friends, Chris and Jamie Hohnbaum, are coming with us. They bought a tent and are excited to try it out!

It is people like Chris and Jamie that keep us excited in sharing the Gospel of the True Jesus Christ with all who ask (1 Peter 3:15-17), all who want to know the Truth (John 14:6). It was many years ago that Chris came to know the Lord after many intense discussions about Mormonism vs. Christianity and the Bible, - and Jamie, just about a year ago, responded to our “truth-challenge”, and realized that to have eternal life in God’s heaven does not have anything to do with Mormonism or any religion, but Jesus alone, who did ***not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*** (Matt. 9:13.) She was “righteous” as far as her Mormon religion defines righteousness, but she acknowledged that to be born from above she must know Jesus of the Bible, who is God Almighty (Rev. 1:8), who alone can save her. (John 14:6.) We all praise God for her honesty and courage to stand for Jesus and break away from Mormonism, just as Paul instructed new believers in Corinth to do – to be separate. (2 Cor. 6:16-17.)

We are asking the Lord to bless this trip with good weather and a special time to talk about His love and plan for us. He must have a plan for all of us as **He has saved us by His grace** out of Mormonism to fulfill our purpose in Him. He has said, ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*** (Eph. 2:8-10.) Good works follow those who have been saved by grace, but good works will not save!

There are 2-3 major facts in Ephesians 2:8-10 that do not agree with LDS teachings and are important to clarify in order to lead Mormons to biblical salvation. Number 1 is their teaching of **who Jesus is**. Jesus Himself said that **unless we believe that He is “I AM”, God**, we will die in our sins, and cannot go to heaven. (John 8:24.) **God became a man to save us.** (John 1:1,14.) **Only God can forgive sins.** (Luke 5:20-21; Mark 2:7.) Jesus of Mormonism is not God who became a man, but a man who became a god, a brother of all, a created being, as, according to them, all mankind is, contrasting what the Bible says, i.e. that **Jesus is God, Creator of all.** (Matt. 1:23; John 1:1-3, 14; Col. 1:16; John 8:23-24.) The number 2 conflict with Mormon teaching is they believe they are **“saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances**

of the Gospel" (3rd Articles of Faith) – i.e. that by their works they earn salvation, and that **"grace"** is applicable only **after they have done all that they can do.** ("*...for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.*" 2 Nephi 25:23.) This is a real problem for Mormons because **grace without works** is taught to be **"one of the most untrue doctrines found in modern Christendom"**. (Mormon Doctrine, p. 671.) In Mormonism **"salvation by grace alone"** means **"resurrection alone"** and if one is not a Mormon working for salvation, resurrection alone will bring only damnation. (See Mormon Doctrine p. 671.) It is important to stress the biblical truth that to be saved, we must **follow the One who is the Truth, and whose Word is Truth.** (John 14:6; 17:17.)

Late Dr. J. Vernon McGee, one of the great Bible teachers of the 20th century, wrote about God's **Love, Mercy and Grace, "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the father, and from Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."** (2 John 3.)

"What is the difference between the love, mercy and grace of God? We read in Ephesians 2: 4-5, **'But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved).'**' This scripture combines all three: Paul says that **God is rich in mercy,** and because of **His great love** for us, He **saves us by His grace.**

What is the love of God? Well, God is love. Before anything was created, God was love. Love is the nature of God; it is what is called an attribute of God. But the interesting thing is that the love of God never saved a sinner. The love of God caused God to move in the direction of mercy and grace; it caused Him to exercise mercy and grace.

What is the difference between mercy and grace? Dr. Chafer very exactly expresses it: *'Mercy...is that in God which duly provided for the need of sinful man.'* God is rich in mercy. Why is He rich in mercy? Because He is love. And because God is love, He, by mercy, provided for the need of sinful man. But mercy didn't save man. Again, I quote Dr. Chafer: *'Grace is that in Him which acts freely to save because all the demands of holiness have been satisfied.'* God today is free to act in grace. You are a sinner who cannot provide anything for God. You haven't anything to offer to Him. But grace means that God can come to you, a lost sinner, and say, *'I am love, and I am rich in mercy. I love you, and I have provided by mercy a Savior for you.'* Now if you will trust Him, **'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.'** (Eph. 2:8-9.)

There is a fine distinction here between these words. Salvation all stems from the love of God, but God does not save by His love or by His mercy. After all, our God is holy, and the Bible says, **'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...'** (John 3:16.) **You see, God did not so love the world that He saved the world – He didn't do that. God so loved the world that by His mercy He provided a Savior for the world, and He can now save by grace.**

There is something else here that is important to see. Salvation is not only an expression of the love of God, but it is also an expression of His justice and righteousness. We not only need John 3:16, but we also need Romans 3:26: **'To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'** In order to justify you when you trust in Christ, God has to be righteous and holy and just. He cannot simply open the back door of heaven and slip you in under cover

of darkness. You and I are not fit for heaven. We are alienated from Him. We have no fellowship with Him. Communication broke down in the Garden of Eden, and He is the one who renewed it. Because He must be just and righteous, His mercy provided a Savior and it is because He loves you. He can be righteous and do this – ***‘that He might be just, and justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus.’*** Therefore, John can write, ***‘Grace be with you [that is the way God saves you], mercy [mercy provided a Savior] and peace of God that passeth all understanding is going to keep your heart.’*** “ (From *Edited Messages of 2 John*, by J. Vernon McGee – quoted by permission.)

Our prayer is that we will rise up to proclaim our God who is rich in mercy, in love and grace and help people to see that He is willing to forgive if we come to Him through Jesus who gave His lifeblood for us. Throughout the history we can see how and why nations have fallen. It always starts with religious apostasy followed by moral decline – and then comes political anarchy. Is this not what has happened to our country? There could be cure, according to God’s promise: ***“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.) **Are we His people?** If we are, will we humble ourselves, pray and seek His face so that he can hear us, and forgive our sin – and heal our land!

From our mailbox:

A Mormon man has been sending various questions. One of them was: *“Where did the concept that the Holy Spirit and the Holy Ghost are two different entities come from?”*

My answer: One of the primary sources for this doctrine of ***the Holy Spirit*** is found in the **Lectures of Faith**, ***“Theology or the Doctrine of the Church of Latter-day Saints”***, published in the ***Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) in 1835 as Section I***. This ***Section I*** remained in the D&C till 1921, when it was, **without explanation, removed.** [One of the obvious reasons for this removal was the contradiction between these lectures on the **doctrine of the Godhead that** Joseph Smith had taught, but then changed it on April 2, 1843, as recorded in D&C 130:22, which is discussed below.] **Only the Part Second, Covenants and Commandments remained in the D&C.** [Note: Much of the *Part Second* was also changed, revised and deleted, all without explanation.]

Lecture V (5) defines the Holy Spirit as the mind of God. This same Lecture V also says that there are **two personages in the Godhead, not three as is currently taught.** It defines these **two personages as the Father and the Son – “Father being a personage of spirit, and the Son a personage of tabernacle, fashioned like unto man.”** [No mention of the Holy Ghost as a third member of Godhead in this lecture.] [It was about 7 years later that Joseph Smith wrote his famous Wentworth letter, which was published in Spring of 1842, and added the Holy Ghost as a third person to his godhead.]

After the Lectures were removed in 1921 from D&C, N.B. Lundwall (LDS compiler) published the Lectures as a separate book, and added a footnote to Lecture 5, stating:

“(Note: That which follows has been added only in this compilation and, of course, is no part of the Lectures on Faith as originally delivered in Kirtland.) Further light was revealed to the Prophet subsequent to the giving of these lectures, as will be noted by the quotations following –

A. We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. - Joseph Smith. (See famous Wentworth letter, March 15, 1842, Documentary History of the Church, vol. 4:540.)

[Note: It should be Vol. 2:130-133.]

B. The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us. April 2, 1843, Doc. and Cov., Sec. 130:22. (Lectures of Faith, p. 53.)

Questions and Answers, at the end of Lecture 5 (p. 52), defines the Holy Spirit as the mind of` God.
(That mind of God is also called an influence of God.)

The Holy Ghost is a personage in the Godhead (at least from Spring 1842 on), but not the same as the Holy Spirit even though these terms are often used synonymously. [See Joseph F. Smith, Improvement Era, Vol. 11:380-2. Portions of his teachings are quoted in Lundwall's *Lectures of Faith*, pp. 53-55.]

“[Holy Ghost] is a Personage of Spirit...He can be in only one place at one time, and he does not and cannot transform himself into any other form or image than that of the Man whom he is...”. (Mormon Doctrine (MD), p. 359.)

Something to think about in the light of what we just read above: When a person is baptized into the membership of the Mormon Church, which is also called “Kingdom of God on earth”, and then “confirmed” and “given” the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands by Mormon elders, he/she is told, ***“receive the Holy Ghost”***. [Read again D&C 130:22 and MD p. 359 from above and ask: How is this possible in light of the Holy Ghost being a spirit man that can only be in one place at one time? There are currently over 13 million baptized Mormons who believe they have “the Holy Ghost dwelling in them” – D&C 130:22.]

Another thing to think about:

Mormon Doctrine, p. 319 (under Godhead) defines Godhead as ***“Three glorified, exalted, and perfected personages...They are: God the Father; God the Son; God the Holy Ghost...”***, and it continues, ***“Each occupies space and is and can be but in one place at one time...”***

[It is rather curious in light of Mormon doctrine that **in order become a God and be glorified, exalted and perfected**, one has to be born of human parents, receive a physical body and have gone through an earthly life, death and resurrection, and after that progression into godhood! But they teach that **the Holy Ghost is still a spirit man**, without a physical body. **How is he “glorified, exalted, and perfected man”?** Mormon prophets have also taught that the Holy Ghost is a son of the heavenly father, a spirit brother of Jesus, all mankind, and Lucifer, who does not have a physical body either, and whom, they teach, will never reach godhood because he does not, nor will not ever receive a physical body.]

[This was a rather long answer to your question, but maybe this will help and also motivate you to do more research on doctrines of Mormonism. **These are some of the issues that helped me to come to see that Mormonism is non-biblical, illogical and false.**]

I have exchanged several letters with an LDS man discussing **Joseph Smith's First Vision accounts** ([all 8-9](#) of them, **each one different in many points** from the ***“official account”*** found in ***the Pearl of Great Price***). LDS President Gordon B. Hinckley stated, ***“If the First Vision did not occur, then we are involved in a great scam. It is that simple.”***

I will give a summary of this LDS man's letters to me and my answers to him for they are way too long to include here completely. He has been drawing his answers from FAIR (an LDS apologetic website) and from their responses to him, saying that I was wrong about the First Vision accounts.

FAIR, in their conclusion (quoted below), supposedly explained why Joseph Smith, **who prior to 1832, had not said anything about his so-called First Vision**, but then in 1832, in his first own handwritten account, wrote, "I saw the Lord", but said nothing about seeing also God the Father. He said that "the Lord" told him that all churches were wrong. All the other versions of this vision that Joseph told between 1832 and 1838, were of a vision of an angel or many angels, who had "testified to him that Jesus Christ is the Son of God". But the **official First Vision version**, found in the LDS scriptures, says that **Joseph Smith told his First Vision account when it took place in 1820, saying that he saw both the Father and the Son, which resulted in a "great persecution" against him, "all the sects united to persecute" him, then only 14-year old boy.** The fact is that there is no record found anywhere that would verify this happened at all. No one seemed to have known about this story of the Father and the Son appearing to Joseph Smith in 1820 – even in official LDS literature it cannot be found until 22 years later, in 1842.

The above mentioned FAIR's conclusion said: "The Father is not explicitly mentioned as making an appearance in the theophany portion of the 1832 First Vision account because Joseph Smith patterned that part of his narrative after the vision of Jesus Christ experienced by the apostle Paul [Acts 26]. The words spoken by the Father during His First Vision appearance are, however, referred to in the introductory paragraph of the 1832 text."

My response:

There is no mention of God the Father in this 1832 story – anywhere. *The Introductory paragraph* is just editorial words of Dean Jessee's (who is the compiler of *Joseph Smith's Personal writings*). Besides that, **what does this have to do with apostle Paul's vision in Acts 26?** Paul never claimed to have seen God the Father, **which would not have been even possible, for the Bible says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."** (John 1:18.) **No one can see God as He is, for "God is Spirit."** (John 4:24.) After His resurrection, Jesus further explained why: **"Spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have."** (Luke 24:39.) **Jesus is God who became a man** (John 1:1, 14; Matt. 1:23) and thus **He is the only visible and physical Person in the Godhead** just as Colossians 2:9 states, **"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of Godhead bodily."**

I would suggest that you'd get these writings and read them for yourself. If you allow yourself to think and reason, you too will come to realize that **the First Vision account is not true, and, according to Pres. Hinckley, Mormonism is a "great scam".**

After 1838 there was a *big shake-up* in the Mormon Church. Even the Book of Mormon witnesses, all but the Smiths (his brothers and father) ended up leaving, many due to Joseph Smith's womanizing and polygamy. For how can one hide several dozen "wives", 11 of them even married to other living men - right in the same community? It had to have created quite a stir!

I believe that he made this First Vision story up in an attempt to boost belief in his *prophetic calling*. He perhaps thought: *Who could refute it? There are no other witnesses, just me and two Gods.*

He started to work on his story, adding (in 1839) that there might be more than one God (evidence of that is found in D&C 121:28). Information about all this and more is available.

The Mormon Church has been very good in keeping excellent records, and thus anyone wanting to know, can find information in their own books. The Mormon Church's own writings could hardly be called "*anti-Mormon*" material, right? [However, so-called "*anti-Mormon materials*" can give a shortcut and a list of **LDS books and writings** where various topics can be found.] The late LDS Apostle Bruce McConkie's **Mormon Doctrine** is now "out of print", which is a very regrettable matter. **His book is an**

alphabetical volume of Mormon doctrines which he collected and compiled from other LDS apostles' and prophet's teachings, making it an unsurpassed and doctrinally official resource. It may be still bought as a used volume from many Salt Lake Bookstores or from the Internet. Most Public Libraries have it available and many other important (LDS) doctrinal volumes as well.

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We would like to remind all who are intending on attending our *Understanding Mormonism* class that it is **starting 9/12/10** at Calvary Chapel in Salt Lake City, 460 West Century Dr. SLC, Utah 84123. Class time will be 6:00-8:00 PM and will continue every Sunday night for about 10 weeks. Registration is requested. Please call: 801.264-9999. Calvary Chapel will provide lesson materials after each class. Please be in prayer for this.

We would again like to remind you to pray for all whom we are witnessing to and have been communicating with for last several months – some of them are local and some across the country and even outside of USA. Because these people desire to remain anonymous at this time, we are not disclosing their names, but the Lord knows who they are. Some of them have shown great progress and courage in learning, some are wanting to cling to their “feelings” that Mormonism might be true regardless of clear evidence against it and truth they have seen in God’s Word. For many this is a scary situation that could affect every aspect of their lives: family, friends and even their jobs. We are aware that until they are able to trust the Lord’s love and provision in all matters of life, some may not be able to break away. Your help in praying for them is greatly needed. When one steps out in faith, and wholeheartedly asks Jesus to forgive all their sins and become the Lord of all aspects of their lives, the miracle of salvation takes place for which we rejoice. We have seen this so many times over these 25+ years and each one of these miracles give us renewed hope for those who have not committed themselves to the Lords’ hands –yet.

We want to thank you for your prayers for us – for our physical health as well as strength to engage in this spiritual war that at times takes all we can muster. However, we are committed to this ministry as long as the Lord Jesus allows us to work on His Field. He is our provider and we depend on Him and on you who partner with us to bring salvation to the lost. We pray that the Lord will reward you for your faithfulness to Him and His work.

Rejoicing in Him,

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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Thought for the day: Faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted!

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