



December 1, 2016

*He Is Savior, Acts 4:12

H.I.S. Ministries December 2016 newsletter, covering November 2016

For about 1600 years December 25th has been the day when the Christian world celebrates the birth of Christ. The early church did not celebrate the birth of Christ. It was not until the 4th century that December 25th became identified as *Jesus' birthday*. Research shows that Christ's birthday celebration on that day replaced an old pagan celebration of winter solstice during the longest night of the year. In actuality, exact date of His birth is not known, but it more than likely *was not on December 25th*. At the time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Judea, we read from Luke 2:8. *"...there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night."* That time of the year shepherds would not be out in the fields with their flocks – they would have placed their flocks in caves or stables to protect them from the cold winter nights. It is more likely that the birth of Jesus took place in the early fall.

Dr. Henry M. Morris IV wrote in *Acts & Facts*, saying, *"Early Christians in Britain celebrated the feast of 'Michaelmas' on September 29, also known as the Feast of Archangels. 'Michaelmas' literally means 'Michael sent', just as Christmas means 'Christ sent'. Scripture always portrays Michael the archangel as leading God's angelic host (Rev. 12:7), and while the text doesn't say, it's possible that Michael was the same 'angel of the Lord', sent with 'a multitude of heavenly host' to announce the birth of the 'Savior, who is Christ the Lord' Luke 2:9-13). It is also significant that this date occurs just before the joyous Feast of Tabernacles. Ancient Israelites celebrated this feast each fall in thankfulness for the harvest by dwelling in handmade tents, or 'tabernacles'. When the apostle John wrote 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us' (John 1:14), he used the unique Greek word 'scenoo' to emphasize that Christ the Creator 'tabernacled' (dwelt) with us for a time. So, just as Michael and angels proclaimed 'good tidings of great joy...to all people' (Luke 2:10), Christ's entrance into the world may have come at the Feast of Tabernacles, a time of great rejoicing in the nation. But as marvelous as the birth of our Savior is, this wasn't His miraculous incarnation. That moment occurred nine months earlier when Jesus [the second Person of Trinity] willingly emptied Himself and took 'the form of a bondservant' in Mary's womb to be made 'in the likeness of men' (Phil. 2:7). As such, the date of Christmas (i.e. 'Christ sent') may very well have been nine months earlier than 'Michaelmas' – which again brings us back to December 25. There are 278 days between September 29 and December 25, which is remarkably close to the average period for normal human gestation! ... wouldn't it be fitting that Jesus 'tabernacled' with us during the season of the longest night to come as 'the light of the world' (John 8:12)? ... As the world grows more hostile to Christ, it's imperative that all believers everywhere 'shine as lights in the world' in the 'midst of a crooked and perverse generation' (Phil. 2:15)."*

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name." (Ps. 100:4.)

At this time of the year we celebrate our God loving us so much that He became a man to die for our sins (John 3:16), for *"wages of sin is death."* (Rom. 6:23; 3:23.) He paid it all for everyone who willingly comes to Him, confessing their sins, and giving their lives into His hands.

We have done that. Have you? If you have, this is the time to really celebrate and be happy that we know Him and belong to Him. With that knowledge there is no fear of anything – not sickness, nor death, not loneliness, nor poverty. As it is written: *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: For Your sake we are killed all day long: We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor heights nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”* (Rom. 8:35-39.) Do you know Him? He is God who became as one of us. He is Jesus Christ, the Second Person of Triune God, who is called *the Son of God and the Son of man*. However, His name, Jesus Christ, was not known until an angel of God revealed it to Joseph who was to be a husband of Mary, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary, your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS (YSHUA, Savior), for He will save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet (Isaiah 7:14), saying: ‘Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name ‘Immanuel’, which is translated, ‘God with us’...Then Joseph... did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her until she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.” (Matt. 1:20-25.)

In spite of this clear message, the Mormon Church claims that Christ was known by that name, Jesus, from before the earth existed, in the preexistence. The Book of Mormon speaks of *Jesus Christ and Christians* hundreds years before Christianity begun... and they accept that!

We are often asked, *“Why do you make such a big deal about what Mormonism teaches about Jesus as long as they use His name and tell stories from the Bible about what He did and said?”* We say that because it is a big deal! The Bible teaches that Jesus is *“God with us”* (Matt. 1:23), not mankind’s spirit-brother. *He is God the Word* who became a man for our salvation. (John1:1, 14.) As Mormons, we were taught that Jesus was not God, but our spirit brother born as an elder son of God and His wives in the “preexistence”, and that we knew Him there by that name, Jesus. We were taught that Jesus is also a brother of Lucifer and all angels, as well as all humans born to this earth, that *He was not God who became a man* (as is taught in Christianity), *but a man who later became a god as we all could likewise become!* We were taught that *He was born as a natural result of sexual relations between God the Father and Virgin Mary*. The late Mormon prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, in his book, *“Come Unto Christ”*, p. 4, wrote, *“The body in which He performed his mission in the flesh was sired by that Holy Being we worship as God our eternal Father. Jesus was not the son of Joseph, nor was He begotten by the Holy Ghost. He is the Son of the Eternal Father.”*

This teaching has been in the Mormon Church from early on. It can be found in their prophets’ and apostles’ sermons and teachings from that time on to this day. A Mormon scholar, a late apostle, Bruce McConkie, wrote, *“God the Father is a perfected, glorified, holy Man, an immortal Personage. And Christ was born into the world as the literal Son of this Holy Being; he was born in the same personal, real, and literal sense that any mortal son is born to a mortal father. There is nothing figurative about his paternity; he was begotten, conceived and born in the normal and natural course of events, for he is the Son of God, and that designation means what it says.”* (Mormon Doctrine, p. 742. Emphasis added.) In the same book, pp. 546-47, McConkie, says further, under the heading, *Only Begotten Son*, *“Each word is to be understood literally. Only means only; Begotten means begotten; and Son means son. Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by their mortal fathers.”*

The Bible, without question, says that Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 1:18-23.) There were no physical relations by any man involved. His birth was miraculous Virgin Birth by the Holy Spirit. Thus He was born without sin nature that the rest of us inherit from our fathers, representing Adam, and thus all men inherited sin nature from him. (Romans 5:12.) Jesus is not our spirit brother but literally *“God with us.”* He

Himself said that believing that He is God is mandatory for forgiveness of our sin, for only God can forgive sin. (Mark 2:7b.) Also, we didn't preexist – Jesus alone came from heaven (John 3:13, 31; 8:23-24,58).

He said (v. 24) **"... if you do not believe that I AM He (God) you will die in your sins."**

Before He was killed, he took His disciples aside and taught them again about what will take place before His Second Coming. He, first of all, warned them about deception and said, **"Take heed that no one deceives you, for many will come in my name ... many false prophets will rise up and deceive many..."** (Matt. 24:4-5, 11.)

Later Paul warned about false Jesus', saying, **"But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted... For such [i.e. who teach of another Jesus, or different gospel and have a different spirit] are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is**

no great thing that his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15.) Jesus taught in Mormonism is different, *another Jesus*,

He is not God who became a man to take our sins away, but a created being, brother of Lucifer and all angels and humans, who, according to Mormonism, *came to pay Adam's 'transgression'* that caused death, and also show us a way how we too can become gods. This was what Paul referred to in 2 Cor. 11:3!

The serpent's first lie to mankind (Gen. 3:5) was that men can become gods, and since Joseph Smith's time, Godhood is Mormonism's highest goal and the most important teaching.

The true Gospel, declared by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:1-4, is a message of *death, burial and resurrection of Jesus* for our salvation. There are no laws or ordinances in the Gospel of God. It is to be received by faith without any works. (Eph. 2:8-9.) But *the gospel of Mormonism* is by *"laws and ordinances"* of the Mormon Church. (3rd Article of Faith.)

That *"gospel"* of *laws and ordinances* includes *membership* in the LDS Church, belief in *plurality of Gods of Mormonism*, that *Jesus is their brother, priesthoods, temple ordinances* – [for both living and the dead], temple or *"eternal marriage"*, and importance of good works till the end of life are stressed.

Spirit of Mormonism is *different spirit*. It is *experienced by answers they claim they receive from a spirit "testifying" to them that Mormonism is the only true church*, even though it's teachings are against the Bible.

The Holy Spirit of God would never "testify" of something that is against His Word. Apostle John

warned about these *different spirits*, stressing *that we test them by the Word of God, the Bible*, (1 John 4:1; and also 1 Tim. 4:1) *that was given to us by God Himself to help us know what true doctrine is so that we can correct those who have strayed from truth.* (2 Tim. 3:16 ; 2 Peter 1:21– see also 2 Tim. 2:15.)

There is no salvation in false gods, in another Jesus or another gospel. Let's celebrate His Birthday by

sharing who He is and why He came. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** (John 3:16.)

[Jesus of Mormonism may have many similarities to the Real Jesus of the Bible, but most importantly - he is still a counterfeit and cannot save. A counterfeit dollar may also look very similar to a real one, but it has no value.]

Questions Mormons ask (from our mailbox):

"We, as members of the LDS (Mormon) Church know and have a testimony of the Holy Ghost that our Church is the only true Church on the face of the whole earth. God restored the church and the gospel through Joseph Smith, our first prophet of this dispensation. Our Church is founded on the prophets and apostles who are in communication with God and Jesus Christ, our elder brother. We have had continually a living prophet since 1830, who leads and guides us in these Latter-days. We believe that there is some truth in other churches and religions, but we have it all. Which church of all the many the Protestant denominations is in your opinion the truest church of them all? If you admit that your church only has some truth, why don't you come back to Mormonism and enjoy all truth?"

Reply: Thank you for asking. I too, as a Mormon, once believed that the Mormon Church was the only true church, but when I finally compared Mormon teachings to the God's Holy Word, the Bible, I realized that I had been deceived by unbiblical concepts of God, Jesus and salvation. I had, according to teachings there, focused on feelings (*testimony*) and not *biblical facts*. When I compared what the Bible had to say about who God is, who Jesus is and how we can be saved, I had to separate myself from the LDS Church, leave and rely on God's Word, not teachings of men. Jude, verse 3, tells us that gospel = faith was *once delivered* (meaning that it will not require a re-delivery). But God of the Bible requires that we *earnestly study His Word* (2 Tim. 2:15) so that we will not, in ignorance (i.e. not knowing what God has instructed us to know and believe), follow false teachings and bring shame to ourselves. The foundation of biblical faith is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11), not any man. *The Gospel* is a message of *Jesus' death, burial and resurrection* – i.e. why Jesus came and how He saved us. (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) The Biblical Church is not an organization, or even a religion, *it is people who have come to true faith in Jesus, received Him and became God's children*. (John 1:12-13.) In the original New Testament, written in Greek, the word "ekklesia" is in our English Bibles translated "church", but it does not mean an organization or a building, but it means "*people who are called out*" from the world and now belong to God as His own sons and daughters. Colossians 1:18 explains that *we, believers in the true Christ, are "the body of Christ, and He is the head of the body, the church."* Being part of a local protestant church is for fellowship with like believers in Christ, not for salvation – for salvation does not *come from any of church, but from Jesus Christ alone through our faith in Him – not of works of any kind*. (Eph. 2:8-9.) As a matter of fact, **all true Christian denominations believe on the same fundamental biblical doctrines** that are *non-negotiable* and absolutely necessary for true faith and salvation. **All born again Christians believe the fundamental doctrines and are part of the Body of Christ, which is His Church**, regardless of denominational lines. (Col. 1:18, 24.) These fundamentals are: 1. Belief that the Bible alone is the Inspired Word of God. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.) 2. Belief that there is one God existing eternally in three Persons (i.e. Trinity). (1 John 5:7.) 3. Belief in the Deity of Jesus Christ – that He is God who became a man. (Matt. 1:23; John 1:1, 14.) 4. Belief in the Virgin Birth of Christ. (Luke 1:35.) 5. Belief that there is no salvation in any other but Jesus (no religion or church saves) (John 14:6; Acts 4:12.) 6. Belief in the Gospel, which is death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1-4), and that He ascended to heaven, and that He is coming again. (Acts 1:11.) 7. Belief that salvation is by grace alone through faith, apart from any works that we could do. (Eph. 2:8-9.) 8. Belief in the final judgment of unbelievers. (Rev. 20:12-15.) 9. Belief that all who are saved by grace alone will have eternal life with God. (Rev. 21 and 22.) We do not need to "belong" to any church, but we do need to fellowship with like believers. (Hebr.10:25.) Jesus has said, "*...where two or three are gathered together in My name, I AM there in the midst of them.*" (Matt. 18:20.) God is good. He loves us and wants all come to Him and join in to worship Him.

Question: "*Aren't we all God's spirit children who were born in preexistence and came to earth to be tested in mortality, and if we live according to His commandments, we will become like He is, and will be exalted and live with God forever?*"

Reply: There is/was no preexistence. We are not God's spirit children, but creation of God and descendants of Adam. To be saved and go to heaven, we "**must be born again**" (John 1:12-13; 3:3, 7), i.e. *born of the Spirit*. *By the new birth we "become children of God," for "those who are children of the flesh (i.e. Adam's posterity), these are not children of God"*. (Rom. 9:8.) The Bible tells us that "*Spiritual is not first, but natural (=flesh) and afterwards spiritual.*" (1 Cor. 15:46.) Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 2:14 about our condition before we are born of the Spirit, "*...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" Triune God of the Bible can only be understood by the Spirit of God. "*It is the Spirit who bears witness, because Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are*

one.” (1 John 5:7) **God of the Bible is one God.** (Matt. 28:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Col. 2:9.) Jesus said, **“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in truth.”** (John 4:24.)

The Bible conveys God’s exact words to us. Jesus prayed that His followers will be sanctified through God’s truth. He said, **“Thy Word is Truth”.** (John 17:17.) “Truth” is also a Title of Jesus. (John 14:6.) He is God the Word that became flesh. (John 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9.) **We can trust the Bible, for it is God who He preserves The Word forever.** **“The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purifies seven times. You shall keep them, O LORD, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.”** (Ps. 12:6-7.)
May God bless you as you read and study His Word.

The Word of God tells us that it is our mind that needs to be renewed when we come to Christ. Paul instructed new believers, **“Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.”** (Rom. 12:2.) Before conversion most people were conformed to worldly behavior, worldly talk and habits. After lifetime of gathering into our hearts what the world offers and accepting ideas of the world, **change is a process**, it does not happen overnight. We cannot immediately get rid of everything that has been part of our daily lives, and ingrained deeply on our memory banks. Our minds and hearts have to be purified, and that takes time. Those who come from other religions (like Mormonism) to faith in Christ have even harder time than those who had no religious faith at all. In Mormonism our hearts were filled with **unbiblical concepts of God, Jesus and salvation**, and we were taught to focus on our feelings rather than seeking truth from God’s Word, the Bible. I know that from my personal experience. Every false doctrine and information I had believed and accepted had to be removed, one by one, and replaced with Truth that can be found only in God’s Word.

I recall that during the **first 2-3 years after Mormonism**, many times I had to stop and *rewind* my mind to think again: *Is this what I learned as a Mormon, or is this biblical?* Some teachings sound very similar, for **Mormonism uses biblical words and terms, but they have given these words and terms totally different meaning.** It was hard work and took very serious evaluation.

The new Christians who are coming from other false faiths may experience similar confusion until they have seriously searched the Word of God, the Bible.

Actually those who had no **“religious beliefs”** before coming to faith in the God of the Bible have a bit easier time –for there is less to be removed from their minds. Prayer and help from believing friends makes transition smoother. This is why we keep asking that you’d pray with us for these people we are helping to be released from bondage to false teachings, and fear of leaving that accompanies that.

Again we thank you, our friends and supporters, for we couldn’t do this work without your help and prayers. This is **HIS Ministry**, and the Lord is the one who guides us in all we do, and you are there to assist and make sure that we are able to do it.

We are depending on your prayers for these people who we are working with. At this time we are asking a special prayer for a young lady who has, just a few months ago, met a returned Mormon missionary who has introduced her to Mormonism. She already has expressed to her parents that she believes that Mormonism is true. Romantic involvement often blinds the hearts and minds of young people, who, though coming from an active Christian family, have not yet taken the Bible studies seriously enough to be able to detect the grave errors in Mormon teachings. It is heart-breaking for parents who have not thought, prior to this happening to one of their own, that it is important early on to warn their young ones about cults and how they can seem very sincere and are attractive in their **“wholesomeness”**. Mormons are taught, from early childhood on, that **“image is everything”**. Thus by very conservative dressing style and in their all-around handsome appearance they seem to be **“above the crowd”**. Of course there is nothing wrong with

clean and good appearance, but it is the Mormon doctrine, if they accept it, that will eternally damn them, unless they can be led to change their course early on.

We are asking your prayers for healings for Dale, Sharon, Heather, Caryl, Judy, Kristine, Max, Pat, Merridy, Judy, Dave, David, Tom, Sandy and Al. There are many others who have trials and many needs and who have asked prayer. The Lord knows their needs. We are praying the Lord to guide all of them and give them desires of their hearts, according to His will. (1 John 5:14-15.)

We are praising the Lord that He has blessed Suzi with a new home, near us, and that her Park City home is already under contract. We pray that it will go through without problems.

We ask that you'd pray for our health also – Dennis' blood pressure is very high and the new medicine that his cardiologist wants him to take is way too expensive, and we cannot afford it (1,500 per month!). Our health insurance has not agreed to pay for it. He may have to go back to his previous BP medicines he has been taking that do not seem to help much. Regardless of his blood pressure, he has been able to work full time, and we thank the Lord for that.

I went to see a cardiologist a week ago (the same one that Dennis has had for about 14 years). He is doing some testing to find out what can be done to regulate my heart beat. 48-hr. heart-monitoring has already been done. I'll go next week to get results and find out what is next! We praise the Lord that my thyroid tumor has stopped growing and the PC doctor has put my surgery "on hold". God is good, all the time.

We wish you Blessed Christmas and a Great New Year, 2017.

Serving the Lord Jesus with gladness in Utah and around the world,

Rauni & Dennis Higley

Website: www.hismin.com

Email: hismin@xmission.com

Phone: 801.943-5011

Thought for this month:

"When knowledge of the True and living God is refused, false gods inevitably will fill the vacuum." (Chuck Missler)

The great 19th century preacher G.K. Chesterton's observation still rings true. He wrote:

"When men choose not to believe in God," he observed, "they do not thereafter believe in nothing, they then become capable of believing in anything."

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Question for the month:

If what you believe now is not the Truth, would you want to know?

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Our postal address is HIS Ministries, 2890 E. Willow Bend Drive, Sandy, Utah 84093-2044.

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