

September 1, 2007

H.I.S. Ministries September 2007 Newsletter, covering August 2007

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3.)

We have received several letters again questioning why we believe in the Trinity, some even asserting Trinity to be an “invented belief”, borrowed from pagan religions.

Since the Mormon Church does not believe in the Trinity, but in three separate Gods for this world and millions upon millions of Gods in the Universe, and others who are still in a progressive state of becoming Gods, perhaps it will be helpful if I, again, try to address this question, as I have answered to those who have asked.

I do not believe that any man can completely understand or explain the Trinity – after all we are talking about God – and there is none other like Him, but we can and must believe what God has revealed about Himself in His Word, the Bible. The Bible teaches that there is one God and that this one God exists as one essence in three Persons. These three Persons are: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit (in KJV, the Holy Ghost).

God is absolutely perfect divine Being in three Persons. His Being is what God is in relation to the universe He created. These three are called Persons because they relate to one another in personal ways. God is one God in three Persons.

“God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24.)

Most Mormons are claiming to “know” that Trinity was invented and introduced by Constantine in Nicaea (Nicene Creed) and that Catholics and after them Protestants just accepted it. They correctly say that the word “Trinity” does not appear in the Bible. It does not, but the teaching of the Triune God is evidenced throughout the Bible.

We cannot find the word “incarnation” in the Bible either, but people in general use it as a word describing a belief that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh.

False beliefs have been around from the early days of Christianity and continuing to this day. Creeds (there are four known creeds) were established to defend the Christian faith in Deity of Christ that had come under attack. Some of these who write to us, say that the concept of Trinity did not exist until after the Nicene Creed (325 A.D.). That is not true. There were many early church leaders who taught the doctrine of One God in three Persons (Trinity) from the first Century on and more than 200 years before any creeds were written. Just to mention a few of them: Clement, the third Bishop of Rome, in A.D. 96; Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, around 90 A.D.; Justin Martyr, an early Christian writer, in 155 A.D.; Theophilus, the Sixth Bishop of Antioch, was the first person known to have used the word “Trinity”, in 168 A.D.; Tertullian, who was an early leader of Christianity, around 197 A.D. – and there were more. *The Apostles’ Creed* was one of the earliest established statements of faith written to defend and clarify basic Christian beliefs. *The Athanasian Creed* was established after the *Apostles’ Creed*, and before the *Nicene Creed* (325 A.D.). *The Chalcedonian Creed* was written about 100 years later, again to defend the faith against false teachings. God is not 1+1+1, which would equal three, but God is 1x1x1, which equals one.

St. Patrick (432 A.D.) used the shamrock to illustrate the Trinity this way: He asked, *“Is this one leaf or three? If one leaf, why are there three lobes of equal size? If three leaves, why is there just one stem? If you cannot explain so simple a mystery as shamrock, how can you hope to understand one so profound as the Holy Trinity?”*

The reason for belief in One Eternal God is found in the Bible.

“Hear O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD.” (Deuteronomy 6:4.)

“Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me.” (Isaiah 43:10 – see also 44:6, 8; 45:5.)

The Bible teaches that the Father is God:

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 1:7; Eph. 4:6; 1 Corinthians 8:6.)

The Son, Jesus Christ is God:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” (John 1:1.)

“And Thomas answered and said unto Him, my Lord and my God.” (John 20:28.)

“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” (Hebrews 1:8.)

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:10-11.) [Here Paul is saying the same about Jesus what Isaiah wrote about God (the Father) in Isaiah 45:23:

“That unto Me (God) every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.”]

Jesus forgave sins and the Bible teaches that only God can forgive sins. (Mark 2:5-12; Luke 5:20-21.)

Jesus accepted worship as God (Matthew 14:33; 28:17; John 9:38; 20:28.)

(For more about Deity of Jesus, go to Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 1:18; 8:23-24, 58; 10:30; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; 10:9-13; Colossians 1:15-16; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:7, 20.)

The Holy Spirit is God:

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?...Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” (Acts 5:3-4.)

“Now the Lord is that Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:16-17; compare with Exodus 34:34.)

There are at least sixty verses in the Bible that mention all three Persons of Trinity together. *“And Jesus when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17.)*

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 28:19.)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14.)

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 20-21.) (See also Ephesians 4:4-6 and Titus 3:4-6; John 3:34-35; 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-15; Romans 14:17-18; 15:13-17, 30; 1 Corinthians 6:11, 17-19; 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 3:4-6; Galatians 2:21; 3:2; 4:4; Ephesians 2:18; 3:11-17; 5:18-20; Colossians 1:6-8; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5; 4:2, 8:5:18-19; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:23-24; 4:13-14.)

We must explain God to Mormons the best we can from the Bible, so that they might be saved. As Jesus said, our eternal life depends on that knowledge! (John 17:3.) Mormons do not know what the Bible teaches about God, and because of the lack of knowledge of the Bible, they have accepted Joseph Smith’s false God, and from that it logically follows that a son of this false god is not God the Son, taught in the Bible, but “another Jesus” warned of in 2 Corinthians 11:4. The fact remains that Mormons do not believe in the God of the Bible, but in a god who was once a mortal man, who conceived Jesus the same way as all mortal men conceive their children. They also believe and teach that we all are brothers and sisters of Jesus and Lucifer, as spirit children of this god and his wives, and that all Mormon men can become gods. As you see, the difference between biblical teaching and Mormon teaching about God, Jesus and salvation (which are the most important matters) is huge!! The Bible clearly teaches that God is not a man (Hosea 11:9; Numbers 23:19), but *eternal God, who does not have a God before Him, nor will men become Gods after Him.* (Ps. 90:2; Isaiah 43:10; 44:6, 8.) The Bible teaches that Jesus is the Only Begotten Son of God, who came to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. (John 3:16.) By accepting Him, we “become sons of God” (John 1:12).

C.S. Lewis wrote in “Mere Christianity” about the unique son-ship of Jesus this way:

“We do not use ‘begetting’ or ‘begotten’ much in modern English, but we know that that means. To beget is to become a father of; to create is to make. The difference is this: When you beget, you beget something that is

same kind as yourself. Humans beget babies, beaver begets beavers, a bird begets eggs which turn to birds. But when you make, you make something that is different kind of yourself. Bird makes a nest, beaver makes a dam, human makes radio etc. – or statue that is more like himself, but really not. The distinction between beget and make (or create) is huge. What God creates is not God, just like what humans create is not human. What God begets is God, just as what human begets is human. That is why ‘the Only Begotten Son of God’ IS GOD. God who has claimed us for Himself is Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, not just Father, not just Son, and not just Spirit. God is God for us – the father. God is god for us – the Son, God is God for us – the Spirit. When we say ‘yes’ to Jesus as Savior and Lord, we are immerses into the love and life of God the Father; and we are immersed into the grace and truth of God the Son; and we are immersed into the power and purity of God the Spirit.”

(Emphasis added.)

[If you desire to read more about Trinity, you can go to our June 2007 Newsletter and read my reply to the last letter there. If you do not have that newsletter, you can find it on our website: www.hismin.com/newsletter.html]

Summer is coming to an end, even though we could not determine that from temperatures that are still in the high 90’s. I like warm, but this hot weather is getting hard to take – we have had 17 days with 100 degrees or over in August and all the rest have been in the high or mid 90’s. But fall will come – and then winter...☺ We took a few days to get “cooled off” in the Mountains (9700 feet above sea-level) and do some reading and studying that has been waiting for *when we have time* for it. We know that we never really *have extra time* but we must *take time* to do what is very important – that is to learn what is going on among Christian churches – for we have seen the deception spreading into many evangelical churches. We must know the “safe ones” to recommend to those who are escaping cults and starting to walk with the Lord in the light of His Word. Roger Oakland’s new book, “*Faith Undone*”, had been recommended to us for that study. I read Roger’s book and Dennis read Brian Flynn’s “*Running Against the Wind*”.

(More information on them at the end of this report.) We highly recommend these books for all who are interested in knowing what is really going on. The Word of God warns us not to be ignorant of the schemes of the devil and we are told to arm ourselves against them by learning what might lie ahead. (Eph. 6:10-20.) Deception is not just a ‘cult-thing’ any more. The Bible warns that the most dangerous deception comes “from among our own”, because we do not suspect that. When we came out of Mormonism almost 25 years ago, we would not have dreamed that we must be as careful as we now know we have to be concerning evangelical Christian leaders and churches. The Bible teaches that we must “*be like the Bereans*” (Acts 17:11), and test all things carefully with the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1; 1 Timothy 4:1). In our early Christian days we assumed that this command mostly applied to cults and other false religions and not to *evangelical Christian churches*. During the last years we have seen a huge change taking place in many of them. However, we do believe that most Christian pastors have been, or still are, uninformed and because of that, somewhat “innocent followers” of these famous and popular “mega-church” pastors. They simply assume that you cannot argue with success, and they want to keep up with the times by adopting the “new methods”, that actually are not new, but repackaged old ones.

Perhaps the reason why we are alerted to these things is because we were once deeply deceived. Like the old saying goes, ‘*once burned, twice smart*’. False teachings, regardless of the name of a group or –ism, they all originate with the enemy of our souls and our God, and those who were victims of these things before, can see them easier, for there is a similar theme in all of them. Deception does not show the obvious falsehoods right off – the enemy is smart and the way he works is to make people see his plans as great improvement over the “past methods”. “*If you give the devil your little finger, soon he will take your whole hand – and YOU.*” About 3000 years ago wise King Solomon wrote: “*The thing that hath been, is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.*” (Eccl. 1:9.)

I am talking here about the *Emerging-church phenomena and ecumenical movement* that is spreading like wild-fire among *postmoderns* who say that the “old-style” evangelical churches are hindered by being *stuck in the past*, and that they are talking too much about biblical doctrine. They say that to become successful we must be willing to move into the *postmodern area of love and unity among all men and all religions*. This has

been promoted here in Salt Lake City, Utah, as “*bridge building*” focusing on what we have *in common with Mormons*, and avoiding controversial doctrinal issues all together.

These postmoderns say that the old ways are no longer effective, and that we need a new kind of Christianity if we are going to make a difference! There are many “Christian authors” promoting this “new kind of Christianity” that accepts all religions as equals. These other religions include *Buddhism, Islam, Wicca, Hinduism, and “you-name-it-religions” on equal footings with biblical Christianity*. In effect they are saying that the “*gate is wide*” and that there are many ways to God! They proclaim that “*Christian faith needs to be reinvented for the 21st Century.*”

One of these postmoderns, Irwin McManus, has announced, “*My goal is to destroy Christianity as a world religion and be catalyst for movement of Jesus Christ...Some people are upset with me because it sounds like I’m anti-Christian. I think they might be right.*”

They talk about “*new faith and new kind of church that must be established in order to reach this generation*”. Ideas and philosophies of men are embraced rather than the Word of God that clearly teaches that *Jesus alone is the Way* (John 14:6) and that the *gate to eternal life is narrow*. (Matt. 7:13-14.)

What Jesus offered to mankind two thousand years ago, and what has been offered by God’s faithful servants ever since, *is the saving faith in Jesus alone, “the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints”* (Jude 3). True biblical faith will never change. A world without Jesus is dark, but if we follow the True Jesus, we will walk in His Light.

(John 8:12.)

Most of what is offered in and through the *Emerging church* seems to be new and filled with *wonderful ideas*. However, these ideas are not *new*, nor are they *wonderful*, when they are inspected in the light of God’s Word and history. They come from way back through Catholic monks and mystics like Thomas Merton, even mystics like Eckhart and Soren Kierkegaard, whose writings I read as a young girl in Finland, and whose books I still have in my library. Perhaps these writings played a role in my readiness to accept Mormonism, because I did not know the Bible... Many of today’s emergent leaders are quoting Kierkegaard and talk about his “mystical affinities”, saying that he “*stands squarely in the great Western tradition of RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE*”, which is in tradition of mystics of the past who base their “religion” on personal experiences rather than the Bible. Kierkegaard has influenced men like pastor Bob Buford and others who are key figures behind this *Emergent movement* now and who have taken their inspiration from mysticism, Eastern philosophies and techniques developed from them, who also speak about their “*spirit-guides*”. Peter Drucker, who was highly influenced by Catholic mystics, started formulating the *emerging church* already in the 1950’s. He died in 2005 at the age of 95, but his influence lives on.

It is important to dig deeper into these matters before accepting them as something *new and wonderful*. We need to look into where these “new and wonderful” things originated.

It is like the idea of men “leaning to become gods”, that is so important in Mormonism, but where did it come from and who started it? Most Mormons are not asking these questions. The idea of godhood came directly from the mouth of the devil himself (Gen. 3:5). Mormons sincerely believe that they will become creator-gods IF they only follow and obey what is taught to them in the LDS church.

Similarly this new ideology is nothing less than old mysticism that is identifiable from Eastern Mysticism, if we only look and compare. Many just follow, without questioning, thinking that *after all, these promoters are well known and trusted evangelicals!*

One of the very popular practices in many Christian churches today, called *contemplative prayer*, is connected to Eastern religions. That is where it originated. Contemplative prayer is a new name for Eastern (Hindu) Meditation known as Transcendental Meditation or TM. Brian Flynn, author of “*Running Against the Wind*” is a former New Ager who for years practiced TM. When he became a Christian he was shocked to discover that the same Hindu-methods are used and taught in Christian churches, but they have a new name for it, contemplative prayer instead of TM. [His book has detailed information on that subject as well as on “Christian yoga”, another Hindu practice, etc.] Churches are going into this because most pastors are not aware what Hinduism really is and what it promotes – just like we encounter many Christians who think that Mormonism is pretty close to Christianity and “not that far off”– which only shows that they do not know nor do they understand Mormonism.

There are New Age promoters working together with the *Emergent Church*, unknown to many pastors who would not have anything to do with New Age. Proponents of *contemplative prayer* claim that this [New Age/Hindu] prayer-method (using repetitious words or phrases, even biblical verses) brings people “in tune with God” so that they can “hear” from God. Contemplative-prayer promoter Richard Foster says that “*contemplative prayer is for everyone*”, but WARNS that by this practice “*we are entering into a spiritual realm*” that could bring connection to “*dark and evil spirits*”!

Why would any Christian want to do this, yet thinking that he or she is praying to God of the Bible, even repeat verses from the Bible, but by this practice “*reach dark and evil spirits*” instead? It is because they are following Hindu-methods that are reaching demonic spirits through Transcendental Meditation (TM). That reminds me of the Mormon temples. During the endowment ceremony a man playing the role of Adam prays to “God”, but it is the devil who answers his prayer. When Mormons, whom I know have been through this ceremony, tell me that they have received confirmation, answers to their prayers about truth of Mormonism, I remind them that devil can and does answer prayers. If and when we are foolish enough to ignore God’s counsel and get involved in cultic methods and participate in ceremonies that are unbiblical, we put ourselves in a danger-zone that there might not even be a possibility of return. We must not tamper with mysticism or anything that originates from the dark side, but cling to the Word of God and obey Him. In these churches that have adopted these methods, you may hear terms like “*new reformation*” or “*postmodern reformation*” (another name for the Emerging church). You also may see books written by many well-known authors like Leonard Sweet, Brian McLaren, Henry Nouwen, Erwin McManus, Dan Kimball, Richard Foster, Doug Pagitt, Leith Anderson et al. Please test all things. Not all that sounds good on surface is good and godly when checked below the surface. The reason why we are doing this is that we need to know which church is with God and with His Word so that we can send new believers in Christ to them without worry. I hope that the same reason motivates you too to study these issues.

The Word of God has plenty of warnings concerning these issues. Peter wrote: “...there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” (2 Peter 2:2:1-2.)

The Word of God instructs us to *test all things* (1 Thess. 5:21) by the Bible, in context!

Peter urged, “Ye therefore, if we know these things before, be aware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Peter 3:17-18.) We too would like to see all come to the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and not “*be led away with the error of the wicked*” and “*bring glory and honor to Him, both now and for ever*”.

There are so many voices attacking the Bible and those who believe that God’s Word is as true today as it was thousands of years ago. One of the many voices is the Presiding Bishop of Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Mark Hanson, who has called “for Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches to come together and combat a fundamentalist-millennialist-apocalypticist reading of the scriptures” and monitor those who “take the Bible literally”!! They are saying that those who read the Bible and take it literally are dangerous fanatics!

One of the emergent leaders, Brian McLaren, calls the idea of God sending His Son to a violent death “*false advertising of God*” and says that “*in many churches today*” some of the leaders, while saying that they “*love the Cross*” also say that “*the Cross was an example of sacrifice and servanthood that we should follow; but the idea that God would send His Son to a violent death for the sins of mankind – well, that is not who God is. A loving God would never do that! Such a violent act would make Christianity a ‘slaughterhouse religion’.*” (Quoted from *Faith Undone*, p. 191.)

The gospel Paul declared is the gospel by which we are saved! The gospel is, “*that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures...*” (1 Cor. 15:1-4) Without belief in that Gospel, no one can be saved! “*Wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Romans 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9.) “*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are the saved, it is the power of God.*” (1 Cor, 1:18.) The Gospel of God and Christ is not a “*slaughterhouse religion*”, but *salvation that only God Himself, who died*

for us, could pay for us all.

Many promoters of this “*new reformation*” and their New Age friends are saying that they are followers of Christ and His example, but they deny the absolute necessity of the Cross and that *faith in death, burial and resurrection of Jesus* is the only gospel that saves. They have changed the gospel into “good works” that can save all mankind without the Cross of Christ. (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Gal. 1:8-9.) They see themselves as “do-gooders” and think that God will accept them for all the good they do. But the truth is that we must KNOW who Jesus is – that He is God, Immanuel, who loved us so that He became a man to pay the penalty we all deserve, but could not pay. Following His example in life is good thing, but that is not what saves us -“*For by grace are you 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.)

- * *FAITH UNDONE* is written by Roger Oakland, and Author and Lecturer and Founder of *Understand the Times International*
- ** *RUNNING AGAINST THE WIND* is written by Brian Flynn, a former New Age Medium who was a practitioner of these occult methods that are now being introduced as something “Christians” should be part of. Brian is the Director of *One Truth Ministries*, and he conducts New Age Seminars.
- In addition to these above mentioned two “must read books”, we highly recommend Ray Yungen’s *A Time of Departing*, that explains further what is happening in Christianity, and what we, as believers in Jesus Christ, can and must do.

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May God bless you, our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. We thank you for your prayers and for your help in this ministry. We are asking that you’d continue to pray with us that the Lord will provide so that will be able to continue this ministry.

We are starting on Sept. 16th our new 10-week course, *Understanding Mormonism* at Calvary Chapel, Salt lake City. We need prayer that we may boldly follow the Lord’s leading in all we do and say and that those attending will be blessed.

We have been asked to teach another 10 week course at South Valley Baptist church, an SBC church, starting in January 2008. Please pray God’s direction there also.

We thank you for continuing to pray for Margaret, Judy, Bruce, Jason and Stephani and for our dear friend Pat who is having some health concerns. , Please pray for Kalli and the safe delivery of her first baby in just a few days. (It was little over 2 years ago that Dennis married Matt and Kalli in Vernal, Utah.)

We received sad news that Florence’s son, Matthew Nelson, died suddenly about a week ago. Please keep Florence in your prayers that she will receive peace and comfort from the Lord.

There are several LDS members that we have been communicating with for several months. They need prayer for courage to face the families and friends and follow the Lord Jesus of the Bible.

Please pray for Edward who is leading Bible-studies for other former Mormons in Uganda. We need to pray for God’s protection for him and his friends as they are challenging the Mormon Church there.

Serving Jesus in Salt Lake City, Utah, and worldwide.

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We would recommend that all who can will go and see the movie, *September Dawn*.

It is an excellent and accurate portrayal of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, part of American History that had to be told. It is very well done.

[H.I.S Ministries is 501 (3) (c) ministry, meaning that your gifts to help us to run this ministry are tax deductible.]

“When God calls a man, He does not repent of it. God does not, as many friends do, love one day, and hate another; or as princes, who make their subjects favorites, and afterwards throw them into prison. This is the blessedness of the saint; his condition admits no alteration. God’s call is founded upon His decree, and His decrees are immutable. Acts of grace cannot be reversed. God blots out His people’s sins, but not their names.” (Watson Thomas on Eternal Security of believers.)