

THROUGH

THE

MAZE

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3-11-01

Dear Mr. Spencer,

I want to thank you for your wonderful ministry. I read in one of your newsletters that a Christian minister didn't care for your style of preaching. Apparently he felt you were too hard? Should be nicer. He obviously is clueless about the hardness of Mormonism! Don't listen to him, he is naïve about what you deal with.

A Christian minister lead my husband and I through the "sinner's prayer." My husband got it and received Christ. I had no idea what I was praying. That minister sent me home with a copy of Beyond Mormonism. It was exactly your "style" that penetrated the veil of darkness and pulled me into the light. By reading your book, I understood salvation and how to receive Christ. I will never forget kneeling before my Lord and pleading with Him to come into my heart, after I read how to do it in your book. It took you and your style to help deliver me from the clutches of hell! I thank you for that! Don't change. Mormons everywhere need you.

The Lord blessed me with the opportunity to lead my oldest son to Christ. He in turn, lead his younger brother to Christ. My boys are five and ten years old. We are grateful for you and your ministry.

In Christ,

□

Lisa R Wiggins

Letters like the ones in this newsletter come into our offices every day. We are reaching out through the Internet, newspapers, radio, newsletters, personal seminars, and personal counseling. But we need your help. Please read the enclosed special appeal letter.

People are sometimes desperate to be in contact with someone who knows how they feel, what they are going through, and what awaits them. Maria is typical of the email correspondence I engage in on a daily basis.

Dear Mr. Spencer.

I'm an 18 year old college student. I have been born and raised in the Mormon church. I was blessed by my grandfather, baptized by my step-father, I received my Gospel-In-Action award and even my Young Women Medallion. I've held various positions, graduated from Seminary (albeit against my will).

But I can't say that I've ever been actively involved in my religion. I've always had doubts. But I love my family, friends, and it's been hard for me to express my displeasure and disbelief with the church. I

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The

truth about

Jesus

by James R. Spencer

Millions have
been deceived
by unbiblical
teachings.

Jesus forced His followers to think about who He is. He asked the Pharisees, “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?”

They answered, “He is the son of David.”

Jesus said, “Then why does David—speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit, call him Lord?” (Matthew 22:41-43, New Living Translation)

Jesus then asked, since David called the Messiah Lord, “How can he be his son at the same time?”

This question has one answer: Jesus is *before* and *superior to* David. He told the same class of questioners that He was *older* than the patriarch Abraham: “Before Abraham was, I am.” (John 8:58, KJV)

The truth about Jesus

Jesus is fully God and fully man

God reveals himself progressively in the Bible. From the Old Testament we learn there is only one God. Once that light is burning brightly, the New Testament introduces Jesus who says, “If you have seen me you have seen the Father” (John 14:9).

For two millennia the church has believed that Christ is both fully man and fully God. Throughout the last 2,000 years, groups have arisen within the church to reject this bedrock Christological foundation — groups the church traditionally has called cults.

Two fundamental errors about Christ’s nature deny either the full deity of Christ or deny His full humanity. Those who deny Christ’s full deity make Him merely a human who is adopted, in some special way, by God. Those who deny His full humanity make Christ into a mere appearance of God, making Him something other than fully human. Although these problems may at times seem only to be theoretical musings (“What difference does it make if you love Jesus?”), in reality these errors always produce bad fruit.

Jesus is a real man.

Let’s examine the teaching that asserts Jesus is simply an appearance of God, not really a human. God just sticks His head out of heaven and pretends to identify with us. If that were true, then Jesus’ death — the death which is supposed to save us — is not really a death. It is only a spiritual play, an act, a sham.

No, the Bible says Jesus took upon himself human flesh and upon that flesh were heaped the sins of mankind. If that is not true, then Jesus did not pay the price of sin, did not die, is not resurrected. If Jesus were not truly a human being, we remain guilty before God.

This error is seen in Christian Science and in all of the so-called “religious science” denominations. These groups speak of the “Christ Spirit” or the “Christ Nature.” In their minds, God is a concept — Divine Love. Our job, they say, is to become

(Continued on page 4)

in tune with this illusory Christ Nature; and, when we do, we will see that the material world, with its bodily illnesses and human passions, is no more real than Jesus. They are illusions. Such thinking not only makes Jesus into an ethereal, wispy ghost, but it makes mankind into that as well. If real flesh were not resurrected in Christ, we are yet in our sins and will die in them.

Jesus is Fully God.

The most common error about Jesus makes Him human, but not fully God. He may be “almost” God, or “the Savior,” but He is not the one true living God and Creator of the universe. Some see Jesus as a great man who attracts the attention of God and is somehow possessed by God. In reality, that is the description of a Spirit-filled Christian.

But Jesus is not merely a human who is in close communion with God; He is God. The Bible declares that Jesus exhibits all the attributes of God revealed in the Old Testament — omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. He is the Creator of all things. He is worshiped by the disciples and even called God by Thomas. He demonstrates that He is the Lord and giver of life because He lays His life down and then takes it up, kindling in us the hope of resurrection.

Those who refuse to make Jesus Lord of all do not allow Him to be God at all. For He is either the God of the Old Testament who wraps himself in flesh and presents himself to us in the

New Testament, or He is a pretender. He cannot be another God, for there is no other God. The Bible eliminates the possibility that Jesus is — somehow or some way — another god. The Bible records God’s final words on this: “Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. ... I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. ... Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any” (Isaiah 43:10; 44:6,8).

The Bible says of Jesus, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). But those groups which refuse to recognize Him as the Creator assign to Him a lesser nature: Jehovah’s Witnesses think of Him not as the Creator of All, but as the first thing God created. Mormonism makes Jesus the son of a god named Eloheim, a god who has a father and a grandfather (although we do not know their names).

Words must mean something, or they mean nothing.

When we say we “believe in Jesus,” we must identify what the term *Jesus* stands for. If I believe in a Jesus who is not God, I may as well put my faith in any other good man. If I believe in Jesus who is not fully man, I am no better off than those New Agers and occultists who commune with the Christ Spirit, but who fail to recognize the biblical Jesus.

False Teachings

Mormonism: Jesus is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the son of a God named Eloheim. All human beings and all angels (including Satan) are sons of Eloheim in exactly the same way Jesus is.

Jehovah’s Witnesses: Jesus is Michael the archangel, a creation of Jehovah. Their Bible translation (The New World Translation) renders John 1:1: “In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.”

Christian Science: Jesus was a man who demonstrated the Christ — “the divine idea of God.”
The Way International: Founder Victor Paul Wierwille wrote the book *Jesus Christ Is Not God*.

Unity School of Christianity: Jesus was a human being who became “a Christ” when he expressed his “potential perfection.” Other humans have the same potential.

Unitarian-Universalists: Do not believe Jesus is the Messiah of the Bible, the Second Person of the Trinity or God Incarnate.

Unification Church: Jesus was resurrected spiritually, but his body remained in the grave. He failed to provide physical redemption by his untimely execution. He failed to marry so he failed to right the wrongs of the first Adam and Eve — only the third Adam (Sun Myung Moon) can accomplish that.

Maria, from page 1

haven't attended for months now. I'm still trying to pray and read my scriptures, but I must say that I'm feeling more lost than ever these days. My boyfriend bought me a copy of "Beyond Mormonism" by James Spencer. Now I have more questions that I feel need to be answered, and I'm not quite sure where to go for them. It burns my soul not having a church to attend on this weekend, the day of resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

Please help me. I feel more lost than ever now.

Maria [Not her real name]

Dear Maria,

Believe me, I know what you are going through. When I wrote *Beyond Mormonism*, I wrote it for people like you. People who have at least some personal understanding of the wonder and glory of Jesus Christ, but who have not yet come into perfect peace with God through him.

One of the questions I asked myself when I left Mormonism was: "What can I keep?" And you know what? The only thing I could keep was Jesus, Himself. And the Bible, of course.

But that was enough. All I wanted was Him, anyway. I don't need a church organization. (Don't get me wrong, Maria, I am a licensed minister and I attend a church in Meridian, Idaho regularly. But what I want from the church is the *exposure of Him*. I want the pastor to expose me to Christ in the sermon, and I want to enter corporate worship to bring me near to Him.)

The good news is that there really, really is life after Mormonism. In fact, I don't believe real Christian life can begin *until* after Mormonism. So, a new day awaits you.

Don't wait to begin. I don't know what part of the country you live in, but wherever you are there will be Christians worshipping the Risen Jesus in a way you never experienced in a Mormon Ward building. Just get out the phone book, and try out a church near you. Again, since I do not know where you live, I can't recommend anything specific. But if all else fails, try going to either a Southern Baptist Church or an Assembly of God church. I only mention those two to try to help you narrow down a service for tomorrow. The church you attend tomorrow may not

be the one for you for the longer season. To find that place you will need to pray and try out several churches until you find one where you feel at home. In addition, there doubtless is a campus ministry wherever you are (unless you are at Ricks or BYU). Those organizations are usually pretty good bets.

You are looking for a "Bible-thumping" church. I'm sort of kidding, but you want one where the pastor and congregation are convinced the Bible is the word of God, without error, and a reliable guide for life and doctrine.

I am praying for you right now, Maria, that God will draw you to Himself and answer *all* your questions.

If you send me your snail address, I will send you my book, *Have You Witnessed to a Mormon Lately?* It answers the very specific questions you are asking yourself right now.

Let me know how I can help.

Jim Spencer

Dear Jim

Thanks so much for your reply. It means a lot to me to have someone that knows what I'm going through, that can help me a bit. After I read your reply, I started crying and couldn't stop. I think it's because you've used the same phrases I've said in my heart over and over again. I've felt (for a long time) that I want God in my life, but not a religion telling me how to worship him. A couple years ago I was given a lesson on the proper formula for [Mormon] prayer. I was asked to give the closing prayer, and I remember being terrified that I would mess up and God would be angry with me. I guess it's small things like that that have really rankled me for a long time. I live in Provo, Utah. [Not her real city] I attended Utah State University last semester, but left for a variety of reasons, one being the close minded attitude of many people there. I learned I was being "fellowshipped" after my roommates had talked to my bishop about my "negative attitude" about church, and the fact that I refused to take Institute classes. I'm going to Salt Lake Community College now, and I've moved out of my home, in part so I don't have to attend church and can have a bit more control over my life.

I have to be honest and say that I'm

scared to denounce the church (if it comes to that). My family would die. They can barely stand the fact that I don't believe now. My mother told me that she will be here to help me pick up the pieces of my life when I'm done messing it up. I'm scared that she's right. I'm so scared to hurt them and all the friends I have. I know people will talk and frankly, that scares me. I'm scared to go to a different church. I've never been to a non-Mormon church. Was that hard for you when you left the church? Don't get me wrong, I LOVE the people in the church. I was raised in a wonderful family and taught the values of compassion, service, and love. But I feel like the church is wrong. I can't really put my finger on it (I don't know much about Christianity according to different religions). Thank you for your suggestions for churches to attend. I plan on going next Sunday.

Thank you again for your reply, it means SO much to me.

Maria

My address ...

Maria

Wow. I hear your heart cry. And I know what you are going through. Again, take comfort in the fact that there are thousands of us out here who have gone through what you are going through.

I don't know a church in Provo to recommend to you. A church I know of is Salt Lake Christian Center in Salt Lake. It is a big church, but I believe it is a good one. Again, you will probably have to try some out until you feel comfortable. You mentioned in your first email that your boyfriend gave you a copy of my book. Where does he attend church? Can you go with him?

I am sending you a packet of information, including my book *Have You Witnessed to a Mormon Lately?* That may help.

I believe God is going to show you something important right away about Himself.

You asked if it was hard for me to go to another church. No, it wasn't. But it is hard for lots of exiting Mormons, so don't feel like there is something wrong with you.

You mentioned the word "scared" several times in your letter to me. Most, if not all, Mormons who sever ties with the Church feel that way. I have seen strong

men turn to jelly when the Bishop comes over to ask them why they were not in church. But think about that for a minute. Where does that come from? The Bible says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2Ti 1:7) And again, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom.8:15)

Fear does not come from God. Peace comes from God. As you trust your ways to God, your fear of men, organizations, and even family will diminish. A religion that promotes fear and bondage in those who try to exercise their own God given intelligence is not a healthy religion.

Jim

Hi Jim

I received your packet. Thanks so much. I'm reading my way through all the info (there's so much!) and I've found a

Southern Baptist church to attend on Sunday. I'm very excited, and a little nervous. I'll let you know how things go.

Thanks again!

Maria

Wow, Maria, so nice to hear from you. I have been praying. Let me know how it all goes and if I can help you in any way.

Jim

Jim,

Today I went to the Baptist church. I had a lot of good feelings, even though I was a bit embarrassed. Obviously everyone knew I was new and went out of their way to be nice to me, which was really neat, but a bit different. Usually I was the one helping to fellowship!

Thanks so much for your concern. I'll let you know how next week goes, because I'm really very excited to go back.

Thank You!

Maria

Maria,

That is great. Keep me posted. And if you have any questions, fire me an email.

I want to use our correspondence (I'll keep your name and location anonymous) in my newsletter, if you don't mind. The questions you asked and what you have gone through, will help other people who are struggling to get Beyond Mormonism.

Jim

Hi Jim.

Yes, that's no problem at all, as long as my name and location aren't used. Thanks again.

Maria

PS You might want to suggest that Mormons find out some of the bare MINIMUM facts before they go to a different church, so they aren't looking around asking "What?" like I was yesterday (i.e. different belief of the Trinity).

Maria

Maria,

I'll send you my tapes on The Trinity.

Jim

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The Book of Mormon: Another Witness for Christ?

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (The Mormons) presents the Book of Mormon as "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." The Church says the book is a history of Jews who migrated to North America 600 years before Christ. However, nearly every archaeologist thinks the Book of Mormon is fiction. If that is true, the book is not "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," but rather "A Testament of Another Jesus Christ." There is a vast difference.

B. H. Roberts—a Mormon General Authority and scholar—discovered that the Book of Mormon is *not* divine. For a copy of the pamphlet, "The Disappointment of B. H. Roberts," write us. There is no obligation. No one will call on you. Your name will be kept confidential.

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