

THROUGH THE MAZE

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The Rescue of a Missionary

George Bromley, like so many young Latter-day Saints, wound up as a missionary for the Mormon Church even though he had reservations from the beginning. One of his problems was that he lived two doors from Blaine Hunsaker, a man many of you know from the pages of this newsletter. I have often said that Blaine is



George Bromley owes his rescue to Blaine Hunsaker in Brigham City, Utah and Christian Friends in Abingdon, Virginia

the boldest man I have ever met. He sure didn't let me down in this story.

George and Blaine met not too long before George left on his mission. George had moved to Brigham City from Cache Valley with his brother and his mother, a widow. Blaine, of course, lost no time in witnessing to the family. George was interested in what Blaine had to say, but did not make a commitment to
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Invest in the Kingdom of God: The Market is Never Down

The Bible tells us that "...he that winneth souls is wise." (Pr 11:30). Investing in the Kingdom of God pays dividends. Those dividends are not *only* awaiting us in heaven, but we enjoy the benefits now in terms of peace and well-being—a sense that our lives amount to something more than just the acquisition of goods and the joy of family and friends. When we invest in ministry, we build into our own souls.

I never cease to be amazed by the faithfulness of those who have chosen to be part of the *Through the Maze* ministry. I have records going back some ten years.

Once in a while I pull them up on the computer and look at them. The reason I do that is to encourage myself. When I am feeling down and feeling that maybe God won't get me through the next fiscal quarter, I look at the records and see that there are people who have stood with me for years and years.

Who are these people? Some of them are friends who knew me within the first few weeks or months of my Christian walk. When I was suddenly and sovereignly saved on the Sugar City curve (try saying that five times fast) in January of 1974, I could never have dreamed where

God would take me. And I certainly would not have dreamed that I would have so many people come along beside me and believe in what God was doing in my life and ministry.

Tonight I deposited a check from a man and woman I met, I believe, in that first month of my salvation. We met in a Bible study in Idaho Falls in the home of Dewey Wilmot—a man I consider to be "a father in the Lord." I wound up in that meeting after I went into a Bible book store in Idaho Falls. Talking to the woman who owned it, I said, "I am a Mormon
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Rescuinga Missionary...

Christ.

When Blaine heard that George was going on a mission, he immediately talked to him. He told him he was making a mistake, but reminded him that he was free to change his mind “at any time.”

George wound up assigned to Abingdon, Virginia. One of his activities was to donate one-half day a week as a volunteer at the hospital gift shop. He and his missionary companion worked in the shop. They were not supposed to look for missionary contacts at the shop (but of course they did).

They ran into a Christian couple, the Roberts (pronounced Ro-bears). The Roberts witnessed to George.

One day George called Blaine back in Brigham City. He said he had made a mistake by going on the mission and he wanted to come home.

Now at this point, I have to confess, that I would have been too naive to help George. I am ashamed to admit that, but it is the truth. Even with all I know about Mormonism, I would have probably told George to simply tell his mission president that he wanted to go home—that he had changed his mind.

Maybe I am naive because—even though I have been in full-time ministry to Mormons for twenty years—I do not live in Utah. Sometimes I forget the very things I know. I start to think that Mormonism plays fair. After all, this is America. People are free to come and go as they please. Young men cannot be forced to give up two years of their lives if they do not want to.

But what I forget is that slavery is not always enforced with a whip or a gun. Most often it is enforced with strong social pressure, shame, and guilt. Blaine Hunsaker *never* forgets that. He never underestimates the lengths to which Mormonism will go to keep its captives in bondage.

For example, Blaine knew that if the mission president got wind of George’s increasing doubts, he would immediately bring George back to the Provo missionary training center and “deprogram” him. He would be isolated and badgered by

well-meaning Mormon leaders who would eventually convince him that he was making a tragic mistake. They would tell him he would shame his family and put his soul in jeopardy. And 99% of the time when young, impressionable men face such brainwashing they capitulate.

So Blaine told George *he must tell no one what he was thinking*. He told him to sit tight and have the Roberts call him (Blaine). He knew George would need support on both ends.

The plan they came up with was complicated and risky. First, they waited un-

Well-meaning Mormon leaders would tell him he would shame his family and put his soul in jeopardy if he did not return to his mission.

til he was working at the hospital. Then they separated him from his companion, telling the companion that George had been asked to help upstairs.”

George immediately went to the apartment where he was staying, to grab his belongings. He rode his bicycle. On the way to the apartment he had two flat tires, so he was riding along on the rims. The local Elder’s Quorum President, who was a policeman, saw him and stopped and gave him a ride to the apartment. He asked where George’s companion was. He asked if “everything was all right.”

When George got to the apartment, he felt he couldn’t leave without telling the mission president he was leaving. The president was located several hundred miles away in Knoxville, Tennessee. George called him and told him he was going home.

The Roberts showed up at George’s apartment to take him to the airport. They not only had a ticket for him and a motel room reserved, but they had collected an offering for George of \$600.00. He had only ten cents of his own money.

As they left the apartment, the local mission leader pulled up in the driveway. He had been called by the president in Knoxville. He did not see George.

The Roberts took him to an airport

some sixty miles away. The next day, as George was waiting for his plane, a man came up to him and showed him a picture of George himself! He asked if George had seen the man and George told him “No.” The man did not recognize George even though he was holding his picture. George has no explanation for that.

Blaine, suspecting that Mormon officials would be waiting for George at the Salt Lake City airport, went there to meet the plane. However, George missed a flight and came in a few hours later. Blaine was still there, but if any Mormons had been waiting for the earlier plane, they were gone.

One of the first things George told Blaine was that “he needed to get saved.” Blaine responded; “This very day.”

When George and Blaine got to George’s mother’s home in Brigham City, the local Bishop was waiting for them. Blaine told

him he “had no authority here,” because “these people are no longer Mormons.”

“Is that the truth?” the bishop asked.

They stammered that they guessed it was the truth. The bishop left.

When I met George he was very determined to give glory to God for his experience and his salvation. I asked him if it would be OK to tell his story in my newsletter. He said that he wanted anything that would help share God’s grace with Latter-day Saints.

This story was an eye-opener for me. It not only gave me courage, but called me to repentance. Sometimes I am not strong enough in this ministry. Sometimes I am tempted to believe the Mormon public relations machine and Mormon propaganda.

Sometimes I get weary in the battle. I am never wearied by Mormons, but sometimes I am wearied by Christians. Often, Christians “don’t get it.”

For example, I have just returned from doing a series of meetings in Logan, Utah. The meetings were very successful, but the day after the meeting, the pastor of the Church in Logan where I spoke got a call from a Christian who had attended. He said that my presentation “wasn’t very good” It could have been better, he said.

I had several Latter-day Saints in the

meeting. I preached my heart out. I wanted to reach the Mormons. Three young men were in the meeting. One of them emailed me the next day and told me “he had to give credit where it was due.” He complimented me on my presentation. I offered to send him some material.

During that same meeting, a woman came up to me and said: “You don’t remember me, but you were here several years ago. When you gave the altar call, my elderly mother went forward to receive Christ. She was a life-long Mormon. She is now dead, but she died saved.”

When I receive this kind of criticism, I am reminded of D. L. Moody’s story. He said that after he preached a fiery sermon, someone came up to him and said: “Mr. Moody. I don’t like the way you get people saved. You talk about hell too much and you are too animated.”

D. L. Moody said, “I don’t much like the way I do it either. How do you do it?”

The man admitted that he *didn’t* do it.

D. L. said, “I don’t like your way more than I don’t like my way.”

While I want to be a person who is able to receive genuine, helpful criticism, I expect to get a break from Christians (although I don’t expect it as much as I used to). I wonder if the critic knows or would care that I have probably led twenty to thirty Mormons to Christ in my meetings in that little church during the past twenty years. I wonder if he has ever done the kind of cult ministry I do. I wonder how many Latter-day Saints he has led to Christ. I cannot imagine going to his church, listening to him preach and come away saying something so critical without factoring in what he was attempting to achieve in the meeting.

So, whenever I fight discouragement, I am glad to remember that there are people like Blaine Hunsaker around. Blaine is the grandson of a prominent Mormon polygamist. For more than twenty years Blaine has stood boldly for Christ in the little community of Brigham City. *Everybody* in the town knows his position. Hardly *anybody* understands him. He continues to take unpopular stands and probably “does it wrong.”

But, folks, *he does it!*

Taming Bratzilla

Being a grandfather is one of the best experiences of my life. Like Jolt Cola, it has “all the flavor and twice the caffeine.” Pictured above is Sophie, our first granddaughter. We have eight grandsons.

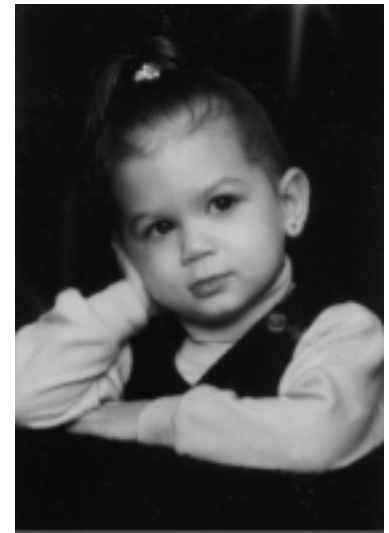
Of course, Sophie is much loved by her parents and her grandparents, so I was surprised one day when her mother (my daughter Jaime) referred to her as Bratzilla.” “Where did you come up with that?” I asked. Jaime said, “She is a cross between a brat and Godzilla!”

Every day Sophie goes down for her nap a 2:00 PM. Promptly at 2:05 she patters up the stairs and says brightly, “Good morning” Her mother says, “Are you out of your ever-loving mind!” and carries her back downstairs. When we were just drifting off to sleep, we heard Sophie say, “Say ‘cheese!’” She is a kick.

Anyone who has had the privilege of raising kids knows that they are not born innocent. Of course, God *judges* them innocent until they reach an accountable age, but they—from infancy—want things *their way*. The Bible tells us that training a child is hard work which takes a steady hand and lots of love. Civilizing humankind is part of God’s great plan for the world.

His work will not be done in the hearts of men until we reach heaven, but all Christians agree that we must attempt to bring our selfishness under control—to achieve some measure of self-discipline. This is the process the Bible calls Sanctification. Actually, there are two aspects of Sanctification. First, there is the Sanctification which occurs when we are born again—we are declared “holy.” God calls us a “holy nation.” (I Pet. 2:9) This aspect of Sanctification is the condition of having been set apart as holy and acceptable to God. When we are His, we are holy.

However, there is another aspect of Sanctification. We sometimes refer to this aspect as that of “outward sanctification.”



It is the process of becoming the same on the outside as we are on the inside. We are “new creatures in Christ,” (2Co 5:17), but we are also “...being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory.” (II Cor 3:18)

All Christians agree that we need to become better. But we do not always agree upon *how* that process takes place in the life of a believer.

This subject holds a particular fascination for me because I have escaped from a cult. Most all cults make the mistake of thinking that the power to change the human nature is somehow in the hands of the human who desires change. They miss the great secret: that it is God who changes us. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.” (Php 2:13)

It is not just cults that become confused on this issue. I find all too often a creeping legalism within the Church itself. I think too often Christians are confused about *how* God brings about outward holiness in the believer.

Perhaps I am oversensitive on this issue because of my background, but I don’t think so. I think there is a great need to address this issue again and again in the Church. To that end I have begun to preach a sermon called “Taming Bratzilla.” I really believe it is the best sermon I have ever preached. I preach it whenever I am allowed to do so. Perhaps you would enjoy hearing this sermon. It is available on our order sheet, or you can request it on our order line at 1-800-871-7120. The cost is \$5.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

Elder and I just got born again.” I have lost contact with that woman (her name was Darlene, I believe). But that night I went to the Bible study and I met Dewey and Ben and Mary, among others. Later I would perform the marriage of Ben and Mary. They are the couple whose check I deposited tonight.

They saw me in the best of times and the worst of times. They saw me struggle just hoping my wife would be saved. When she was saved, they saw us struggle to hold our marriage together. During those early years Dewey and Virginia Wilmot counseled us into the wee hours.

There are people on my mailing list who were among the first ten or eleven people in attendance at the very first meeting of Shiloh Chapel, which met in our home in Idaho Falls beginning in May of 1980. Some of those people, like Dave and Tamara Wulf, are among our closest friends today. Shiloh Chapel is now Shiloh Foursquare Church. After pastoring there for nine years, I left to do full time apologetic ministry.

Many of the people on my mailing list are people who found Christ in one of my many meetings held throughout the country. When I go into a town and place an add in the paper challenging Mormonism or the Occult or Secularism, I often have people come who want to argue, but who leave saved. Once in a while, one of them will drop me a note saying something like, “I was saved in your meeting in Portland (or in Phoenix, or a town in California, or Arizona, or Wyoming, or Florida).

Others encountered my ministry through my book, *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder’s Story*, or one of my other books. Some heard me on one of the hundreds of radio and TV shows I have done or because they viewed *The Mormon Dilemma* (More than one Mormon Missionary has told me he met Christ because of that video).

I have people on my mailing list that I met, but don’t remember meeting, and people I have never met and wouldn’t know if I saw them on the street.

Now, more and more people are coming to know *Through the Maze* because of one of my web sites (mazeministry.com or yrulds.com).

I wish I could remember all the stories. Stories like the extended family in

Pocatello who were saved because they came to a meeting just to see what was up. Or the woman who found two of my books in a storage shed and got saved reading them. Or the Moonie missionary who came to recruit me to be part of a political organization and eventually was saved through our conversations. Or the people who came to Shiloh Christian Center and met the Lord.

I have baptized hundreds of people in the Snake River, spoken to thousands throughout the world (including ten million people in nine languages on Trinity Broadcasting Network. I have met people in parking lots, cafe’s, hotels, movie theatres, along side the road when either I or they were broken down.

If you think I am bragging, you are missing the point. The point is that of all the various people I have encountered throughout the twenty-plus years of my ministry, *some* of them have decided—for one reason or another—to come along side and help shoulder the load of this ministry.

I won’t name any more names because there are just too many that someday I wish I could acknowledge in some public way. But they are not part of the ministry so they can receive glory. They are part of the ministry because they think what we do here at *Through the Maze* is valuable.

But let me share, in general terms, about some of the supporters. A wonderful grandmother in Willits, California has sent *Through the Maze* \$15.00 a month for at least ten years. Think of it! I am about to do a mailing to a thousand Latter-day Saints in a small community in Utah. I figure it will cost between \$1,000.00 and \$1,500.00. This one lady’s giving—over time—can be said to have paid for that mailing.

Then there are those who give sacrificial amounts every month to say, “Keep going, Jim!” Several times when the ministry was on the ropes, a large check has come in to pull us back from the brink. Once when a Church closed its doors and liquidated its assets, it gave the money to several ministries. *Through the Maze* was one of those. Once, we received a gift of stocks that had come to a couple in an inheritance. Another time a family sold their business and sent us \$10,000.00. The

day that check arrived I was on the verge of shutting down the ministry. Last spring we received a special offering that made it possible to keep going through the summer. All of these gifts came to meet the urgent request for financial rescue. I have come to believe that God is often “The God of the Last Minute.”

The newsletters I send out, the free books, audio tapes, and videos I send to honest seekers—they are paid for by people who have sought God and determined to support my work. All of the books I have written have been written because people on my mailing list made it possible for me to give myself wholly to the ministry.

Sometimes the ministry is in short supply of funds. We never have a surplus. We are always month-to-month. But, God has seen fit to keep us in ministry for more than twenty years.

These people have invested in the Kingdom. They are part of the winning of thousands to Christ during that time. I could not have done one-tenth the work I have done without my “partners.”

There is a lot more to do. The work is, I believe, much more difficult than it was fifteen years ago. People are more sophisticated and more hardened—I really believe that. However, I have never had a greater sense of being useful than I have at this time. I really feel like “things are coming together” in a new way. I feel as though—if God gives me a few more years—*Through the Maze* will surpass what it has done in the past.

I need your help as never before. Only about one in five people who receive the newsletter respond financially. Thank God, some of them respond, with great enthusiasm.

Would you pray about joining the *Through the Maze* team? If you are already a member, would you ask God if you are doing all that he would have you do to help?

As this ministry crosses over into the New Millennium, I have no idea how much time I have. I am still young at heart and healthy, but if I have another twenty years, I will be 78. My “druthers” would be to go to heaven before that! However, if I am going to be here, I want to be effective. More effective in the next twenty than I was in the last. ■