



AN OPEN LETTER TO PAUL BY ANDY POLAND

Concerned Christians

We received the following handwritten letter from Paul, dated 11/16/2011. No last name was included, nor a return address. Paul is obviously on our mailing list to receive our newsletter, and has not requested we remove him from that list. Since there are comments made by Paul which are indicative of some Christians who know little about Mormonism, and some who also demonstrate a lack of understanding of Christian theology, we decided to respond to it openly with the hope that you (all of our readers) might benefit from my answer.

First, his letter, exactly as it was written...



Concerned Christians?

I recently moved from Minn to a small Utah town. I was warned about "The Mormons." After a few years and returning home I had Bible study with my friends. They ask what I had learned.

My statement to them, we could all learn from the Mormons. Every one I have met is more Christian than I. They believe in Christ and act more like Christ than any group of people I've been acquainted with.

They have shared what they believe when I ask, never pushing their religion on me and have never torn down or said anything negative about my Baptist beliefs.

They teach of Christ from the Book of Mormon & the Bible and I believe it's the same Christ I follow.

When I read your "Concerned Christians" newsletter I could only think you must be pretty angry people and a little more "love of Christ" and then act it.

Yours in Christ, Paul

My Reply:

Paul,

Thank you for voicing your concern over the ministry of Concerned Christians. I must admit that if I was only listening to what your LDS friends are telling you I would agree that our ministry must be motivated by hate. However, I have a different perspective because I was raised LDS. For years I withheld from my Christian friends, truths about my Mormons beliefs. I was more interested in telling my non-LDS friends what they might be ready to receive so that they would later accept all of my Mormon beliefs. There were three things that I would purposely withhold from any conversation I had with my non-LDS friends: 1) my belief that I was working to become a god someday, 2) my belief that the Bible was corrupt,

and 3) my belief that the free grace taught by Christians was an abomination.

The reason I would withhold my beliefs about my personal deification was because I was taught in the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Provo, Utah that if an "investigator" asked if we believed that we could become a God, my answer should be "No. We are trying to be perfect like God," or "We were trying to be like God, but we were not going to become God." The leaders at the MTC told me that if I revealed the truth of that doctrine to "investigators," and that truth caused them to not accept Mormonism, then I would be the cause of them losing their salvation. Later, I believed that my sin of "revealing the truth" would result in my

having to answer to God. I reasoned that everyone should start with the "milk" of the gospel, before they received the "meat." Today I regret that I was not open about my true beliefs. It seems strange to me now that in my private moments on my mission, I would daydream about how good and gracious I would be as a god to my future spirit children. I wanted to answer their prayers with all the love that a good god should have for his progeny.

I never wanted to reveal my disdain for the Bible to any Christian. I would quote the Bible and dishonestly speak highly of it. I wanted them to think that I used the Bible as much as they did.

(Continued on page 2)



Concerned Christians

525 E Broadway
Mesa, AZ 85204

www.concernedchristians.com

Phone: (480) 833-2LDS

MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 18

Mesa, Arizona 85211-0018

General Manager:

Andy Poland

andy@concernedchristians.org

Founders:

Jim and Judy Robertson

The CROSS Newsletter Editor:

Judy Robertson

judy@concernedchristians.org

Website questions / comment

Office Manager:

Bob Betts

bob@concernedchristians.org

Newsletter Design: Marsha Book

AMAZING QUOTES

FROM LDS CHURCH LEADERS

“It would mock the Savior’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross for us to expect that He should transform us into angelic beings with no real effort on our part. Rather, we seek His grace to complement and reward our most diligent efforts (see 2 Nephi 25:23). Perhaps as much as praying for mercy, we should pray for time and opportunity to work and strive and overcome. Surely the Lord smiles upon one who desires to come to judgment worthily, who resolutely labors day by day to replace weakness with strength.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson
The Divine Gift of Repentance
November 2011, *Ensign* pg. 39

BIBLICAL RESPONSE:

Anyone that is striving to be worthy of grace, admits that he has not yet received grace. Grace and forgiveness must come *before* one can do the works of God, otherwise grace is not a gift but wages that must be paid by God.

“Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness” (Romans 4:4-5).

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

AN OPEN LETTER TO PAUL

However, I knew what I was taught by the Mormon church, that the Bible is corrupt and teaches many erroneous doctrines. Whenever I would discover scriptures that disagreed with the concepts of Mormonism, I would first ask myself, “What did the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible say?” I was taught that Joseph Smith had spent much time correcting the corruptions found within the Bible. Sometimes, when I found a passage that was in “error,” but Joseph had not changed it, I would assume that Joseph simply did not have the time to fix it. I was so grateful that we had the purity of Mormonism found within the *Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price*. I was also grateful that God had told me through a peaceful spiritual manifestation that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and that I could rely on his revelations found within Mormon scripture.

Often when I was confronted by Christians about the concept of free grace and forgiveness, I would think about how naïve they were to believe that salvation was free. The first verse I would quote was James 2:20, “faith without works is dead.” I did not understand that James meant that good works come *after* one is saved and is evidence of the forgiveness that one has already obtained from God. In contrast, Mormonism is clear that permanent forgiveness only comes after one has stopped sinning: “And now, verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return” (D&C 82:7). Often I would worry about my sins that were constantly being returned to me. I knew that the Mormon god did not look upon sin “with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31). Therefore, I was

constantly afraid that in the end I was going to be cut off from God’s presence forever. This caused me to work even more diligently to keep the commandments of God. I never understood what it meant to know the peace of God because I was expecting God to say, “you are not good enough.” The truth is that no one is good enough. “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law. Rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Romans 3:20).

Paul, both you and I know the true peace of God. We know that our sins are taken away because of the trust we have placed in the sacrifice of Christ for us. Please take time to spread that true love with those who have never known what it means to have “peace.” This is the reason why I am in this ministry, to share the love that God had for me when he told me that my sins were permanently forgiven because of my faith in Jesus. It is so good to know that “good” people don’t make it to heaven, but “forgiven” people do enter into eternal life with God. “[T]hat is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:8b-9). Andy Poland †

Mormon Friendly Bible Study on

Tuesdays, 7 pm

@ Concerned Christians (food provided).

Plan to attend! Call the Concerned Christians office for more details (480) 833-2537.

Letters! From the Mailbag - (expanded edition)

The first letter in our Mailbag section is lengthier than we normally use within the scope of The CROSS; however, we found it to be very touching and really a blessing and encouragement to receive. Our hope in sharing it with our readers is that you will also be encouraged to pray for the writer and his family.

Dear Concerned Christians,

I would like to personally thank you for your book called *Out of Mormonism*, by Judy Robertson. My name is [name withheld]. I am the eldest son of [name withheld]. I grew up in Hilldale, Utah & Colorado City, Arizona. My family are all in the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A very, very strict cult [of] followers of Warren S. Jeffs, who is my blood cousin. I have been in Arizona prisons since 2006. For a long time now over charges stemming from my religious background. I am the oldest son of 14 children all born from my father's 3rd wife [name withheld].

I have friends who are in here that gave me a copy of your book. It's only by the grace of God that I read it and studied it. When I read it, it brought back a flood of memories of my own life to me. I am finally, after ten long years of being so lost and living in hell, on my true Christian path of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks to friends and Concerned Christians like you! In the past I had the hardest time realizing that I don't go to heaven by my works alone. I was very, very well educated as a child in the old Mormon doctrines that are so wrong and very, very corrupt. When I was reading this book I cried, and cried over finally seeing the truth of why my older and younger sisters did not want to get married in arranged marriages done by the FLDS church. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for publishing your stuff.

For the longest time I would lash out in anger, hurt, frustration and guilt of all the evil sins I have done in my past...I have family members that keep telling me to pay for my crime or my debt to society and then come back and join them in Utah & Arizona. However I have true Christian friends and brothers who have shown that the Mormon church is of the evil ways and wrongs of men in its teachings. They have been true brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lately after reading some of your material I have become a born again Christian and yesterday received my baptism in here a CACF. I would love to receive all your pamphlets on how to get over the wrong doctrines that I've been taught and grown up in by my FLDS family. Please understand that I am not expecting or seeking a hand-out of any kind. I just seek to learn the truth about the Bible and the Mormon doctrines.

When I get out of prison in [month withheld] 2012 this year, I would like to get into a church based on God's laws and his truths like your own. I will be going to [location withheld]. And am all alone in my Christian walk...But many family and

friends are leaving the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I wish to learn how to be a teacher of love and kindness to my family on helping them see the true light of Jesus Christ in their lives like I have in my own.

So, if you could would you send me some more valuable reading material to study and learn while I'm here in prison. I would greatly appreciate it a lot. I want to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for all the work and time you and many others called by the Lord to minister are doing to help Mormons such as myself who are lost and need to know and find the real Jesus Christ. To fully submit to serving and loving him on his terms and in his way. Not some man made-up version. Thank you for your time and tireless efforts to help lost Mormons like me find light at the end of the long dark and deep tunnel.

May God Bless all of you in the great work he's called you to perform in his name and for his grace. I long for the day to see or meet Judy Robertson and her family to express in person how their story changed my life forever. God Bless them in their works and their callings. I am truly humbled by what they are doing for people around the world to understand how Mormons truthfully are. God truly has called them and appointed this task to their care. I hope to one day join them in it to bring my family members to the truth. With great gratitude and love,

Sincerely yours, [name withheld].

FROM COLUMBUS, NE: Praise God for all you do to tell Mormons about the true God and Jesus. The Holy Spirit is convicting many. Keep praying for my granddaughter and her husband in your prayer meetings. All things are possible with God!

FROM PHOENIX, AZ: Thank you for your relentless work with our lost Mormon brothers and sisters. Yours in Christ.

FROM EL DORADO HILLS, CA: We are committed tithers of our income to our church. We also have a special place in our hearts for the work you are doing and want to help as much as we can. We therefore have committed a tithe of the earnings on our meager investments to Concerned Christians. Keep up the good work in His service.

(Mailbag continued on back page)



Concerned Christians of Mesa

P. O. Box 18
Mesa, AZ 85211-0018

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U. S. Postage
PAID
Phoenix, AZ
Permit No. 1383**

<u>Inside This Issue:</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
An Open Letter to Paul	1
Amazing Mormon Quote	2
From the Mailbag	3
Prayer Meeting / Training & Support at CC	4

Mailbag Letters continued

FROM LAS VEGAS, NV: Thank you so much for the DVD. How sad the bondage these people are in. I will use this DVD to let people who are Christians know the importance of leading them to Jesus. If you have a newsletter, please include me in your mailing.

FROM HARDY, VA: Concerned Christians, keep up the great & wonderful work you are doing for those trapped in Mormonism. God bless, in Christ. †

Your THURSDAY Evening Agenda



Training on how to witness to Mormons (7 to 8 pm).
Then... Mormons In Transition (MIT) Support Group—Let us help! 8 to 9 pm
Call the Concerned Christians office for more details at (480) 833-2537.



Prayer Meeting

Mondays at
Concerned Christians
7:00 PM
525 E. Broadway Rd., Mesa

Looking for a few good prayer warriors!

“Again I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my father in heaven”



Matthew 18:19.

Come and spend time asking for God’s favor to rest on the ministry of Concerned Christians.

Concerned Christians