



## HOW TO KNOW IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN

BY ANDY POLAND

“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” John 8:31-32. As a Mormon I believed that I was a Christian because the name of my church had Jesus Christ in it. I believed that I was a Christian because Jesus was in the Book of Mormon and in the other Mormon scriptures. But what I failed to realize is that I was not following the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus taught “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away” Matthew 24:35. Although Jesus’ teachings were simple and He claimed that they would never pass away, I refused to believe them in favor of the teachings from the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon claimed that after the death of Jesus’ apostles that the Bible would become corrupted and many plain and precious truths of the gospel would be lost. See 1 Nephi 13:24-28. Although the Book of Mormon directly contradicted Jesus, I still called myself a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus taught “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” Matthew 16:18. Even though Jesus taught that hell would not prevail against the church, I believed Joseph Smith when he said all the churches on the earth were corrupt and of the devil. See Joseph Smith History 1:19 at the end of Pearl of Great Price. Although Joseph Smith directly contradicted the teachings of Jesus, I still called myself a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus taught “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world” John 8:23. John

agreed with Jesus and said “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” John 1:18. Although the teaching was simple that Jesus was the only one to see, to live with, and to come from the Father, I believed the Book of Abraham when it taught that all of mankind lived with God before we came to earth. See Abraham 3:22-25. Although the Pearl of Great price contradicted the teachings of Jesus, I still called myself a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus taught “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life” John 5:24. And again Jesus said “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand” John 10:28. Although Jesus taught that men who believe in him have eternal life right now and will never lose that forgiveness, I believed the Doctrine and Covenants when it taught “but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God.” See D & C 82:7. While the Doctrine and Covenants directly contradicted Jesus, I still called myself a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus taught “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” Matthew 7:21. No man who disregards the teachings of Jesus can say that they are doing the will of the Father. The only ones who can call themselves true followers of Jesus are those who believe in and practice the teachings of Jesus. The challenge for each of us is to determine the price of following Jesus and pay the cost no matter where it

leads us. For me the cost of following Jesus was to leave behind my Mormon teachings and become rejected by my family and my church for doing so. But it is true what Jesus said “and the truth will set you free.” I have a peace and freedom in Jesus that I could not find within the teachings of Mormonism. I pray that my family and all the members of the LDS church will one day discover this truth and find true freedom.



### Thursday Events @ Concerned Christians:

Learn how to be a witness to Mormons (7 to 8 pm).  
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**THANK YOU!**



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*... For if righteousness  
could be gained through  
the law, Christ died  
for nothing!  
(Galatians 2:21b)*

# “AMAZING QUOTES” FROM LDS CHURCH LEADERS

## From LDS Apostle Boyd K. Packer:

“It is not unusual to have a missionary say, ‘How can I bear testimony until I get one? How can I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that the gospel is true? If I do not have such a testimony, would that not be dishonest?’

“Oh, if I could teach you this one principle. A testimony is to be *found* in the *bearing* of it!...

“...Can you not see that it will be supplied as you share it? As you give that which you have, there is a replacement, with increase!”

*Ensign, The Candle of the Lord,  
January 1983, pp. 54-55.*

## BIBLICAL RESPONSE:

Imagine your church preparing to send out a missionary who does not have a testimony that God lives, or that Jesus is the Christ, or that the gospel is true. No true Christian church would send out an unbeliever. But, according to Mr. Packer, the Mormon church would. A few years ago, I (Bob Betts) met such an LDS missionary who admitted that when he started his mission, he did not have a testimony.

Try to imagine gaining a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ by a mantra-fashioned repetition of claims you “know” to be true, but you did not actually believe to be true! Jesus certainly never taught unbelievers to gain a testimony of Him, by falsely claiming to believe in Him, until the repetitious bearing of it became true to them. Mr. Packer advocated bearing false witness, both to one’s self, and to others as a means to gain a true personal witness. Mr. Packer advocated the breaking of the commandment:

Matthew 19:18-19 states, “And Jesus said, ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and mother, and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (underline added).



# Letters! From the Mailbag



**FROM MESA, AZ:** Andy, thank you so much for your article “An Open Letter to Paul” in a recent issue of *The CROSS!* I read it over and over again to let it sink in. I loved it because it was so clear and easy to understand. I knew the truth about Mormons and what they withhold from new “converts” but was never able to put that into words. Now when other Christians say, “Mormons are Christians, they believe in Christ,” I have some clear truths about Mormonism to share with them. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers that are making a difference by educating and leading our faith community.

**FROM MESA, AZ:** We always look forward to *The CROSS* newsletter. I was raised in “little Utah” – Eager, AZ, but never converted. But my brother and cousins married Mormon women and, well you know the rest. I pray for my lost LDS family members and friends, and dream of the day they see the truth and come out. Thanks for all you do to be a beam of light into that dark world of Mormonism. God recently blessed us with some extra money, so here is a gift to be used for spreading the truth about Jesus. Pass greetings on to Jim and Judy – they were a vital part of my book store I had owned, and a great blessing to us.

**FROM AUBURN, CA:** I purchased the DVD, *The Bible vs. Joseph Smith* and found it to be informative. I donated my copy to my Bible-based church library. We have a growing number of Mormons in the area and our Christian members need to know how to communicate with their Mormon friends and how to address the Mormon missionaries constructively. Thank you and God bless.

**FROM SUSANVILLE, CA:** I had a chance to correct my converted Mormon son during a family gathering. I have been praying since 2002 that God would place doubt in my son’s mind and heart and be open to the truth about the true God and His Son Jesus. I was given the moment of testimony to define the differences between the Mormon Jesus and the Christian Jesus. My son believes the two are the same. I am so blessed to be an instrument for the Lord to tell my Mormon son the truth that Christians believe God the Father was always Spirit and never a man; and that Jesus is fully God and fully man on earth. I will continue to pray for my son to question Mormonism and seek the true and only Lord. Keep up the good work in Christ.

(Mailbag continued on page 3)

My parents were converts to the LDS church, joining when I was pre-school age. I grew up in an active Mormon household. I went to Primary, Mutual, and Seminary; later I served a mission, served twice in the Elder's quorum presidency, taught gospel doctrine classes, and I was married in the temple.

But my membership in the Mormon church was also interrupted by periods of inactivity, starting in my teens. On a few occasions I would re-enter the LDS flock out of a need to salve wounds inflicted on me by my sins. I also had difficulties with some of the doctrines; but like many others I trusted that my parents and teachers would never lead me astray, so I simply swept the questions I had under the rug. It was not until I was in my 40s that I came to know without any doubt that they too had been led down a wrong path towards a deceptive and punishing system of belief.

Irreconcilable feelings about the Mormon faith began for me at an early age. I remember standing in the aisle of a chapel before Sacrament meeting one Sunday. I believe I was about 8 years old. I cannot recall what prompted the event, but I was overcome, even physically, with the idea that withholding the priesthood from blacks was a grave error against Christian thinking. At an age when only a couple of years ago I abandoned a belief in Santa Clause, I was able to discern without the aid of any adult, that which Christ designated as His greatest commandment had been breached.

In my mid-twenties I entered the Mormon mission field. My desire to serve the Lord was genuine, I wanted to come close to Him by serving Him; and I wanted to make amends for all the wrongs I had committed in my life. While I was on my mission in CA, I became sick with a high level of OCD. My illness was greatly magnified by the tormenting teachings of Spencer W. Kimball as written in his *Miracle of Forgiveness*. I went door to door bringing what I believed to be the teachings of Christ to the people of the west coast; but I was reduced by feelings of unworthiness, to say the least. I couldn't understand why after so much prayer, the Lord would not remove these debilitating feelings from me. I couldn't understand why God would only allow me to function at a small percentage of my abilities, knowing that before long I would be released to return home.

In the years following my mission I had fluctuating levels of mental health. When I lived my life with less involvement in the church, I seemed to enjoy accomplishments. I went to college, and I graduated with a bachelor's degree. I played in small blues band combos, and enjoyed much of my life. But when I felt compelled to become more active in the church, I became sicker. Also, my wife was an active member, and I desired to be closer to her through church activity. Down the road we became divorced.

During this period my OCD reached Howard Hughes levels. I became obsessed with confessing sins. I confessed past sins, and I re-confessed them to make sure I didn't leave anything out that would stand against me on judgment day; I even started to confess to my bishop that I may have committed sins I wasn't sure about. I would call and visit bishops at inopportune times to satisfy my tormented soul. The lengths I went to do this I don't even want to go into. It was so embarrassing and humiliating for me to put myself, and them, through this. And no bishop had the same answer when I inquired about what I might do to relieve myself of these checking rituals. I wanted to know which sins required me to confess to a bishop, and which ones I could simply confess to God, in order to obtain forgiveness. I suppose some bishops thought my inquiry was an attempt to get away with sinning without having to fess up to proper church authorities. But actually, I was trying to spare my church leaders the unnecessary life interruptions I was causing them. I also was trying to keep myself from going insane. And I was trying to save myself from going to hell.

One bishop told me which sins "he thought" I should confess to him, but had no doctrine about it that might bring me some relief. My next bishop simply told me he didn't know which sins I was required to bring to him for forgiveness. I thought, if he doesn't know, who does?

I was in so much mental anguish that many days I spent hours begging the Lord aloud at the top of my lungs, until I was hoarse, to release me from this pain. For me, it was the mental equivalent of sawing my leg off without anesthesia. I couldn't understand why He would continue to let me suffer that way. I was angry at God!

(Continued on page 4)

## From the Mailbag (continued)



**FROM COLUMBUS, NE:** I talked to Andy when I was visiting my sister in AZ. It is encouraging that Mormons are leaving the LDS Church at a record-setting pace. I keep praying that a strong Christian will witness to my granddaughter's husband, who comes from a very strong Mormon family. I am reminded of Jeremiah 32:27. Thank you for all you are doing to help Mormons find the true Jesus.

**FROM FARMINGTON, AR:** I've included an extra gift this month along with my regular donation. Today is the birthday

of the first Mormon I personally knew. He is still an actively practicing Mormon and he is the main reason I support your ministry. My prayer is that you will be able to use this money donated in his honor to help other's lives. Please put it where it is most needed. God Bless!

**FROM LAGRANDE, OR:** Thank you for being so faithful in telling Mormons about the real Jesus. Our prayers are for you and for their hearts to be given to our Lord.





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## A FORMER MORMON'S STORY

BY T. J.

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I now live in Arizona. One day a guitar-playing friend I played in a band with in Provo, UT called me up to tell me that a mutual friend of ours, our bass player, had died of cancer. The news came as a surprise; I had not talked to my guitarist for about a decade. Over the course of our conversation, I found out that he had left the church. I should mention that he was also in the bishopric of our shared ward in UT. He sent me a book in the mail, *One Nation Under Gods*. I read it—and it was an eye-opener as it revealed much that I felt I should have known by now, given my many years of activity in the church. The fact that so much had been kept from me I found to be more disturbing than the things themselves. During a subsequent phone call between AZ and UT, I had asked my friend if he could find on his computer (I didn't have one at the time) a place near where I live that I could go to ask a few questions I had about the LDS church. I had questions I couldn't get answers to from the church itself. He located Concerned Christians for me on the net. Within a couple of days I went to Concerned Christians, about a mile

from my apartment here in AZ, and soon became friends with Bob and Andy. For about a year I studied Mormonism in great detail. It nearly became a full-time job.

Today my OCD is about 10% of what it was, and it seldom involves religious issues. I no longer worry about going to hell. I found out that Jesus Christ has already paid the price for me. And I now realize that if God had answered my pleas for relief during those past days of extreme mental and emotional torment, I would have read into it some validation of the truthfulness of the Mormon church. A loving God was not about to do that to me. I understand now what I once thought to be unjustifiable. I can now see that God was loving me through it all.

I thank the Lord for the truths that I have been shown. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

