



*Bible Studies...*

By Andy Poland

## **That Changed Everything**

It is hard to put into words the different things I learned when I began reading the Bible to understand what the apostles and prophets actually taught, rather than twisting the Bible into *what I wanted to believe*. It was so easy to look at the Bible through eyes that saw only what they wanted to see. Every verse, when viewed through my powerful rose-colored glasses, could teach me whatever I wanted to believe! All I needed to do in order to accomplish this was disregard certain verses, and embrace and focus on the verses that I twisted to conform to my own personal understanding.

Some of the first verses that changed my understanding had to do with the Mormon belief of pre-existence (living in heaven before living on earth). During our first Thursday night meetings at Concerned Christians where we studied many verses from the Bible, Jim Robertson taught from 1 Corinthians 15:44-47:

*"It is sown a natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: 'The first man Adam became a living being' The last Adam a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven."*

I could hardly believe what Jim had just read!..."the spiritual did not come first, but the natural." How could I have missed that while I was a Mormon? I had turned to 1 Corinthians 15 so many times before to show the three degrees of glory and baptism for the dead (yet other false doctrines of Mormonism). But in just a few words my whole belief system in the pre-existence was seriously challenged because I was not a spirit first, but rather, I was a physical

person first.

As I continued to study the Bible, more verses arose to challenge the concept of a pre-existent life with God in heaven. While I was reading the gospel of John, I came across a verse that struck me very strongly:

*"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).*

So my mind raced inside my head saying, "Jesus was the only one to ever see the Father?" If that is true, there can be no pre-existence like I was taught. All of us saw and talked with the Father in the Mormon pre-existence, so if Jesus was the only one to see the Father, then we did not pre-exist with Jesus!

I continued reading and found some verses that challenged me even further:

*"No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man" (John 3:13).*

Again I asked myself, "How could I have come from heaven if Jesus was the only one to come from heaven?" Because I had seen the evidence that the writings of the apostles hold true and have not been changed, I began to have a very different view of who I was and who Jesus was. Jesus was the only one to come from heaven. No one ever has gone into heaven. The words were so plain, but challenged deeply my former Mormon belief in a pre-existence.

As I continued to read I soon discovered that Jesus was not the only one to teach this concept, but John the Baptist also taught:

*"The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one*

*from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all" (John 3:31).*

In my Mormon beliefs, we all came from above – no one came from the earth; so therefore, no one person could be above all because we all came from heaven. But, here I am reading clearly that John the Baptist is agreeing with Jesus, that Jesus was the only one who came from heaven and therefore he was above everything and everyone on earth. I was surprised again to see such simple statements in the Bible that challenged everything I had believed all of my life. I was beginning to realize that I had purposefully resisted the teachings of the Bible.

As I continued to study and search, more scriptures came to light. In John chapter six, Jesus is teaching the Jews about his divinity by claiming that he came down from heaven. The Jew's response to Jesus again challenged my belief in the pre-existence:

*"At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They said, 'Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?" (John 6:41-42).*

Even the Jews of the time said that no one comes from heaven if they were born on earth. Again my mind spun when I heard these teachings. I thought, "Shouldn't the Jews have known there was a pre-existence where we all lived with God? And if they did believe in a pre-existence, then how could Jesus claim to be the only one to come from heaven?" The evidence from the Bible began to stand up and laugh at my idea of a pre-existent spiritual life with God.

(continued on Page 3)



Concerned Christians  
525 E Broadway Rd.  
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

judy@concernedchristians.org

Newsletter Design: Marsha Book

## “Amazing Mormon Quotes”

*“May we become heirs to the covenant and the seed of Abraham through our faithfulness and by receiving the ordinances of the restored gospel. I promise you that the blessings of eternal life are available to everyone who is faithful and obedient.”*

Elder L. Tom Perry  
Ensign, May 2014, Pg. 103



### Biblical Response:

Once again we have Mormon leadership teaching that salvation is achieved by observing and receiving ordinances and by maintaining a level of good works as determined by the LDS church for worthiness. However, we see from scripture that the Bible teaches otherwise. [All underscores and bold have been added for emphasis]. ~ Andy.

#### From Romans — Chapter 4:

“So then, he (Abraham) is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring— not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: ‘I have made you a father of many nations.’ He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not” (Romans 4:11b-17).

#### And again — from the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians:

“For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith” (Philippians 3:3-9).

## Be Bold, NOT Overbearing

( An Urgent? Message )  
From Andy Poland

During the Easter pageant week I received a call from a concerned and desperate Mormon woman. Every two weeks for months, her door has been targeted with “anti-Mormon” material. She said that it has gotten to the point where she feels like she has been violated and attacked. She pleaded with me to stop sending people to her door to give her more “anti-Mormon” literature. She was almost in a state of tears when she described how she believes she was being persecuted for her beliefs.

I assured her that I did not send anyone to her door to deliver the “anti-Mormon” material. Then I explained the approach of Concerned Christians is to teach and communicate in a spirit of love why we believe in the Bible, and to help people understand why we cannot believe in Mormonism. She insisted that we must be involved because many times our newsletters were left on her doorstep. I explained to her that we have a number of supporters that receive our newsletter, and I tried to figure out where they might be coming from. She told me she lived in the Lehi area of Mesa near the intersection of Center and McKellips Road. I explained that I still did not know who might be distributing our newsletters in that area, and I told her that I would write an article in our next newsletter addressing the problem.

Mormon beliefs have a saying from the *Book of Mormon*,  
“Use boldness, but not overbearance...” (Alma 38:12).

Although this teaching does not come from the Bible, I believe that the Bible teaches us to have the same type of approach when sharing the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus tells us to...

“be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16b).

---

## Bible Studies... That Changed Everything Continued from page one

Perhaps a verse that really helped me grasp that I did not live in heaven before living on earth is a reference made in the book of Hebrews about Levi, a son of Israel [Jacob] that says:

“One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor” (Hebrews 7:9-10).

The writer of Hebrews carefully asked and answered a simple question: Where was Levi before he was born? The answer was astounding; Levi was inside the body of his ancestor, not waiting in heaven to come down! Again the evidence was clearly on one side – there is not a pre-existence for human beings.

So how important are the teachings from the Bible? Today those teachings mean everything to me. I want to share with everyone the things I have discovered by studying the teachings of the prophets and apostles. To that end, I have

The Bible also tells us:

“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle” (Proverbs 18:19).

While this verse in Proverbs is speaking of a Jew offended by another Jew as being difficult to restore their prior fellowship, I believe this verse holds true for New Testament evangelism and can be applied to us today. Mormons sometimes do see the errors of Mormonism and can indeed become our true brothers and sisters in Christ, but our methods of evangelism must be examined carefully so as not to offend.

Now that this Mormon woman feels that she has been violated by the continual placement of “anti-Mormon” literature, it will be very difficult indeed for her to listen to any discussion about the gospel of Jesus from the Bible. Unfortunately, every time she sees and hears a Christian she will associate that with the feeling of being “oppressed” at her doorstep.

I do want to be clear; I am not saying that evangelism at the doorstep is wrong, but we must be careful not to exceed our welcome. We should proclaim the gospel to all, but it should be done in such a way that the listener feels the love that we have in our hearts for Jesus and for the truth.

Be bold in sharing your faith as Paul was (recorded in Acts 28:31). We will surely offend some just by telling them the truth about why we believe. We can’t avoid offense altogether. But we should not be viewed as overbearing, and thus become a stumbling block to those who do not believe.

May God bless you in your efforts to proclaim the truth and the hope we have in Jesus.




---

created eleven new videos on various Bible topics and posted them online on YouTube and on our website at Concerned Christians.

If you have been touched by these verses I used in this article, would you do me a favor?...Would you go online and watch the videos I have posted? Would you share them on Facebook and email the links to a friend of yours? I believe that the words of the Bible speak for themselves. I also know that God changes hearts using the truth of plainly spoken, simple scriptures like these. Thank you for taking the time to share them with your LDS friends. I will be praying that God uses you to be a light in the darkness and that your Mormon friends will come to know the Jesus of the Bible. Let these studies in the Bible be that thing that changed everything in your Mormon friend’s life, as it did mine.

May God bless your efforts to share our love for Jesus.





## Concerned Christians of Arizona

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

Nonprofit Org  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Phoenix, AZ  
Permit No. 1662

### Inside This Issue:

Pg.

Bible Studies That Changed Everything	1 & 3
Amazing Mormon Quote	2
Be Bold, Not Overbearing	3
Letters From the Mailbag	4

---

## Letters—From the Mailbag

**FROM FRESNO, CA:** Hello, I was really surprised to read your article on the “purposeful dating” \* of the Mormons. Yet, it makes sense that they would do that.

**FROM PHOENIX, AZ:** Upon finishing my study of 1 John 4: 7-21 and John 15: 19-17 for our Couple’s Bible Study this evening, I opened your *CROSS* newsletter and in the first article were two quotations from the “Apostle of love” we had just studied! Please accept the enclosed donation and use wherever needed. They’ll know we are Christians by our love! All of your articles are full of good information and solid in the Bible. God’s richest blessings to you and your ministry.

**FROM EFRIDA, AZ:** Thank you again for the clear article on “How to Know if You Are a Christian” \* and for being faithful to allow the Lord to work through you to be a true witness for Christ. Enclosed is a check to cover the next mailing of *The CROSS*, or for something else if the need is more urgent. Serving Jesus together because He loves us so much!

**FROM MESA, AZ:** Excellent newsletter! I encourage you to make “How to Know if You Are a Christian” available online\* so it can go viral. It is the clearest short presentation that I have seen. It would also make a great booklet with each paragraph on each page!

**FROM PRAIRIE GROVE, AR:** I’m sending this as encouragement to keep up the good work. They (the Mormons) recently built an impressive church here in town. My Christian church is trying to educate its members. All prayers are needed everywhere.

**FROM MESA, AZ:** I’ve lived in Mesa for 45 years and was around at the beginning of Concerned Christians. I had a neighbor who was Mormon and after she gave up on converting me, we became very good friends. I learned a lot as she felt free to share her deep feelings honestly with me. All Mormons who have ever tried to convert me gave up and walked away. So I thought I knew pretty much all there was to know about Mormonism, then I came across your Co-founder Judy Robertson’s book on my shelf from 1997 called *No Regrets*. \* [Updated book is entitled, *Out of Mormonism*, available through our website]. I was stunned to discover all the things I didn’t know. Keep up the good work. Wish I had lots of money to donate, but I sure don’t. However, prayers help too.

**FROM PHOENIX, AZ:** God bless your ministry. You’re on my daily morning prayer list. In Christ.

\* [Editor’s Note: The above referenced book and archived articles can be found on our website, or call our office to receive copies.]

