

who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (Rom. 1:16-18)

How a worm becomes a butterfly

Being born again is a radical and exhaustive process. It is organic. Old things do indeed pass away. All things do indeed become new. The worm becomes a butterfly.

The change is not cosmetic. The worm that goes into the chrysalis dies. It turns to mush. If you opened it prematurely, there would be some dark soup in that shell. It is akin to resurrection in that what goes into the chrysalis is unlike what comes out; its glory is as different as moonlight is from sunlight.

Isn't it interesting that Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (John 12:24-25)

So making the unconverted converted requires that they radically change their direction, their orientation, their hearts. It is not simply a change of doctrines they need but a death and a resurrection.

How apt is Jesus' depiction of the religion of the Pharisees as "whitewashed sepulchers." You can't hang plastic cherries on a dead cherry tree and make it live. The root must be made right if the fruit will ever be made right.

Can you imagine a born again Muslim?

How about born again Hindu? How can there be a born again Mormon, when Mormonism is, at its core, anti-Christian?

Mormonism brings another Jesus, another Spirit, and another Gospel. To the Apostle Paul, Christians who "put up with" those who bring such doctrines to the Church were in peril of being beguiled by the devil. (2 Cor. 11:2-4)

In my recent DVD "Mormonism: Has Anything Changed?" I go to great lengths to demonstrate that the same Antichrist doctrines Joseph Smith initiated continue to be the doctrinal foundation of Mormonism to this very day. Nothing has changed. Mormonism was Antichrist in its inception and remains so.

The catalogue of Mormonism's anti-Christian doctrines is great and cannot be ignored.

The greatest Mormon scholar in the first half of the Twentieth Century was Mormon General Authority B. H. Roberts. His most comprehensive book about Mormon theology was *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity*. Sterling M. McMurrin—himself the most important Mormon scholar of the second half of the Twentieth Century—said *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* was "the most impressive theological piece to come from an accepted Mormon writer." McMurrin was United States Secretary of Education in the administration of John F. Kennedy.

At any rate, B. H. Roberts summarized Mormon theology in his book this way:

"First, we believe that God is a being with a body in form like man's; that he possesses body, parts and passions; that in a word, God is an exalted, perfected man.

"Second, we believe in a plurality of Gods.

"Third, we believe that somewhere and some time in the ages to come, through development, through enlargement, through purification until perfection is attained, man at last may become like God—a God."

When McMurrin set his own hand to describe Mormon theology—in his book, *Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion*—he is equally frank about Mormonism's heretical views. And, L. Jackson Newell, President of Deep Springs College and former Dean of Liberal Education at Utah State University, called McMurrin's book, "...the most lucid and penetrating work on the theology of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints yet written."

McMurrin wrote that Mormonism teaches a finite and material God which is a radical departure from all Christian orthodoxy.

He also states that Mormonism denies man is a creation of God. He says the Mormon Church in the last half of the Twentieth Century believes that "God was once a man and that men may become Gods."

Modern Mormon scholars—those of the new Twenty-First Century—agree with Roberts and McMurrin.

And last, but not least, the best Evangelical scholars of the Twenty-First Century confirm that Mormonism has not changed from its original heretical positions. This is documented in the recent exhaustive compendium, *The New Mormon Challenge*, in which a dozen of the brightest Evangelicals dissect Mormonism and prove its continuing heresy.

We can't decorate Mormonism into Christianity.

Mormons don't need us to validate their ungodly approach to God, they need us to challenge it. We do them a great disservice if we tell them that they can find peace with God, biblical teaching, and genuine Christian fellowship within the Mormon Church.

Anything we do to make Mormons feel comfortable where they are is just dead wrong.

I often repeat a line I heard as a young preacher: "A preacher's job is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." We certainly must not make Mormons feel comfortable within Mormonism by telling them that they can stay where they are, make a few doctrinal adjustments, and be OK.

Mormonism is not changing, and it is not going to change in the foreseeable future.

Those who hold out such naive hope need only to listen closely to what the leaders of Mormonism are saying. President Gordon B. Hinckley signaled the radical and unchanging heresy of Mormonism recently. He said:

Those who observe us say that we are moving into the mainstream of religion. We are not changing. The world's perception of us is changing. We teach the same doctrine. (Ensign, Nov. 2001, p. 5)

Of the Mormon concept of the Person of Christ he said:

The traditional Christ of whom [those outside of Mormonism] speak is not the Christ of whom I speak. (The Church News, June 20, 1998)



BeyondMormonism.com

"TRUTH WITHOUT LOVE IS TOO HARD
LOVE WITHOUT TRUTH IS TOO SOFT"

"Truth without Love is too hard; Love without Truth is too soft"

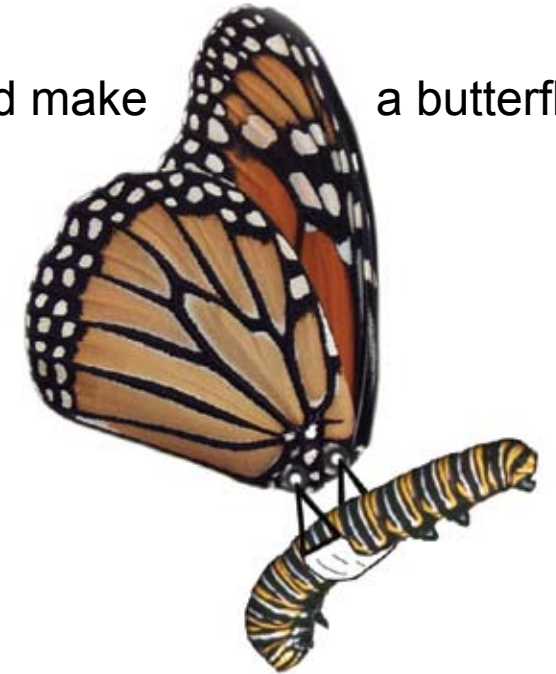
Living Faith Church

Through the Maze

Copyright 2006, James R. Spencer Box 8656, Boise, ID 83707 www.beyondmormonism.com 12/06
order line (answering machine) 1-800-871-7120

—www.BeyondMormonism.com—

You can't attach wings to a worm and make a butterfly



"Marvel not that I said unto thee,
Ye must be born again." (John 3:7)

The Myth of the Born Again Mormon

Can a Mormon be born again?

Of course! Anyone can be born again. It is self-evident that all born again people were sinners and rebels before God right up until the moment they were born again. There are no other options. Only two kinds of people exist: *Saints and Ain'ts*.

The question really is: "Can a Mormon become born again and remain a Mormon?"

Of course *not!* No more than a worm can be a butterfly and

remain a worm. Don't get me wrong. I am not calling Mormons worms. It's just that to change from an Ain't to a Saint—to pass through the curtain from what the Bible calls "death to life," involves a radical change of nature. "...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (The Apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 5:17)

A butterfly is *different* than a caterpillar: it moves differently—it flies instead of crawls; it eats different food—it sucks nectar rather than eating milkweed leaves; and *it no longer*

It takes a *lot* to make a butterfly!



der the arrangement, but so did she. (To find out how that all turned out, you need to read my book, *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder's Story*.)

A Christian cannot *abide* in the Mormon Church.

For one thing, if you desire to be a true disciple of God, you have to leave the Old life (even mother and father) to follow Christ. Likewise, it is disingenuous to hang around the Mormon Church.

Those, like Shawn McCraney, of Born-Again Mormons, suggests that Mormons who become born again ought to remain in the Mormon Church and let their light shine. One point in his ministry's mission

hangs out with worms because it has nothing in common with them! So it is with a Mormon who becomes a Christian: he/she must leave the milkweed diet and start living on the nectar of God.

I am not saying that the instant a man or woman becomes born again that person must immediately stand up in Mormon Sacrament Meeting, rend his garments and shout, "I'm outta here!" No, there needs to be wisdom in all things. The feelings of family and friends must be taken into consideration. All too often exiting Mormons spill too much blood on their way to the ward doorway.

In my own case, I elected to put off my water baptism for two years after I was born again. I also decided I would not try to force my new found faith on my wife and children. I believed that I had to respect the marriage contract I made with my wife when I married her. We were Mormons. We were married in the temple. She had very reasonable expectations that I would remain the Mormon Elder she married. I had, *de facto*, promised to raise our kids as Mormons. All of those important promises could not be easily thrown aside. Not if I wanted to treat her fairly. And should not a Christian man treat his wife fairly?

Of course, I demanded the right to worship God according to the dictates of my own conscience. I demanded the right to go to a church where I felt at home. But even then, we worked a compromise in which we alternated attendance week by week. First at her church, the Mormon Church, then at mine which at the time was a Presbyterian Church. I smarted un-

statement says his goal is to "patiently help initiate an integration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints into the existing body of Christ." That is, in my opinion, an abysmally naive concept and roundly condemned by many of the so called "cult watch" leaders. You can see a list of ministries who disagree with this concept at: <http://www.beyondmormonism.com/mccraney>

First of all, if your primary purpose of staying in the Mormon Church (or any church for that matter) is to change it, you are already on the wrong track. That is not the way to go about it. It may be possible to be in overall agreement with an organization and to try to make some changes within it. But when you realize an organization (or a church) is *fundamentally* flawed, you need to get out of it and confront it honestly and openly. To stay in the Mormon Church is not only deadly, but you are not being honest with the Mormon leaders. I think it is a cheesy, underhanded way to be a minister of Christ.



Paul confronted the errors of his day openly and transparently. As did Jesus. If you are only in the Mormon Church to change it, you are dishonoring your relationships with your Mormon friends.



A person cannot be a *genuine* Mormon and a born again Christian simultaneously

Neither Christians nor Mormons define their irreligious affiliation by race, ethnic background, geographical location, or place of birth. No, both groups define their religious affiliation *by what they believe!*

I once told a Mormon missionary, "I am a Mormon! Now, I don't believe the Book of Mormon is scripture. I don't believe Jo-

seph Smith was a prophet. In fact I believe he was a false prophet, who received and delivered false prophecies. Neither do I believe that Mormonism has restored the priesthood as it claims. I don't believe in Pre-existence, Eternal Marriage, or using water for wine in the Lord's supper."

After I went on in that vein for a while the missionary—correctly—interrupted me. "You are no Mormon!" he exclaimed.

And, of course, I was not.

It is ludicrous and ridiculous to claim to be both a Mormon and a born again Christian.

Being born again means exactly what it says.

The new birth is not first about doctrine. It is first about a new, radical birth. Again, the Apostle Paul described his New Birth as apocalyptic. The word he uses to describe God's revelation of Christ is "reveal" in the King James Bible (Gal. 1:16), which is the word *apokalupto*, from which we get our word apocalypse. After being born again, it is then possible to understand the Bible and build a good doctrinal foundation.



Born again people are *required* to come into the light.

Obedience and holiness are not optional! We are required to be disciples. "If you love me," Jesus said, "keep my commandments." And he was not talking only about smoking cigarettes! No, a Christian is required to walk in the light and fellowship with the Body of Christ. We are to have "No fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11) And, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." (1 Cor. 10:21)

The communion of the Christian Church means we cannot have *Christian* fellowship with nonbelievers. Does that mean we cannot befriend "sinners?" Of course not, how could we be salt and light if we isolate ourselves from non-Christians. However, we cannot worship Christ with non-Christians. (No, I do not mean we have to kick all nonbelievers out of our worship services.) We cannot gloss over important Christian doctrines for the sake of "peace." Therefore, it is impossible for a Christian to make his church home within Mormonism.

It is an error to think that we can disciple unconverted people.

A Mormon does not become born again by learning Christian doctrine. He becomes born again and *then* he *unlearns* Mormonism and is disciplined by the Holy Spirit (Who uses human teachers through the gifts of ministry within the Body of Christ.)

I believe a very grave error has crept into the healthy Body of Christ through the well-intentioned and so-called "Church Growth Movement." Some people think you can preach the Gospel in such a way that it becomes inoffensive to sinners. That clearly is unbiblical. If our message is not offensive (note, I did not say *we* should be offensive) we are not preaching the Gospel of Christ. We don't win people to Christ by disguising the Gospel, but by confronting sin. We have to tell people the unvarnished truth. Yes, in fact, the *bloody* truth! The cross of Christ is by its nature an offense. The mind of man is in rebellion and he cannot comprehend the wisdom of God in his natural mind.

One of my favorite quotes comes from G. K. Chesterton. He said:

There is a notion abroad that to win a man you must agree with him. Actually, the opposite is true. Each generation has had to be converted by the man who contradicted it the most. The man who is going in a wrong direction will never be set right by the affable religionist who falls into step beside him and goes the same way. Someone must place himself across the path and insist that the straying man turn around and go in the right direction.

The idea that Mormons, or any unconverted person can become born again by *osmosis* is unbiblical. There is only one power which will convert the unconverted—the Cross preached:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,

