

# Religion or Relationship

(May 30, 2006)

**LAST WEEK . . .**

**A LDS CALLER NAMED STEVE . . .**

“the difference between the LDS Church and being a born-again Christian is that we do not believe that Christ comes into your heart and does all the hard work.”

**I was so happy Steve called and said this on the air because in a sense it encapsulates an essential difference between Mormonism and Christianity – one preaches religious allegiance and the other preaches a relationship with Jesus.**

Let’s examine briefly.

**To begin with, Christians believe that Jesus does dwell in them:**

**John 14:18-20** I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world does not see Me any more. But you see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, **and I in you.**

**Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, **but Christ liveth in me:** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**Ephesians 3:17** That **Christ may dwell** in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love.

**Revelation 3:20** Behold, I stand at the

**Latter-day Saints do not speak of Jesus dwelling in them, as Steve so boldly proclaimed.**

They talk of having the “Spirit” which is not the same thing to them as having Jesus dwell in them.

**Obviously, the Bible teaches Jesus will dwell in them that have faith in Him.**

What does this difference say theologically?

**Is this only semantics? Does it make a difference?**

Yes. And because the mindset is so different between what Christians believe and Latter-day Saints, the results are enormously different as well.

**Our caller Steve also said that the LDS do not believe the Jesus does all the “hard work.” Another truism about Mormonism. They believe they do all the hard work.**

They put their shoulder to the wheel and push along.

**But NOTHING could be more untrue in an exegetical biblical study!**

door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, **I will come in to him**, and will sup with him, and he with me.

**LISTEN!**

**Philippians 3:9** And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is

All glory is in the Lord. We do no thing.  
All work is from Him. He does it.  
All strength is by Him. Not the flesh.  
All Love is through Him. Not ourselves.

**If the atonement of Jesus – meaning the suffering for sin – was all that He needed to accomplish in His mission, Jesus could have come down from heaven as an adult, made the required payment with his suffering and death, and the world could have been sinless before the Father.**

But we would have presented ourselves to God as a zero sum gain.

**Justified but NOT sanctified!  
Clean, but totally unprofitable.**

Now Latter-day Saints would say, well the righteousness we do of ourselves will please God!

How does a soiled creation please a perfect and holy God? By what means?

through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

**LISTEN!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:27-31** But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and God has chosen the base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, in order to bring to nothing things that are; so that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption; so that, according as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

**Our Faith in His Son pleases God, not the works of our flesh! Our faith in His Son, our faith in Him justifying us. Our faith in Him sanctifying us!**

You see, my LDS friends, it truly **is** all Jesus.

**He justified us before the Father.  
He sanctified us before the Father.  
Our faith in him pleases God.  
Leaving no room for our flesh to glory!**

Now, some Latter-day Saints will quote  
Philippians 2:12 that says . . .

**Did you hear this Steve?**

Do you understand this, my LDS friends?

**I'm not sure you do. Why?**

Because Mormonism presents an altogether  
different Gospel.

**READ BUSHMAN QUOTE (Page 314)**

**Hebrews 11:6** . . . without faith it is  
impossible to please God . . .

AND

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:29** tells us that no  
flesh can glory in His presence!

**Philippians 2:12** . . . work out your  
own salvation with fear and trembling.

**BUT READ THIS VERSE IN  
CONTEXT . . . PLEASE. WHAT  
DOES THE FOLLOWING VERSE  
SAY??????**

**For it is God** which worketh in you  
both to will and to do of his good  
pleasure.

In other words, Joseph introduced this non-biblical method to the Saints, a method that is still practiced today:

**Make yourself holy and God will accept you.**

Live righteously and you will earn a place with Him.

**Live by the Law: the Law of rituals, the Law of ordinances, the Law of cleansing your heart, and you will come to know God and truth.**

But the Bible teaches an altogether different approach!

**Romans 5:8** But God commends His love toward us in that **while we were yet sinners** Christ died for us.

**Galatians 2:16** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

**Romans 11:6** But if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it is of works, then it is no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:9** And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for

**Do you EVER hear these verses read in an LDS meeting or class? Ever? ASK YOURSELF WHY???????**

The religious system of “sanctifying one self to be worthy of God’s blessings is not only unbiblical, it is COUNTER to the essential saving principles of saving faith!

**I think this quote really helps summarize what I am attempting to teach:**

(READ RELIGION and GRACE QUOTE IN BIBLE)

**What is the fallout from this alternate system of our righteousness, our diligence, our works?**

It’s Bondage.

It’s uncertainty.

It’s Prozac.

**It’s living an “I’ve got to” kind of life rather than an “I get to” kind of life.**

It’s serving in an “I have to” religion instead of an “I want to” relationship.

**It’s relationship over religion, my friends. Grace over Law.**

IN CONCLUSION . . .

**Imagine it is your wife’s birthday, men.**

- **I got you some flowers.**
- **Had to, it’s your birthday.**
- **On sale, anyway.**

Imagine it’s not your wife’s birthday.

- **Sneak up behind her and present her with a gorgeous**

My power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may overshadow me.

bouquet.

- What's the occasion?
- I love you. Appreciate you.  
Mean the world to me.

This is relationship over religion.

I pray you will find it.

#### CONCLUSION

**We were all sinners and all need to be saved not by our works but by faith.**

**Titus 3:3-7** For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**IT IS HIM, NOT US.**

**Colossians 1:19** For it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell. And through Him having made peace through the blood of His cross, it pleased the Father to reconcile all things to Himself through Him, whether

the things on earth or the things in Heaven. And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blame, and without charge in His sight.

**GRACE GETS US TO DO MORE!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace which was toward me has not been without fruit, but I labored more abundantly than all of them; yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

**2 Timothy 1:9** Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began