

November 12, 1997

Pastor Novak
P.O. Box 411
Elizabeth, Colorado 80107

Dear Pastor Novak,

A few nights ago I happened to catch a portion of your radio broadcast regarding Mormonism. I believe it was toward end of your program. It appeared that you were discrediting members of the Church of *Jesus Christ* of Latter-day Saints (italics added) because they "do not believe in the same Jesus that traditional Christianity does". Additionally, I think I heard the comment that Mormonism's concept of the Trinity is different than what traditional Christians believe. Consequently, your position was that Mormons are not true Christians.

The purpose of this letter is to share with you another perspective. It may not be "Traditional Christianity" (whatever that is), but, it does come from the Bible. I would think that the "Traditional Christianity" you refer to also believes the Bible to be the literal word of God. Even though the so called "born again" Christian community differs on so many points of doctrine, i.e., the need of baptism, salvation based on faith vs. works, speaking in tongues, etc., I will assume that the Bible is one source we agree we can turn to for truth and direction.

Either you or your guest suggested that it was cultist and heresy to suggest that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and, the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct personages. However, as I read the Bible, this makes total sense to me. The convoluted notion that the Trinity is some mysterious spiritual mixture of three persons in one seems to be the antithesis of what the Bible depicts. Consider the following points:

1. When Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, you will recall the scriptures say the heavens were opened, the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I well pleased". There seems to be a very deliberate effort in this passage to show the absolute separateness of the Trinity. With Jesus standing in the River Jordan and a voice coming from heaven, your version of the Trinity suggests that Jesus was a ventriloquist.
2. In Matthew chapter 17 we read the account of Jesus with Peter, James and John on the mount of transfiguration. The passage says that while the savior radiated like the sun, a cloud came directly over them and a voice said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him". You have to admit this is a clear illustration that the Father and the Son are two distinct individuals.
3. In chapter seven of the Book of Acts, verses 54-60, we read of Stephen the Apostle being stoned to death. In this passage he looks into heaven where he sees the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Can this be any more plain to someone reading the Bible -

God the Father and Jesus Christ are two separate and distinct personages. Perhaps you want to claim Stephen is not a true Christian because he does not believe in the same Jesus Christ that "Traditional Christianity" does. Or, perhaps you want to suggest a pair of demons appeared to the Apostle Stephen as you claim happened to Joseph Smith during his heavenly vision.

4. In John, Jesus talks of sending the Comforter after he departs his disciples. Is he saying he is going to send himself again to his disciples? No! He is referring to the Holy Ghost, a separate personage from himself.

5. When Peter was asked of the Lord in Matthew 16:17 Whom do men say that I am?, he answered by saying, "Jesus the Christ". "And then Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed (it) unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." It sounds as if the Savior was making a strong point that there was another person besides himself - his father which was in heaven.

6. There are dozens and dozens of scriptures in the New Testament where Jesus indicates that he does in fact have a father which resides in the heavens, a father that is separate and distinct from him. Read these verses: Matthew 24:36, Matthew 26:53, John 10:18, John 14: 26.

7. In Matthew 26:39 we read, "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." If I understand this scripture correctly, Jesus was physically on the earth, kneeling, as he verbally prayed to his father who was in heaven. Am I to understand from your "traditional" belief of the Trinity that Jesus was praying to himself?

God lives. His son Jesus Christ came to this earth and died for our sins. Through him we can have a forgiveness of our sins and return to live with God again. I proclaim the same Jesus that prayed to his father in Gethsemane, the same Jesus that was crucified on the cross at Calvary, the same Jesus that was resurrected three days later is my personal savior and redeemer. However, I do not agree with the "traditional" beliefs of Christianity that the trinity is all three, one in the same. The "Traditional Christianity" you refer to has been so depleted over the centuries of plain and simple gospel doctrines that the world is starving for the truth.

This same world that hungers for the truth will hear the Shepherd's message. His sheep know his voice. It will not come from some misguided, money-grubbing preacher. It will come from those that have been ordained with His authority and priesthood. It will emanate from His prophets. God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. I believe if he led his people with prophets in days of old, He does the same today.

Thanks for reading this. If you would like to know more, call me at my home (303) 423-7010, or, my work (303) 425-4466.

Sincerely,

Chris Stevenson