

Are Mormons and Catholics Christians?

Tim Conway | *illbehonest.com*

Tim: As you are all well aware, there are only really two religions on the face of this earth. (Aside) Don't you have a shirt that says Christianity is not a religion? Religion in years past was not the negative and derogatory term that it is today, so I almost hesitate to call Christianity [that]. But you know what we're talking about, there are really only basically two basic religions that exist, that have ever really existed. One is divine accomplishment: God provides for everything man needs to be saved. Over against all the religions of human works that basically say I must do something to merit God's favor. And everything I just described, whether it's Catholicism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam, and go down the line... Hinduism, Buddhism... they fall into this category of human works.

Now I realize among those religions that fall into that category, some speak more highly of Christ than others. They don't honor Him, they just are not as derogatory towards Him as, say, Islam is. Catholicism will actually say some things that we would agree with, right? They would claim He's God. The problem is they make Mary out as the one who did what He did. So they really dishonor Him. They do great disservice to Him. But can a true Christian continue as a Mormon?

Question: I would say to James, here's his actual question: "Pastor Tim, I'm a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) who has recently come to know the Lord. I'm wondering if it's possible to still remain as an active member of this organization while having had the born again experience. Thank you."

Discussion:

Tim: So help me out, guys. You answer it. Can he stay? (responses from the room - unintelligible) There's the question, right there. That's exactly where my mind went. Why would you want to? I don't know and he doesn't say.

But I can tell you this, typically in Mormonism, in Catholicism, in Islam, there are strong families. Exactly. Typically, the reason you want to stay in a system that does not line up with true Christianity is because you're trying to please somebody. You're not wanting to suffer the consequences of having come to Christ. Listen: Revelation 18:2, "And he called out with a mighty voice, 'fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great.'" Let me say something to you, in the book of Revelation, do you know who Babylon the Great is? Do you remember that picture of a whore; what was she riding on? A beast? And it was called something, but the term Babylon is used.

Folks, let me tell you something. A very symbolic book; what is the church described as? A bride. The bride of Christ. False religion is a whore. False religion is an adulteress. False religion is described as Babylon. Basically, false religion has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every

unclean and detestable beast, all the nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality. False religion pervades every country on the face of this earth. Guaranteed. They have all drunk of the passion of her sexual immorality. How many governments in this world are Catholic governments? Muslim governments? And even the ones like in Turkey who claim to be secular, they're drunk with the passions of the sexual immorality of Islam. No question about it. The kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living, then I heard another voice from heaven saying this, 'Come out of her, My people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues, for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.' Mormonism is taking multitudes to hell! Come out from among her. Or 2 Corinthians 6:16, we are the temple of the living God, as God said, I will make my dwelling among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people. Therefore, go out from their midst and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing and I will welcome you, and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be the sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.

Listen: we know well Paul's words, do we not? Even if we or an angel, Galatians 1:8, even an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preach to you, let him be accursed. Do you realize Mormonism falls under the accursment of this inspired apostle? His curse on all who proclaim another gospel. You say, does Mormonism preach another gospel?

Listen: the 3rd article of faith of the Church of Latter Day Saints, one of the 13 points of their basic church doctrine: Anybody involved in the Church of Latter Day Saints can look this up, it is their 3rd article of their 13 basic points. They're collectively known in Mormonism as the articles of faith. They're included in the standard Latter Day Saints scriptures, and members are encouraged to become familiar or memorize them, the third article of faith reads verbatim: We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel." And you better hear that... they're not saying we're saved by the atonement of Christ, and everything He achieved there. You are only saved by the atonement of Christ and maybe saved by obedience to the laws.

I'm going to quote to you from the teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, 13th president of the LDS in his teachings, pages 353-354, he says this, "Grace consists of God's gift to His children wherein He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever would believe in Him, and comply with His laws and ordinances would have everlasting life.

Or Bruce Redd McConckie, an apostle of the LDS, in his book "Mormon Doctrine," page 408 "As with all other doctrines of salvation, justification is available because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but it becomes operative in the life of an individual only on conditions of personal righteousness." That is a blatant and manifest denial of the Gospel. Romans 3:20 "For by works of the law, no human being will be justified in His sight." No, Mr. McConckie, it is not 'it becomes operative in the life of an individual on conditions of personal righteousness.' The justification that we have from Jesus Christ becomes operative by faith. By faith, Abraham was declared

righteous. By faith. Yes, faith will produce works, but the works do not merit our salvation. By works of the law, no human being will be justified in His sight. Or Titus 3:5, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

What I would say to this man James, is this: Jesus Christ calls us to full, undiluted devotion to Him. Luke 14:26, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple." I would say to this man James: if you're seeking to stay in Mormonism, in a false religion, in a religion that God tells you to come out of, in a religion that the Apostle Paul cursed, if you are determined to stay there and it has to do with a greater affection for any family relationship than what you have for Christ He says, Christ Himself says, you cannot be His disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:33, "so therefore any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be My disciple."

So we would call James and anybody else in that situation... Catholicism has a cursed message, Islam is a damnable religion, Jehovah's Witnesses deny the deity of Christ, all these religions deny that Jesus Christ in a perfect life, in a perfect obedience, according to Philippians 2, He took that obedience all the way to becoming a man, perfectly, coming and submitting to His Father, taking that obedience all the way to death, even death on a cross, Jesus Christ, through tears, He learned obedience, He suffered before His Father, He earned a righteousness whereby the righteousness of God, the righteousness God demands of us was earned, it was merited by Christ Himself. To John the Baptist, He says, "John, baptize Me." John says, "Lord, I need to be baptized of You. You come here to be baptized by me?" And He said that all righteousness might be fulfilled, Jesus Christ had to walk through life and do what we do, be involved in what we're involved with, and do it in absolute perfection, and fulfill all righteousness so that the law might be satisfied perfectly, and in so doing, He takes all of that obedience, all the way to obeying His Father, and going to give His life as a ransom for many on Calvary's cross, so that He could come to that very point where He breathed His last, and just giving up the spirit, He says, "It is finished," and it's done.

He has accomplished salvation. He was stricken, He was smitten, He was afflicted of God, He was crushed by almighty wrath on that cross, so that in the end of it, it is finished. And now, the most vile sinner, much like Luke 19, the tax collector beating on his breast, no works to offer God. Christ sets him off against the Pharisee, who was boasting - he fasts, he gives, he does, he works, he puts forth an effort; this man beat on his breast, wouldn't even raise his head, he simply said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Jesus did not say He went out and did all these works to make justification possible. He specifically said this man had no works to offer God, totally contrary to the Pharisee, who is offering God all sorts of good works, and Jesus says, make no qualms about it, Jesus says, "This man went home justified, and not the other." Be certain of that. This Mormon is a liar. These Mormons I quoted, they are liars. You cannot be justified the way they say. They're liars. Paul was very specific in Romans 4, it was not works, it

was not works... Abraham had no place to boast in works. And if anybody doubts that, you not only have Luke 19, you have Romans 4:5, and it is unmistakable.

Who does God justify? He who justifies the ungodly. It doesn't say He justifies those who work and obey and keep laws. It says He justifies the ungodly. These Mormons are liars. It is a corrupt system. It is a damning system. And if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, God calls you, "Come out." So no, you do not want to stay. It is a haunt of demons. A man cannot be saved unless the most basic aspects of the Gospel are understood. You see, we're called to believe something. There are very concrete propositions, or truths, that are presented in the basic Christian message that must be adhered to, they must be believed, they must be laid hold on. You clearly see that in 1 Corinthians 15, do you not? Paul is laying down very basic tenets of the Gospel, and the thing is, false religions are not a little hazy in some obscure doctrine. False religions attack the foundations; they attack the very core message. That's what Paul's dealing with in Galatians 1:8, if somebody, even an angel from heaven, it doesn't matter who it is, if they come to you preaching another gospel than what we have preached, let them be accursed.

And the thing is, the Gospel at its very root has to do to with Christ, His person, His character, who He is, and what He accomplished, in His life, on the cross, in His death. If a man does not have a basic understanding of that, he cannot be saved. There needs to be a basic comprehension of that. And the thing is these false religions attack on that level. Like I say it's not some obscure teaching about eschatology where they go wrong, they attack the very central message in a way that their message is damning. This is night and day, this is dark and light, this is the difference between life and death. This is truth and error. This is of God and of the devil. This is where the Spirit operates versus the haunt of demons. We're not talking some vague, small thing; we're talking about very foundational matters.

Now look, I know there have been times in history where there have been certain individuals that stayed in the Catholic church or they stayed in the Anglican church, and they held to the truth. Typically people who did that, Savrinola, they burned him. I mean, typically, the people that tried to hold on in the midst of those kinds of situations suffered great persecution; they were put to death, they were ostracized, you name it. Even the evangelicals that stayed in the Anglican church, they tended to be a minority, rocks were thrown at them, probably literally and not so literally. I guess the point is what we find here is God is calling His people out of false religion, and I really believe that if you study Babylon, if you study that harlot... A lot of our forefathers have thought it spoke of Catholicism and the priests. I would say Catholicism is just one among many antichrists that are representative of false religion. There was a day when the Pope and Catholicism seemed to be the main enemy. Today we might look at it and say Islam may be, although if you talk to Ryan, he probably still sees Catholicism... I think what we basically see is this: If you're in Romania, it's Eastern Orthodox; if you're in Russia, it's Eastern Orthodox, if you're in Tibet, it's Buddhism, if you're in India, it's Hinduism, Basically what you have is a picture of false religion, and God is calling His people out.

And the truth is, that if somebody is in one of those systems and they simply do not have the ability to see the difference between the true Gospel and that which is a corrupt perversion, then there is probably a very great likelihood they're not converted, because one of the things we find that happens is that the Spirit of God opens men's eyes. They're no longer blind. They now have the ability to see. The Scriptures come alive. We actually find various Scriptures scattered through the New Testament that show us that we're taught of God. The problem is that if it's difficult for people to give up their old beliefs, it's because they have not come to a new belief. Because that's exactly what faith is: Faith is beholding in Christ the answer to my sin that I never found in anything else, the answer to my eternal glory, to my joy, to what is seen in Christ as something precious that I never found in anything else. What you're saying is no different than saying a guy given to pornography for his whole life it's very difficult for him to give up what he loved so much for all those years. It's the same thing.

When Jesus Christ comes along, what in the world do we think salvation is? Salvation is being saved from those things. It's being saved from the power of sin. It says it very clearly in Romans 6, sin shall not have dominion over you. Jesus Christ comes along to save people to the uttermost. Not to leave them lingering, hovering over these things and going on with their spiritual adultery and fornication, that's why He says come out from among them. Come out from among all that whoredom, and that adultery and fornication in a spiritual sense, come out. Do you realize what's happening when the church of LDS meets? It's a room full of whores committing spiritual idolatry. When a Catholic church gets together, it is whoredom. It is spiritual adultery. People committing lewd acts of spiritual abomination. That's what it is. When people put their affection and attention on writings other than the Scriptures, saviors other than Christ, gods who are not the God of the Bible, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when they turn and lay their trust and lay their hope, you just read what God says about the Jews when they worshiped other gods, up under every green tree; He uses language that is graphic, because that's how it is to Him. It's like a married woman going out and finding another man not her husband and committing all sorts of lewd acts and indescribable sexual abominations and perversions selling herself cheap, giving herself, and I'm not even coming up to Biblical descriptions (response from the room - inaudible) Yes, there's idolatry of all sorts. But the fact is, false religion is the devil's playground, and God calls us to come out from among it. But the thing is, false religion can be like Islam, or it can be like Joel Osteen. It can be the faith movement, health, wealth and prosperity, or it can be the Amish. I mean, it's got every look under the sun. The Wilkenson's were just telling us Sunday about the people who dress in grey; it can look like that or it can look like Benny Hinn. It's everything in between. Anyway, that's it for tonight.