

TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2014

How long will you make us to doubt? Tell us plainly!

On Wednesday, April 9, at 11 pm, I was excommunicated from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for apostasy. The entire proceedings lasted about four hours. The presiding high council of my stake decided the matter upon first impression without having read *any* of my words beforehand or having considered in detail *any* of the doctrinal or historical arguments in question prior to this meeting. When it was over, I didn't even know what doctrinal points the council found me to be in disagreement with with the Church, so confusing were the proceedings!

The hearing was organized in such a way as to prevent any effectual rebuttal. (My stake president is a trained lawyer, who knows how to "win" his case, after all!) He occupied the first two hours referencing my blog (and any links therefrom), beginning from May, 2013, when I first encountered Denver Snuffer and wrote about his ideas. The stake president read a highlighted sentence here, or a paragraph or page there, slowly, monotonally and, sometimes, incomprehensibly, reciting my words like a priest sometimes mumbles through the sacrament prayer. I cringed, because I considered my words sacred, and he obviously did not.

Because he read chronologically, he moved from topic to topic, taking my words out of context rather than addressing each point thematically. He asked me not to respond until he was finished, but I was compelled to butt in repeatedly! (I realized that, when he concluded, *no one* would want to go back and listen to these same words again! We would be there all night!) He was hopelessly poisoning the well. I *had* to speak up as he dropped each "bomb", which only made me look disrespectful and contentious. Otherwise I wouldn't have been able to remember, must less address, any of the ground he covered.

I had already been up since 2 am, fasting since the day before, while performing a full day of heavy labor. *So I was beat!*

As he continued to read, I noted the demeanor of those in attendance. Many seemed genuinely interested to listen, while others looked visibly angry, disinterested, or ready to pronounce their "verdict" immediately.

When the time came for me to "officially" respond, one member of the council said "I don't want to be taught!" Another repeatedly demanded that I restrict my response to "five minutes". When I took much longer than that, he walked out. (Ironically, *he* was selected to protect *my* interests!) Virtually everyone in attendance I considered to be a personal friend.

But this was not an audience that was in any way receptive to what I had to say. When I asked them questions, they remained silent. (I was told they were instructed not to respond. It was like speaking to a wall.)

In the end, the stake president recited (from memory) the list of "charges". I was compelled to answer "yes" or "no". It didn't seem to matter what I said. My words were regarded as disingenuous, nuanced or contrived, as if I didn't really mean it when I said "I support and sustain the Brethren", or "I recognize the leaders of the Church as 'prophets, seers, or revelators'", or "I believe the LDS Church to be the vehicle God is using to do His work today".

When I asked the stake clerk to read back to me the "charges" so that I could rebut them, he couldn't do it, so rambling (and contradictory) had been the arguments made against me.

My stake president no doubt felt moved and obligated to protect the interests, integrity and reputation of the LDS Church. He believes sincerely that my actions and motivations are contrary to those ends. In a way, he is right. *I don't care about the corporate church.* Much of what we “celebrate” as Latter-day Saints is tedious, uninspired and misguided. Still, we're the Lord's Church (His “chosen” people!) and we're currently wandering, as a body, in the wilderness.

Building and perpetuating an organization is not my focus. Coming unto Christ is.

About a year ago our ward met in a combined meeting during third hour to discuss *cleaning and maintaining the chapel*. One speaker after another addressed the topic. When it was my turn to speak, as ward facilities representative, I said if we spent an entire hour talking in church about cleaning the building and not talking about or bearing witness of Christ, then we would be better off *dropping a bomb on the building*, and then *speaking of Christ*. Our focus, as a Church, in all things, should be on Christ.

It is not.

It is distracted by *many* other things. Things of Babylon, not Zion.

That's why we, as a people, are failing to come unto Christ.

Nevertheless, we must have the *opportunity* to be “distracted”, so we may choose. *We must choose Christ*, or we cannot be saved. *He will not have Himself be our God by default*. We are given many opportunities to choose something else – *anything* else – over Him. We cannot put our souls on “auto-pilot”, hand our life's controls over to others, or let the Church fly us “home”. We must actively *seek after, find, focus on and follow* Jesus Christ *ourselves* in order to be saved. He would have us have *no other gods before Him*.

Recently in General Conference, *Elder Claudio D. Zivic gave an inspired talk*. He spoke of *following a man who seemed to know where he was going*, while he himself personally *neglected to read and follow the signs* posted along the way. This *follower of a man* ended up “missing the mark”. He became separated from his family and failed to reach his goal.

That's what happens when we “*follow a prophet*” rather than the Lord.

When we follow a prophet, we end up in the wilderness of Sin, not on Mt. Sinai. The Lord promises to *give “living waters” from within* to those who follow Him, that they might never thirst again. This “living water” is the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which men commune with God themselves. To a rebellious people, however, who follow after “strange gods”, He gives to “follow a prophet”, to languish with thirst and hunger in the desert, *until they learn* to come unto God directly. *Only the words of God lead one back to God*. “For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.” Those who trust in men, or in the words and works of men, to save their souls do so at their peril. The words of God – delivered by His own voice or, equivalently, by *the voice of His inspired servants*, when delivered appropriately, both with respect to time and audience – are accompanied *by power*, being *confirmed by the Holy Ghost*. *We are required to distinguish between words spoken by men and words spoken by God*, by taking the Holy Spirit for our Guide. Otherwise, *we may be easily deceived* and lead astray.

The kingdom of Heaven comes *with power*. Those who receive the Holy Ghost *invariably receive revelation from God*, for He (the Holy Ghost) is a Revelator. He *bears record of the Father and the Son*. All those who receive His witness *become prophets*. *One must become a prophet to have eternal life*. *God desires all his people to become prophets*, filled with the Holy Ghost. *Christ reveals Himself to those who earnestly seek Him*. *Those who know Him recognize Him* for who He is when He appears, for they are like Him – full of truth, righteousness and love. Otherwise, He remains hidden from view, for *He comes as a thief in the night*.

When Jesus' spoken doctrine caused many to reject Him (because they would not believe or receive the witness of the Holy Ghost), He asked His remaining disciples if they, too, would leave Him. Peter's response was instructive: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). Note he did not say "You have the proper priesthood authority!" It is the *power of Jesus' words*, not the profession of His "authority", that convinces others to follow Him. His words are delivered *with power*.

We must recognize, receive, and follow the powerful witness of the Holy Ghost. When we do, we come unto Christ.

People access *priests* to receive authorized rituals and ordinances. People access *God* to receive power unto eternal life.

Posted by Good Will at [12:44 PM](#)