

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION[®]

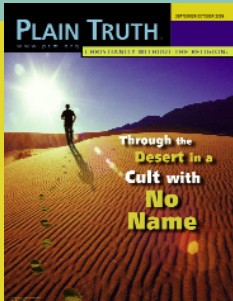
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Cover Story

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To former members and those who encounter this cult, they are known by a variety of nicknames: 2X2s (two-by-twos), Cooneyites, Irvinites, Dippers, Go-Preachers, the Tramps and the No-Names. It is the very anonymity and simplicity of the No-Names that enables their cult to grow largely undetected, like termites in a home, noticed only when the damage is too costly to ignore.

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Inside This Issue

The No-Names continue today to capitalize on that human desire to know something special or to be something special...they proselytize by moving slowly and deliberately, identifying vulnerable and malleable targets. *Through the Desert in a Cult With No Name* **10**

Over the course of human history untold millions have been killed and countless more displaced and abused as the result of holy wars over holy places. *Christianity Has No Holy Places* **20**

I was just sitting there minding my own business when the critical moment came. I didn't see the ambush coming. The lead singer asked everyone who was "saved" to stand up. *The Christian Ambush* **24**

In our desire to prompt confession and make repentance real, we've added our own legalisms and religious rituals until the "plan of salvation" looks like a slick hot-rod, packaged and programmed to be convenient, clever and desirable. *Tricked-Out Confession* **29**

MISSION STATEMENT

Plain Truth Ministries proclaims authentic Christianity without the religion. Our work is Christ-centered, based on God's amazing grace, giving hope to those burned out by legalistic religion.

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Leaving My World Behind

Thanks for the article by Carol Harper in the July/August issue. I began my Christian life at the Assembly of God Churches. When I got married I took on my wife's Mormon faith (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints—LDS). In time I pulled away from it, believing the scientific arguments about reality. After becoming Hurricane Katrina Refugees in Mississippi, we rejoined the Latter-Day Church. They were the first to help us out in this time of crisis, and I guess I felt that I owed it to them to return to the religion.

My wife was born in the Mormon religion, so returning was easy for her since it is where her heart always had been. She tried the Assembly of God church for a time but thought it was too wild and not reverent enough. My wife is very much dedicated to Mormonism and is dead set on our kids growing up only in this religion.

While I love my wife and the kids and believe that the Mormons teach great morals to our children, I always feel dissatisfied and discontent with the church. The people are great and are the nicest and most helpful I have ever met. But I feel the weight of too much legalism and “us against them” mentality in the belief of being the only true church. I would appreciate any further help you can give.

Tennessee

- *The Mormon people can be wonderful people, yes. There can be wonderful people in every religion and culture. But, the issue is not whether the people are good or charitable. The issue is what is true. Jesus said, “I Am the way, the truth and the life.” Not Allah/Mohammad, not Buddha, not Krishna, not Zeus or Hercules, not Oprah or the latest top spiritual bookseller, and...not Joseph Smith. Only Jesus is.*

It seems you are afraid of the truth breaking up your family. This is a legitimate fear. Fear is one of the greatest tactics used to keep membership in line. Both fear and guilt are the glue of religious houses built upon sandy foundations, and the LDS church has evolved into a religion which uses this glue in excess. When it comes right down to it, everything about

Mormonism hinges on Joseph Smith. Here are a few questions to consider:

1) *Do you believe Joseph Smith, or Jesus Christ?*

2) *Do you believe Joseph Smith's scriptures (Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, Doctrine & Covenants)...or the Bible (by the way, the very existence of the Bible is proof that there was never a “Great Apostasy.”)*

3) *Do you believe in religion's definition of God, or do you believe in the everlasting love of an amazing, infinite, omniscient and eternal God that came to save humanity in the person of Jesus Christ (John 3:16)?*



A Slice of Grace With a Side of Law?

Ouch! Ken Armstrong's opening and closing comments about one's attitude while behind the wheel of an automobile was a particularly piercing application! Driving etiquette can indeed be the “ultimate laboratory” for determining whether we are living in God's grace. But, as Ken adds, “Almost the ultimate lab. There's also *church*.” I especially agreed with his statement “Law has no passion, no conscience, no room for love.”

California



Rehabilitating Grace

Thanks to Christopher Lee for his article “Rehabilitating Grace” in the July/August issue. The double entendre of this title is a clever way of drawing the analogy between the first-person experience of the author's therapeutic involvement in “rehabilitating Grace” (the name of the client he worked with as a physical therapist) and his own experience of “rehabilitating grace” as the Divine

Therapist overcomes the debilitating problem of legalistic religion. I believe this article will speak to the hearts of many readers, especially those who are beginning to hear promptings of the "Divine Therapist" who desires to rehabilitate (even cure) their religionism and legalism with His grace.

Email



All Is Not Lost

Thanks so much for the article by Susan Reedy "All Is Not Lost" in the July/August *PT*. It really hit home. I, too, work with families going through divorce/separation. It is a court ordered program that parents must take. I would like to work with the children. I spend eight hours with the parents. Every class touches my heart. So much pain and inability to see what their children are going through.

Minnesota

Please extend my thanks and gratitude to Susan Reedy for the wonderful word pictures and emotions she portrays in her writings. I always turn to her column first when my *PT* arrives. It is a great magazine and the whole staff gets my vote for a job well done. Thanks for your ministry.

Washington



Thou Shalt Question Authority

I want to personally thank PTM as well as author Kimalee Finelli for the wonderful and eye-opening article "Thou Shalt Question Authority" in the May/June issue.

I can relate to her story, being a former convert to the Mormon cult. Kimalee mirrored the experience that my family and I went through so accurately. After being "loved into the church," we were watched and followed. In our small neighborhood Ward it seemed as if it was your neighbors' duty to spy on you and

report the tiniest transgression to the Bishop. When my family and I formally left "the church" we were ostracized by our neighbors and disowned by family. It wasn't as if we didn't exist anymore, but as if we had become pariahs or lepers.

Though this was a painful experience, we have come to experience God's true grace, love and fellowship in our new family of brothers and sisters in Christ. I have come to learn and embrace the fact that all families are not raised under one roof, but as Christians we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Utah



Thirty More Years!

I wanted to let you know that next month will be a personal milestone. It will mark my being a subscriber to *The Plain Truth* magazine for 30 years. The transformation in the magazine has been awesome. Thanks for every issue of *The Plain Truth*. This magazine has a major impact on my life. I hope to receive it for 30 more years!

Alabama



Christianity Without the Religion

I felt so lost until I found your teaching ministry, *Christianity Without the Religion (CWR)*, on the Internet. Now I can truly see. Thank you so much!

Texas

I just want you to know how much you have helped me. You explain grace in such a way that I can grasp God's love for me better than I ever have before. I am so grateful I can listen to you every day on your website. God bless PTM!

New York

Your messages are giving us the spiritual food and encouragement that we need. I am grateful for all you do at PTM.

Iowa

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