handmaiden of polygamy. There are two reasons: Early Mormonism was violent by nature; polygamy is an emotion-charged sexual perversion.

I also believe that Fundamentalist Mormonism has something to teach those of us who have an interest in Mormonism. Because, in the final analysis, Fundamentalist Mormonism is the True Mormonism. The Mormon Church we normally think of is the ten million member Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). But in fact, that organization is apostate from True Mormonism. By that I mean that the LDS Church has forsaken many of the so-called “plain and precious truths” revealed by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Any one who objectively examines what happened in 1890 when the LDS Church “abandoned polygamy” must see that it did not really do so. In fact, to this day, all Mormon groups retain the belief that polygamy will once again be instituted for all worthy Mormons.

WHY BOTHER WITH FUNDAMENTALIST MORMONS?

If Mormon Fundamentalism is as I say, the True Mormonism, then we must not allow it to be obscured by LDS public relations and tap dancing. We must hold the feet of Mormonism to the flame of truth to reveal it for what it is. Only then will Evangelical Christians have the motivation and the ammunition to carry on the work of evangelizing Mormonism. I do not exaggerate when I say that such work has fallen on hard times. The Evangelical Church is much less apt to evangelize Mormons today than it was ten or fifteen years ago.

Today many Evangelicals are double-minded as to whether or not Mormons even need to hear the Gospel message. My most recent newsletter mentioned the foggy thinking of one Evangelical pastor in Provo who apparently believes that a major problem with Mormonism is that Christians are full of hatred towards Mormons. Love. We need to go back to the admonition of scripture found in I Corinthians, chapter one:

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

It may be possible that we will have to convert Mormons to True Mormonism before we can convert them to True Christianity. I mean that as long as we allow the LDS Church to define itself publicly one way and privately another, how can we hope to have true conversation? It is hard work to patiently insist that Latter-day Saints own up to their true doctrine. And, don’t get me wrong, I am not saying the average Mormon is lying and deceiving. I think he or she is probably confused. Standard operating procedure in Mormonism calls for the sheep to be obedient and not ask penetrating questions. Our job as evangelists is to help them ask the right questions.

A RECENT BLESSING

A few weeks ago I was asked to come to a meeting of Evangelical pastors in Emmett, Idaho. These brothers had, within the past couple of years, reformed the men’s pastoral association. The association had followed the normal path of most Christian denominations—a slow liberalizing which leads them away from their evangelical roots. The situation finally came to a head when a local Mormon Bishop managed to be officially included in the pastoral association for more than three years. Of course the liberal Christian pastors could see nothing wrong with that. But clear thinking prevailed and the group adopted a set of doctrinal statements which effectively excluded not only the Mormon, but the liberals.

But these men still were not sure how to address Mormonism in their churches. They recognized that many of their parish-
Manti: The “Gathering Place”

The Mormon Temple in Manti, Utah dominates the approach to the city. Set on Temple Hill, the building was dedicated by Mormon President Lorenzo Snow, May 21, 1888. It was the third temple to be completed, following those in Logan and St. George, and prior to the Salt Lake Temple. Manti is thought by some, particularly the leadership of The True and Living Church of Jesus Christ of the Last Days (TLC), to be a special place—the only city properly designated as an official “city in Zion”—by Brigham Young.

I went to Manti in early April to scout out the possibility of doing a meeting there this summer. My host for the day was Pastor O. Jay Swanson who previously had aided me by working up a cross reference between the 1830 Book of Mormon and the Golden Bible of M. T. Lamb. We spent the day driving around town. I managed to meet John Harmston, the son of Prophet and President of TLC, Jim Harmston. John, is also a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of this small, interesting Mormon sect. I also met the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as well as a former member of the TLC.

Manti is remarkable because of TLC and other Fundamentalist/Polygamists sects of Mormonism. I have been studying these groups intently during recent months. As I reported in an earlier newsletter, polygamy and its twin wife/child abuse, has dominated the news in Utah for two years. I want to repeat what I said in my most recent newsletter:

Wherever we find polygamy in America we also find violence. Not every polygamist clan is violent, but all too many are. Violence is a

(continued on page 2)
handmaiden of polygamy. There are two reasons: Early Mormonism was violent by nature; polygamy is an emotion-charged sexual perversion.

I also believe that Fundamentalist Mormonism has something to teach those of us who have an interest in Mormonism. Because, in the final analysis, Fundamentalist Mormonism is the True Mormonism. The Mormon Church we normally think of is the ten million member Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). But in fact, that organization is apostate from True Mormonism. By that I mean that the LDS Church has forsaken many of the so-called "plain and precious truths" revealed by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Any one who objectively examines what happened in 1890 when the LDS Church "abandoned polygamy" must see that it did not really do so. In fact, to this day, all Mormon groups retain the belief that polygamy will once again be instituted for all worthy Mormons.

WHY BOTHER WITH FUNDAMENTALIST MORMONS?

If Mormon Fundamentalism is as I say, the True Mormonism, then we must not allow it to be obscured by LDS public relations and tap dancing. We must hold the feet of Mormonism to the flame of truth to reveal it for what it is. Only then will Evangelical Christians have the motivation and the ammunition to carry on the work of evangelizing Mormonism. I do not exaggerate when I say that such work has fallen on hard times. The Evangelical Church is much less apt to evangelize Mormons today than it was ten or fifteen years ago.

Today many Evangelicals are double-minded as to whether or not Mormons even need to hear the Gospel message. My response by saying, "The problem with Mormonism is not Christianity!" God help us. When evangelism is reduced to being nice and loving while at the same time the doctrinal declarations of Christianity are minimalized, we are on the road to a bloodless message which contains no conversion power. I repeat, it is the preaching of the cross of Christ which has power to convert, not human love. We do, indeed, speak the truth in love, but we must speak the truth. And speaking truth means expressing verbal points which describe the differences between the gospel of Mormonism and the Gospel of Christ. Whenever we have that discussion, Mormons have a chance to be born again. Without the doctrinal discussion, we produce only mushy human love and positive thinking—what some of us used to call "sloppy agape." Real love is tough love. We need to go back to the admonition of scripture found in I Corinthians, chapter one:

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

It may be possible that we will have to convert Mormons to True Mormonism before we can convert them to True Christianity. I mean that as long as we allow the LDS Church to define itself publicly one way and privately another, how can we hope to have true conversation? It is hard work to patiently insist that Latter-day Saints own up to their true doctrine. And, don't get me wrong, I am not saying the average Mormon is lying and deceiving. I think he or she is probably confused. Standard operating procedure in Mormonism calls for the sheep to be obedient and not ask penetrating questions. Our job as evangelists is to help them ask the right questions.

A RECENT BLESSING

A few weeks ago I was asked to come to a meeting of Evangelical pastors in Emmett, Idaho. These brothers had, within the past couple of years, reformed the men's pastoral association. The association had followed the normal path of most Christian denominations—a slow liberalizing which leads them away from their evangelical roots. The situation finally came to a head when a local Mormon Bishop managed to be officially included in the pastoral association for more than three years. Of course the liberal Christian pastors could see nothing wrong with that. But clear thinking prevailed and the group adopted a set of doctrinal statements which effectively excluded not only the Mormon, but the liberals.

But these men still were not sure how to address Mormonism in their churches. They recognized that many of their parish-
ioners could not figure out why we can not just ignore the Mormon/Christian debate. As I talked with the men on an early Tuesday morning, they outlined their dilemma. They said they did not believe their people were ready for a full-fledged Mormonism Seminar. Rather than run ads in the paper and invite the public to hear the issues debated, they asked if I could come and talk to their people and explain why Mormons could not be considered—as a group—to be Christians.

It was a smart move on their part. We met on a Sunday night and Christians from six churches gathered together for a standing-room-only meeting. We had, I believe, about 300 people present. To a man, the pastors said the meeting was one of the best things they had done together for the community. Now that they had their people on board, they decided we could

Pastor Jay Swanson and his wife, Diane, have been in Manti for seven years

now have another meeting and talk specifically about how to reach Mormons. Praise the Lord!

BACK TO MANTI

There is another element in Manti that interests me. This town of 3,000 people has a Christian population, according to Pastor Swanson, of “four or five people.” We are talking about those the pastor has met in seven years who would be considered born again as defined by most Evangelicals. The rest of the population are traditional Mormons and Jack Mormons, members of the TLC cult, and a smattering of nonbelievers of various stripe—Secularists, New Agers, Agnostics.

But what is different about Manti is this: the Mormon Church has been seriously challenged. A debate has raged there for a number of years now as the TLC has proselytized regular Mormons into fundamentalism. Every TV tabloid show in the nation has troup through Manti interviewing the cult leaders, as well as disaffected members, and those who have lost their husbands, sons, wives, and daughters to polygamy. While TLC is small—the President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles told me they were about 300—it represents 10% of the town’s population.

There have been discussions in Manti between regular Mormons and others—that is very unique. Although the official Mormon Church position is to avoid all dialogue and dissent by “taking the high road of non-discussion,” when people are losing their kids and spouses, you can bet interaction is occurring. This is exactly what is not happening in the rest of the United States. Mormons are not talking to people who have a different viewpoint.

Of course the missionaries are talking to potential converts in the privacy of the convert’s homes, but there is no longer public discussion as there was, say, ten years ago. I used to do 150 nights of meetings a year. Christian churches were excited to mount a discussion. And men like Ed Decker and myself won hundreds of people to Christ as a result of those discussions.

Because of the existing conflict in Manti, I thought it might be possible to get a discussion going there. I soon discovered that the official position of the TLC was “no comment.” I was told that they have officially closed the doors to the outside world. They are not seeking to make any more converts and they are not granting any more interviews.

Two reasons account for their closed mouths: First, they suffered tons of negative publicity when the TV tabloids were passing through. There were interviews
with weeping women whose husbands had trekked off to imbibe in polygamy, often leaving large families behind. Jim Harmsen was called Jim Jones and law enforcement worried (and still do) that violence might erupt within the cult or between TLC and the community. Rumors of stockpiled weaponry and plans to lay siege to the Manti temple floated throughout Sanpete County.

As a result of the decision to cut off discussion with the outside world, I will not be having a debate with Jim Harmsen. Nevertheless, we cannot discount the fact that discussion has occurred in Manti. The downside, as pointed out by Pastor Swanson, is that the people are exhausted. They are "argued out."

So, how would I arrange a meeting in Manti which would draw a crowd? Who would come to a meeting in, say, the library basement, in Manti? The short answer is "probably nobody." But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to reach out there. I am praying about how to do something there yet this summer, and I ask you to pray with me about how to touch at least a few people there.

**Utah's Checkered Legacy**

Those of us who live in Mormondom know that the 24th of July is a bigger holiday than the 4th of July. But do we know why? Of course we know that Brigham Young, on that date, looked down Emigration Canyon and out across the Salt Lake Valley and proclaimed he had found safe haven for the Saints.

And safe haven was needed. The rule of Mormonism. Many prophecies predicted the doom of the United States and the supremacy of the theocracy led by Joseph Smith. For decades after Joseph Smith was killed, all temple Mormons took an oath to "avenge the blood of Joseph Smith upon this Nation, and teach our children to do the same."

The Church literally was at war with the citizens during its season in Missouri. And when they made it to Utah, they were on the brink of a civil war with the United States of America. In fact, President Buchanan, in 1858, sent troops to Utah. Never before had the United States mustered such a force.

When Brigham Young took over Utah, he ruled with an iron fist. He was the civil leader as well as the religious leader. Those who dared to stand up to him were exiled or murdered through the mandate of Blood Atonement. So vicious was the antagonism the Mormon leaders felt against gentiles, that when a wagon train from Missouri passed through Utah, Brigham ordered that they be detained and slaughtered. He had his lieutenant, John D. Lee, convince a party of Indians to pin the settlers down and surround them. They laid siege to the train for several days. Then Lee entered the camp under a flag of truce and told the unfortunate Missourians that he could guarantee them safe passage through the Indian lines. Of course, they had to surrender their weapons. After they did that, Lee and his men killed every man, woman, and all (except a very few) children.

This event, The Mountain Meadows Massacre, has an important place in history. The foul deed, until the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building by Timothy McVeigh in Oklahoma City, stood as the greatest massacre of Americans by Americans in our history (excluding the Civil War).

So Mormonism indeed has an unfortunate legacy which continues to play itself out today. Child abuse, polygamy, restriction of women's rights, and the oppression of dissenters is common fare. Note the following statistics from my website:

- The divorce rate in Utah is higher than that of Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey.
- The murder rate in Utah is higher than it is in New Hampshire, Iowa, and North Dakota.
- The rape rate is higher in Utah than New York, California, and Virginia.

These statistics are from the U. S. Census Bureau.

Mormonism is an authoritarian system that does not offer its adherents acceptance before a forgiving God. Rather it puts them on a treadmill of self-improvement—a stairway leading nowhere.

---

Don't forget to visit our websites at:

www.mazeministry.com and www.yrulds.com