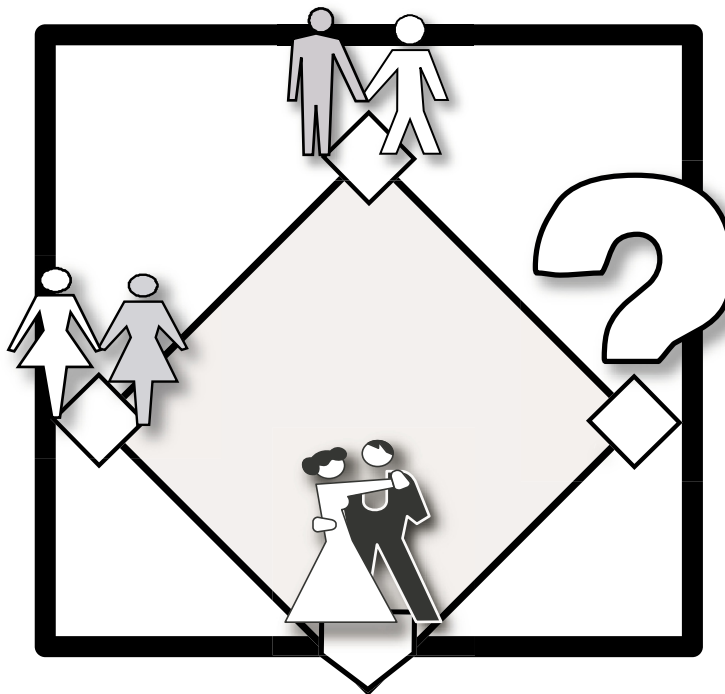


Who's On First...First? Do We Need A Marriage Amendment?

By L.L. (Don) & Joy A. Veinot & Judge David Pake

Since the time of the Tower of Babel, when God confused the languages of men on Earth, there has been a great language problem to overcome. And, any of you who watch those migraine-inducing, political-debating shows on television know that even if people speak the same language, they might not "speak the same language." ☺ There is a human problem of communication that often goes way beyond Spanish vs. English or Russian vs. Swahili. The problem, as we see it, is often "misunderestimated"—to borrow a term coined by our President. ☺

There is a famous comedy routine performed by Bud Abbott and Lou Costello called "Who's on First?" It is a classic piece that draws its humor from the idea of human miscommunication. Two guys were talking about the same thing, a baseball team. They were even using the same words, but no true communication resulted because they held differing *understandings* of those words. To Bud Abbott, "Who" is a personal, proper noun—someone's name. To Lou Costello, "Who" is a question.



Costello: You know the fellows' names?
Abbott: Certainly!
Costello: Well, then, who's on first?
Abbott: Yes!
Costello: I mean the fellow's name!
Abbott: Who!

Costello: The guy on first!
Abbott: Who!
Costello: The first baseman!
Abbott: Who!
Costello: The guy playing first!
Abbott: Who is on first!
Costello: Now whaddya askin' me for?
Abbott: I'm telling you, Who is on first.
Costello: Well, I'm asking YOU, who's on first!
Abbott: That's the man's name.
Costello: That's who's name?
Abbott: Yes.
Costello: Well, go ahead and tell me.
Abbott: Who.
Costello: The guy on first.
Abbott: Who!
Costello: The first baseman.
Abbott: Who is on first!

The skit continues on a ways, but you get the drift ...☺
 What we have here is a failure to communicate.

The Need for the Creed

In comedy, being "definitionally challenged" can be humorous. In real life, however, it can have devastating effects. The various church creeds came into existence in response to false teachers corrupting Christianity by imbuing the words of the faith with new definitions. The result of these new meanings

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caused great confusion and a large number of "shipwrecked" believers. The creeds were *restatements and reaffirmations* of the *definitions that had been held and taught from the beginning*. The first recorded creed we have is contained in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and was given to bring clarity to the word *Gospel* as well as to record the meaning "for the ages." We get a sense of how false teachers had co-opted this term because the Apostle Paul spends the balance of chapter 15 focusing on one aspect of this definition: The Resurrection. He goes from the specific statement that "**He [Christ] was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures ...**," to the general concept of Resurrection, to the explanation that the Resurrection was of the *physical body*—as opposed to some notion of a "spiritual" resurrection (as the Greeks held in that day, and as Jehovah's Witnesses, and other heretical groups hold today). Paul was very clear that none of this teaching on the Resurrection was new or fabricated by him. It is what he had received from God, what he had preached, and what they previously had believed. Any divergence, then, from Paul's definition there or any alternate explanation offered by anyone was *heresy* to be rejected by the Church throughout the ages.

The next few centuries of Church history brought more false teachers and heretical teachings to the fore. False teachers generally would not be successful in stealing believers away from the faith if they *plainly stated* that Christianity is bogus. What false teachers did then—and still do now—is subtly corrupt the meaning of words and doctrines so that people leave the faith without even *knowing they are leaving it*. They may still call themselves "Christians," but they will not hold to *true* historic Christianity, but rather a counterfeit.

Gnosticism, for example, denied The Incarnation of Jesus by claiming that God could not have taken on human flesh, because physicality was supposedly evil. They used Christian terminology, but simply *redefined the words* to capture the ignorant or unwary in their net. The Gnostic "Christians" had left the faith and were intent on taking as many as possible with them. But the Early Church Fathers, who held to the "**... faith once for all delivered to the saints**" (Jude 1:3) did battle with these early heretics by writing prolifically in defense of the Humanity of Jesus as well as affirming His Divinity and, in the process, debunking the Gnostic heresy.

These early Christian apologists (an apologist is one who reasons in defense or justification of something) saw the need to plainly restate and affirm the faith as it was believed from the beginning, which resulted in what we know as *The Apostle's Creed*:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Amen.¹

Note the language emphasizing Jesus' *humanity*— *that He was born and died as a man*, as well as affirming His death and Resurrection. What they were doing was *formalizing* (not to be confused with *formulating*) the true faith as opposed to Gnostic teaching. But Gnosticism was not the only heresy that Christianity would encounter through the ages, so more elaborate creeds were needed as time went by. Each successive creed was a bit longer and more belabored in their definitions. The Nicene Creed was crafted in the fourth century (325 A.D.) and approved by the Nicene Council.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

The Nicene Council again reaffirmed and more clearly stated that which had *always* been believed and taught. This creed was drafted in response to Arius—a very popular false teacher who taught that Jesus was merely a created being and not God.

Since with Arianism it was now Christ's *Deity* that was being challenged, rather than his humanity, it was His Deity that was stressed in the Nicene Creed.

But, alas, it wasn't long before false teachers found ways to twist biblical words and concepts in new and ingenious ways to support newly minted false doctrines. Sabellius was another heretic who taught a modalistic view of God—wherein the Father *became* the Son, and the Son *became* the Holy Spirit.

So in response to new heresy, Christians had to define and clarify biblical teachings yet again, to separate true Christian doctrine from the teachings of pretenders who would co-opt the faith for their own gain.

Hence, the *Athanasian Creed*² states:

This is what the catholic [universal] faith teaches: we worship one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in unity.³

To make sure that this statement could not be co-opted by false teachers, it continues with a sort of “by-this-I-mean” delineation:

Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit. But the Father and the Son have one divinity, equal glory, and coeternal majesty. What the Father is, the Son is. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is boundless, the Son is boundless, and the Holy Spirit is boundless. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal. Nevertheless, there are not three eternal beings, but one eternal being. So there are not three uncreated beings, nor three boundless beings, but one uncreated being and one boundless being.⁴

Notice in this creed the clear delineating of the persons of the Trinity to combat Sabellianism. The creed goes on at great length in a “by-this-we-mean” and “by-this-we-do-not-mean” fashion in order to prevent heretics from distorting their words and meanings.

In matters of faith, the Church has continually stated, defined, and refined the definitions, while never deviating from the core teachings of biblical and historic Christianity. This battle to affirm and remain loyal to the true faith once for all delivered to the saints continues today within the Church as new challenges continue to arise. Definitions are as important as ever.

Misunderstanding, fuzzy thinking, and purposeful distortion have consequences in other areas of life as well.

He Made Them Male And Female

In areas of Christian practice, a number of things have been regarded as true by Christians for nearly 2,000 years. The predominant Christian view also influenced how non-Christians thought and behaved. For example: In the first-century, Greco-Roman culture, an adult male often had a catamite⁵ (a boy kept by a pederast). The Church so influenced culture that this vile practice of child molestation was abandoned and has been prosecutable by law for many centuries. However, this is a practice which NAMBLA (The North American Man Boy Love Association) would like to affirm and legalize again.

In another cultural area, marriage (in the Western world at least) has been esteemed to be a union of one man and one woman. Even in the pre-Christian, Greco-Roman world, marriage was a union of one man and one woman. The man might also have had a mistress and/or catamite, but the institution of *marriage* was always understood to be one man and

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one woman. As Christianity gained influence, child molestation was abandoned; and fidelity in marriage—as *the Bible defines it*—came to be held in high regard. After all, Jesus Himself stated:

And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, ‘FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’? “Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” (Matthew 19:4-6)

Until very recently, not many in the Western world even would have thought to question the definition as defined by the *American Heritage Dictionary*:

The legal union of a man and a woman as husband and wife.⁶

Certainly, no other definition was *legally* sanctioned.

Defining Moments

In 1604, the English Parliament enacted laws which made bigamy a felony. Marriage—meaning one man and one woman—had long been accepted as a sacred sacrament. After America won its independence from England, each of the states also enacted anti-bigamy laws. However, since marriage had such a universally accepted definition, little attention was paid to the laws which were on the books. There didn’t need to be – until the laws were challenged.

The first real legal challenge to the definition of marriage in the Western world came from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (a.k.a. Mormons). In the 1800s, the Mormon church found itself run out of Missouri and Illinois because of their highly detested doctrine and practice of polygamous unions. So the Mormons pulled up stakes, headed west, and settled in what they called the State of Deseret—now known as Utah. There they continued their reviled practice of polygamous unions, which led inexorably to other despicable practices such as more-or-less-sanctioned abuse of women and very young girls being taken into forced “marriages.” The Federal Government had reasonable concern about the outlandish practices of the LDS church in the area of marriage; but since polygamy was considered by the Mormons to be not just an alternative lifestyle, but also a *divinely mandated one*, the dispute could not be resolved easily. The government of the young United States of America was facing a challenge from one of its territories about the legal (as well as the only culturally accepted) definition of marriage. The nation rose to the occasion and settled the dispute: In order to become a state, Utah would have to abandon its peculiar definition of marriage and accept the long-held definition of the rest of the states and of the Western world. On July 8, 1862, the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Law was signed by then-President Abraham Lincoln. Although the law contained fines (\$500—a large amount of money in those days) and up to five years in prison, there was a loop hole: “Bigamy” involves two wives, whereas “polygamy” is many wives, which could be—and was—exploited by the LDS. There was also a lack of will on the part of President Lincoln to enforce this law with regard to the Mormons. This loop hole was closed in 1874 with the Poland Act:

This law stated that all polygamy cases would be tried in federal courts with federally appointed judges. This way, Mormon judges or juries couldn’t just dismiss the cases.⁷

In the same year, George Reynolds, secretary to LDS President Brigham Young, wrote:

... an acknowledged polygamist with two wives, became a voluntary defendant in a test case to determine the constitutionality of the Anti-Bigamy Law of 1862, in which case he was found guilty in a lower court.⁸

The “**acknowledged polygamist**” was found guilty, fined \$500, and sentenced to two years in prison. At this point, it seems to be taken for granted that marriage is between men and women. The particular question was *how many* women one man might have in this union. The definition of marriage—being one man and one woman—had been upheld and reaffirmed legally ... at least for the moment. On January 6, 1877, the law was brought before the United States Supreme Court to determine its constitutionality, and:

... the United States Supreme Court upheld the decision of the territorial court and declared that every civil government had the right to determine whether monogamy or polygamy should be the law of social life under its jurisdiction.⁹

In other words, as far as the Supreme Court was concerned, each state, territory, county, town, and community would make their own local decisions on this matter. With this decision, the affirmed meaning of marriage was threatened through the possibility of *redefinition*, with the seeming blessing of the Supreme Court. That is, until 1882, with the passage of the Edmunds Act:

In 1882, the Edmunds Act made unlawful cohabitation a crime, and anyone who broke the law could be imprisoned for six months.¹⁰

More than 1,300 men were imprisoned as a result of the Edmund’s Act. The issue was revisited again in 1887 with the Congressional passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, which the Supreme Court found constitutional when it was tested. The government followed a path similar to that of the Church in the early centuries: In response to “heresy” against the culturally accepted and understood definition of marriage, that definition was clarified, codified, and written into law. The “*creed*” the lawmakers came up with, defining marriage and defending it against mischaracterization and misuse, has remained intact for the last 118 years. However, in recent times, it is being challenged again.

By the time the 1960s “sexual revolution” arrived on the scene, the Edmunds-Tucker Act had gone the way of the anti-bigamy laws that had been enacted by each state with the founding of the United States. It was still “on the books” but not much in use. The definition of marriage was not challenged, even in the rebellious 60’s, since the “free love” advocates didn’t see much use in making permanent commitments anyway. Who cares about the definition of some outdated concept? However, as the “sexual revolution” matured, it spawned various sexual “civil rights movements” whose adherents began to see great benefit in gaining cultural acceptance and government sanction of their “lifestyles.” It no longer was enough to ignore or spurn conventional definitions of marriage; the agenda now was to gain acceptance of their perverse inclinations and back this cultural acquiescence up with the force of law.

Change Agents

Changing cultural norms takes time and can utilize various avenues. One way to change minds on a massive scale is to begin making changes on a small scale and allow these ideas to take root and grow until the concept is completely accepted and legitimized. “Living together” in an unmarried state was socially unacceptable and considered to be “living in sin” by nearly *everyone* in the pre-1960s; but now it is commonplace and almost universally accepted. Moreover, it is widely believed that living together before marriage is the *wisest* course to take to determine if the couple is compatible. (Completely ignored is the inconvenient fact that couples who do live together before marriage have a higher marriage-failure rate than those who do not.) Except for a number of “reactionary” and “bigoted” Christians, “everyone is doing it.” It seems the very definition of someone who is “reactionary and bigoted” is someone who still believes in something called “sin.”

Another way to change culture is to liberally apply euphemisms and/or neologisms for words in common use in order to obscure unpleasant truths. The use of euphemisms and/or neologisms quiets everyone down and keeps them asleep while a veritable earthquake of transformation is taking place all around them. We saw this in the abortion debate. There is no question that abortion is the taking of a human life. So, if euphemisms and/or neologisms had not been employed early on in the debate in order to obscure the obvious, it would have been very difficult to get the masses to rally behind killing the most innocent (and delightful!) among us—tiny helpless babies. Even applying the death penalty to convicted murderers is controversial; so imagine if someone were to propose the wanton slaughter of infants? Thus, the baby in the womb became merely a “fetus”—a mass of unviable tissue, something that can be guiltlessly “disposed of” if inconvenient or unwanted. Now we know that *fetus* is a perfectly good word, and we have no quarrel with it, except for the fact that it is being used to “water down” the fact that what are dying in abortions are BABIES.

Another word game is played by the left when they claim they are not “pro-abortion,” but “pro-choice.” Could it be that despite all of the liberal protestations that there is nothing whatsoever wrong or evil about aborting children, they still are squeamish about being identified as an open promoter of the practice? Why is that, should we suppose? Putting that aside for the moment, if one is to be *truly* pro-choice, should not a father also have the right to choose whether his child lives or dies? What about a *parent’s right to choose* what type of medical procedure their teen-age daughter may undergo? And if parental rights are to be trumped by their minor child’s right to choose abortion, what about an admittedly *smaller* minor’s *right to choose* whether they are torn limb from limb or allowed to live in a peaceful and pain-free environment to term and then be delivered into the world. Of course, we would be forced to *guess* what choice the unborn child would make, but it can’t be that hard to surmise.

This type of double standard is one reason why it is *very convenient* for the left to have the mainstream media in their pocket—so the other side of the story barely sees the light of day. The public “megaphone” is a very powerful change-agent. And even though, over the past decade or so, conservative voices are being heard on talk radio and the internet, the media’s monopoly over what *middle America* sees and hears is still pretty much of a lock. Joe and Jill America, who consider themselves to be

apolitical, still get their news for the most part from the liberal networks and passively assimilate the beliefs of the Hollywood whorehouse and the popular music sewer.

And of course, another very effective way to change cultural thinking is to demonize and/or ridicule those who refuse to get on the bandwagon. You sexist, bigoted, homophobe you!!!

The Federal Marriage Amendment

Currently, a small group of homosexual activists are pressing to stretch the definition of marriage to include the union of two people of the same sex, seemingly oblivious to the fact that calling a circle a square does not make it square. These activists are well financed. The Alliance for Marriage (www.allianceformarriage.com), an organization that supports the Marriage Amendment asserts:

Radical activist groups are now very close to their goal of completely destroying marriage as a legal and social institution in America. And as Senator Bill Frist clearly says, now is the time to protect and defend it.

In fact, the top five organizations spearheading the national campaign to redefine marriage have revenues exceeding \$160 million per year! Lawsuits have been filed or are being planned in all 50 states - including yours!¹¹

In a pluralistic nation with a representative form of government, homosexuals have every right to attempt to persuade public opinion and legislation in their favor. By the same token, those who are opposed to this agenda have the same right to attempt to persuade Congress to stand firm by the definition of marriage which has been commonly agreed upon for centuries. The Marriage Amendment is not a radically new idea being imposed upon an unwilling nation by Washington, but rather it is simply a *restatement* and *reaffirmation* of the definition of marriage which has been *the common understanding since the founding*

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of the nation. It is necessary because of the aggressive campaign of those who desire to co-opt the very definition of marriage to include something that it has never meant or included previously. The Marriage Amendment is simple, straightforward and easy to understand:

Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.¹²

The Alliance for Marriage continues with four statements to clarify what this proposed amendment means and what it doesn't mean:

- The first sentence simply states that marriage in the United States consists of the union of one man and one woman.
- The second sentence ensures that states can determine the allocation of the benefits associated with marriage.
- AFM's Marriage Amendment has no impact at all on benefits offered by private businesses and corporations.
- People have a right to live as they choose, but no one has the right to redefine marriage for our entire society.¹³

Enter The Cato White Papers

On September 23, 2004, gay activist, columnist, and associate professor at the University of Minnesota Law School, Dale Carpenter, issued on the *Cato White Papers and Miscellaneous Reports* a paper titled: "The Federal Marriage Amendment: Unnecessary, Anti-federalist and Anti-democratic."¹⁴

The title, itself, is designed to effectively cut off further discussion of the issue. After all, the average person, including the average Christian, doesn't necessarily want to be "anti" anything, much less "anti-federalist" or "anti-democratic." Professor Carpenter then goes on further to misrepresent the proposed amendment.

Members of Congress have proposed a constitutional amendment preventing states from recognizing same-sex marriages. Proponents of the Federal Marriage Amendment claim that an amendment is needed immediately to prevent same-sex marriage from being forced on the nation. The policy debate on same-sex marriage should proceed in the 50 states, without being cut off by a single national policy, imposed from Washington and enshrined in the Constitution.¹⁵

In this short introductory paragraph of the "Executive Summary," Professor Carpenter uses the phrase "same-sex" in conjunction with "marriage" in all three sentences, as though this is *already a part of the definition of marriage*. In doing so, he has attempted to cloud the issue. The very reason for the proposed amendment is to formally assert and stand by the *already existing definition of marriage*. As The Alliance for Marriage points out:

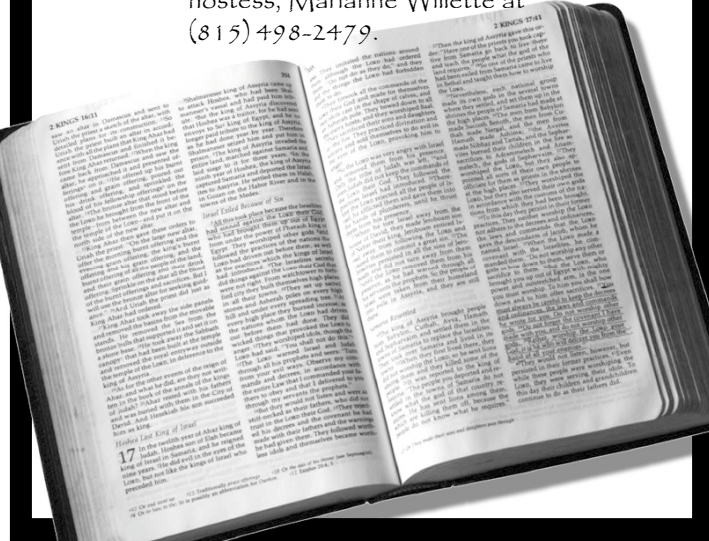
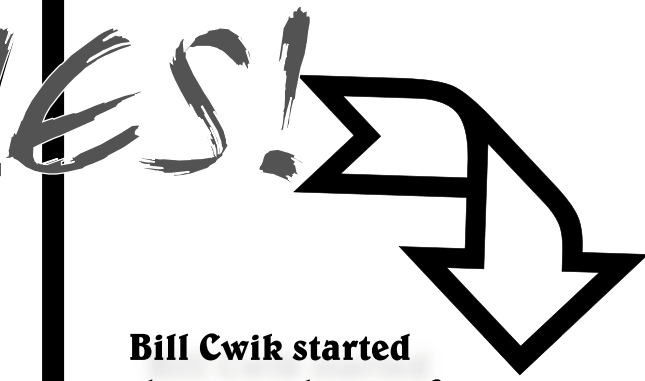
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People have a right to live as they choose, but no one has a right to redefine marriage for our entire society.¹⁶

Professor Carpenter goes on to assert that **“Proponents of the Federal Marriage Amendment claim that an amendment is needed immediately ...”** While that is true, his opening paragraph keenly demonstrates the *need* for the amendment.

Lastly, he resorts to fear tactics when he writes that the marriage amendment would be **“imposed from Washington and enshrined in the Constitution.”** Ah ... *imposed*—“Big Brother” government is enforcing its arbitrary rule on the unwilling necks of the citizenry. This claim self destructs on page 19 of his paper where he points out:

To be adopted using the usual procedure, an amendment would be “super-democratic” in that it requires two-thirds approval of both houses of Congress and approval from three-fourths of the states.¹⁷

In other words, the Marriage Amendment would *not* be **“imposed from Washington”** but would go through a **“super-democratic”** process in which all Congressional representatives and states participate. His defense for his initial claim of imposition is an interesting one:

... any amendment is anti-democratic as to the states that refuse to ratify it.¹⁸

Using that reasoning, one could argue that presidential elections are anti-democratic since some of the states voted for the candidate who lost!

Professor Carpenter then lays out his **“four main arguments against the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment:”¹⁹**

First, a constitutional amendment is unnecessary because federal and state laws combined with the present state of the relevant constitutional doctrines, already make court-ordered nationwide same-sex marriage unlikely for the foreseeable future. An amendment banning same-sex marriage is a solution in search of a problem.

Second, a constitutional amendment defining marriage would be a radical departure on the nation’s founding commitment to federalism in an area traditionally reserved for state regulation, family law. There has been no showing that federalism has been unworkable in the area of family law.

Third, a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage would be an unprecedented form of constitutional amendment, cutting short an ongoing national debate over what privileges and benefits, if any, ought to be conferred on same-sex couples, and preventing democratic processes from expanding individual rights.

Fourth, the amendment as proposed is constitutional overkill that reaches well beyond the stated concerns of its proponents, foreclosing not just courts but also state legislatures from recognizing same-sex marriages and perhaps other forms of legal support for same-sex relationships. Whatever one thinks of same-sex marriage as a matter of policy, no person who cares about our Constitution and public policy should support this unnecessary, radical, unprecedented, and overly broad departure from the nation’s traditions and history.²⁰

One of Professor Carpenter’s primary concerns seems to be that the Marriage Amendment would cut off debate, which, in his opinion, **“would substantially delay or permanently foreclose what may turn out to be a valuable social reform.”²¹**

Are conservatives the ones who seek to cut off debate on this issue? Conservatives are often characterized as fascists who are attempting to shove their bigoted beliefs down the throats of the masses, but the truth is the exact opposite! It is the left who imposes their will on the rest of us by using friendly courts and judges—who are not supposed to make law at all—to accomplish their leftist agenda. And then, if the court system does not move fast enough to thrust liberal ideals upon the rest of us, they just blithely ignore any law that does not correspond to their beliefs until such time as the intimidated citizenry gives up and gives them their way. We experienced just this in 2003 and 2004 when there was an attempt to derail *the very debate* that Carpenter now claims to think is so important. The left tried to impose their will upon the rest of us by fait accompli—homosexual “couples” traveled to friendly locales such as San Francisco, Oregon, or Massachusetts to participate in a type of “marriage” ritual. They then returned home and attempted to force their unwilling native states to legitimize their wholly illegal actions! There is nothing wrong with our *elected* leaders taking a pro-active attitude to decide the issue once for all on a national level. In fact, a failure to act immediately would potentially lead to a small number of states breaking with the traditions of the country as a whole. That was the basis upon which the Civil War was prosecuted (on an entirely different issue, of course).

A Little Bit Of History

What many do not realize is that the definition of marriage has been under assault for at least *the last 34 years*, beginning with *Baker v. Nelson* in 1971. The following is the **“Chronological History of Same-Sex Marriage Attempts:”**

***Baker v. Nelson* (Minnesota, 1971).** A gay male couple argued that the absence of sex-specific language in the Minnesota statute was evidence of the legislature’s intent to authorize same-sex marriages. The couple also claimed that prohibiting them from marrying was a denial of their due process and equal protection rights under the Constitution. The court stated that it could find no support for these arguments in any United States Supreme Court decision.

***Jones v. Hallahan* (Kentucky, 1973).** A lesbian couple argued that denying them a marriage license deprived them of three basic constitutional rights -- the right to marry, the right to associate, and the right to freely exercise their religion. The court refused to address the constitutional issues, holding that “the relationship proposed does not authorize the issuance of a marriage license, because what they propose is not a marriage.”

***Singer v. Hara* (Washington, 1974).** A gay male couple argued that denying them the right to marry violated the state Equal Rights Amendment. The court disagreed, holding that the purpose of the statute was to overcome discriminatory legal treatment between men and women on account of sex.

***Adams v. Howerton* (Colorado, 1975).** The couple, a male American citizen and a male Australian citizen, challenged the Board of Immigration Appeals refusal to recognize their marriage for the purpose of the Australian obtaining U.S. residency as the spouse of an American. (The couple participated in a marriage ceremony with a Colorado minister and had been granted a marriage license by the Boulder, Colorado

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OH MAN, WHAT KIND OF PROJECT IS THIS?

EXPOSING THE INDECENT EXPOSURE OF THE



ManKind PROJECT

By Mark Roggeman

Aside from the obvious physical differences, there is a marked contrast in how men and women relate to their friends. For example: If Laura, Suzanne, Debra and Rose go out for lunch, they will call each other Laura, Suzanne, Debra and Rose. But if Mike, Charlie, Bob, and John go out to grab a bite, they will affectionately refer to each other as Fat Boy, Godzilla, Peanut-Head, and Useless. When the bill arrives, Fat Boy, Godzilla, Peanut-Head, and Useless each will throw in \$20—even though the tab is only for \$22.50. None of them will have anything smaller, and none will actually admit they want change back. When the girls get their bill, out come the pocket calculators.

A man has six items in his bathroom: a toothbrush, shaving cream, razor, a bar of soap, and a towel from the Holiday Inn. It seems like the average number of items in the typical woman's bathroom is 337. A man would not be able to identify many of these items.

When it comes to children, a woman seems to be all knowing. She knows about dentist appointments and romances, best friends, favorite foods, secret fears, hopes, and dreams. A man is vaguely aware of some short people living in the house.¹

The Vanishing Manly Man

Over the last 30 years or so, there seems to be an increasing concern that men have forgotten, or more to the point, not had role models to demonstrate manhood. To solve this “crisis” both inside and outside the church, books have been written and groups have arisen to guide and train men in being manly.

One such group is the Mankind Project (MKP) which is an international men's network of interdependent centers with members in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. The primary instructional tool of this organization is called the **New Warrior Training Adventure** (NWTA)—a weekend retreat where the supposed goal is to empower men to regain their masculinity. In 1985, Rich Tosi, Bill Kauth, and Ron Hering came together, whose collective backgrounds and influences contributed to the creation of the Mankind Project.

Tosi's background was in the United States Marines as a captain who served in Vietnam. He brought a military influence to the MKP training. Kauth, who has a Master's Degree in Psychology and was a self-styled feminist, is the author of *A Circle of Men: The Original Manual for Men's Support Groups*—the training manual for men's support groups. Hering's contribution was his ability to instruct others to become effective leaders. He had a doctorate in education and was a teacher, seminar leader, and professional coach.

The New Warrior Training Adventure weekend is the compilation of several other human-potential seminars spanning four

decades. Kauth attended a seminar called Understanding Yourself and Others (UYO), where he met Tosi who was one of the facilitators. UYO was started by David Durovy and his wife, Patricia. Durovy became an initiate of the first New Warrior Training Adventure. Kauth, Tosi, and Hering attended a workshop called *Men, Sex, and Power* in California offered by Justin Sterling. These weekends are currently called Sterling Seminars. The techniques learned there are a major part of the NWTA. Sterling was an early disciple of Werner Erhard who founded what was then known as Erhard Seminars Training (EST). Today, EST has transformed itself into the Landmark Forum. Men, Sex, and Power (Sterling Seminars) was the outgrowth of Sterling's training with EST. Kauth's experience with Gestalt psychology was added to the NWTA.²

Training the Trainers

MKP history comes through a long line of Human-Potential Movements that began in the 1960's. It started with Mind Dynamics by Alexander Everett who arrived in America in 1962 from England and lived in Missouri for a year and then moved to Fort Worth, Texas where he helped establish a private boarding school. Everett's Mind Dynamics was influenced through his involvement with Unity Ministry in England, Edgar Casey's work, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Egyptology, and Silva Mind Control.³

William Penn Patrick was a student of Everett. He used both Mind Dynamics and the Silva Mind Control Method in his pyramid sales organization called Holiday Magic. He also started another organization called Leadership Dynamics which proved to be detrimental to people. The information on this is detailed in a book called *The Pit: A Group Encounter Defiled* by Gene Church. According to Church, the hard-hitting, confrontational group encounters went out of control. As a result, lawsuits were filed which caused both organizations to shut down.⁴

Many of the instructors from these two groups went on to found their own organizations using many of the same behavior-modification techniques. The goals were to bring people to their highest potential and to overcome their fears. Their method was to break them down by screaming insults at them in order to have them face their fears. The theory behind this abusiveness was that, in order to change one's behavior, one must be brought down to zero in order to build them up again.

The following list of instructors from Mind Dynamics illustrates the flow of how these groups began and the direct influence each had on the other. Bob White, Randy Revell, Charlene Afremow, John Hanley founded Lifespring in 1974.⁵

Werner Erhard founded EST in 1971 which evolved into The Forum. Bob White left Lifespring, went to Japan, and started a training organization there called Life Dynamics. Randy Revell left Lifespring and founded the Context Trainings. Charlene Afremow joined Erhard's organization as a trainer. She later left in a dispute and is now back at Lifespring. Howard Nease founded Personal Dynamics. Jim Quinn founded Lifestream. Thomas Willhite founded PSI World Seminars. Stewart Emery worked for EST and later founded Actualizations. William Penn Patrick's training organization recovered and is known today as Leadership Dynamics.⁶ Justin Sterling was an early disciple of Werner Erhard who started the weekend conference (Men, Sex, and Power) today known as Sterling Seminars.

Embracing The New Age

Another major influence for the New Warrior Training Adventure for MKP is Robert Bly's writings and his influence on the men's movement. On the back cover of the training manual for leaders on the NWTA called *The Circle of Men*, Kauth credits Bly's influence. It states that the "wild man weekends" are inspired by the mythopoetic writings and personal testimonies of Robert Bly, Sam Keen and John Lee. It goes on to say that they followed Bly's practical advice he gave to gatherings of men to form small groups. Bly is quoted extensively in their writings. Bly has attended several of the weekends and continues to support MKP. Much of the Native American Indian Spiritualism and rituals performed at the NWTA weekends comes directly from Bly and the works of Carl G. Jung. Several books written by Bly are also used: *Iron John*, *Little Book on the Human Shadow*, and *The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart Poems for Men*.

Some men are introduced to the weekend through informational classes that were held at Christian churches. In most cases, the church rented out their facility and were likely not aware of what this group is about. Inquiries from spouses and families came in due to personality changes that occurred in the men after they became involved with MKP.

In April 2003, three separate interviews were conducted with men who were participants a NWTA weekend and then spent time in MKP attending the small groups. One of these men was a facilitator and assisted at several weekend trainings. All these men requested that their names not be mentioned, as every man must sign an agreement stating that nothing can be said about what goes on. (This should be a giant red flag.) The current price for the NWTA weekend is \$650.00 with a \$100.00 deposit in advance. In Colorado and around the country, these trainings take place in the mountains at various retreat places.

Introduction To Warrior Work

The Mankind Project

A non-profit organization and network of independent centers working together to heal the world one man at a time.

Mission

We empower men to missions to service.

Identity Statement

We are an order of men called to reclaim the sacred masculine for our time; through initiation, training, and action in the world.

Core Organizing and Guiding Principle

We empower the evolution of consciousness in each man in our culture.

Principles of Our Order

1. I create my own perception of reality.
2. My outer reality exists as a reflection of my inner world.
3. Higher states of consciousness exist and reflect greater abilities to manifest my inner reality.
4. Higher states of consciousness embody a life of service, compassion, and unconditional love.
5. My work towards higher consciousness starts within.
6. My inner work begins with awareness of feelings which become the doorway for discovering and owning my shadows and wounds.
7. Healing of my wounds comes from releasing my judgments and forgiving from my heart.
8. My personal life mission becomes my guiding force that transcends my wounds and moves me beyond healing into joyous service.
9. I take personal responsibility and am accountable for living in integrity with my mission.

Principles Poetically Put

We empower men to manifest their potential fully and joyfully, trusting that they will create the healthy solutions needed by our society and planet.⁷

A Typical Men's Weekend

Upon arrival on Friday evening, each man is SMUDGED with burned incense that is placed on sage sticks. This is an American Indian ritual that is done to cleanse and keep the evil spirits away. It is claimed this ritual washes away the cares and negative energy of the day. As the men arrive, the facilitators greet them by shouting several times the question, "WHY ARE YOU HERE?" The facilitators look directly into their eyes and tell each man they have power you don't even know about. All who were interviewed related that it seemed to be very similar to a recruit's introduction to boot camp. The men arrive on Friday at different times due to their own schedules ranging from late afternoon until evening. While the men wait for the others to arrive, they are directed to sit in a dark room, told to be silent, and not to grin or laugh. Some of the men sat in this room for over two hours as they waited for all to arrive.

Once everyone arrived, each man had to go through two stations. At the first station, they were asked in a loud voice, "Are you ready to change your life forever?" They were told that they had to give up all jewelry and electronic devices they brought with them. At the second station, each man was told that they were no longer to be called by their name. They were given a number and told they would be called that number throughout the weekend. They were then asked if they had given up all their jewelry and electronic devices at the first station. They were told, if they still had any of these things, to empty their pockets and place the items on the table. Several times men had electric razors in their possession; they were called liars and loudly ridiculed. The facilitators were yelling at them saying, "Can't you understand?" There were times when the group leaders would let someone go past the first station purposely with jewelry and electronic devices and set them up to be humiliated at the second station.

—Continued on page 10

“Project” Continued from page 9

There was a one-to-one ratio of a group leaders and new participants. The new recruits to manhood had very little time alone. Very little food was provided the first two days except for snacks such as apples and nuts. On Sunday just before they left, a banquet was provided in honor of their graduation. The activities went well into the night which did not leave much time for sleep.

On Saturday, there were classes centered on the philosophy of what it means to be a man and a warrior. They were told how men have been emasculated by society and by the women in their lives. It was explained that this was because many of our fathers abandoned us emotionally; the result is that men were raised by their mothers who also emasculated them. They said that women do not know how to raise a boy to be a man—that they should be taught and raised by men. The claim is that the real goal of a man is to be a warrior and, in many cases, their mothers and wives held them back from their full potential to be a man. The main objective, then, is to regain the power that was taken away from men. Women, it seems, are the ever-present enemy.

They are encouraged in sessions to share about times they were shamed while growing up. These are wounds that were hidden and now need to be dealt with. At one session, a male phallic symbol was passed around signifying what it means to be a man; they were encouraged to talk about sexual experiences.


Saturday afternoon, the “Trust Walk” takes place. This involves the men going on a walk in the nude wearing only shoes and a blindfold. This is to promote trust in the leaders in following someone blindly for about an hour. When they returned from the walk, many of the previous graduates of the NWTA showed up. The men, still naked, now were dancing to the sound of drums. The object of this is to get all your inhibitions out. They allege if you can do this, you can do anything and regain your lost power. Every man was given an Indian neck pouch along with an animal name that best described each man’s character. They were called by this animal name from this point on.

Several times over the weekend, the men formed a circle and ritual invocations were repeated out loud welcoming the energy of the East, South, West, North, and Mother Earth. The purpose of the invocation, as defined in the *Facilitators Guide Protocol Manual* (The New Warrior Initiation Adventure), is to extend a ritual invitation for ancestral, archetypal energies to join with and strengthen the container (the man making the invocation). This ritual’s purpose is to bring men to a place where they can do “inner” work. To affectively do inner work requires a departure from the normal limits of our rational minds. To accomplish this, the participants invite the energies of those who passed on, their ancestors, their fathers, and grandfathers. They call on the energies of the masculine archetypes, the Lover, the Warrior, the Magician, and the King to ground them in the sacred masculine. They call on the seven energies represented by the seven directions of the medicine wheel. This is derived from the tradition of Native American Indians, which is believed to renew our experience with the ancient wisdom of the relatedness of all beings, the unity of all things.⁸

Test All Things

It is plain to see that this is not a movement a Christian man should be involved in. Mankind Project does not present itself as

Christian, but it does insist that men from all faiths can benefit from the training. The whole premise is based on man regaining his power that was lost and finding his masculinity. Some men, after being involved with MKP for some time, understandably developed an attitude against their mothers and wives. They blamed *them* for being the cause of not reaching their full potential as men.

In Scripture, we are told “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*” (John 8:31, 32) For the believer, this should be our heart’s desire to abide and focus on Jesus not focusing on ourselves. We should not dwell on the things of our past but look to Christ. Paul says in relation to himself, “*Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.*” (Phil. 3:13, 14) Also Hebrews 12:1,2: “*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*”⁹ 



Mark Roggeman has been involved in outreach to those affected by cults and other high-demand groups for a period of 30 years. He has assisted with exit-counseling individuals trapped in cults and provides support for the families with loved ones who are involved in cults. He has served as a police officer in Denver, Colorado for the past 34 years and assists other law-enforcement agencies with information and training on cults.

Mark is currently a part-time missionary with Haven Ministry located in the Denver Area. He has a degree in Criminal Justice and has attended Calvary Chapel Bible College.

Endnotes

- ¹ Anonymous.
- ² Klegman, Hal. “An Introduction to the Founding of the New Warrior Training Adventure,” *Mankind Project Indiana Newsletter*, January 2002.
- ³ Vahle, Neal. “Alexander Everett and Complete Centering,” *New Realities Magazine*, May/June 1987.
- ⁴ Church, Gene. *The Pit: A Group Encounter Defiled*, (Outerbridge & Lazard; distributed by Dutton; 1972).
- ⁵ <http://www.lifespringinc.com/>
- ⁶ From an article on the web. “Mind Dynamics - Alexander Everett,” <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/eldon.braun/awareness/mind.htm>
- ⁷ *Facilitators Guide Protocol Manual* (The New Warrior Initiation Adventure) p.29.
- ⁸ Pedigo, Mark. *MPK-Colorado- I-Group 8 Week Protocol-Facilitators Guide Protocol Manual* (The New Warrior Initiation Adventure), 1998.
- ⁹ *Holy Bible, New King James Version* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983, 1988, 1997).

county clerk.) The court ruled that the word “spouse” ordinarily means someone not of the same sex. Then it noted the 1965 amendments to the Immigration Act, which expressly barred persons “afflicted with sexual deviations” (homosexuals) from entry into this country. The court concluded that it was unlikely that Congress intended to permit homosexual marriages for purposes of qualifying as a spouse of a citizen, when the Immigration Act explicitly bars homosexuals from entering into the United States.

Thorton v. Timmers (Ohio, 1975). A lesbian couple sought a marriage license. In denying their request that the court order the clerk to issue them a license, the court concluded that “it is the express legislative intent that those persons who may be joined in marriage must be of different sexes.”

De Santo v. Barnsley (Pennsylvania, 1984). When this couple split up, De Santo sued Barnsley for divorce, claiming that the couple had a common-law marriage. A common-law marriage is one where the partners live together and act as a married couple, without going through a formal marriage ceremony. Only a few states still recognize common-law marriages – in 1984 Pennsylvania was one of those states. The court threw the case out, stating that if the Pennsylvania common-law statute is to be expanded to include same-sex couples, the legislature will have to make that change.

Matter of Estate of Cooper (New York, 1990). Cooper died, leaving the bulk of his property to his ex-lover. His current lover sued to inherit as a surviving spouse under New York’s inheritance laws. The court concluded that only a lawfully recognized husband or wife qualifies as a surviving spouse and that “persons of the same sex have no constitutional rights to enter into a marriage with each other.”

Dean v. District of Columbia (Washington, DC, 1995). Two men sued the District of Columbia for the right to get married. They lost their case at the lower level and appealed. They lost again at the appellate level when the court decided, under current D.C. laws, that the district can refuse to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Baehr v. Miike (Hawaii 1999). A nine-year battle over the issue of same-sex marriages ended just 11 days before the Vermont ruling in *Baker v. State*, discussed below. The plaintiff in the *Baehr* case argued that Hawaii’s marriage license rules were discriminatory. The case set off a national debate over same-sex marriage rights and prompted an onslaught of state and federal legislation designed to preempt the possibility that other states would be forced to recognize same-sex marriages from Hawaii. The case was finally dismissed on the grounds that the legislature had passed a prohibition on same-sex marriages before the Hawaii Supreme Court could render a favorable opinion.

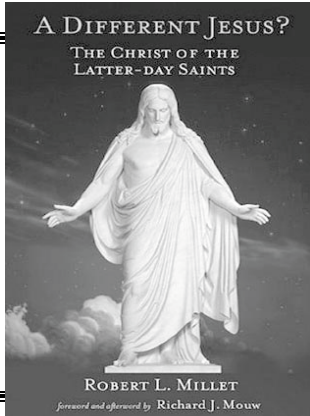
Baker v. State (Vermont 1999). Same-sex couples sued the state, the City of Burlington, and two towns, saying that refusal to issue them marriage licenses violated the Vermont Constitution and the state marriage laws. The Vermont Supreme Court, reversing a lower court decision, declared that the constitution required the state to extend to same-sex couples the same benefits and protections provided to opposite-sex couples. In response, the state legislature passed the Vermont Civil Union law, which went into effect in July 2000.

Goodridge v. Department of Public Health (Massachusetts, 2003). The Massachusetts Supreme Court held that the state law barring same-sex marriage was unconstitutional under the Massachusetts constitution and ordered the legislature to remedy the discrimination within six months. In February 2004, the court ruled that offering civil unions instead of civil marriage would not meet the requirements set forth in *Goodridge*.²²

Reviewing the history of the case law demonstrates that until 1995, the courts *held firmly* to the preexisting definition of marriage. It wasn’t until six years ago (1999) that the courts began applying a *new definition* to the term *marriage*, thereby necessitating a *reassertion of the original definition*. Working quickly to forestall any further renegade courthouse tyranny, a number of state legislatures have already voted on and passed laws reasserting and reaffirming that marriage is as it *always has been* in this country—the union of one man and one woman. But there is a real concern that the Supreme Court which in recent years has taken on sovereign powers never imagined by the founding fathers, by fiat, may impose its will on the states, *as it has done so many times before*, by striking down the states’ position regarding this matter.

The Professor’s second argument is not persuasive, nor is it accurate. He alleges that a national law on the subject would be a “**radical departure**” from the rights of the states. Now *that* is funny! When have liberals *ever* been concerned about state’s rights? Putting that aside however, it should be noted that the national government *has* created *much* criminal law (the RICOH Statutes, et al) to which the states defer on a daily basis. Additionally, the national Congress has created laws (such as OSHA) which apply to all states, and which bear upon the socio-economic status of all the states. The OSHA law, of course, was necessary so that individual states could not create an imbalance of industry by having work environments that would favor big business over individual human safety. Now it may be true that some would call OSHA and RICOH radical intrusions upon the rights of the states, but they are national laws just the same, and as such, provide precedent, and poke Carpenter’s argument right in the eye. ☺

His third point is simply false on several counts. He characterizes the proposed constitutional amendment as “**unprecedented**” and alleges that it would be “**cutting short an on-going national debate**” on “**same-sex marriage**.” According to him, such a process would be “**preventing the democratic process from expanding individual rights**.” It should be pointed out that *all* prior constitutional amendments have been “**unprecedented**.” That is because they all have addressed “unprecedented” situations which needed either to be corrected or protected against. There is no manual or handbook that contains a list of the appropriate circumstances for which a constitutional amendment is deemed necessary. Constitutional amendments are considered on an ad hoc basis, and either embraced or rejected pursuant to the democratic process. The Professor does not make it clear how the “**on-going national debate**” can be cut short by the proposed process. Rather, the proscribed process (a constitutional amendment) is *designed* to bring the debated issue to a head. While the professor does not define whose “**indi-**



Bill McKeever, Director of
Mormonism Research Ministry shares his thoughts on:

A DIFFERENT JESUS?

THE CHRIST OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Long is the list of differences that separate Mormonism from Christianity, but one of the greatest is how each faith understands the person and role of Jesus Christ. For all but four years of its history, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (aka: LDS church, Mormons) has had the name *Jesus* in its official title, but how *this* “Jesus” has been described by Mormon leaders has led most of the professing Christian world to balk when it comes to accepting them as part of the Christian fold.

Robert L. Millet, a professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University, has been one of the foremost apologists for the LDS church in recent years. However, what makes him different from all the rest is that he does not come into this arena with the arrogance that so often accompanies other defenders of the LDS faith.

Make no mistake about it, *A Different Jesus? The Christ of the Latter-day Saints (A Different Jesus? ...)*¹ is a Mormon apologetic that is specifically written for an evangelical audience. Most books written to Mormons by Mormons normally do not include an 18-page glossary defining terms unique to the LDS faith, nor do they normally include an explanation of the unique books included in the Book of Mormon.

Perplexing, however, is that *A Different Jesus? ...* does not come to us from an LDS publisher like Deseret Book, Bookcraft, or even Signature. No, it is published instead by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing—a company that normally is known for producing Christian books. Why would a company that has a history of publishing Christian books publish a book that clearly defends Mormonism?

Because of Millet’s association with BYU, he naturally is viewed as a spokesman for the LDS church (despite the fact that he has said time and again that he does speak in that capacity). It is difficult to make a clean disconnect between Millet and his church simply because it is common knowledge that the LDS church could put a stop to his public interaction with evangelicals at any time church leaders deemed it necessary. Obviously, the LDS church sees something to be gained from Millet’s notoriety among evangelicals. Call me skeptical, but I have every reason to believe that this *gain* comes in the form of a long-sought validation that will result in even more converts.

Being very familiar with Millet’s writings, I can say that one of the more irritating habits he has is the constant name dropping of prominent evangelicals. Names like C.S. Lewis, John MacArthur, John Warwick Montgomery, J.B. Phillips, F.F. Bruce, John Stackhouse, and even Norman Geisler are peppered throughout

the book. (Millet’s constant use of MacArthur’s name compelled the latter to write a statement that clearly explains that he does not agree with Millet’s positions as a Mormon nor does he see Mormonism as a Christian religion.) No doubt this is to give the impression that Millet’s Mormonism is not all that far off from the views of the men he constantly likes to mention.

To hear Millet quote C.S. Lewis, one might assume Lewis was a closet Mormon. While I mean no undue disrespect to Lewis, I think we need to understand that he was a philosopher and not a theologian. As such, he, on occasion, approached theological issues from a philosophical understanding as opposed to a strictly biblical interpretation. Interestingly, Millet seems to gravitate to such aberrations as well as to aberrations of other thinkers who were/are professed Christians. In doing so, Millet quite often misrepresents their views.

For example, concerning Lewis, a comment that really jumps out can be found on page 116. Here Millet attempts to use a statement by Lewis to somehow support the LDS doctrine of deification. After devoting seven lines to this quote, he concludes: **“I honestly don’t know what Lewis meant fully (and certainly what he understood or intended) by these statements.”** He then wonders if Lewis would have agreed with **“such notables as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, Athanasius and Augustine on deification – or, for that matter, with what the Latter-day Saints teach – I cannot tell.”**

First of all, let me make this very clear: We have *absolutely no evidence whatsoever* that any of the previously-mentioned men believed at all like Mormons when it comes to this LDS doctrine of deification or *theosis*. In fact, Eastern Orthodox scholars have so much as said so. (See *Mormon America* by Richard and Joan Ostling.)² Yet, despite this clear denial, we still have Mormons like Millet trying to make a comparison that is not there.

Second of all, if Millet is not sure what Lewis meant in the quotation he cites, wouldn’t it have been more prudent (honest?) not to have mentioned it at all?

Another problem I observe with the book is that readers never really can be sure if what they are asked to accept is actual LDS doctrine or Robert Millet’s personal opinions. Mormon philosopher David Paulsen, in his blurb on the back cover of the book, insists that Millet has **“clearly articulated the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”** However, he then writes in the same paragraph: **“Though Millet does not profess to be speaking for the Latter-day Saints church, I believe LDS leaders and laity alike will find his presentation to be a faithful and penetrating representation of commonly**

shared convictions.” This “plausible deniability” in the first part of this sentence is why I don’t like getting my information from the LDS laity. None of them speak with any authority.

A luxury afforded Mormon apologists is the vast amount of contradictory statements made by LDS leaders. What I mean by this is when a Mormon is confronted with a problematic quotation by one leader, he often can grab another statement from another leader that seems to cancel it out. Like Islam, Mormonism has its own doctrine of *abrogation*.

For example, under the subheading of “Justification and Sanctification,” Millet cites LDS Seventy* D. Todd Christofferson who insists that given the magnitude of grace, we would never suppose **“that we had earned it”** (p.99). Such language becomes extremely confusing when you consider that in a 1988 conference message, Thomas Monson, first counselor to current LDS President/Prophet Gordon Hinckley, taught: **“It is the celestial glory which we seek. It is in the presence of God we desire to dwell. It is a forever family in which we want membership. Such blessings must be earned.”**³ Consider also that 12th LDS President/Prophet Spencer Kimball, in his book *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, spoke of members who are **“doing nothing seriously wrong except in their failures to do the right things to earn their salvation.”**⁴

Sometimes, we can even find examples where Mormon leaders contradict themselves. On page 82, Millet cites Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie who stated: **“Salvation is free. Justification is free. Neither of them can be purchased; neither can be earned”** which is cited from p.346 of McConkie’s *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981). Yet, in another book by LDS Apostle McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), he writes on p.462 of v.3: **“‘Salvation is free’ (2 Ne[phi] 2:4), but it must also be purchased; and the price is obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.”**

Throughout the book, Millet expresses his anxiety over those who refuse to accept Mormons as Christians. Like most Mormons, he seems to be unaware that the LDS doctrine of a complete apostasy most certainly challenges any non-Mormons’ claim to Christianity. That being the case, perhaps he can understand our anxiety when Brigham Young said: **“Should you ask why we differ from other Christians, as they are called, it is simply because they are not Christians as the New Testament defines Christianity.”**⁵

Endorsed By Christians

Dr. Richard Mouw - A great cause of concern regarding *A Different Jesus?* ... isn’t so much what Millet actually says in the book, but rather it has to do with Christian endorsements of the book. Richard Mouw, the president of Fuller Theological Seminary, writes the “Foreword” and “After word” to *A Different Jesus?* He takes full responsibility for Millet writing the book and Eerdmans for publishing it. **“Indeed, I encouraged him to write this book, and I urged the Eerdmans folks to publish it”** (p.viii).

Mouw has been a part of a small group of evangelical scholars who have been meeting behind closed doors with Mormon scholars to discuss theological issues. Clearly, this book is a product of those discussions.

Mouw has also gained a reputation over the years for the many apologies he has given on behalf of Christians whom he

feels have been bearing false witness against the Mormons. He uses his “Foreword” to take another shot when he writes: **“The fact is that many of my Christian friends think they know what the LDS believe, even though they have never seriously attempted to understand those beliefs from the LDS perspective. What they know about Mormonism is what they have learned from books on ‘the cults’ by Christian writers”** (p.ix).

Mouw doesn’t bother to explain where he thinks these **“Christian writers”** got the alleged misleading information they include in their books. Does he automatically assume they purposely made it all up or have embellished it—with fiendish intent—to make Mormonism appear worse than it is? Does he *ever* acknowledge the slightest chance that they may have gleaned their information from the exact same sources Mormons, themselves, use in order to better understand the LDS faith?

Mouw does say that he is **“no closer to accepting the historical claims of Mormonism than I was the night I listened to Walter Martin make the case against Mormon teachings. I do not accept the *Book of Mormon* as divine revelation, nor do I believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet called by God to restore ancient teachings and practices that had long been lost to the traditional Christian churches”** (p.180).

He has no doubt that Millet has been honest in presenting his case in the book, but at the same time he admits that **“The question of whether he really does mean what, say, an evangelical means when he uses the same words that we employ is, of course, a more complicated matter”** (p.180). If this is so, doesn’t that place the entire book under suspicion?

When discussing what Millet calls the **‘more’** of Mormonism (baptism for the dead, temple rites, the ancient office of prophet and apostle, golden plates, and new revelations), Mouw says: **“These uniquely Mormon beliefs have to be kept in mind as reminders that the divide between many LDS doctrines and some key beliefs of Christian orthodoxy is still wide indeed”** (p.182).

On the same page, Mouw states that God is **“Wholly other – eternal and self-sufficient – who is in a realm of existence that is radically distinct from the creation that was brought into being out of nothing by God’s sovereign decree. On this view of things, to confuse the Creator’s being with anything in his creation is to commit the sin of idolatry. Mormons, on the other hand, talk about God and humans as belonging to the same ‘species.’ Inevitably, then, the differences are described, not in terms of an unbridgeable gap of being, but in a language of ‘more’ and ‘less.’”** He goes on to say: **“This kind of disagreement has profound implications for our understanding of who Jesus Christ is”** (p.182).

These comments make me question his conclusion on page 183 where he says: **“I think that an open-minded Christian reader of this book will sense that Bob Millet is in fact trusting in the Jesus of the Bible for his salvation. This is certainly my sense.”** If Mouw agrees that the Mormon view of God is idolatrous, and that this has profound implications for understanding who Jesus is, how can a person like Millet be trusting in the **“Jesus of the Bible”** when he believes in this idolatrous version of God the Father? Based on Mouw’s explanation in the previous paragraph, should we not conclude that Millet is an idolater when he admits that he believes that **“God is an exalted man”** (p.145)? In 1996, Millet also wrote: **“Knowing what we know concerning God our Father -- that he is a personal being; that he has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as our**

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own; that he is an exalted and glorified being; that he was once a man and dwelt on an earth ...”⁶

Are we, as Christians, going to change the biblical definition now to say that an idolater can be a saved individual at the same time? Mouw’s reasoning becomes even more problematic when we take into account that the Jesus of Mormonism is the literal offspring of what must be a non-existent God!

The Back Cover Endorsements

On the back of the book are seven endorsements, four of which are written by evangelical Christians. Christian pastors and apologists alike have expressed their dismay over what appears to be a very confusing message being sent to the Christian community. Some even have gone so far as to conclude that the four endorsers of the book are somehow working in collusion with the LDS Church to give it more respectability.

Endorsements easily can be misunderstood, especially when it comes to an apologetic book written by a Mormon who wants very badly for his church to be accepted as Christian. I admit that I have reservations regarding the wisdom behind such endorsements. Rather than run the risk of causing division among brethren, I would not have done so. However, I think we must exercise caution before we confuse differences of methodology with what is perceived as an outright sin.

I assume that each of the four Christians are looking for some level of success as scholars dialogue with their LDS counterparts, and I don’t think you can separate the statements on the back of the book from that hope. Whether that is going to be a reality or an unfulfilled pipe-dream remains to be seen. I certainly do not know all that has actually been going on in these discussions, so I admit to being at a disadvantage when trying to make an evaluation of this effort. I will say that I have not been given any indication from those in authority in the LDS church that these talks have altered any doctrine that historically has placed it outside of Christianity. Quite frankly, with every announcement of a new Mormon temple, I become all the more convinced that the LDS church has no intention of moving towards orthodoxy.

Trying to look at this controversy objectively has not been easy for me, since I have friends on both sides of this thorny issue. As I try to understand the goals of those who are engaged in these private dialogues, I also find myself being sympathetic to those who are left outside to wonder if unbiblical compromises are being made. There is no denying that comments have been made that tend to fuel those fears. With that said, I offer my brief evaluation for each of the four endorsements.

Dr. Craig Blomberg (Denver Seminary) has been engaged in personal dialogue with LDS academics for several years and co-authored the book *How Wide the Divide* with BYU Professor Stephen E. Robinson. Blomberg does seem to want to make it clear in his brief statement that what the reader is about to experience in Millet’s book is comprised of the opinions of Robert Millet. As I mentioned previously, this becomes cloudy when you read Paulsen’s comments.

Blomberg does not view the LDS church as a Christian organization. He made this clear in his contribution to the book *The New Mormon Challenge* where he wrote: **“The real problem from an evangelical perspective – or any orthodox Christian perspective – is to find a meaningful way to include Mormon-**

ism within Christianity. I cannot, as of this writing, therefore, affirm with integrity that either Mormonism as a whole or any individual, based solely on his or her affirmation of the totality of LDS doctrine, deserves the label ‘Christian’ in any standard or helpful sense of the word.”⁷

David Neff (editor of *Christianity Today*) offers what I consider to be the most disturbing endorsement when he states that Millet has **“given us a gift of clarity”** that **“lays out a thoroughly Mormon understanding of Jesus-centered salvation.”** In reading this, I can’t help but ask, **“If this ‘Mormon understanding’ is really ‘Jesus-centered,’ why does the LDS church continue to disfellowship and excommunicate those who insist they are trusting totally in Jesus Christ for their salvation, but who have come to reject Joseph Smith?”** These are not people who engage in immoral acts. Their major “sin” is that they have come to the conclusion that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God. To my knowledge, the LDS church has never renounced the warning given by Tenth LDS President/Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith who said there is **“no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith.”**⁸ Does this really sound **“Jesus-centered?”**

Neff goes on to say that Millet **“does not at all hide or diminish the fundamental differences in our understandings.”** I most strongly disagree. There are many topics discussed in the book where Millet fails to elaborate clearly what LDS leaders have taught.

Craig Hazen (Biola University) has always expressed to me his passion for the Mormon people as well as a love for God’s Word. For this reason, I am puzzled when some Christians portray him as a liberal who has gone to the dark side. Hazen has more than once publicly stated that he does not consider the LDS church to be a Christian church. In fact, in a radio interview with Greg Koukl (*Stand to Reason*), he went so far as to say: **“I actually believe that Mormonism is a tremendous achievement of the devil!”**⁹

Hazen firmly sees Mormonism as outside the pale of Christianity, but he is very optimistic that some day the LDS church may very well shed its heretical teachings. At this point, I don’t share that enthusiasm; but I will not fault Hazen’s optimism. Quite candidly, I hope he proves me wrong. Hazen is part of the ongoing dialogue with Mormon scholars; though he wants to keep an ongoing dialogue, he does not see this as something that is open-ended.

Hazen states: **“Robert L. Millet has done us all a great service with this book. He communicates contemporary Latter-day Saints thinking on Christology with remarkable clarity and charity.”** While I may understand what Hazen is trying to say, unfortunately, many Christians reading this may not be aware that there even is a difference between contemporary Mormonism (unofficial ideas expressed by some of the laity) and the more traditional Mormonism (teachings espoused by LDS leaders). However, because Millet insists that what he espouses in his book has been a part of Mormonism all along, Hazen’s distinction tends to have little meaning for many people.

Because I have spoken to Hazen about his views, when he says on the back cover: **“This work sets the stage for a whole new level of robust dialogue between the LDS and evangelical Christian communities.”** I don’t at all get the impression that he is looking forward to an ecumenical standoff. Hazen has more than once expressed to me that he truly wants to see Mormons come to an orthodox consensus.

Greg Johnson (Standing Together Ministries) is a close friend of Millet and has been responsible for much of the lime-light that has been given to him in recent years. He and Millet often speak together in churches and schools. I concede that I have a lot of concerns about this arrangement; and at this point in time, I have not seen any substantial benefit to the Christian Church as a result of this relationship (though I have seen an incredible amount of benefit to the LDS church). I have never heard Johnson say that Mormonism was compatible with Christianity, although he does believe that Millet expresses a faith that appears to be much closer to the truth. That, of course, is what much of this debate is about.

Johnson begins by saying: **“Without hesitation, I recommend this book to evangelical Christians and Latter-day Saints alike.”** I can’t see myself saying this, since I maintain the book is fraught with theological landmines that most Christians could readily step on. Millet has been hanging around evangelicals for so long that he has become fluent in “Christianese.” He is very “church-wise” and knows how to make a clever argument. For these reasons alone, I would *never* recommend this book to a new Christian, and I would have strong reservations recommending it to *any* Christian who has only a minimal understanding of Mormonism.

Official Doctrine

Millet wants his readers to know that **“not everything that was stated or written since 1830, even by prominent [LDS] Church leaders, is considered to be a part of the doctrine of the Church”** (p.xiii). He chides LDS critics who quote the teachings of past LDS leaders who, he concedes, **“are not perfect”** (p.xiv) and have **“some time in the past”** (p.xiv) made statements **“that would not be a part of the doctrine of the Church today”** (p.xiv). This last statement is telling because Mormons are told over and over that God will not allow church leaders to lead them astray. In their manuals, they are told to trust what the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve tell them. **“Always keep your eye on the President of the Church, and if he ever tells you to do anything, even if it is wrong, and you do it, the Lord will bless you for it but you don’t need to worry. The Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead the people astray.”**¹⁰ **“We should regard both the standard works [the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price] and inspired declarations of living prophets as valid and necessary sources of truth. Occasionally misinformed members of the Church will maintain that, although they are reluctant to give equal credence to pronouncements of the living prophets. Such individuals are pursuing an inconsistent course and ‘err, not knowing the scriptures’ (Matthew 22:29), for the scriptures themselves plainly testify of the fact that we must give heed to the living prophets (see D&C 1:14, 38; 21:1, 4-5).”**¹¹ Are we to assume this is not true of men who held these offices in the past? If so, how far “in the past” does this apply?

He then explains that **“doctrine”** for the LDS church can **“be found in official Church pronouncements, within current Church manuals and handbooks, and would be a topic discussed regularly in general conferences or other official church gatherings”** (p.xiv). Why is it necessary to use words like **“current”** if LDS leaders are, in fact, getting their information from the same unchanging God? After all, Alma 41:8¹² states the **“decrees of God are unalterable.”** Shouldn’t there be

a long-term consistency if something is a decree from God?

Millet’s definition is certainly not shared by all Mormons. For instance, the late Sterling McMurrin, a respected Mormon philosopher, noted: **“In the beginnings of the LDS Church, its philosophy and theology were quite fluid and in some respects transitory, a condition entirely normal for a movement in its infancy. In the early years, the theology was not basically different from typical Protestantism, but there were radical changes before the death of Joseph Smith. In the first decades of this century, the philosophy and theology achieved a considerable measure of stability and consistency. But things changed after the death in 1933 of the Church’s leading theologians, Brigham H. Roberts and James E. Talmage; now for several decades there has been considerable confusion in Mormon thought, with the result that it is often difficult if not impossible to determine just what are and what are not the officially accepted doctrines.”**¹³

A Church In A Doctrinal State Of Flux?

I have heard from several of my Christian acquaintances that Mormonism is crumbling, and that it won’t be long before we can, with confidence, accept it into the Christian fold. Is this really happening? After all, LDS President Gordon B. Hinckley outright denied such a notion when, in a 2001 conference message, he said: **“Those who observe us say that we are moving into the mainstream of religion. We are not changing. The world’s perception of us is changing. We teach the same doctrine.”**¹⁴ It is interesting to note that Millet inserts this quote on page 141 of *A Different Jesus?* ...

If the LDS church is really changing, why do I not see this in the writings of Robert Millet? For example, in his June 2003 review of Jon Krakauer’s controversial book, *Under the Banner of Heaven* (Doubleday, 2003), Millet states emphatically: **“The fact is, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has no inclination whatsoever toward ecumenism and no desire to compromise one ounce of its doctrine or history in order to court favor among other religionists.”**¹⁵

Much of what we find in *A Different Jesus?* ... concurs with the above insistence that Mormonism is not changing. Throughout the book, we find samples of Mormon teaching that have been expounded on by LDS leaders for years. For example:

- Page 2: All the sects were wrong and that God had no church on earth.
- Page 3: The necessity of the Aaronic Priesthood that gives power to preach, teach and baptize.
- Page 9, 15: The necessity of latter-day revelation and an open canon.
- Page 19: Men and women are spirit sons and daughters of God, and that we lived in a pre-mortal existence. God is **“literally our spirit father.”**
- Page 20: Jesus was the **“firstborn spirit child of God.”**
- Page 21: Lucifer and **“one third of the spirit children of God”** are cast out of heaven.
- Page 45: **“Plain and precious truths”** removed from the Bible.
- Page 64: The LDS church is **“the only true and living Church”** and **“the only one with which He is well-pleased.”**
- Page 70: Support for a tri-theistic godhead.
- Page 73: Jesus *became* like unto God.

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- Page 74: Jesus **“is literally the Son of God.”**
- Page 76: Post mortal opportunity for salvation.
- Page 83: Man is an eternal being who existed from eternity.
- Page 84: A denial of the Doctrine of Human Depravity.
- Page 92: Jesus’ **“suffering in Gethsemane was not just a prelude to the Atonement but a vital and important part of it.”**
- Page 94: Bodily resurrection is **“universal salvation.”**
- Page 95: **“Certain things must be done in order for divine grace and mercy to be activated in the lives of individual followers of the Christ.”**
- Page 99: Justification removes the punishment for past sin.
- Page 100: A combination of faith, repentance, and baptism bring remission of sins.
- Page 117: Men can become Gods.
- Page 144: Man is of the same species as God. God is an exalted man.

Admittedly, Millet often fails to give a lot of details regarding these teachings. For instance, while he mentions the **“noble and great ones”** who helped God **“create”** the earth, he doesn’t mention that Joseph Smith was allegedly one of them (p.21).

On pages 22 and 23, he writes that the plan of salvation is **“always and everlastingly the same”** and **“gospel laws have not changed.”** How does this square with the fact that Blacks were banned from temple ordinances necessary for their exaltation until 1978? Or how about the doctrine of polygamy that was required for godhood until 1890? If Millet’s conclusion is true, why did tithing only become mandatory for exaltation after the United Order** experiment was suspended?

On page 63, he states that the god of Mormonism **“is the only true God and thus the only deity who can hear and respond to the earnest petitions of his children.”** Yet, on page 141, he concedes that there are **“three separate Gods”** within the Mormon godhead. If that is so, which two of the three are not true and cannot **“respond to the earnest petitions of his children?”**

On page 114, he says there is no power his god **“does not possess.”** Yet the god of Mormonism cannot create physical matter ex nihilo (out of nothing) nor can he cause it to cease to exist.

On page 117, he states: **“Even though we believe in the ultimate deification of man, I am unaware of any authoritative statement in LDS literature that suggests that men and women will ever worship any being other than the ones within the Godhead.”** The key phrase here is **“authoritative statement.”** Granted, you won’t find such a statement in the LDS standard works, but it is a subject that has been discussed.

For instance, Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt (ironically, the same Pratt he mentions following this statement) taught on page 37 of his book *The Seer* (Salt Lake City: Esborn Books, 1854) that the offspring of those who become Gods **“are required to reverence, adore, and worship their own personal father who dwells in the Heaven which they formerly inhabited.”** If Mormons believe this eternal human progression to godhood is something that has been going on since eternity past, consistency would demand that they eventually will accept worship. If not, why do they worship Elohim?*** An even bigger question for me is, who is Elohim worshipping?

On the same page (117), Millet says Mormons **“believe in ‘one God’ in the sense that we love and serve one godhead.”** This sounds like a definition used by LDS Apostle Bruce R. McConkie. McConkie also liked to define *monotheism* as the belief in one godhead. (See *Mormon Doctrine*, Bookcraft, 1966, p.511.) Millet goes on to insist that *all three gods* **“possess all of the attributes of Godhood.”** Since omnipotence is one of the attributes commonly associated with God, is it really possible to have more than one omnipotent being at a given time?

On page 145 Millet states: **“That which is without body, parts, and passions is nothing. There is no God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones.”** Where does that leave the bodiless “Holy Ghost” of Mormonism?

Millet’s Jesus

Is the Jesus of Robert Millet any different than the Jesus embraced by Latter-day Saints of the past? Millet doesn’t seem to think so. While speaking at the “Worlds of Joseph Smith Conference” in Washington, D.C. on May 7, 2005, he stated: **“Strictly speaking, nothing in the LDS doctrine of Christ has changed in the last 175 years.”** He makes the same statement on page 139.

On page 73 he says: **“Modern revelation attests that Jesus was the firstborn spirit-child of God the Father.”** The reason he must preface this sentence with the words **“modern revelation”** is because this is not a biblical doctrine. He also states on page 73 that Jesus, as “Jehovah,” **“grew in knowledge and power to the point where he became ‘like unto God.’”** Shouldn’t such a comment alarm Christians who hold the Bible dear?

Though he concedes that **“Jesus was born of a virgin,”** (p.67), Millet says that **“Jesus of Nazareth is literally the Son of God, the only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is not the Son of the Holy Ghost, nor is he the Son of the Father in some mystical, metaphorical sense; he is the Son of Almighty God”** (p.74). In what only can be an attempt at damage control, we find a footnote that reads: **“While Latter-day Saints clearly believe that Jesus is the Son of God the Father, there is no authoritative doctrinal statement within Mormonism that explains how the conception of Jesus was accomplished”** (p.74). Again, he is compelled to hide behind words that hopefully will somehow neuter the teachings of past leaders that he knows full well expose Mormonism’s heretical view of the Incarnation of Christ.

Is Millet’s game of semantics an intentional attempt to deceive? A number of LDS prophets have explained how the conception of Jesus was accomplished. For instance, Ezra Taft Benson, a very **“authoritative”** LDS prophet/president, stated: **“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints proclaims that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in the most literal sense. The body in which He performed His mission in the flesh was sired by that same Holy Being we worship as God, our Eternal Father. Jesus was not the son of Joseph, nor was He begotten by the Holy Ghost”** (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, Bookcraft, 1988, p.7). Jesus is the Son of God in **“the most literal sense?”** His body **“was sired by that same Holy Being we worship as God?”** Do words not have any meaning among LDS apologists? When Millet, himself, says Jesus is not **“the Son of the Father in some mystical, metaphorical sense”** (p.74), what are we left to believe?

Three LDS manuals that I am readily aware of address the

Incarnation of Jesus Christ in such a way that I am compelled to question Millet's premise.

Gospel Principles, probably one of the most popular of all the manuals published by the LDS church, stated in its 1985 edition: **"Thus, God the Father became the literal father of Jesus Christ. Jesus was born of a mortal mother and an immortal Father."**¹⁶

In the 1967 edition of *Messages for Exaltation: Eternal Insights from the Book of Mormon*, Mormon readers were told: **"[Jesus Christ] was willing to make payment because of his great love for mankind, and he was able to make payment because he lived a sinless life and because he was actually, literally, biologically the Son of God in the flesh."**¹⁷

Consider also that in 1972, an LDS *Family Home Evening* manual was published by the "Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" that tackles this issue. The information on pages 125-126 was meant to **"help you and your children understand that Jesus is God's Only Begotten Son."** Under the heading of **"A MODERN PROPHET'S ANSWER,"** Sixth LDS President/Prophet Joseph F. Smith is quoted as saying: **"Now we are told in Scriptures that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God in the flesh. Well, now for the benefit of the older ones, how are children begotten? I answer just as Jesus Christ was begotten of his father."** On the next page, his thought continued: **"We must come down to the simple fact that God Almighty was the Father of His Son Jesus Christ. Mary, the virgin girl, who had never known mortal man, was his mother. God by her begot His son Jesus Christ. And he was born into the world with power and intelligence like that of his Father."**

Accompanying this quotation is an illustration depicting a man and a woman labeled **"Daddy" plus "Mommy"** with lines connecting to a drawing of a girl labeled **"You."** (Daddy plus Mommy equals You). Directly below it is another illustration that reads **"Our Heavenly Father" plus "Mary"** with lines connected to the word **"Jesus"** (Heavenly Father plus Mary equals Jesus).

Any person with minimal amount of biological knowledge regarding how children are born can easily grasp this concept. If Millet wants to continue insisting that a manual published by the LDS church (that quotes its prophets) is somehow not **"authoritative,"** he only gives credence to the suspicion that he is acting in an intellectually dishonest fashion.

Now I know Millet may argue that two of the three manuals I listed currently are not being used. The oldest one I mentioned was printed in 1967. However, one can see it certainly doesn't disagree with the example I cited that was printed in 1985. Is it logical to believe that an event as ancient as the Incarnation of Christ somehow changed within the last few decades? Remember, these manuals were considered "current" as recently as 1967, 1972, and 1985!

Also, Millet speaks of how **"Jesus of Nazareth was and is the only mortal to traverse earth's paths without committing sin"** (p.74). Yet, Brigham Young gave this startling description of Jesus when he said: **"But while he was tabernacling in the flesh, he was more or less contaminated with fallen nature. While he was here, in a body that his mother Mary bore him, he was more or less connected with and influenced by this nature that we have received. According to the flesh, he was the seed of Adam and Eve, and suffered the weaknesses and temptations of his fellow mortals."**¹⁸ "More or less contaminated with fallen nature?" "Influenced by this nature?"

On page 171, Millet states: **"If an acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity makes one a Christian, then of course Latter-day Saints are not Christians."** That's enough for me. A denial of the Trinity compels a person to either accept the heresies of modalism, henotheism, or polytheism. None of these can be supported biblically. The Doctrine of the Trinity is one of the fundamentals of the faith, and it cannot be compromised.

On the same page, he quotes President Gordon Hinckley who, in a 1998 conference message, said: **"There are some of other faiths who do not regard us as Christians. This is not important. How we regard ourselves is what is important."** Actually, how Mormons view themselves is not nearly as important as how their doctrines conform to *God's* standard: The Bible. In the end, it all boils down to how God's creation handles His Word.

Conclusion

I have no idea how much error God will allow when it comes to man's final judgment. What maximum amount of heresy God will allow before a person is plunged into despair and damnation is unknown to me. However, this one thing I do know: The leaders of Mormonism certainly have pushed the doctrinal envelope to a very uncomfortable level. It is a level so extreme that I can't help but feel compelled to warn both my Christian brethren and my Mormon friends about the pitfalls that, according to Scripture, appear to lie ahead. I can only do my best to point out these extremes and pray that God will open their eyes to the fact that only His Word is worthy of our trust.

I am fully aware that this article's criticisms are not an exhaustive examination of *A Different Jesus?* ... No doubt, some will wonder why I mentioned some things at the expense of leaving out other things. Like many of my colleagues, I, too, would like to see a dramatic change take place in the LDS church. However, if this tome was to be a landmark beginning of a new direction towards orthodoxy, I can only say that I am sadly disappointed. To put it bluntly, I can't see why any Christian would be excited about this book. If Dr. Millet really represents a general understanding of the LDS faith, then it seems clear it has a long way to go before we confidently can claim the LDS church is a Christian church.

At times, I really don't know how to categorize Dr. Millet. There are moments when I'd like to think of him as a young Martin Luther who is still in the infant stages of a new scriptural understanding—struggling to make it all work to some level of


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consistency. If such was the case, I could probably be more patient toward his views that are clearly outside the biblical norm. Then again, there are times when I see him staunchly defend Mormonism with a conviction so firm that I can't help but feel he is purposely using his cunning to appease the concerns of skeptical Christians so that people like me will leave his church alone and allow the Mormon people to bask in the pool of good feelings.

At the beginning of the book, he laments over the fact that Christians have questioned his faith in “Christ.” He asks: **“Do we worship the same Jesus worshipped by our friends of other Christian faiths? This question is not answered quickly or easily”** (p.xii). As long as he finds *that* question difficult to answer, I see no reason why Christians should abandon their skepticism. 

*Seventy is an LDS general authority below the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

**United Order was the consecrating personal property for communal use.

****Elohim* is the name the LDS church gives to their particular god the father.

My personal thanks to Eric Johnson and Lane Thuet for offering their input regarding this review.



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ENDNOTES:

1. Robert Millet, *A Different Jesus? The Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., April 30, 2005).
2. Richard Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, *Mormon America: The Power and the Promise* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999), 308-314.
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4. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969, reprint Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), pp.211-212.
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7. Francis Beckwith (Editor), Carl Mosser (Editor), Paul Owen (Editor), *The New Mormon Challenge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, March 1, 2002), p.331.
8. *Doctrines of Salvation* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954) v.1, pp.189-190.
9. <http://www.strradio.org/current/121904.mp3>
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11. *Teachings of the Living Prophets* (Salt Lake City: LDS Church, 1982), p.20.
12. *Book of Mormon* (1830; reprint Salt Lake City: LDS Church, 1981).
13. “Some Distinguishing Characteristics of Mormon Philosophy,” *Sunstone* (March 1993), 16:4/35.
14. “Living in the Fullness of Times,” *Ensign* (November 2001), p.5.
15. “Church Response to Jon Krakauer’s Under the Banner of Heaven,” <http://www.lds.org/newsroom/mistakes/0,15331,3885-1-17125,00.html>
16. *Gospel Principles*, (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), p.57.
17. *Messages for Exaltation: Eternal Insights from the Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1967), pp.378-379.
18. *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints Book Depot), v.6, pp.95-96.

“Amendment” Continued from page 11

vidual rights” should be expanded, it should be pointed out that it is equally as important that the democratic process protects the individual rights of the majority.

The very few occasions the accepted definition of marriage has been pressed, it has been affirmed either by Federal Act (super-democratic law) or (until at least 1995) by every court that ruled upon it. We also see a bit of distraction from the primary point (definition of marriage) through legal slight of hand when he writes:

Throughout the nation’s history, states have adopted their own family law policies, including their own requirements for marriage. These divergent policies have not created intolerable levels of confusion or conflict among the states.²³

It is true that different states have different criteria regarding various points. For example: Can first cousins marry? In 26 states, this is legal. In the remaining states, it is not. However, in *all* states it is not legal to marry one’s parent, sibling, aunt or uncle, *nor someone of the same sex*. In *all* states it has always been one man and one woman since the founding of the nation! This brings us to his last main argument, that such a definition is **“constitutional overkill.”** If Professor Carpenter means by this that such an amendment so solidifies the existing definition—thereby eliminating the possibility of changing the definition even by judicial caveat—he is correct. At times, such strong reaction is warranted because of those who so adamantly want to impose their *redefinition* upon all of us.

Professor Carpenter’s fourth argument seems to “double back upon itself.” He states that a constitutional amendment is **“constitutional overkill”** because it forecloses the courts from recognizing **“same-sex marriages;”** but then he spends a great deal of ink explaining how the courts would be unlikely to ever approve them. His allegation that elected state judges would bow to the pressure of the electorate (which in and of itself acknowledges that the *vast majority of people do not approve of so-called same-sex marriages*) denies the practicalities of judicial elections. The electorate in general has little interest in judicial elections. Additionally, most states have a judicial ethics code which either prevents or sharply curtails the open debate of such issues. It should also be remembered that a judicial candidate must also be an attorney. It is extremely difficult to unseat an incumbent judge, and few attorneys (who are riled enough on an issue to enter a time-consuming campaign) are willing to suffer the consequences if they do not win. Federal judges are elected for life, and the impeachment process for federal judges is so difficult to accomplish successfully that it presents next to no deterrent at all. Surely Carpenter is aware that most liberal advances in this country have come as a result of judicial activism and imperiously have been imposed over the objections of the voters *and* their duly elected officials—who are the ones who are supposed to make law! Certainly, these judicial despots have not bowed to the pressure of the electorate. But then, as long as we are redefining words and phrases, perhaps *bowing to the pressure of the electorate* really means *glibly ignoring the opinions and deeply held beliefs of the electorate* ... na na na boo boo. After all, words only mean what liberals imagine they mean.

In a moment of honesty, Professor Carpenter reveals that 39 states have prohibitions against same-sex marriages in their constitutions and laws, and that the 1996 Definition of Marriage

Act (DOMA) also bars recognition of such unions (It takes 38 states to ratify a Federal Amendment.) He then opines that an amendment of the U.S. Constitution is unnecessary. In light of the fact that he has spent so much effort in constructing his dissertation on this issue, one is left to wonder whether he truly supposes those state “safeguards” are as “water tight” as he would have us believe.

What The World Needs Now Is Love, Sweet Love, And A Little St. Nicholas Too

Gene Edward Veith, writing in *World Magazine*, tells us that one of the bishops of the early church, specifically the Bishop of Myra (modern day Turkey) got a little carried away in his defense of Christ’s Deity at the Council of Nicea in 325. If you recall, the Council had been called to lay out clearly what had been taught and deemed true concerning the nature of Christ during the previous four centuries. The bishop’s name is one that is very familiar to all of us—St. Nicholas—who, in the midst of the proceedings, did a very unusual thing. Veith relates:

During the Council of Nicea, jolly old St. Nicholas got so fed up with Arius, who taught that Jesus was just a man, that he walked up and slapped him!²⁴

Now we are not advocating slapping anyone, nor would we ever presume to do so, but you have to at least admire St. Nick’s passion for the truth. May we all be passionate enough about what is true and right to keep ourselves from being intimidated or lulled into passivity and slumber when it is challenged? ☞

*Catholic church in the sense of “universal” church.

ENDNOTES:

¹ Legend has it that the Apostles wrote this creed on the tenth day after Christ’s Ascension into Heaven. That is not the case, though the name stuck. However, each of the doctrines found in the creed can be traced to statements current during the apostolic period. The earliest written version of the creed is, perhaps, the *Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus* (ca. A.D. 215). The current form is first found in the writings of *Caesarius of Arles* (died 542).

The creed was apparently used as a summary of Christian doctrine for baptismal candidates in the churches of Rome. Hence, it is also known as *The Roman Symbol*. As in Hippolytus’ version, it was given in question and answer format with the baptismal candidates answering in the affirmative that they believed each statement <http://www.creeds.net/ancient/apostles.htm>

² The Athanasian Creed, also known as the “Quicumque vult,” was formerly recited at the Office of Prime on Sundays. It is one of the four authoritative creeds of the Catholic Church. The Anglican Church and some Protestant Churches also hold it to be authoritative. While the Creed has always been attributed to St. Athanasius (died 373 AD), it was unknown in the Eastern Churches until the twelfth century, and thus, it is unlikely he is the author. St. Ambrose is one suggested author, but many authors have been proposed with no conclusive agreements reached. Current theory suggests it was composed in southern France in the fifth century. In 1940, the lost ‘Excerpta’ of St. Vincent of Lerins (flourished in 440: “quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est”) was discovered, and this work contains much of the language of the Creed. Thus, either St. Vincent or an admirer have been suggested as the author. The earliest known copy of the creed was included in a prefix to a collection of homilies by Caesarius of Arles (died 542). <http://www.creeds.net/ancient/Quicumque.html>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “a boy kept by a pederast”; <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/Catamite>

⁶ *The American Heritage Dictionary: Third Edition*; (New York: Dell Publishing, A division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1994), p.509.

⁷ “Understanding Polygamy in Mormon History,” <http://www.dummies.com/WileyCDA/DummiesArticle/id-2910.html>

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⁸ Perry L. Porter, “A Chronology of Federal Legislation on Polygamy,” <http://www.xmission.com/~plporter/lds/chron.htm>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Understanding Polygamy ...,” Op. Cit.

¹¹ “Historic Marriage Battle Looms in 2006 -- A Critical Update ...,” Alliance for Marriage (www.allianceformarriage.com) email Friday, December 16, 2005 10:27 AM

¹² http://www.allianceformarriage.org/site/PageServer?pagename=mac_FederalMarriageAmendment

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “The Federal Marriage Amendment: Unnecessary, Anti-federalist and Anti-democratic”; Dale Carpenter; Cato White Papers and Miscellaneous Reports; www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/040923paper.html, 1

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ http://www.allianceformarriage.org/site/PageServer?pagename=mac_FederalMarriageAmendment

¹⁷ “The Federal Marriage Amendment ...,” Op. Cit., p.11.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.1.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., p.2.

²² “Same Sex Marriage: Developments in the Law”; <http://www.nolo.com/article.cfm/objectID/6DF0766E-C4A3-4952-A542F5997196E8B5/118/304/190/ART/>

²³ “The Federal Marriage Amendment ...,” Op. Cit., p.6

²⁴ Gene Edward Veith, “Slappy Holiday: Why not take the Santa Claus tradition a little further?” *World Magazine*, Vol. 20, No. 50 (December 24, 2005).



Don and Joy Veinot are co-founders of Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc., which is a national apologetics ministry and mission to new religious movements based in Lombard, IL. He and Joy, his wife of 35 years, have been involved in discernment ministry as missionaries to New Religious Movements since 1987. Don is on the Board of Directors for Evangelical Ministries to New Religions (EMNR), a consortium of discernment ministries. In addition to being staff researchers and writers for the *Midwest Christian Outreach Journal* and co-authors of *A Matter of Basic Principles: Bill Gothard and the Christian Life*, they have been published in the *CRI Journal*, *PFO Quarterly Journal*, *Campus Life Magazine* and other periodicals. Don was ordained to the ministry by West Suburban Community Church of Lombard, IL at the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem, Israel in March of 1997. They have two adult children and two grandchildren.

There Are Still Dates Available!
MCOI is currently taking requests for the Winter and Spring speaking schedule.
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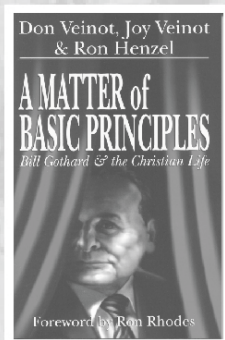
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