

“MORMON’ NO MORE FOLLOWING NAME CHANGE”

NUMBER 139

JUNE, 2019

“MORMON’ NO MORE FOLLOWING NAME CHANGE” was the title of an article in the June 30, 2019 Houston, Chronicle on page F7.

It relates that the President of the Church of Christ of the Latter Day Saints received a “game changing divine revelation” that church members should no longer call themselves Mormons or use the shorthand “LDS”. They should now be called “members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” or the shorter version “Latter-day Saints”.

“As he is revered as a living prophet, the announcement had divine weight.” The Mormon Tabernacle Choir is now the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square.

(1) What can be learned from this is that “truth” for a Mormon (or Latter-day Saint) is what the current President says it is. That is logical if you believe he is a “living prophet” and receives “divine revelations”, that is what you would expect to believe.

The sequence of truth” for the Latter-day Saints is what the Bible said, as modified by what the Book of Mormon said (published in 1830 by Joseph Smith), and as modified since by any President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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WE ARE OVERCOMERS

“To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” (Rev. 2:7b)

Jesus knows his body. He knows and cares for each member. When one member hurts he is there with sustaining love and healing. He calls each one to a life of perseverance. “Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Rev. 2:11b)

Jesus says, “I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance.” He is right here in the middle of life, right where we are. He is our head, and nothing happens to his body that he doesn’t know about. His call is to persevere, to overcome the evil one and not grow weary.

Jesus knows our afflictions and poverty. He knows the slander, persecution and hatred we face from Satan. He knows that we will be tested and suffer. “He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.” (Rev. 2:11b)

Jesus warns that there will be false witnesses, enticing idols and sexual immorality. Some will renounce their faith and tolerate all kinds of evil. Repent, hold on to your faith until the Lord comes. “To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations...” (Rev. 2:26)

Jesus knows how much strength we have and whether we keep his command to endure patiently. A great test is coming upon the world and he will strengthen us for the hour of trial. “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.” (Rev. 3:21) Have courage, we are overcomers!

Elizabeth Brown

GREATER HOUSTON AREA CHURCHES OF CHRIST

MISSION 2019

“Lights Shining Bright”

Saturday, August 10, 2019

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12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. • Lunch and Devotion at Fifth Ward Church of Christ
4308 Stonewall Street • Houston, TX 77020

Benton Baugh
bbaugh@thearray.com
Memorial Church of Christ
(713) 464-0271

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smithgarystriving@gmail.com
Fifth Ward Church of Christ
(713) 672-2654

Cruz Hernandez
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GIVES READY ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION LISTED BELOW. SEE PAGE 12 FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

Vacationers

As you travel this summer, you can be of assistance in local congregations in helping them to understand how they are seen by potential visitors and prospects.

On the occginstitute.org website, Project Papers tab is a paper titled:
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“MORMON” NO MORE FOLLOWING NAME CHANGE”, P. 2

It is important to note that the Latter-day Saints, this proclamation to stop calling themselves Mormons is the literal truth from God.

(2) To Catholics, whatever the Pope says from his Throne or “ex officio” is absolute truth from God, even though over that years what has been said from time to time has been completely contradictory.

(3) A little closer to home when visiting a Methodist Priest and asking why they did not follow what the New Testament said, he said “As God updated the Old Testament with the New Testament, our Methodist Council updates the New Testament with our votes today.” An amazingly blunt statement in our politically correct world today.

(4) At home our motto is “Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent” (or “Just the Bible”). A simple philosophy which locks you into what the Bible says, and frees you from the decisions required to decide what to do instead of what God said.

Those are three basic approaches to the truth.

(1) and (2) are basically the same thing with a leader declaring that he is the current infallible conduit from God, so you cannot question anything they say. You have to look at their record and see if they have the knowledge and consistency of God actually speaking through them.

(3) doesn’t claim to have the direct inspiration of God, but functionally suggests that God wrote the New Testament which was good for when it was written, but God needs a little help now. And that they know enough to help God out.

(4) is distinctly different in that it says that God had the New Testament written in a form which is a good religious guide for all time since and does not need and does not allow for any updating (on religious subjects). It does not ad-

dress customs and practices, just the religious content.

Our collective philosophy is an anchor if we half heartedly follow it, or is the rock we build on if we engage it.

Just as having good acapella music doesn’t happen by accident but rather you need to work at it, simply following the Bible requires some study and understanding.

You cannot say follow every word in the New Testament. There are instances in the New Testament where conversations are recorded in which someone made an erroneous statement such as God does not hear the prayers of sinners (John 9:31). A good study to consider is when in Acts 1:4 Jesus told the Apostles to “wait....until you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit”, a period of around 10 days. Rather than waiting in verse 21-26 they decided to appoint Matthias as the twelfth Apostle. This was a true historical event. In Acts chapter 9 Jesus selected Saul (or Paul) to be an Apostle. Which will be the twelfth Apostle in Heaven?

The point to this is that we should simply follow the Bible, but we must study and understand the Bible to do so. We cannot take a verse out we like to follow and ignore the rest. We must follow all the New Testament. It even takes proper understanding to know that the Old Law was done away with, so we only follow the New Testament.

For a greater discussion on how to BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE go to www.occginstitute.org, TOPICAL LESSONS tab, CHURCH OF CHRIST tab, lesson 4.3 or input the following to go directly:

<http://thearray.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.3-BIBLICAL-PRINCIPLES-FOR-UNDERSTANDING-THE-BIBLE.pdf>

See page 12 for a free phone app to take you directly to the website.

YOUR CHURCH AS A FIGHTER PLANE

Jet fighter planes are highly unstable aircraft. Turns out that stability and maneuverability are opposing virtues. The more stable a plane is, the less maneuverable it is.

The Cessna in the lower photograph is so stable that if the pilot were to pass out, the plane would automatically go into a slow stable downward glide until it hits the ground at a shallow angle. It won't "land" itself, but you would have a reasonable chance of living over it. The natural



computer dies, characteristically there are 3 other computers to take over. If all four die for whatever reason, the pilot must bail out or he will die also.



The jet fighter and the Cessna are not the extreme positions of normal human aircraft. In reality the jet fighter is at one end and a glider or even a hang-glider such as in the photo is at the other end.

In Ephesians 6:11 putting on the whole armor of God should make the contemporary image of a fighter plane reasonable to consider.

Continued on page 3

center of lift is well above the center of gravity.

The jet fighter in the upper picture is so unstable that if the pilot passes out it would functionally fall like a rock. The center of lift is at or behind the center of gravity.

For a jet fighter to be competitive today, it has to be highly unstable so it can be maneuverable enough to combat other combat aircraft. Today's jet planes are so complex and unstable that a human pilot cannot fly the. They are controlled by computers. The pilot makes inputs to the computer(s) and the computer(s) fly the planes. If the com-



Images from iStock by Getty Images

YOUR CHURCH AS A FIGHTER PLANE, p. 2

Basic question is what has this to do with your or any other church? We want to suggest first that if your congregation is at the extreme lack of stability of a jet fighter plane, it is not going to last long. Most anyone would agree with this. The goal of most congregations is to get things under control and do away with the unstable aspects of a startup congregation. Getting your own building, getting it paid for, getting a full time preacher, getting elders, and getting formal system in place are good and natural goals.

Look at the other end at the glider or hang-glider. It's elevation is in a constant state of decline and its flight will soon be over. It can appear to go upward at some times when it gets in an updraft where the air is going up, but as a practical matter it is going down within the updraft. These updrafts happen near sources of heat such as dark patches on the ground. A good glider or hang-glider pilot can stay up all day on a Sunny day, but is definitely coming down at night.

Our question is where is your congregation on the continuum between a jet fighter and a glider? Are you so unstable that you will wear your self out simply trying to keep everything together?

Are you closer to the glider stage where you are simply coasting down to the ground?

Is your congregation in the long hot day where an occasional updraft keeps you going along. Updrafts we have today can be our service area population going up so we maintain our size due to existing church members simply moving in. Are problem at another congregation causing some transfers to your congregation? Are you providing the best facility so members of smaller struggling congregations simply move to the comfort of your facility?

Your statistics will objectively tell you the answer to this irrespective of whether you are simply gliding down or maintaining your size at the expense of other congregations.

First consider that baptism of family members generally offsets passing of family members. Transfers in generally offsets transfers out. What is left is conquest baptisms. Conquest baptisms are the baptisms of those who are not presently part of your member's families.

If you do not have conquest baptisms totaling to at least 5% of your Sunday morning attendance, it is likely that you are in the glide mode. You can think of a thousand reasons why you are not in the glide mode. However, so can every other congregation which is in the glide mode. As the church in the USA is seeing an average annual decline of 1.71%, at least half the congregations who don't think they are gliding, are gliding. Are you one of them?

This would be a good verse for you to note in the Array. Nancy Habermacher, Katy, TX

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?

And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? — [Romans 10:14](#)

THE FASTER RATE OF DECLINE TOWARD DEATH OF MANY CONGREGATIONS

Based upon an aggregate of several research projects, I made some notes of growth and decline rates of churches and summarized my estimates into five categories by worship attendance changes over the previous five-year period. I compiled the following numbers ten years ago:

Growth and Decline Categories of North American Congregations 2009

- Fast-growing (growing greater than 5% annually): 12%
- Growing (growing nominally to 5% annually): 23%
- Steadily declining (declining 0% to 3% annually): 34%
- Rapidly declining (declining 2% to 5% annually): 21%
- Declining toward death (over 5% decline annually): 10%

This past week I conducted the same exercise based on some of my updated research and the research of others and estimated the following:

Growth and Decline Categories of North American Congregations 2019

- Fast-growing (growing greater than 5% annually): 3%
- Growing (growing nominally to 5% annually): 24%
- Steadily declining (declining 0% to 3% annually): 32%
- Rapidly declining (declining 2% to 5% annually): 22%
- Declining toward death (over 5% decline annually): 19%

My numbers admittedly are estimates, but they do have some quantitative basis, such as denominational statistics, research by LifeWay Research, and the data available in the increasing number of consultation and coaching requests we receive.

Obviously, the staggering reality of these

numbers is the pronounced change in the two extreme categories. We are seeing a marked decline in fast-growing churches and a marked increase in churches declining toward death.

As I prayerfully consider these trends, I have a few immediate reactions and thoughts:

- We need fervent prayer more than ever in our churches.
- Our church leaders and members must let go of the idols of the past and traditions that hold us back.
- If we are not focused and intentional on evangelism and sharing the gospel, we are little more than a religious social club.
- We must stop fighting each other and understand who the real enemy is.
- Church leaders should humbly seek interventions of coaching and consultation to see how God might lead us in fresh and exciting directions.
- I have seen too many churches breakout in God's power to maintain a defeatist attitude. The One who resurrects the dead can bring any church back to life again.

This information is sobering. But it is not hopeless. God is not done with us yet.

Let me know your thoughts.

<https://thomrainer.com/2019/06/the-faster-pace-of-decline-toward-death-of-many-congregations>

Note: Thom Rainer is a Baptist Pastor (Preacher), but has good statistical information.

**“WHY WERE THE OLD DAYS
BETTER THAN THESE?”
FROM ECCLESIASTES 7:10 - 1000 B.C.
NOT A NEW PERSPECTIVE!**

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION – BONE REPAIR

Bones grow slowly (or rapidly depending on your point of view) to full adult size in about 15 years. After that for an extended period of time they simply maintain at the same size and then then to shrink a little in our older years.

That endoskeleton life or life with internal bones came into existence in the first place is a spectacular subject, but one we will take for granted in this discussion.

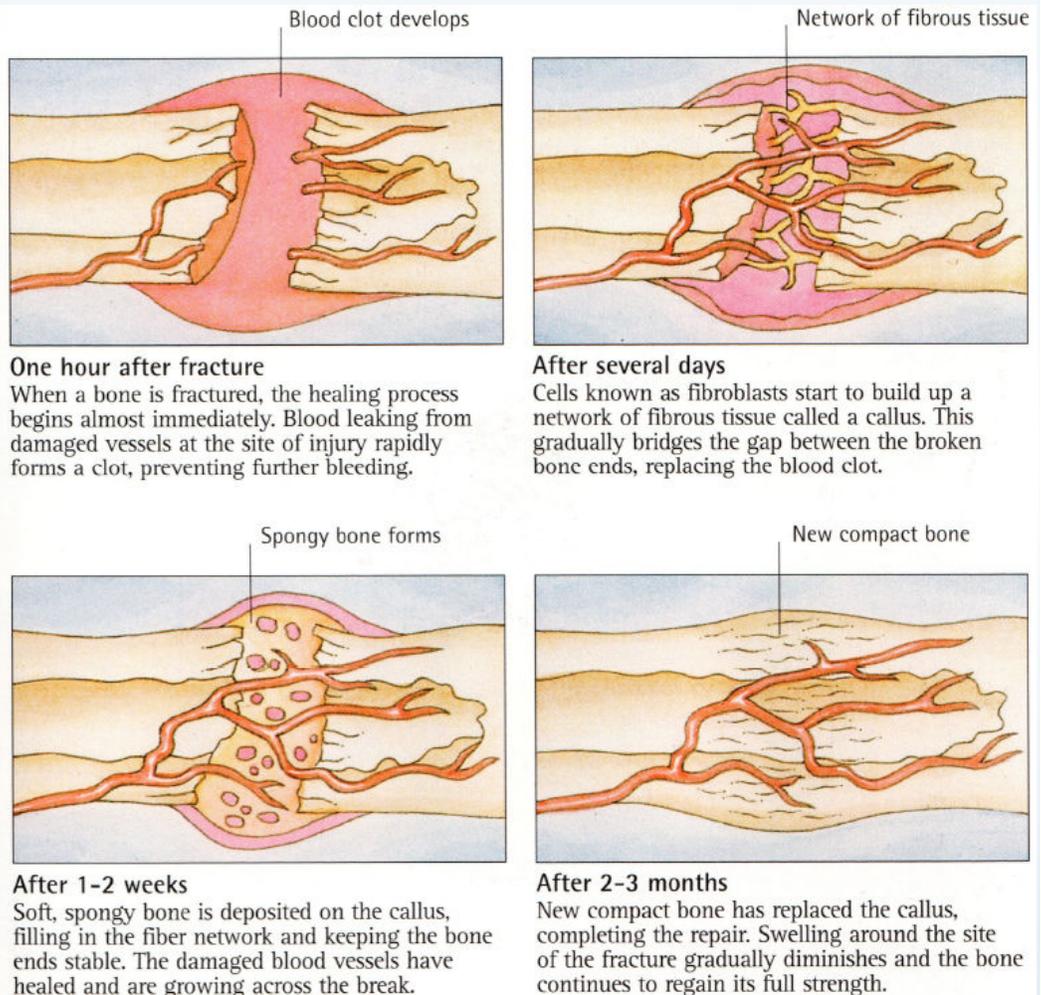
The attached graphic shows the sequence of events which are required to repair a bone break. It is not the slow replacement of dying bone cells, it is a whole new technology.

1. A clot forms to stop the internal bleeding and tends to stabilize the joint.
2. Fibrous tissue bridges the gap.
3. Spongy bone material is added and blood vessels are reconnected.
4. New bone material is generated to get you back to full strength.

You don't have a million years to evolve this process, you do it in short order or you are an invalid for life in an early nomadic society which isn't equipped for to deal with this.

Without this process, this isn't a couple of months of inconvenience until you could heal. It was for the rest of your life. It was functionally a death sentence in early society. In society today we could deal with this pretty well. How-

ever, it is not reasonable to consider the earliest society in which this evolution would have had to have taken place in light of our technology today. They were functionally illiterate nomads.



This capability takes the preplanning of a Designer who designed endoskeleton systems, already taking into account what happens when a part of the endoskeleton is broken. That designer is Jehovah.

Benton F. Baugh

GRAPHIC FROM: Human Body, p. 75,
Dorling Kindersley, Ltd.
(A really good book to have)



Foster's Home for Children

In an effort to meet a growing demand for children needing out of home placement, Foster's Home for Children is expanding by three additional group homes in the summer of 2019. We will be interviewing and hiring caregivers for these three homes around May of 2019. If you are interested in being considered, it is not too early to submit your application. Consider serving with us as we provide sanctuary and healing to children of trauma. Applications can be found on our website at www.fostershome.org, and submitted to glenn@fostershome.org.

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PREACHING SPECIALISTS

Congregations sometimes need fill-in preachers and speakers with special subjects which are difficult for the local minister to become proficient in. Following are a list of speakers with topics which may be of interest to you. Each of the speakers are known to us and reliably present the Word.

If any of the topics are interesting to you, contact information is provided. Some speakers may require expenses and/or stipends.

- **CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IMPACT ON CHURCH FAITHFULNESS**
- **CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IMPACT ON MARRIAGE**

Kent Allen, Oklahoma Christian University
405-315-3008

- **CROSSING THE LINE IN ADDICTION**
Philip Bailey, Memorial Church of Christ,
Houston, TX, 713-304-0011
Pbailey@gpbaileyconsulting.com
- **GOD IS SCIENTIFIC**
- **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION [1]**
- **WHAT ATHEIST ARE GOING TO TELL YOUR CHILDREN, WITH ANSWERS**

Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E.
Memorial church of Christ Houston, TX
713-419-8683
bbaugh@thearray.org

[1] Impossible for Evolution is a good topic for a youth event. If you arrange an event, we will provide the refreshments, wherever you are.

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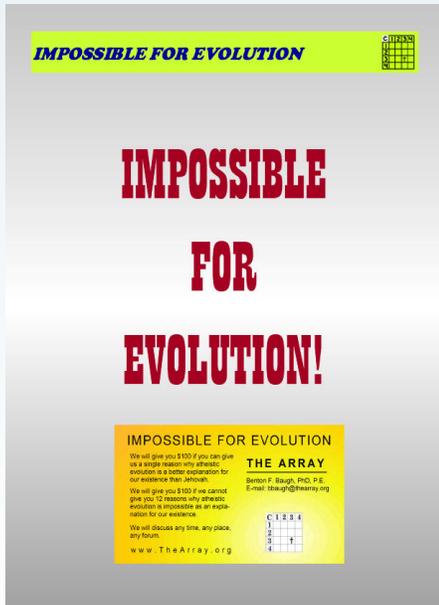
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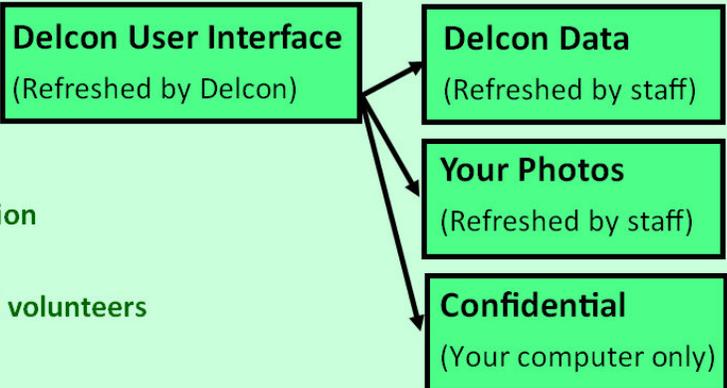
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AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

8/10/19 Greater Houston Campaign for Christ - Mission Spring Branch

Each Wed. NE Houston Preacher's Meeting, Location varies, 11:00—1:00

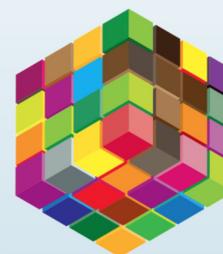
2nd Tues. NW Houston Preacher's Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Rancho King Buffet, 5900 N. Frwy., Hou, confirm with Gerald Fruzia fruzia70@sbcglobal.net

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1. Visit the website on your mobile device, www.occinstitute.org
2. Along the bottom row of buttons, press on the middle button
3. The row of options just above the "Cancel" button, scroll to the right to the 6th button "Add to Home Screen", and press it
4. Press "Add", and you can move it around as you would a normal app



For Android

1. Visit our website on your mobile browser
 2. Click on the "Add Bookmark" button at the top right of the screen
 3. Press on the "Add To" drop down menu and select "Home Screen"
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