

## POLYGAMIST SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS IN PRISON

Tom Green, a modern-day polygamist in Utah, was given a five-year prison sentence on August 25, 2001. Green might never have come to the attention of the state if he had kept a low profile. Instead, he appeared on various television programs and granted numerous interviews, explaining his polygamist life-style. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

NEPHI—Polygamist Tom Green’s bragging on tabloid TV shows that he is married to five women and has fathered dozens of children finally may have caught up with him. . . .

“I will never regret standing and publicly defending my religious beliefs,” Green told *The Salt Lake Tribune*. “I’m being prosecuted because I am a polygamist who stood up.”

Also Thursday [April 19, 2001], the Utah Court of Appeals rejected Green’s appeal of another judge’s ruling that his marriage to wife Linda Kunz is valid—a crucial point for prosecutors in the bigamy charges.

. . . The ruling about Green’s marriage does not resolve the bigamy counts, and prosecutors still must prove those charges beyond a reasonable doubt, the court said in dismissing the appeal.

Green also did not file his appeal by court deadlines, the judges noted. During the hearing in Nephi, Kunz called herself “Head wife” and added, “If our family was a business, I’d be the CEO.” She explained that meant, among other things, she is in charge of deciding who will spend each night with Green.

. . . Green was ordered to stand trial on the bigamy charges last year. But [4th District Judge Guy] Burningham granted a new preliminary hearing after Juab County Prosecutor David Leavitt filed an amended complaint alleging the admitted polygamist has continued to break bigamy laws.

In court Thursday, Hannah Bjorkman—who married Green in a civil wedding in 1991, but divorced him four years later testified that she is still married to Green “in my heart.” Bjorkman added all of the women considered themselves to be Green’s wives, regardless of status in the eyes of the state. . . .

Green is also charged with first-degree felony rape for allegedly fathering a child with Kunz, then 13, in 1986. Kunz later became Green’s wife. That charge could be dropped if Bucher [Green’s attorney] can prove the rape allegation had been reported to the police before 1986. That would mean the 10-year legal deadline, or statute of limitations, then in effect had expired. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 20, 2001, p. D3)

On May 19, 2001, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

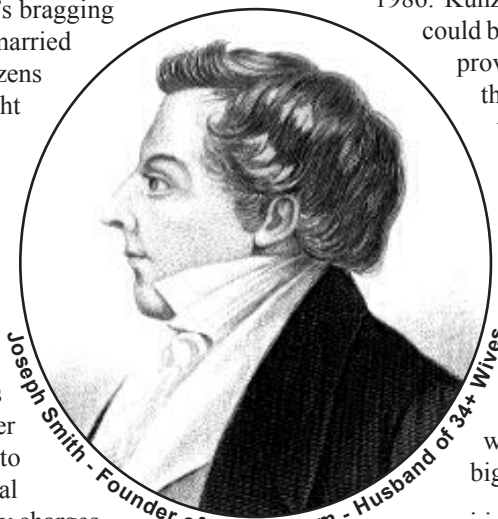
PROVO—Avowed polygamist Tom Green—the subject of **Utah’s first polygamy trial in nearly five decades**—was convicted late Friday on four counts of bigamy and one count of criminal nonsupport. . . . The 8-person jury reached the verdict in

less than three hours.

Interestingly, Green recalled in testimony his transformation from a missionary with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to a believer in what he called “Mormon fundamentalism.”

“The process began in my teens as I studied . . . the history of my faith, the history of my state,” Green said

Polygamy was practiced for several decades during the 1800s by Mormon pioneers, but was abandoned by the church in 1890. . . . [Juab County Prosecutor David] Leavitt has said he did not know Green existed until he



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saw him bragging on “Dateline NBC” about his living arrangements. . . . “The reality is that the state of Utah makes criminal more than one wife because it hurts people,” Leavitt said, telling jurors that Green took three of his wives when they were only 14.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported the following:

PROVO—With a rueful smile, convicted polygamist Tom Green blew a kiss to his five tearful wives and a handful of his 30 children before deputies escorted him from court to Utah State Prison for up to 5 years. . . . [This] marked the first time since the 1940’s that a Utah polygamist was sent to prison for violating the state’s anti-bigamy law. . . . Green, 53, was sentenced to up to 5 years on each of four counts of felony bigamy and one charge of criminal nonsupport, and was ordered to pay \$78,868 in restitution. . . .

[Judge] Burningham, who acknowledged his own polygamous heritage during Friday’s court proceeding, ruled Green’s prison sentences will run concurrently. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 25, 2001, pp. A1 and A10)

Ironically, the Juab County Prosecutor, David Leavitt (brother of Utah State Governor Mike Leavitt) is also descended from early Mormon polygamists. The *Salt Lake Tribune* commented:

Modern-day polygamists—like Green, himself a former church missionary—are excommunicated for entering into plural marriages. . . . Leavitt and his older brother, Gov. Mike Leavitt have polygamous ancestors. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May, 19, 2001, p. A5)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* also reported that the state Attorney General’s Office is pursuing other possible cases against Utah polygamists.

Green is the first polygamist to be convicted since the 1953 raids on a polygamist group in southern Utah:

. . . Utah’s estimated 30,000 polygamists, . . . have never forgotten a 1953 raid on the polygamous enclave of Short Creek on the Utah-Arizona border. The incident became a public relations nightmare for state and federal officials as fathers, mothers and children were forcibly separated. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 25, 2001, p. A10)

While the *Salt Lake Tribune* estimated **Utah’s polygamists at 30,000**, the total number of polygamists is hard to determine. Maxine Hanks reported:

Utah usually ignores polygamy, hoping it will go away. But its scope and problems have grown and “festered like cancer,” according to an ex-wife . . . Today, there are a dozen major clans consisting of hundreds of families. And there are small independent groups. . . . Estimates vary widely, but insiders claim that Mormon fundamentalism may involve 60,000 people scattered

from Canada to Mexico across seven Western states. Most of them are practicing some form of polygamy. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 7, 1998)

## Incest and Abuse

The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported on another polygamist group, the Kingstons:

. . . Two years ago, [S.L. County District Attorney David] Yocum’s office successfully prosecuted polygamist David Ortell Kingston on two charges of **incest**—a felony for **having sex with a niece** in a closed polygamist society. Kingston, a key member of Salt Lake County’s largest polygamist clan, was ordered to serve two consecutive terms of up to 5 years in prison and fined \$10,000. And Kingston’s brother, John Daniel Kingston was sentenced to 7 months in jail for **beating his daughter** with a horsewhip after she fled the arranged marriage to her uncle. But Yocum did not pursue charges on bigamy. David Zolman, a former lawmaker from Taylorsville who often defended polygamists on Capital Hill, says violent crimes such as the Kingston’s should be prosecuted but that **consenting adults**, such as Green and his five wives, ought to be left alone. He says plural marriage in Utah is here to stay and that Green’s trial has galvanized polygamists statewide. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May, 20, 2001, p. A14)

Although Mr. Zolman defended polygamy when it is between consenting adults, he failed to mention that Tom Green’s current first wife, Linda, was only 13 when he “married” her.

Green was first married as a regular Mormon. When he got interested in practicing polygamy his wife divorced him. He later married Beth, who had a daughter named Linda. He then married that step-daughter.

Next he married Shirley (age 15), Beth’s niece. Then he married Shirley’s mother, June. Later June’s other daughter, LeeAnn, married Green. The total of Green’s wives in 1993 was seven: Beth and daughter Linda; June and daughters, LeeAnn and Shirley; and Cari and Hanna (sisters). Older wives Beth and June later left the relationship, leaving Green with his current five wives, all at least two dozen years younger than him (see *Salt Lake City Magazine*, March/April, 1993, “Plural Lives: Inside Polygamy in the ‘90’s,” pp. 52-101).

The women were once a part of another polygamist group. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Shirley Beagley, 31, one of Green’s wives, testified Wednesday that she was raised in the polygamous enclave of Colorado City, Arizona. She said she married Green at age 15 in a “religious ceremony.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 17, 2001, p. A8)

While Mr. Green only claims five wives today, he has had up to ten in all (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 20, 2001, p. B1).

In a television interview with Green's wives, Shirley explained that she and her mother, June, were simultaneously pregnant with Green's children and both delivered on the same day (*Dateline*, June 22, 2001).

## Polygamy in Other Areas

The *Salt Lake Tribune* carried the following story on polygamy in Arizona:

PHOENIX—Anyone thinking that polygamy is limited to a remote and obscure strip along the Arizona-Utah line beyond Grand Canyon should think again: How about metro Phoenix?

Take James Timpson of suburban Tempe, a 26-year-old Arizona State University psychology major who wears his hair in a surfer's ponytail, drinks Corona beer and puts in long hours at his job as a computer salesman

Timpson is a practicing polygamist, one of several in metropolitan Phoenix who believe keeping more than one wife is a mandate from heaven. Timpson has three.

Arizona authorities have taken no significant action toward consensual polygamist marriages since 1953, when a disastrous police raid on the polygamist settlement of Short Creek—now Colorado City, just across the border from the Utah town of Hildale—resulted in a wave of negative publicity that helped drive Republican Gov. Howard Pyle from office.

"Polygamous or plural marriages, or polygamist cohabitation, are forever prohibited within this state," says Arizona's constitution, written in 1910.

But the Marcia County Attorney's Office will prosecute only if there is evidence the husband defrauded his wives financially, Bill FitzGerald said. "We don't think the public interest is served by prosecuting," added Bill Ekstrom, the top prosecutor in Mohave County, where an estimated **5,000 practicing polygamists** still live in what was Short Creek.

Tens of thousands of people in western United States practice polygamy. There is no way to gauge how many of them are in Phoenix, . . . Timpson was raised with 65 biological brothers and sisters in Colorado City, said to be the home of the largest polygamist assembly in North America today. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 20, 2001, p. A15)

Another article relating to the Colorado City group told of the escape of a teenage girl:

A 15-year-old girl who ran away from her polygamous family saying she wanted to avoid an

arranged marriage maintained she just looks for a chance to live a normal life and get an education. . . . she has not been allowed to attend school since the sixth grade. . . .

The girl believed she would be forced to marry 45-year-old Warren Jeffs, acting church president [of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints] . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 7, 2001, p. A1)

Polygamy is not just a phenomena of the United States. The following newspaper article appeared in the Saturday, September 30, 2000, edition of the *York Daily Record*:

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—A polygamous community in Southern British Columbia is part of a U.S. probe into the arranged marriages of underage American girls. In Utah last week Ron Barton was hired by the state attorney general's office to investigate tax evasion, welfare fraud, and child sexual abuse, domestic abuse and other crimes in "loose" societies, such as tax protest groups, white supremacist organizations and polygamist sects.

One of the largest of the polygamist sects is the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Located primarily in Hildale, Utah, and neighboring Colorado City, Ariz. it has an estimated **8,000 to 12,000 members**. The sect has an enclave at Lister, British Columbia, with **800 to 1,000 members**.

Ex-members of the sect and a child advocacy group have asked Utah authorities to investigate the movement of young girls between Arizona, Utah and British Columbia. They say the arranged marriages are increasing because the church's leaders have predicted that the end of the world is near. The Lister enclave is headed by businessman Winston Blackmore, 44, who has 30 wives and 80 children, *The Vancouver Province* newspaper reported.



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## Joseph Smith and Polygamy

Although many members of the Mormon Church are familiar with polygamy in early Utah, they usually are not aware of the beginnings of plural marriage under Joseph Smith. Richard VanWagoner explains that Joseph Smith first introduced the idea of polygamy in 1831, just a year after starting his church:

It is difficult to determine exactly when Joseph Smith first felt compelled to practice polygamy. W. W. Phelps recollected three decades after the fact in an 1861 letter to Brigham Young that on 17 July 1831, when he and five others had gathered in Jackson County, Missouri, Smith stated: "It is my will, that in time, ye should take unto you wives of the Lamanites [Indians] and Nephites, that their posterity may become white, delightful and just." Phelps added in a postscript that "about three years after this was given, I asked brother Joseph, privately, how 'we,' that were mentioned in the revelation could **take wives of the 'natives' as we were all married men?**" He claimed that Smith replied, "In the same manner that Abraham took Hagar and Keturah; and Jacob took Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpha, by Revelation. (*Mormon Polygamy: A History*, by Richard S. Van Wagoner, p. 3)

Joseph Smith's practice and teaching on polygamy were only known to a small circle of friends and was kept secret from the community. This led to speculation and charges of adultery. In response to these charges, a section on marriage and denouncing polygamy was added to the 1835 edition of the Mormon's scriptures, *Doctrine and Covenants*:

Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 ed., Sec. 101)

This denial of polygamy was in every edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* until 1876, when it was replaced with section 132 commanding polygamy. Even though Smith was already practicing plural marriage in the 1830's he did not give his polygamy revelation (Sec. 132) until 1843.

George Smith provides the following discussion of Joseph Smith's 1843 revelation on polygamy:

On July 12, 1843, Joseph Smith dictated a ten-page revelation to his private clerk, William Clayton, which indicated that he meant to "restore" the ceremonies and

cultural patterns of ancient Israel. The revelation on plural marriage, or "celestial marriage" as it was called, claimed to restore the practice of "Moses, Abraham, David and Solomon having many wives and concubines . . . a new and everlasting covenant" in which "if any man espouse a virgin . . . [or] ten virgins . . . he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him." (*D&C* 132:4, 61, 62).

A few months earlier, Clayton recalled, Smith "also informed me that he had other wives living besides his first wife Emma, and in particular gave me to understand that Eliza R. Snow, Louisa Beman, Desdemona W. Fullmer and others were his lawful wives in the sight of heaven." In fact, by the time of the 1843 revelation Smith had married at least twelve women besides his legal wife Emma, and a dozen of his most trusted followers had also taken plural wives. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, vol. 27, no. 1, Spring 1994, pp. 7-8, "Nauvoo Roots of Mormon Polygamy, 1841-46: A Preliminary Demographic Report," by George D. Smith)

B. Carmon Hardy, in *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage*, discusses the response to Smith's revelation:

That plurality of wives was the most important intent of the communication [D&C 132] is clear from the reasons that led Joseph to dictate it. The opening lines expressly indicate that it was an answer to the prophet's inquiry as to why ancient men of God were justified in taking plural wives and concubines. . . . Commencing with the examples of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, affirming the sealing authority of God's appointed and applying it to marriage for eternity, Joseph was instructed to "do the works of Abraham" and his wife Emma to accept them. The ancient patriarchs had taken wives and concubines "and it was accounted unto . . . [them] for righteousness . . . and they have entered into their exaltation . . . and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods." More than this, the Lord stated that "those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same."

Whatever accounted for the prophet's decision to dictate on the matter, its portrait of the universe as a field for dominion by the patriarchal family had begun to take form . . . Not all were favored . . . with a presentiment of the doctrine's divinity. And much of the dissent dividing the church in the spring of 1844 dated from refusal to accept the revelation and the obligations enjoined by it. Some of this arose from the sense of betrayal an associate like William Law could feel. Law had previously stood by Joseph, publicly denying rumors of church-sanctioned polygamy. By the spring of 1844, however, the church's leadership was rent with ugliness and accusation. Not only did some refuse to accept the revelation on plural marriage, but charges of adultery

and attempted seduction were traded. Violence was threatened. And, feeding on reports of scandal, the non-Mormon press made the most of it. Social structure in Nauvoo was becoming dangerously tangled.

Then, while **under indictment** from a Carthage, Illinois, grand jury for **adultery and polygamy** but secure at home and among friends, Joseph was confronted with the publication by several disaffected members of the *Nauvoo Expositor*. Charging the Mormon leader with abuses of power and economic manipulations for private gain, the paper was primarily an attack on the personal morality of the leader and his brother Hyrum, including the revelation about and **practice of polygamy**. The **seduction of young women**, the ruination of innocent reputations, and the secrecy of **sexual liaisons** in the name of religion were all charged. Pleading for repentance by the brothers, asking that the old friendships and old orthodoxies be restored, the *Expositor's* authors acknowledged the jeopardy they invited by their disclosures but hoped the venture, which promised future evidence in support of their allegations, would be protected by the freedoms of press and religion.

Fearful of the paper's effect if it were permitted to continue, the city council held an extraordinary meeting with **Joseph presiding**, condemned the publication as a nuisance, and issued an order to **wreck the press** that printed it. Those responsible for the *Expositor* left town in fear, seeing to it that Joseph and others were charged in Carthage with instigating to riot and destruction of property. After some hesitation and considerable parleying involving Governor Thomas Ford, the prophet with several associates surrendered to authorities in Carthage to await trial. In the late afternoon of 27 June 1844, a mob of assassins with blackened faces stormed the jail, shot Joseph and Hyrum to death, and left John Taylor, one of their companions, terribly wounded. (*Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage*, B. Carmon Hardy, pp. 10-11. A copy of the *Nauvoo Expositor* is available from Utah Lighthouse Ministry for \$2 plus \$1 shipping.)

Polygamy was kept secret until the Mormons settled in Utah. In 1852 Apostle Orson Pratt was appointed to make the announcement of plural marriage in an LDS meeting (*Mormon Polygamy: A History*, p. 85).

## Plural Marriage Illegal

Prosecutor David Leavitt stated:

"I am sure that my great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents would approve of my actions," Leavitt said. . . . "Polygamy is against the law in Utah." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 20, 2001, p. A14)

Ironically, polygamy was against the law in Illinois when the early Mormons began practicing it. This was the reason for its great secrecy and the adamant denials of the doctrine and practice by Joseph Smith. Richard S. Van Wagoner provides the following information:

**Polygamy, a criminal act under the 1833 Illinois Anti-bigamy Laws**, was so unacceptable to monogamous nineteenth-century American society that Smith could introduce it only in **absolute secrecy**. Despite Smith's explicit **denials** of plural marriage, stories of "spiritual wifery" had continued to spread. (*Mormon Polygamy: A History*, p. 18)

In 1833 the state of Illinois passed a law making bigamy illegal:

Sec 121. **Bigamy consists in the having of two wives or two husbands at one and the same time, knowing that the former husband or wife is still alive.** If any person or persons within this State, being married, or who shall hereafter marry, do at any time marry any person or persons, the former husband or wife being alive, the person so offending shall, on conviction thereof, be punished by a fine, not exceeding one thousand dollars, and **imprisoned in the penitentiary**, not exceeding two years. It shall not be necessary to prove either of the said marriages by the register or certificate thereof, or other record evidence; but the same may be proved by such evidence as is admissible to prove a marriage in other cases, and when such second marriage shall have taken place without this state, **cohabitation in this state after such second marriage shall be deemed the commission of the crime of bigamy**, and the trial in such case may take place in the county where such cohabitation shall have occurred. (*Revised Laws of Illinois*, 1833, pp. 198-199)

Thus we see that Joseph Smith, living in Illinois in the 1840's, was privately practicing and teaching a doctrine that was not only illegal but also in direct contradiction to the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*. In addition to this, records indicate that many illegal plural marriages took place after the LDS Church issued the 1890 Manifesto, supposedly stopping the practice. There is a list of 262 plural marriages between 1890 and 1910 among the prominent LDS people in the back of the book, *Solemn Covenant*, by B. Carmon Hardy. (See also "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," by D. Michael Quinn, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1985, pp. 9-105.) Of this number 131 men had served on a mission, been a Branch President, Bishop, Stake President or Apostle.

## Number of Wives

In 1887, LDS Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson made a list of 27 women who were sealed to Joseph Smith before his death (*Historical Record*, vol. 6, 1887, pp. 233-234). More recent research, however, has led to a longer list. Todd Compton stated:

I have identified **thirty-three** well-documented wives of Joseph Smith, which some may regard as an overly conservative numbering . . . Historians Fawn Brodie, D. Michael Quinn, and George D. Smith list forty-eight, forty-six, and forty-three, respectfully. Yet in problematic areas it may be advisable to err on the side of caution. (*In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith*, p. 1)

Compton also noted that Joseph Smith wanted to marry even more women. He noted that Joseph Smith “proposed to at least five more women who turned him down.” On the dust jacket of his book, we read:

Mormons today have little idea about their founder’s family life. . . . Fewer know of his contempt for traditional marriage and Victorian morality.

To understand these issues, Todd Compton has painstakingly researched and recovered the life stories of the women aged fourteen to fifty-four—whom the prophet loved and married and whose salvation he guaranteed. In their own accounts, the wives tell how difficult it was to accept this secret—shared marriage—and to forfeit their dreams of meeting and falling in love with a man of their choice. What they received were tainted reputations among the uninitiated and, ultimately, their husband’s violent death.

These were colorful, tragic figures. After the martyrdom, one of the widows became a nun; another joined the prophet’s first wife in the Midwestern anti-polygamy reorganization; and some abandoned Utah for California. Most were claimed by the twelve apostles, who fathered their children but proved unreliable as husbands, resulting in more than one divorce.

The widows experienced sadness as they contemplated what they had become. One reticently revealed on her deathbed that her child, Josephine, was the prophet’s daughter—a whispered confidentiality that only underscored the secrecy that still surrounds these women’s identities a half-century later.

Thirty-three extraordinary lives began with promise and devotion and ended almost uniformly in loneliness. The great consolation these women held was that their sacrifices had been for God. Whatever reward they received, it was not of this world.

## Teen Brides and Married Women

Joseph Smith’s wives ranged in age from fourteen to fifty-six. Todd Compton recounts: “Having married Joseph Smith at the age of **fourteen**, Helen Mar [Kimball] is the **youngest of Smith’s known wives**” (*In Sacred Loneliness*, p. 487).

Helen had not been Smith’s first pick from the Kimball family. He had earlier asked Apostle Heber C. Kimball for his wife, Vilate. When Heber was unwilling to give up his wife, Joseph turned to his daughter, Helen.

The fact that Joseph Smith asked for other men’s wives was acknowledged in a sermon in 1854 by Jedediah M. Grant, second counselor to Brigham Young. In this sermon he stated:

When the family organization was revealed from heaven—the patriarchal order of God, and Joseph began, on the right and on the left, to add to his family, what a quaking there was in Israel. Says one brother to another, “Joseph says all covenants are done away, and none are binding but the new covenants; **now suppose Joseph should come and say he wanted your wife, what would you say to that?**” “**I would tell him to go to hell.**” This was the spirit of many in the early days of this Church. . . .

What would a man of God say, who felt aright, when Joseph asked him for his money? He would say, “Yes, and I wish I had more to help to build up the kingdom of God.” **Or if he came and said, “I want your wife?” “O Yes,” he would say, “here she is, there are plenty more.”** . . . Did the Prophet Joseph want every man’s wife he asked for? He did not . . . If such a man of God should come to me and say, “I want your gold and silver, **or your wives,**” **I should say, “Here they are, I wish I had more to give you, take all I have got.”** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, February 19, 1854, pp. 13-14)

Todd Compton frankly discussed the issue of Joseph Smith’s practice of polyandry, marrying women who already had husbands:

**Polyandry** is one of the major problems found in Smith’s polygamy and many questions surround it. Why did he at first primarily prefer polyandrous marriages? In the past, polyandry has often been **ignored or glossed over**, but if these women merit serious attention, the topic cannot be overlooked . . . A common misconception concerning Joseph Smith’s polyandry is that he participated in only one or two such unusual unions. In fact, **fully one-third of his plural wives, eleven of them were married civilly to other men when he married them.** If one superimposes a chronological perspective, one sees that of Smith’s first twelve wives, **nine** were

**polyandrous.** So in this early period **polyandry was the norm, not the anomaly** . . . Polyandry might be easier to understand if one viewed these marriages to Smith as a sort of de facto divorce with the first husband. However, none of these women divorced their ‘first husbands’ while Smith was alive and all of them continued to live with their civil spouses while married to Smith . . . **In the eleven certain polyandrous marriages, only three of the husbands were non-Mormon** (Lightner, Sayers, and Cleveland) and only one was disaffected (Buell). All other husbands were in good standing in the church at the time Joseph married their wives. Many were prominent church leaders and close friends of Smith. . . .

These data suggested that Joseph may have married these women, often, not because they were married to non-members but because they were married to faithful Latter-day Saints who were his devoted friends. This again suggests that the men knew about the marriages and permitted them.” (*In Sacred Loneliness*, pp. 15-16)

One of Smith’s polyandrous marriages was to Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs. Smith had taught eighteen-year-old Zina about plural marriage and proposed to her but she put him off. She was being courted by a “handsome, eligible twenty-three-year-old” named Henry Jacobs. “On 7 March 1841, twenty-year-old Zina married Henry Jacobs.” Smith would not attend their marriage. He next approached Zina’s brother, Dimick, to talk to her about becoming his plural wife. “In October 1841, Smith sent him [her brother Dimick] with an unwelcome message to force Zina to a decision. ‘Joseph said, Tell Zina I have put it off and put it off **until an angel with a drawn sword** has stood before me and told me if I did not establish that principle [plurality of wives] and live it, I would **lose my position and my life** and the Church could progress no further’” (*Four Zinas: A Story of Mothers and Daughters on the Mormon Frontier*, by Martha Bradley & Mary Woodward, pp. 107-115). Under such religious pressure, Zina submitted to become Smith’s secret plural wife. She also continued in her marriage to Henry, a devout Mormon. “Zina does not record if she and Joseph consummated their union, although Zina later signed an affidavit that she was Smith’s wife in ‘very deed’” (*Four Zinas*, p. 115). Joseph Smith’s death did not end Zina’s struggles with polygamy and polyandry, “on 2 February 1846, Henry Jacobs witnessed the sealing of his twenty-five-year-old wife, Zina, for time to Brigham Young, who was twenty years her senior” (*Four Zinas*, p. 132).

According to Illinois law, not only would Joseph Smith have been guilty of bigamy but so would his various wives who were already married.

## Marriages Consummated

Many members of the Mormon Church find it difficult to believe that Joseph Smith had multiple wives and even harder to believe that he had sex with anyone other than Emma. The evidence, however, is clear. Todd Compton wrote:

Emily Partridge Young said she “roomed” with Joseph the night following her marriage to him, and said that she had “carnal intercourse” with him. (*In Sacred Loneliness*, p. 12)

Other early witnesses also affirmed this. Benjamin Johnson wrote:

On the 15th of May . . . the Prophet again came and at my hosue [house] ocupied [*sic*] **the Same Room & Bed with my sister that the month previous he had ocupied with the Daughter of the Later [late?] Bishop Partridge as his wife.**” According to Joseph Bates Noble, Smith told him he had spent a night with Louisa Beaman . . . Many of Joseph’s wives affirmed that they were married to him for eternity and time, **with sexuality included.** (*In Sacred Loneliness*, pp. 13-14)

## False Prophets

The first seven presidents of the Mormon Church, proclaimed to be prophets of God, were involved in breaking the law, polygamy, polyandry, adultery, deception and perjury. All 15 presidents of the LDS Church have been involved in a massive cover-up regarding these issues. Although Joseph Smith died on June 27, 1844, his teaching on plural marriage continues to affect thousands of people today. As long as the LDS Church continues to print Sec. 132 in their *Doctrine and Covenants* and does not renounce the doctrine of polygamy, the sad practice will continue to spread.

Jesus Himself warned us to beware of “false prophets,” and instructed us that we will “know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:15-16). Mormons need to face the fact that one of the “fruits” of Mormonism is the wide spread practice of polygamy today. Joseph Smith’s secret, illegal doctrine is directly responsible for the vast number of people who are trapped in polygamy and who have never had a chance to know the truth.

**LDS CLAIMS**  
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## IS POLYGAMY PART OF GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE?

When God created humans He instituted His plan for marriage: one man should have one wife. Genesis 2:24 states: “*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.*”

The first mention of polygamy in the Bible is Genesis 4:19: “*And Lamech [a descendant of Cain] took unto him two wives . . .*” But this was not attributed to instructions from God.

If there was ever a justification for polygamy it would seem to have been needed when Adam and Eve were to populate the earth. Yet we see the pattern of just one woman and one man.

The same pattern is carried out by Noah at the time of the Ark (Genesis 7:7). Noah took his one wife into the ark. Again, if polygamy were ordained of God, why didn't He tell Noah to take additional wives to repopulate the earth faster?

God instructed Moses that the kings of Israel were to have only one wife: “*Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away*” (Deut. 17:17).

This is exactly what happened with Solomon. We read in I Kings 11:4: “*For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.*”

David's heart was right with God because he did not turn to other gods, not because he practiced polygamy.

LDS will sometimes point to 2 Samuel 12:8 to prove that David's wives were approved by God. But that verse indicates that he inherited Saul's wives, not that David actually married them by God's appointment. It was the custom of the time for the succeeding ruler to receive all of the prior ruler's property and women. This is not a proof that God intends people to practice polygamy. It is contrary to the pattern of marriage established with Adam and Eve and His instructions in Deuteronomy.

Just as divorce was permitted, so too was polygamy. But it does not represent God's will. In Matt. 19:3-9 the Pharisees asked Jesus about divorce and Jesus answered: “*Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain [two] shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain [two], but one flesh.*”

The Pharisees then asked him why Moses allowed for divorce. Jesus answered: “*Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so*” (Matt. 19:7).

In the New Testament the practice of polygamy would have kept a man from leadership in the church. Paul instructed Timothy: “*A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife . . .*” (I Timothy 3:2).

Paul also wrote to Titus: “. . . ordain elders in every city . . . if any be blameless, the husband of one wife . . .” (Titus 1:6).

Thus we see that there is no teaching in the Bible that plural marriage was ever part of God's religious instruction to His people.

## ABUSE — SPECIAL REPORT

### \$3 Million Dollar Settlement in Oregon

On September 5, 2001, *The Oregonian* reported a settlement deal between the LDS Church and Jeremiah Scott, the victim of child sexual abuse:

The Mormon church on Tuesday announced the \$3 million settlement of a sex-abuse case brought by a Portland-area man abused by a high priest as a boy, as both sides raced to declare victory. . . .

Alleging negligence and emotional distress, Scott's lawsuit accuses the church of knowingly allowing a child molester to have access to children. . . .

The church admits no wrongdoing and settled the case Friday to avoid the cost of continued litigation, lawyers said Tuesday. . . .

Most cases similar to this one involve confidential settlements. Trial had been set for August, with the plaintiff seeking **\$1.5 billion in punitive damages**.

In his 1998 lawsuit filed in Multnomah County, Scott accused the church of hiding the fact that Curtis, one of its high priests, was a pedophile. Curtis was excommunicated from the church in 1983 in Pennsylvania but was rebaptized in 1984 in Michigan. In 1988, he joined the Brentwood Ward in Portland.

Curtis lived with the Scott family twice, in 1990 and 1991, at Scott's parents' invitation. He repeatedly abused Scott on the second stay, when the two shared a bed because of lack of space in the Scott home. At the time, Curtis was 87 and Scott was 11. Curtis was later convicted of sex abuse. . . .

Scott's mother, Sandra Scott, had consulted her bishop, Gregory Lee Foster, about taking in Curtis to live out his years in the family's home. Foster advised her that she shouldn't because of his advanced age but said nothing about pedophilia, although he knew of complaints about Curtis, the plaintiff said in his suit.



Foster, in a deposition, said he didn't remember the complaints at the time of his conversation with Sandra Scott. (*The Oregonian*, September 5, 2001, pp. B1, 9)

However, according to Sandra Scott, Foster knew Curtis was a pedophile and yet did nothing to protect her son:

The lawsuit claims that Curtis sexually abused at least five children in the Rocky Butte Ward in Portland, where he became a member. **A bishop confronted Curtis and he admitted the molestation.**

Curtis joined another ward, where **he told then-Bishop Gregory Lee Foster that he had abused** in the past. **Foster didn't report him because Curtis said he had repented**, the lawsuit states. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 10, 2001, p. A5)

Sandra Scott says she called her former LDS bishop in 1993 to warn him that her son had been sexually abused by an aging Sunday school teacher her family had taken into their home.

She said she was "dumbfounded" when the **bishop told her he had known the late Frank Curtis was a pedophile, but that he did not tell the Scotts because Curtis had repented.** . . .

The LDS Church maintains Scott misunderstood the bishop, who was only trying to tell her he had heard about what had happened to her son and express his sympathies. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 6, 2001, p. B1)

After the victim reported the crime, Curtis was charged with sexual abuse and plead no contest to the felony, but died a year later in 1995. Foster, the victims former bishop, was dropped as a defendant in the lawsuit, leaving the LDS Church to defend against accusations of knowingly allowing a pedophile to have access to children.

"It's not about the mistakes of an individual," said David Slader, Scott's lawyer, of Portland. "It's about the policy of the Mormon church to intentionally conceal and cover up its knowledge that one of its high priests is a child molester."

A church lawyer told a Salt Lake City newspaper Tuesday that "No church, including this one, had the ability to track all its members and inform every bishop in the country about the members' past history."

But internal Mormon documents, which *The Oregonian* obtained Aug. 17 from a public court file, memorialize both a 1982 disciplining of Curtis for, in the words of the church documents, "homosexual actions" and the 1983 excommunication for "homosexuality/child molesting." The words "child molesting" had been crossed out with a pen. (*The Oregonian*, September 5, 2001, p. B9)

The courtroom battle over what the LDS Church knew and when it knew it escalated when the plaintiff's attorneys demanded that the Church turn over documents it keeps on sexual predators and their victims. The LDS Church fought vigorously to prevent access to the records:

Portland, Ore.—Hoping to uncover what the Mormon church knew about a high priest convicted of sexually abusing an 11-year-old boy, a Multnomah County judge ordered the church to release internal records of sex-abuse complaints and discipline actions. The church has filed an emergency appeal with the Oregon Supreme Court. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 10, 2001, p. A5)

And *The Oregonian* reported:

The settlement comes after Multnomah County Circuit Judge Ellen F. Rosenblum ordered, in January, the church **to turn over all its internal records of sex-abuse complaints in the Portland area, regardless of the subject.** Mormon attorney Von Keetch said the **records involved a dozen Mormon sex offenders.** . . .

"No religious institution in the history of the world is as diligent in keeping records as the Mormon church," Slader said. "The Mormon church knew Curtis was abusing children. The Mormon church knew exactly where Curtis was, and the Mormon church did absolutely nothing to protect the children of the Brentwood Ward in Portland." (*The Oregonian*, September 5, 2001, p. B9)

The records were sought due to the fact that child molesters tend to have a long history of abuse, often times involving multiple victims. Unfortunately, this case proved no different.

Curtis first served the church in Portland in 1978 and 1979, in the Linwood Ward, where he taught young children, and abused boys, according to depositions taken from victims and their parents.

One woman was briefly married to Curtis during that time. . . . In 1979, she walked in on him in the bathroom with a young boy, she wrote in an affidavit. "I was shocked and disgusted." She wrote her bishop but said she never heard back from him or any other church official.

Slader said the plaintiff's lawyers know of 20 other Curtis victims and expect lawsuits from at least a half-dozen of them. (*The Oregonian*, September 5, 2001, p. B9)

Sandra Scott made the following statement:

"We cannot put our children at the mercy of the church's sense of judgment," Scott said at a news conference. "People need to know when there are severe criminals in their church—that's not something you conceal." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 6, 2001, p. B1)

## The Toombs Case

Another case brought to light recently with disturbing allegations of silence and non-reporting involved the sexual predator, Jay Toombs.

LOGAN—A 43-year old Benson man accused of fondling a boy three times in the early 1990s now faces another charge and growing evidence that victims have been many and his obstacles few. . . . Yet [Logan Police Detective Rod] Peterson and Cache County Prosecutor Scott Wyatt say one of the most disturbing facts of all is that so many people knew of the alleged abuse and did not tell police. . . .

“He [Jay Toombs] expressed to people that found out that, in a very convincing way, that he was truly sorry for what he’d done and it wouldn’t happen again,” says Peterson. “They’ve forgiven him. They believe him, that he’s repented.”

Forgiveness is fine, says Wyatt, but it doesn’t stop an abuser. . . .

Wyatt was so agitated upon learning there was widespread knowledge—but only one report—of abuse, that he considered bringing failure-to-report charges against a West Valley City counselor and two LDS bishops. “Everyone in our community is obligated to report it. They have not only a legal obligation, but a moral obligation,” Wyatt says. . . .

The mother, who is not being identified to protect her son’s identity, says she spoke of Toombs’ misbehavior with boys from 1991 through 1999 with Cooper, two LDS bishops and Toombs’ family, including his brother, an LDS stake president. . . .

“I was always told to be patient with Jay, he was a good man. That’s what I was told again and again and again. I was even given priesthood blessings that I had been chosen to help him,” she says.

**The bishops were inclined each time to tell police,** the woman says, but later told her **they had checked with church officials and learned they did not have to report Toombs as long as he was repentant** and getting professional help.

Both bishops deferred questions to church attorneys. . . . Says Von Keetch, a Salt Lake City attorney who represents The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: “Our investigation indicates that these **leaders acted appropriately**.” . . .

Neither bishop called police. But Keetch says one, Robert Owens, knew the Cache County Sheriff’s Office investigated Toombs in 1989 and the second, Brent Bryner, made sure that law enforcement authorities were notified by a counselor of an alleged victim’s mother shortly after Bryner learned of alleged abuse in 1997

The mother says she first told Bryner of abuse **four years earlier** . . .

Jerry Toombs, an LDS stake president in Benson and Jay Toombs’ older brother, says it is not true that he and his father had been warned for years about Jay Toombs’ alleged abuse.

Keetch says Jerry Toombs, like the bishops, acted appropriately. When he was told of suspicions of child abuse, he learned that law enforcement authorities had investigated, say the attorney. He did not become his brother’s stake president until last year.

Jerry Toombs was in the spotlight last year when he **recommended a convicted child abuser, Shonn M. Ricks of Benson, for a mission** after the 23-year-old had served a 14-month sentence at the Utah State Prison. The mission call was withdrawn after the victim’s outraged father complained. . . .

The . . . mother says she was baffled when the case was dropped with no criminal charge.

“It was really, really hard. We were always the one made to feel like the bad people,” she says. “Everybody was always defending Jay. Everybody. So we just kind of dropped it.”

Robb Parrish, chief child abuse counsel in the Utah Attorney General’s Office, says charm is a hallmark of most pedophiles. It allows a pedophile to get victim’s—and their parents’—trust and is a main reason that many are never reported, he says. . . .

The urge to have sex with children, pedophilia, is a deep-seated aberration, he says.

“It doesn’t just go away. They are not just in need of a little counseling,” Parrish adds. “They’ve got to have intensive intervention, with the threat of prosecution held over their heads. The confessional situation is not enough.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, March 26, 2000)

## Utah State Law on Reporting

Utah, like many other states, does have a law on mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse:

State law requires a person with knowledge of child sexual abuse to report the crime, and provides a penalty of up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine for those that do not. Clergy are exempt from the law only if their sole source of knowledge of the abuse comes from a perpetrator’s own confession. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 8, 2000, p. B2)

Utah’s law, while supported by those in law enforcement, has been repeatedly attacked by the LDS Church. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported on a panel discussion dealing with this topic:

David McConkie, an attorney who represents The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, called Utah’s reporting law vague and ambiguous. . . .

But police argue Utah's law is clear. A panel moderator Marilyn Sandberg, executive director of the Utah Chapter of the Child Abuse Prevention Center, said many clergy want to believe abuse will somehow stop spontaneously—an erroneous conclusion.

"The legal system needs to be involved," Sandberg insisted.

Conference speaker Mike Johnson, a Texas police detective who has spent his career investigating child abuse, said it made his "soul hurt" to hear panelists talk about protecting the confidences of child abusers.

"I don't believe God condones anyone standing by," Johnson said. "Kids lack the ability to protect themselves. They will continue to be abused under this veil of protection." . . .

McConkie pointed to pamphlets, videos and training sessions for LDS Church leaders—as well as a 24-hour hot line that offers legal advice to bishops. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 3, 2000, pp. A1, A6)

Law enforcement in Utah has given clergy simple advice to follow:

Police and prosecutors, noting the secrecy that often surround child sexual abuse, contend clergy members and others can avoid trouble by **reporting anything suspicious and allowing authorities to investigate.** (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 3, 2000)

Yet Mormon clergy have repeatedly ignored the mandatory reporting law:

Declaring himself innocent of wrongdoing, LDS Bishop Bruce Christensen plans to challenge the constitutionality of a Utah law that sometimes forces clergy to inform on members of their own flock. . . .

Christensen is the **third Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints bishop charged this year with failing to report.**

Bishop David Maxwell . . . allegedly failed to report an alleged rape of a 16-year-old girl by a 15-year-old boy. . . .

Also this year, a Washington County LDS bishop Brent Atkinson, was charged with failing to report a suspected case of child sex abuse. Atkinson last month entered into a diversion agreement that calls for dismissal of the charge if he completes 100 hours of community service, pays \$250 in court costs and commits no new violations. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 15, 2000)

However, despite the charges brought against a few Mormon bishops, little has resulted:

Charges accusing a Mormon bishop [Christensen] of failing to report an alleged case of child sexual abuse were dismissed Monday in 3rd District Court. . . .

. . . prosecutors said the woman recently changed

her story and now says she spoke to Christensen only in hypothetical terms, . . .

"The police reports were very specific, [but] now she's saying something different," said Salt Lake District Attorney David Yocom. "It's not a prosecutable case now." . . .

But defense attorney Bradley Rich did not mention any hypothetical scenarios to reporters Monday after the case was dismissed by Judge Roger Livingston.

Rich said Christensen believed any touching between the father and child was inadvertent and, therefore, not child sexual abuse.

The father, 43-year-old Hassane Adib, remains charged with misdemeanor lewdness with a child, . . .

Adib's charges are based upon information from the child's mother, who allegedly observed Adib allowing the baby to fondle him in July 1999.

The woman came to Christensen in January to discuss conflicts with her estranged husband. Rich has said that the woman mentioned the fondling incident almost as an aside, and that Christensen's priority was getting the woman to a shelter and finding her a divorce attorney. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 3, 2000)

Close on the heels of that dismissal:

For the second time in a week, a controversial criminal case involving a Mormon bishop has quietly evaporated.

Bishop David West Maxwell . . . entered into an agreement with prosecutors in which the charge will be dismissed in 90 days. Meanwhile, Maxwell, 35, is required to **admit no guilt, pay no court costs and perform no community service.** . . .

Maxwell said **he called the help line** and talked to a stake president but **was told he was not obligated to report the alleged rape**, according to police reports. The alleged rape was ultimately reported to police by the girl's seminary teacher. **The boy was charged with first-degree felony rape** in 3rd District Juvenile Court and is scheduled for trial next week. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 5, 2000, pp. C1, C3)

## LDS Church Warned of Problems

The lack of reporting and the disgraceful treatment of victims of child abuse has plagued the Mormon Church for years. A study done in 1995 by Karen E. Gerdes and Martha N. Beck sought to find answers on how victims within the LDS Church were being treated. However, when the results were revealed it was met with open hostility from the LDS Church:

. . . It [the sex-abuse study] was denounced or worst of all, largely ignored by church officials who still dismiss it four years later.

The study, which Mormon leaders condemned as flawed, found that more than two-thirds of the women interviewed said they had bad experiences when they turned to Mormon clergymen for comfort and counsel.

For a church that in recent years has faced numerous lawsuits accusing it of harboring, or at least failing to stop, pedophiles in its midst, Gerdes said she believed she and her colleagues were providing some helpful insights. . . .

“It’s like it was bad news they didn’t want to hear,” she said. “Our only agenda was to help the church help victims. I was excited because I thought the church was going to be pleased to get this information so they could put it to good use. It was quite a letdown.” . . .

The researchers reported that, out of 71 Mormon women who had suffered childhood sexual abuse, 49 told of having “negative interactions” with the bishops in whom they had confided. . . .

The women who reported the negative encounters described the bishops as “judgmental” in some cases, “unbelieving” in others and “protective of the perpetrators” in still other cases. Twelve of the women reported positive interactions while the other 10 chose not to confide in local church leaders. . . .

“(Church officials) can criticize our methodology all they want, but it was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Brigham Young,” Gerdes said. “It was scrutinized by a panel of scholars at the very reputable journal (*Affilia*) that published our article about it. It was rigorously evaluated—and approved—by both Mormon and non-Mormon professional researchers.”

In addition, Gerdes, who has a Ph.D. in social work, pointed out that the research was supported by a grant from the Eccles Foundation, —a Mormon entity—and administered by the Women’s Research Institute at Brigham Young. . . .

According to the article in *Affilia*, the scholarly journal for social workers, the research found that 50 of the 71 victims felt guilt or frustration for being admonished by “the highest church authorities or local leaders to forgive their perpetrators.” It noted that “the majority of women reported feeling neither protected nor helped in their recovery process” by church officials. . . .

The study has been used as legal ammunition by plaintiffs’ attorneys who have sued the church in courts across the country, alleging a widespread pattern of failures by bishops or other ecclesiastical leaders to report abuses to proper authorities or to obtain proper professional counseling for victims. (*Houston Chronicle*, May 10, 1999, pp. 1A, 11A)

A professional psychologist and member of the LDS Church, Arleen Cromwell, also sought to help the church with its sexual abuse problems. However, after a bizarre turn-around and recanting by the psychologist, it left many people questioning whether the LDS Church was

engaging in a deliberate cover-up in order to protect itself from litigation:

In a sworn affidavit she signed in February 1996—but later recanted—the Salt Lake City therapist detailed what she called a pattern in which sexually abused children had been shunned or generally mishandled by bishops, who in the Mormon faith are local congregational leaders.

Cromwell noted in the affidavit, given for a lawsuit in which she agreed to testify against the church, that families of the abuse victims often sought help from bishops, who failed to get them the professional treatment they needed.

She said bishops often made “little effort to ensure the safety of victims or failed to report abuses to appropriate state authorities.”

“In many cases, the Bishop is ignorant of the needs of the victim, and does not act to ensure that the victim is not further abused,” said Cromwell, who had been involved in treating abuse patients in about 300 cases in Utah. . . .

The therapist went on to note that in March 1992, she “became so concerned with the disturbing pattern I had seen emerging among the clergy of my own Church” that she wrote a letter to her stake president. . . .

“It seemed Bishops had a distrust of therapists which made them reluctant to refer victims to therapy,” she said in her first affidavit. “This antagonism further injured the victim of the abuse by preventing the assistance with treatment that counseling provides.” . . .

“Since March 1992, I have noticed no significant change in the number or severity of child sexual abuse cases among members of the church and I have noted no change in the pattern which I found so disturbing and which compelled to write to my Stake President,” Cromwell stated in the 1996 affidavit.

Cromwell, however, backed off the statement last June as the lawsuit pending in Beckley, W.Va.—where Mormon officials are accused of liability for failing to report a case of child sexual abuse to authorities . . . [See *Salt Lake City Messenger* No. 91, November 1996]

Cromwell said she told the plaintiff’s attorneys that she did not want to be involved in the lawsuit and asked them not to use her 1996 affidavit.

Von Keetch, a Salt Lake City attorney representing the church in that case and similar lawsuits, said Cromwell’s recanting of her original affidavit is evidence that the experienced therapist is impressed with the church’s turnaround in training its bishops in a concerted effort that began in 1995.

Sullivan [plaintiff’s attorney in the Beckley case] said he suspects that Cromwell was pressured to recant, but by whom, he doesn’t know.

“Recanting doesn’t change what she swore as being her experience with bishops,” he said. “She either

observed this pattern by bishops, and experienced the antagonism from them and saw firsthand how terrible they were treating victims, or she didn't."

"You have to wonder why a woman who is a credible psychologist with impeccable credentials . . . would turn right around and say, 'Never mind. I didn't mean it. King's X. Black is white,'" Sullivan said.

"You don't have to be a rocket scientist to see from looking at both affidavits that somebody from the church got to her." (*Houston Chronicle*, May 10, 1999, p. 11A)

## Help Line for Victims or Mormon Clergy?

In 1995 the LDS Church started a help line for bishops and other Mormon clergy reportedly to help deal with child abuse cases within the church.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported in '95 when the hot line was first put in place:

A May 10 internal memorandum from the church's Presiding Bishopric mandates that local ecclesiastical leaders in America and Canada who become aware of abuse involving church members are to **call the toll-free help line**. . . .

Counselors and attorneys who deal with child sexual abuse cases unanimously praised the idea of a hotline, although **some characterize it as belated and merely an attempt to ward off legal liability**.

Others believe the church should insist its leaders immediately call the proper police or social agency as required in the child abuse laws of most states. . . .

It [the memorandum] instructs bishops and counselors in stake presidencies to consult with their stake president . . . about "incidents of abuse that come to their attention." Published reports indicate the **9 million-member church has been forced to settle several lawsuits involving cases of abuse**.

For example, Jefferson County, Texas, court records show the church in January settled for an undisclosed amount a lawsuit filed by the parents of an 8-year-old girl who was repeatedly molested at a Mormon chapel by a member of the congregation. The member, Ralph Neeley, was sentenced to life in prison.

The lawsuit names as co-defendants the church and Neeley's bishop, who apparently **knew about the allegation but failed to report it**. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 10, 1995 pp. D1, D3)

The question of whether the hot line is for the victims of child sexual abuse or merely to help protect the LDS Church from litigation has been inadvertently answered by David McConkie, the LDS Church's own attorney:

McConkie pointed to pamphlets, videos and training sessions for LDS Church leaders—as well as a 24-hour

hot line that offers legal advice to bishops. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 3, 2000, p. A6)

Also the *Salt Lake City Weekly* reported:

According to Lavina Fielding Anderson, co-editor of the 1996 volume *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance*, which covered child sexual abuse in the Mormon church, the help line is more self-serving than victim-friendly. "I was told by one bishop who called the help line that they walked him through procedure on **how to get a commitment from the parents of the victim not to sue the church**," she says. (*Salt Lake City Weekly*, March 8, 2001, p. 23)

Many believe the LDS Church is out to protect its image more than protecting the victims of child sexual abuse:

The church that is known for placing a spiritual premium on family values is under increasing attack for an alleged failure to protect its children from pedophiles.

Therein lies the irony of a barrage of lawsuits and general complaints alleging that—**in an effort to protect its wholesome image**—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the Mormon church, has **failed to root out child molesters in its midst**. . . .

Last year in Montgomery County, a jury found the national **church liable in a \$4 million verdict**—\$1 million more than the plaintiff had sought—for failing to protect an 8-year-old boy who was sexually assaulted in 1993. . . .

"**The church will go to great lengths to protect its image and reputation**," said Clay Dugas, a lawyer in Orange who has sued the church on behalf of numerous child-abuse victims and their families in Texas and Mississippi.

Dugas, who led a team of lawyers in winning the \$4 million verdict in the Montgomery County case, said he believes that pedophiles are attracted to the Mormon church because of its structure. . . .

"**The church is very patriarchal, very secretive**. Why would you preach not to discuss a case of child abuse when it becomes known? They do that. The whole belief is that the men, the leaders who are all men, can take care of everything. If someone in a family is abused, the family won't go to the police. They'll go to the bishop." (*Houston Chronicle*, May 9, 1999, p. 18A)

## The Franco Case and the Utah Supreme Court Decision

Another case of child sexual abuse broke new ground in Utah's highest court and ended in a decision giving the LDS Church and other clergy far reaching protection from litigation:

The Utah Supreme Court on Friday banned lawsuits over allegations of clergy malpractice, a landmark ruling that grants broad protections to church leaders when they counsel members of their flocks.

Citing First Amendment safeguards against government intrusion in to the practice of religion, the high court unanimously upheld a trial judge's decision to dismiss a child rape victim's lawsuit against The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The alleged victim, Lynette Franco, claimed her LDS bishop and stake president were negligent by mishandling her plea for help after she claimed to have been sexually abused by a teen-age church member. . . .

LDS Church spokesman Dale Bills said in a news release the church was satisfied with the ruling. . . .

Franco's attorney, Ed Montgomery, said **the ruling by the five justices—all of whom are Mormon**—means the LDS Church is "completely immune from anything they do behind closed doors. It's chilling, is what it is," Montgomery said. "You have the most powerful organization in this state doing what it will, without any government regulation at all and without any redress being available." . . .

The events at the heart of the Franco case allegedly occurred in 1986, when the girl was 7 years old. Franco claims she was sexually assaulted by Jason Strong, a 14-year-old neighbor boy and fellow LDS ward member. The abuse was "so extreme" that Franco repressed the memory for eight years, the justices wrote.

By the time Franco reported the abuse, Strong was preparing to serve a church mission. Montgomery claims **church leaders decided to defend the young male member of the priesthood at the girl's expense**. "They used my client to help them protect the very person who molested her," Montgomery said.

Franco claims her bishop, Dennis Casaday, and stake president David Christensen counseled her to "forgive, forget and seek atonement."

Later, the two clergymen referred the girl to a purportedly qualified counselor at a Bountiful mental health center, who, it turned out, **was not licensed to practice in Utah**. The counselor, Paul Browning, also advised the girl to forgive her attacker and forget the incident, **rather than inform police**, the girl claims.

Franco's parents finally took the girl to another counselor, who reported the sexual abuse to police. Investigators, however, said too much time had passed to pursue charges. . . .

Despite \$70,000 worth of counseling, Montgomery said Franco, now in her early 20s, may never completely recover from being sexually abused. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, March 10, 2001, pp. A1, A9)

For more information on the Franco abuse case, see the article "Crisis of Confidentiality" which appeared in the *Salt Lake City Weekly*, March 8, 2001.

## Extracts From Letters and Emails

**May 2001.** I just wanted to let you know how much my husband and I appreciate your website. We were both raised in the Mormon Church by zealous parents.

We both went to BYU. My husband served a 2 yr. mission, and we both married in the temple. Yet, we had both been feeling dissatisfied with the Mormon Church.

I'd push doubts aside and keep trying to be faithful. After all it was my duty to raise the kids to be strong in the Gospel. My husband was leaning toward inactivity.

Towards the end of Feb. of this year our Mormon paradigm came crashing down. My husband was watching a TV show which talked about Mark Hoffman. He wondered how the Church authorities could be tricked by the forgeries. They were supposed to be men of God. Apostles and prophets weren't supposed to be deceived.

My husband did an internet search to learn more about the salamander papers. Up came the websites that led to more websites and disturbing accusations regarding the Church. We researched the terrible claims against the Mormon Church and it all checked out.

We were able to get our hands on the History of the Church books and verify that Joseph Smith was not a humble man. The boasting of himself against Jesus was very disturbing to us but did not seem to faze my husband's parents. Needless to say we are having problems with parents and siblings still in the Church.

Luckily, my husband has a wonderful Christian extended family. His parents are the only Mormon converts on both sides. His extended family has been praying for 30 years that my husband's parents and children would see through the deception of the Mormon Church. So they have really been there for us and helping us learn about who God really is according to the Bible. I'm pretty angry at the LDS Church. It's painful to feel so betrayed and have such turmoil with the parents, but I am thankful to know the truth.

**May 2001.** . . . I just want you to know that it was through the reading and study of many of your books and letters that i was able to stay separated from the LDS church after having been a member for the first 31 years of my life.

I found the Lord's truth through reading the New Testament but spent the next 5 years struggling to break all ties with what I had been taught. It was a difficult process and I couldn't have done it without all the work you have done for the Lord. God Bless you as you serve Him.

**March 2001.** I just praise the Lord for your voice crying out in the wilderness & hope anything we send will help your ministry. Bless you.

**May 2001.** Hi Jerald and Sandra, My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I joined the Mormon Church in January. Well shortly after I joined I got my hands on what they call Anti-mormon literature but it was actually their own literature.

I couldn't believe how fast the word spread that I was mormon bashing and I was only asking questions because there was alot I didn't understand. I am not writing you to understand it all. But it has been really hard for me to break away from the church. I have believed and have been raised a christian. So I know God is up there and cares for us all. However for some reason the mormon religion hung me up so bad it is hard to recover really. I find my self confusing there beliefs with the bible and etc. It is hard.

Anyway I guess in a way I wanted to say thanks for having this literature up here for me to read it helps me understand what Mormonism really is . . . Thanks so much.

**April 2001.** OK you two, After wading through all the lies you call information on your web site, it's easy to see how you could be swayed from Christ's path to one of abomination and heresy. You were weak and easily fooled.

**March 2001.** I find it amazing that people take all this time to put together this complex website. . . . I am sorry to see that you have been so miss led . . . All I can do is pray for people like you. . . . Hope you can get your facts straight someday! Good luck.

**April 2001.** . . . I was in the mormon [church] for a very long time . . . I thank God all the time for Jerald and Sandra Tanner for your dedication and work you people do. I cannot describe the peace and hope in my heart because of your efforts. May God bless you both.

**July 2001.** Tanners, Why do your publications do the same thing that you accuse the mormon church of doing—namely brainwashing? With due respect, your publications sound like a bunch of whining babies wrote them. Don't mean to be rude, but the tone of your publications are too whiney. Thanks.

**March 2001.** Your website is horrible. There is so much false information about the Mormon church. What are you anti-Mormon or something? You really need to talk to some Mormon Missionaries and get things cleared up, because you are obviously confussed out of your minds.

**August 2001.** My husband is a ex-Mormon who has been born again. We are so happy to have found your web site. It has taught us so much! The most impressive thing of all is how the Lord led both of you to himself.

**April 2001.** . . . When I found your website and read some of the material there, my first thought was, "Looks like someone has taken something true and put their "spin" on it.

It saddens me when people have nothing better to do with their time than twist the truth into something unrecognizable. I didn't see the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in your website. I saw a campaign of lies. It's a shame.

**June 2001.** I want to thank the Tanners for their in depth research into the LDS church. It has helped me to make a more informed decision about this church that still holds my membership records. . . . My husband and children are still "believers" and I am dealing with this completely alone, given the fact most people I associate with are LDS! I am so very afraid of losing my family because of this decision . . .

**July 2001.** I'm in the medical field. . . . My analogy of mormonism, as one who was raised a mormon, is this: I see mormonism as a melanoma tumor. It is a cancer that grows at an alarming rate, that spreads in all directions and levels. It is deadly if not caught in time and cut out. It has gotten into the body of christ and people do not see its deadly potential spiritually. It is not selective of its victims, in their Race, Nationality, Religious preference, Gender or finacial status. I was willing to look under the microscope at mormonism, I saw the evidence I know the truth now! to L.D.S. members I say the devil is very Clever! thank you for being there utlm . . .

**August 2001.** Are you guys still around?? I am amazed. . . . NO Tanners, true CHRISTIAN mormons aren't upset about your constant silly attacks on us. It doesn't bother us really cos every idiot under the sun has attacked the True Church and where has it gotten them? Nowhere! . . . we have deep pity for you both knowing what is going to happen to you. To be honest even Hitler doesn't get what you 2 have to have.

**September 2001.** Hello, My wife and I just wanted to thank you for the time you've spent on your site and it's contents! It's very hard here in Salt Lake to find an open and honest source of information about the LDS Church. When coming to our decision to leave the church, we often found ourselves at your site looking up information that other wise would have been unavailable to us! We have recently parted ways with the church and have truly found Christ in our lives for the first time!! Now if our families would only speak with us!! Thanks again for a wonderful source of information. God Bless.

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