



# The LifeLine



Summer 2020

“Contending for the faith”

lifeline2rlds.org

Carol's Corner...

## Truth Matters

**Question:** What is the Gospel?

**Answer:** The gospel is the good news that Jesus died on the cross, paying the penalty for our sins!

When I learned what the gospel really means, it changed my life forever!

I realized that it is not our lifetime of good works that saves us, but Christ's finished work on the cross.

The Bible refutes the false notion that we can earn salvation by doing good works:

- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9
- “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...” Galatians 6:14

We all have family and/or friends still in one or another branch of Joseph Smith's Restoration movement. It is imperative for them to realize the Biblical gospel as taught by Jesus and His Apostles is not the “gospel” we learned growing up in “the Church.” The gospel we were taught is what the Bible calls, a “different gospel,” which can save no one:

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all...” Galatians 1: 6-7

The Biblical gospel is clearly laid out in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

“...I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you.... By this gospel you are saved...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...”

The simple gospel message is what the world so desperately needs today.

# The State of “the Church” Today

## The Community of Christ

Many of you, like us, may have fond recollections of your days in the RLDS/COC church. Good friends, happy times, memorable occasions come to mind. So the following may be unexpected news to you:

### Overall Status

- “I struggle when I hear statements that the church is dying, because that’s not my experience. The church is in transition.” (Scott Murphy, Counselor to the Church President, Steven M. Veazey, *Herald* March/April 2020 issue, p. 7)
- “The church isn’t dying; it’s just trying to find a new way of being meaningful and authentic in a changing culture.” (Ibid., p.8)
- People are not participating in the life of the church, but they still are deeply yearning for an authentic, meaningful relation with God.” (Ibid., p.7)

### Financial Status

- “...the COVID 19 pandemic...has hastened a 30-plus-year

decline in Local and Worldwide Mission Tithes and other income...” (Presiding Bishopric Financial Update, May 2020, *Herald* July/August 2020 issue, p. 33)

- “...we must eliminate about 18 positions in the field, International Headquarters, and the World Church Leadership Council... eight positions must be reduced involuntarily...” (Ibid.)

“We have a different message, that salvation comes in a different way....”

*Herald*

- “World Church leaders are prayerfully considering all church assets to decide the best way to align them with financial and missional needs in the future.” (Ibid. p.34)

### Doctrinal Status

- “What gives me hope the most is the core identity of who we are...the core identity of who Community of Christ has been from that moment it was birthed

in Joseph Smith, Jr. has not changed. Its relevant voice and message are in the midst of culture as it changes.” (Scott Murphy, *Herald* March/April 2020 issue, p. 13)

- “We have a different message, that salvation comes in a different way, and it can occur now in the aspect of social justice, economic justice and the Worth of All Persons.” (Ibid., p.12)

• “... we shift from understanding gospel not as a structure and a form that has to be supported, but as a spirit, a movement that’s expressed in relationships and a focus that is Christ-

inspired.” (Steven Veazey, Church President, *Herald* January/February 2020 issue, p.32)

- “The challenges Christians face [include]...declining church attendance...changing doctrine...fundamentalism...disagreement...on what the gospel means today...and how it applies to the world or daily discipleship.” (Matthew J. Frizzell, Human Resources Ministries, *Herald* May/June 2020 issue, p. 17)

## The RLDS Restoration Branches

Upon reading through the most recent issues of the *Tidings of Zion*, periodical, published quarterly by the Conference of Restoration Elders, it is clear that the members of the Restoration branches continue to faithfully uphold the original teachings of the church that Joseph Smith Jr. founded, “...the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I the Lord am well pleased...” (D&C Sec. 5e)

It is reported in this publication that it is being sent into over 4,000

homes around the world including Russia, Kenya, Honduras, Nepal,

“Look upward and press forward, Zion is coming.”

*Tidings of Zion*

the Philippines, Mexico, Australia, the United Kingdom and Germany as well as the United States and Canada.

The following are quotes from the first two issues for 2020:

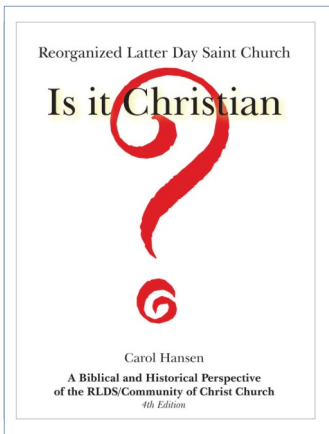
“...I felt prompted to teach the true and living Church, the only Church with the authority of God.” (January/February/March, pp. 20-21)

“...the Spirit reminded me of the experience of Joseph in the grove, how he saw the vision and heard the voices and instructions of God the Father and His Son.” (April/May/June, p. 7)

“This is a true and living church, collectively – not individually. This is Christ’s Church. The Gospel of Christ is about the remission of sins, not punishment.”

Please pray for the salvation of our dear families and friends still in “the church.”

# Resources Available

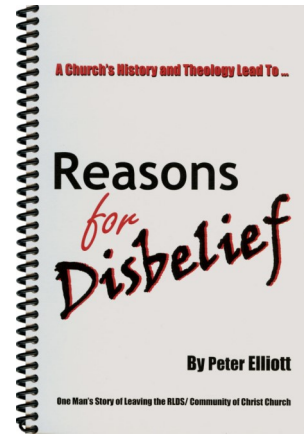


*Reorganized Latter Day Saint Church Is it Christian?* is a thoroughly documented book on the RLDS/Community of Christ church's history, doctrine and scriptures. \$25.00 incl. postage



Our "Seeking" series of tracts. \$5.00 for all three.

A 3-year investigation into the church of his youth resulted in Peter Elliott's book, *A Church's History and Theology Lead To... Reasons for Disbelief*. He tells why he chose to leave the RLDS/Community of Christ. \$10.00 incl. postage



These resources are available directly from LifeLine's website, some both in printed form and as a PDF. You can purchase copies for your pastor and for yourself at: [https://www.lifeline2rlds.org/wp/?page\\_id=540](https://www.lifeline2rlds.org/wp/?page_id=540) or by

sending a check to LifeLine Ministries to RLDS, P.O. Box 1536, Independence, MO 64055. Books on the website also include Paul Trask's *Part Way to Utah, The Long Way Home* and Ron Luff's *Faith Gone Astray*.

## Truth

"It is better to be divided by truth than to be united by error.

It is better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals, than falsehood that comforts and then kills.

It is not love and it is not friendship if we fail to declare the whole counsel of God.

It is better to be hated for telling the truth, than to be loved for telling a lie.

It is impossible to find anyone in the Bible who was a power for God who did not have enemies and was not hated.

It is better to stand alone with the truth, than to be wrong with a multitude.

It is better to ultimately succeed with the truth, than to temporarily succeed with a lie.

There is only one Gospel and Paul said,

'If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed...'"

**Dr. Adrian Rogers**

1996 National Religious Broadcasters Convention

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