

# RGP Discussion

## TRUTH! The Peace and the Price

(God's Gift of Agency vs. Calvinism; Freedom of Thought;  
Characteristics of Cults; The Eternal Nature of Earthy  
Relationships)

### Saturday May 24, 2025

#### I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK

[2 Nephi 26:25](#) Behold, doth he cry unto any, saying: Depart from me? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; but [he saith: Come unto me all ye ends of the earth](#), buy milk and honey, without money and without price.

26 Behold, [hath he commanded any that they should depart](#) out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, [I say unto you, Nay](#).

27 [Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but he hath given it free for all men](#); and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade all men to repentance.

28 Behold, [hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay](#); but all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and [none are forbidden](#). (RLDS [2 Nephi 11:97-105](#))

[2 Nephi 26:33](#) For none of these iniquities come of the Lord; for he doeth that which is good among the children of men; and he doeth nothing save it be plain **unto** the children of men; and [he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile](#).

(RCE: [2 Nephi 11:111](#))

#### WHAT IS CALVINISM?

Key Beliefs:

- **Sovereignty of God:**

Calvinism emphasizes God's ultimate authority and control over all things, including salvation.

- **Predestination:**

The belief that God has chosen who will be saved before they are born, and nothing they do can change that decision.

- **Salvation by Grace:**

Salvation is a free gift from God, not earned through good works.

- **Authority of Scripture:**

The Bible is considered the supreme authority for Christian faith and practice.

- **Five Points of Calvinism (TULIP):**

- **Total Depravity:** Human beings are inherently sinful and unable to choose God without God's intervention.
- **Unconditional Election:** God chooses individuals for salvation based on His own will, not on any foreseen merit or good works.
- **Limited Atonement:** Jesus's sacrifice on the cross was specifically for the elect, those chosen for salvation.
- **Irresistible Grace:** God's grace is effectively applied to those He has chosen, and they cannot resist it.
- **Perseverance of the Saints:** Those who have been chosen for salvation will persevere in faith until the end of their lives.

Historical Context:

- Calvinism emerged during the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, with John Calvin and his followers developing and expanding on his theological ideas.
- It influenced the development of Reformed churches, Presbyterianism, and other Protestant traditions.

## **CALVINISM AND THE BOOK OF MORMON ZORAMITES**

[Alma 31:14](#) Therefore, whosoever desired to worship must go forth and stand upon the top thereof, and stretch forth his hands towards heaven, and cry with a loud voice, saying:

15 Holy, holy God; we believe that thou art God, and we believe that thou art holy, and that thou wast a spirit, and that thou art a spirit, and that thou wilt be a spirit forever.

16 Holy God, [we believe that thou hast separated us from our brethren](#); and we do not believe in the tradition of our brethren, which was handed down to them by the childishness of their fathers; but [we believe that thou hast elected us to be thy holy children](#); and also thou hast made it known unto us that there shall be no Christ.

17 But thou art the same yesterday, today, and forever; and [thou hast elected us that we shall be saved, whilst all around us are elected to be cast by thy wrath down to hell; for the which holiness, O God, we thank thee](#); and we also thank thee that thou hast elected us, that we may not be led away after the foolish traditions of our brethren, which doth bind them down to a belief of Christ, which doth lead their hearts to wander far from thee, our God.

18 And again [we thank thee, O God, that we are a chosen and a holy people](#). Amen.

19 Now it came to pass that after Alma and his brethren and his sons had heard these prayers, they were astonished beyond all measure.

20 For behold, every man did go forth and offer up these same prayers.

24 [Now when Alma saw this his heart was grieved](#); (RLDS [Alma 16:90-100](#))

## **FREEDOM TO THINK AND CHOOSE**

[Alma 30:7-11](#) Now there was no law against a man's [belief](#); for it was [strictly contrary to the commands of God](#) that there should be a law which should bring men on to unequal grounds.

8 For thus saith the scripture: [Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve](#).

9 Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; or rather, if he believed in God it was his privilege to serve him; but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him.

10 But if he murdered he was punished unto death; and if he robbed he was also punished . . . Nevertheless, there was no law against a man's belief; therefore, a man was punished only for the crimes which he had done; therefore all men were on equal grounds. (RLDS [Alma 16:8-12](#))

[2 Nephi 2:27](#) Wherefore, [men are free according to the flesh](#); and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And [they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil](#); for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.

(RCE: [2 Nephi 1:119](#) )

[2 Nephi 2:28](#) And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words, and [choose eternal life](#), according to the will of his Holy Spirit;

(RCE: [2 Nephi 1:122](#) )

[2 Nephi 2:29](#) And [not choose eternal death](#), according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom.

(RCE: [2 Nephi 1:124](#) )

[2 Nephi 10:23](#) Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and [remember that ye are free to act for yourselves -- to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life](#).

(RCE: [2 Nephi 7:40](#) )

[Helaman 14:31](#) He hath given unto you that ye might know good from evil, and [he hath given unto you that ye might choose life or death](#); and ye can do good and be restored unto that which is good, or have that which is good restored unto you; or ye can do evil, and have that which is evil restored unto you.  
(RCE: [Helaman 5:86](#) )

[2 Nephi 30:2](#) For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that [repent and believe in his Son](#), who is the Holy One of Israel.  
(RCE: [2 Nephi 12:77](#) )

### THIS LIFE IS GIVEN TO US TO PREPARE TO MEET GOD



[2 Nephi 9:6](#) For as [death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator](#), there must needs be a power of resurrection, and the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and the fall came by reason of

transgression; and because man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord.

(RCE: [2 Nephi 6:11](#).)

[Alma 12:15](#) But this cannot be; we must come forth and stand before him in his glory, and in his power, and in his might, majesty, and dominion, and acknowledge to our everlasting shame that all his judgments are just; that he is just in all his works, and that he is merciful unto the children of men, and that [he has all power to save every man that believeth on his name and bringeth forth fruit meet](#) for repentance.

(RCE: [Alma 9:26](#).)

[Alma 12:24](#) And we see that death comes upon mankind, yea, the death which has been spoken of by Amulek, which is the temporal death; nevertheless [there was a space granted unto man in which he might repent; therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God](#); a time to prepare for that endless state which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead.

(RCE: [Alma 9:40](#).)

[Alma 13:13](#) And now, my brethren, I would that ye should humble yourselves before God, and bring forth fruit **meet** for repentance, that ye may also enter into that rest.

(RCE: [Alma 10:6](#).)

[Alma 34:30](#) And now, my brethren, I would that, after ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the holy scriptures testify of these things, [ye come forth and bring fruit unto repentance](#).

31 Yea, I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, [now is the time and the day of your salvation; and therefore, if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you](#).

32 For behold, [this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors](#).

33 And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that [ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed](#).

34 Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for [that same spirit which doth possess your](#)



bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.

35 For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked.

36 And this I know, because the Lord hath said he dwelleth not in unholy temples, but in the hearts of the righteous doth he dwell; yea, and he has also said that the righteous shall sit down in his kingdom, to go no more out; but their garments should be made white through the blood of the Lamb.

37 And now, my beloved brethren, I desire that ye should remember these things, and that ye should work out your salvation with fear before God, and that ye should no more deny the coming of Christ; (RLDS Alma 16:226-236)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CULT

These are results for *Characteristics* of a cult AI search.

### AI Overview

A cult is a group characterized by excessive devotion to a person or belief system, often involving manipulation, control, and isolation. Key characteristics include a charismatic leader, unusual beliefs and practices, control and isolation of members, and potential exploitation.

Here's a more detailed look at the characteristics of a cult:

1. **Charismatic Leadership:** Cults typically have a leader who is seen as infallible and demands unquestioning obedience. This leader often claims special knowledge or divine insight.
2. **Unusual Beliefs and Practices:** Cults often have belief systems that deviate significantly from mainstream society, including apocalyptic visions, secret teachings, or claims of special knowledge only available to members.
3. **Control and Isolation:** Cults use strict rules, practices, and monitoring to control members. They often isolate members from family and friends to maintain power.
4. **Exploitation:** Cults may exploit members financially, emotionally, or even physically, deepening their dependence on the group.
5. **Manipulation and Persuasion:** Cults employ various psychological techniques to manipulate and persuade members, such as "love bombing," thought reform, and suppressing dissent.
6. **Authoritarian Structure:** Cults have a rigid, authoritarian structure where the leader's word is absolute and dissent is discouraged or punished.
7. **Unquestioning Faith:** Members are expected to have unquestioning faith in the leader and the group's teachings, even if it means sacrificing their own values or beliefs.

8. Isolation and Secrecy: Cults often isolate members from the outside world, creating a closed environment where they are less exposed to different perspectives.
9. "Us vs. Them" Mentality: Cults often **create a polarized "us vs. them" mentality**, fostering suspicion and hostility towards those outside the group.
10. Inappropriate Loyalty: Cults often **demand inappropriate loyalty to the leader, even to the detriment of family and friends**.

## THE ETERNAL NATURE OF FMILIES AND FRIENDSHIPS

D&C 132 7, 19-21 7 And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, **that are not** made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, **of him who is anointed**, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment **through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power** (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and **there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred**), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.

**19** And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, **by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power** and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and **shall be of full force when they are out of the world**; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

**20** Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

**21** Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory.

### **Do eternal Families require blood oaths?**

**Ether 8:13** And it came to pass that Akish gathered in unto the house of Jared all his kinsfolk, and said unto them: **Will ye swear unto me** that ye will be faithful unto me in the thing which I shall desire of you?

**14** And it came to pass that **they all sware** unto him, **by the God of heaven**, and also **by the heavens**, and also **by the earth**, and **by their heads**, that **whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired should lose his head**; and **whoso should divulge whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them**, the same **should lose his life**.

**15** And it came to pass that thus they did agree with **Akish**. And **Akish did administer unto them the oaths** which were given by them of old who also sought power, which had been handed down even from **Cain**, who was a murderer from the beginning.

**16** And they were **kept up by the power of the devil** to administer these oaths unto the people, **to keep them in darkness**, to help such as sought power **to gain power**, and **to murder**, and **to plunder**, and **to lie**, and to **commit all manner of wickedness and whoredoms**.

**17** And it was the daughter of Jared who put it into his heart to search up these things of old; and Jared put it into the heart of Akish; wherefore, Akish administered it unto his kindred and friends, **leading them away by fair promises** to do whatsoever thing he desired.

**18** And it came to pass that they formed a **secret combination**, even as they of old; **which combination is most abominable and wicked above all, in the sight of God**;



**19** For **the Lord worketh not in secret combinations**, neither doth he will that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it, from the beginning of man. (RCE Ether 3:86-93)

Michelle Stone (132 Problems with polygamy)

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 8 December 1818 and from Thomas Jefferson to John Adams

Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Adams

MONTICELLO, November 13, 1818.

*The public papers, my dear friend, announce the fatal event of which your letter of October the 20th had given me ominous foreboding. Tried myself in the school of affliction, by the loss of every form of connection which can rive the human heart, I know well, and feel what you have lost, what you have suffered, are suffering, and have yet to endure. The same trials have taught me that for ills so immeasurable, time and silence are the only medicine. I will not, therefore, by useless condolences, open afresh the sluices of your grief, nor, although mingling sincerely my tears with yours, will I say a word more where words are vain, but that it is of some comfort to us both, that the term is not very distant, at which we are to deposit in the same cerement, our sorrows and suffering bodies, and to ascend in essence to an ecstatic meeting with the friends we have loved and lost, and whom we shall still love and never lose again. God bless you and support you under your heavy affliction.*

Letter from John Adams to Thomas Jefferson

*Dear Sir*

*Your Letter of Nov. 13 gave me great delight not only by the divine consolation it afforded me under my great affliction: but as it gave me full proof of your restoration to health.*

*While you live, I seem to have a bank at Montecello on which I can draw for a letter of friendship and entertainment when I please.*

*I know not how to prove physically that we shall meet and know each other in a future state; nor does revelation, as I can find give us any positive assurance of such a felicity. My reasons for believing it, as I do, most undoubtingly, are all moral and divine.*

*I believe in God and in his wisdom and benevolence: and I cannot conceive that such a being could make such a species as the human merely to live and die on this earth. If I did not believe a future state I should believe in no God. This Universe; this all; this  $\tau\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu$ ; would appear with all its swelling pomp, a boyish fire work. And if there be a future state why should the Almighty dissolve forever all the tender ties which unite us so delightfully in this world and forbid us to see each other in the next?*

[2 Nephi 33:7](#) I have charity for my people, and great faith in Christ that I shall meet many souls spotless at his judgment-seat.  
(RCE: [2 Nephi 15:8](#))

[Jacob 6:13](#) Finally, I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the pleasing bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.

## **LEAVING A CULT => THE EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL PROCESS REQUIRED**

### **Excerpts from letter from friend:**

“I promise that as you continue to be obedient, expressing gratitude for every blessing the Lord gives you, and as you patiently honor the Lord’s timetable, you will be given the knowledge and understanding you seek. Every blessing the Lord has for you—even miracles—will follow. That is what personal revelation will do for you.

“Oh, there is so much more that your Father in Heaven wants you to know. Please, keep trying. I saved all your thoughts you sent to us monthly. They are truly inspiring. You’re a good man who has had many trials. But you conquered most of them and your testimony grew which made other members strong. So many people have given up everything, family,

friends, personal wealth to become a member of The Church of Jesus of Latter-day saints. Don't let it be in vain. They even sacrificed their lives to bring the truth to others. When others know you have given up it could make them give it up too. Your influence has touched so many lives. Do not undo all you have accomplished. You don't know who is watching you and who, even now, can be influenced by your actions.

"I hope I haven't been too bold to interfere with your life. But your actions matter, for the good and the bad. Be the inspiring man, Bishop, you once were.

Love,"

### **Excerpts from my response:**

"Thank you so very much for your kind email below . . . I am touched at the amount of time you apparently spent in drafting your sincere caring message to me. Based on the content of your email it appears that the rumor mill has been somewhat active regarding my and Annette's well thought out decision to have our names removed from membership in the LDS church (church). For example, I appreciate the vast amount of research you have done regarding homosexuality, and specifically how it relates to the church. Based on the amount of content in your email below it appears that you believe that that subject had a significant impact on my leaving the church. It did not."

**I then go over some of the major reasons I left the church and include links to a few podcasts that support those and other reasons, such as:**

- 1. The church's handling of COVID**
- 2. The church's obsessive devotion to everything temple and its associated ordinances**
- 3. The out and out lies church leaders and members have used to promote church doctrine**
- 4. The changing of scripture and church history (including cherry picking very unreliable sources while discarding well supported and well documented "inconvenient truths")**
- 5. The ever-changing definition of what is and isn't church doctrine (blood atonement, Adam god theory, blacks and the priesthood, changing temple ordinances including garments, application of the Word of Wisdom, polygamy, etc.)**
- 6. Learning that priesthood keys are not real**
- 7. The requirement to treat mere mortal men as near deity and sustain them as prophets, seers and revelators whom we were required to follow (and professing for years that the church had no paid ministry, I shudder at the number of times I have unknowingly told that lie to family and friends)**
- 8. Recognizing the cult-like practices and requirements of the church**
- 9. The church's abuse and misuse of the "widow's mite" including hiding and lying to the SEC and members about the vast wealth the church possesses**

"Please understand that I truly appreciate your sincere reaching out to me and believe that it is out of pure love and kindness. But the brief explanation above of my journey out of the

church does not even begin to scratch the surface of the road that has led me here. The church was my life. It is a hard awakening to come to the realization that it is founded on lies. In spite of the falseness of the church I know that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. In fact, one of the greatest witnesses against the church is the Book of Mormon. Had Joseph just translated the Book of Mormon and spent a lifetime teaching its truths the world would be a much better place.

“When I consider the tremendous amount of time and gas and wear on my cars over the decades attending senseless meetings and being away from my family to hear some self-aggrandized windbag pontificate on what could have been summed up in a simple email it makes me truly lament the precious years I have wasted.

“Annette and I now attend a Christian church where we gather each Sunday morning and sing heart felt praises to Jesus Christ, hear a scripture base sermon, and leave uplifted and refreshed spiritually. I facilitate a Bible study every Wednesday at the senior center where we discuss the Savior, and I share many truths from the Book of Mormon. I cannot even begin to express how much richer my life and my relationship with God is since I stepped away from the task oriented “check the box” method of worship mandated by the LDS church. Christ said cast no one out of your meetings, the LDS church says: check your brain and agency at the door, stay in line, sustain these mere mortal men as prophets, seers, and revelators or we will excommunicate you, and not for a minute recall all the years, time and money you have dedicated to this church. Once you stop drinking the Kool Aid you are of no use to us. “And thus we see that the Devil will not support his children at the last day, but doeth speedily drag them down to hell”.

Please give our best to everyone in the Sumterville Ward. We love you all and you will always have a special place in our memories and hearts. And please know that just as you have concern for me in leaving the church, Annette and I have likewise had many discussions regarding our friends in Florida who remain on that endless hamster wheel called the LDS church trying to check the never-ending boxes required to get to heaven. Once you gain the ability to remove the Mormon glasses and see clearly without the bias required to be a member of the LDS church, you will come to know that when Christ said “It is finished” it truly was. The only works required now are faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism and enduring to the end. The man-made ordinances of the “covenant path” cheapen and diminish the wonder of the atonement. Christ alone did the work required for salvation. Indeed, it is finished.

Love,

Brother Mark”

## MICHELLE STONE

- Initially a hidden diamond in the ruff but now exposed to the world as a bright shining light for truth and common sense
  - Exceptional scholarly research
  - Logical Occam's Razor-based conclusions (parsimony)
  - Logical ranking/prioritizing of historical sources/evidence
  - The absolute tragedy of removing her incredible research from YouTube
- Vindication of Joseph, Emma and Hiram Smith with respect to polygamy
- Shedding light on "Inconvenient truths"
  - Insights into the true character of Brigham Young
  - Building of the Salt Lake Temple (the endowment house)
  - Brigham's wealth and mansions
  - Temple ordinances
  - Oppression by priesthood leaders
  - Incredibly biased conclusions by paid church historians
  - Squelching of information **TRAGEDY**
- Jacob chapter 2 "the polygamy loophole"
- No biblical support for God sanctioning polygamy
- Allowing women and men to see God as the loving father he is who truly loves his daughters and cares for their "tender hearts" and emotions and allowing women to give their whole hearts to their husbands and vice versa
- My personal eternal thanks to Michelle for her incomparable work
- Whitney Horning, Rob Fotheringham, Mark Curtis and so many others, including my friends on this podcast, thank you for your contributions to truth and light