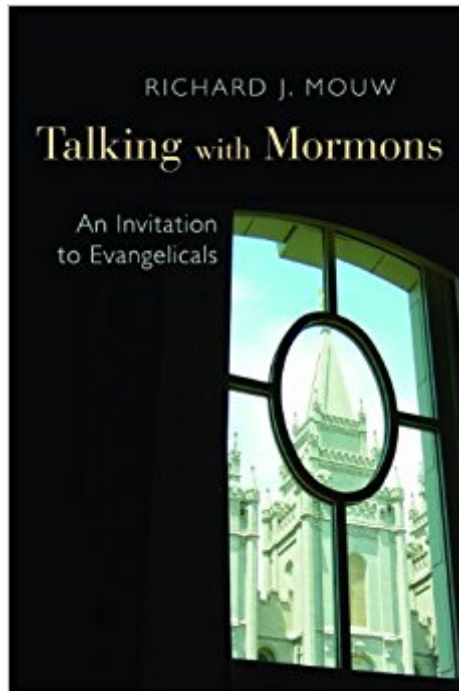




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Talking With Mormons: An Invitation To Evangelicals



Synopsis

For over a decade Fuller Seminary president Richard Mouw has participated in Mormon-evangelical dialogue with a view to developing a better understanding between the two groups. His participation in these discussions has drawn severe criticism and even anger from people who believe such talks are pointless or even dangerous. This brief, highly accessible book is his answer. Advocating humility, patience, and a willingness to admit our own shortcomings, Mouw shows why it is necessary to move beyond stark denunciation to a dialogue that allows both parties to express differences and explore common ground. Without papering over significantly divergent perspectives on important issues like the role of prophecy, the nature of God, and the creeds, Mouw points to areas in which Mormon-evangelical dialogue evidences hope for the future. In so doing, he not only informs readers but also models respectful evangelical debate.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Richard N. Ostling [Review](#) • Coauthor of *Mormon America*, former religion writer with *Time* magazine and the Associated Press "In this book the esteemed president of Fuller Seminary appeals to fellow evangelicals to observe civility and fairness in dialogue with Latter-day Saints. Given that the Mormon church has had relatively little formal contact with traditional Christianity for a century and a half, this is an important statement [Review](#) • and one that doubtless will provoke controversy." Robert L. Millet [Review](#) • Brigham Young University "Richard Mouw's persistence in conducting an interfaith dialogue with Mormons [Review](#) • in the face of bitter criticism from those

of his own tradition — speaks volumes about his character and integrity. . . . While as a Latter-day Saint I obviously disagree with some of Mouw's conclusions, I am moved to the core by his generosity of soul and his eagerness not only to engage theological differences but also to celebrate points on which there is welcome agreement."David Neff — Editor in chief, Christianity Today "Mouw represents a rare blend of doctrinal certainty and generosity of spirit. In this book — and over many years of dialogue with leading Mormons — he has put this winning combination into practice."Richard Bushman — Columbia University "Can Mormons and Calvinist evangelicals talk to each other without compromising their beliefs or minimizing their differences? Richard Mouw knows the pitfalls but shows it can be done. The engaging story of his decade-long conversation with Mormons is a model for interfaith dialogue in the twenty-first century and an exemplification of Christian love, intelligence, and good humor."Craig L. Blomberg — Denver Seminary "I have had the privilege of partnering with Rich Mouw in the Evangelical-Mormon dialogues he describes in this little book. It always amazes me how some who have not been a part of these conversations can confidently pronounce on what really happened at them and even on the motives of the participants. Rich sets the story straight here. . . . A must-read for anyone interested in Latter-day Saints!"BYU Studies Quarterly — "Mouw does a great job providing a workable structure for Mormons and Evangelicals to begin speaking to each other. — Calvin Spark — "Advocating humility, patience and a willingness to admit our own shortcomings, Richard Mouw shows why it is necessary to engage in dialogue that allows both parties to express differences and explore common ground. — Religious Studies Review "Accessible. . . . Evangelicals seeking a trustworthy, academic voice to help make sense of Mormonism will find this a helpful primer."

Richard J. Mouw is president and professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. His many other books include *Uncommon Decency*, *Praying at Burger King*, and *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal*

Used it for a book study group

I'm Helen's husband, Cal.If you're not religious, in other words, if you're open to the Spirit of God, and if you want to expand your mind into new horizons of God's wisdom, get this book. Richard Mouw is not a liberal. I see no sign that he is compromising his biblical standards. But God is beginning to show him that the Mormon Church isn't exactly what most evangelicals have been led

to believe it is. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has many flaws but. . . . (See the book for more.)

An evangelical friend wanted me to read this book as a starting point for a good discussion between us (I am a Mormon). I found the book to be enlightening and fairly accurate, which is so unusual when evangelicals write about Mormon doctrine. I'm so glad Mouw has found common ground to bring about a dialog between two branches of Christianity.

I read "Talking with Mormons" cover to cover in less than 2.5 hours. There are few conclusions drawn about the nature of this faith compared to Christianity - in several instances where Mr. Mouw is 'hopeful' about the Mormon church. Little historical information is provided in this slim volume to reinforce any justification for that hope. This same publisher, Eerdmans printed a smaller book in the 1950's titled "Mormonism Under the Searchlight" which gave a substantial understanding of the origin of Mormonism/Joseph Smith/the Salt Lake City move/changes in revelation/contradictory statements in their own doctrine/true belief system, etc. However, I believe Mr. Mouw is free to speak about Christianity with anyone he chooses, hopefully without rebuttal from others who are disciples of his faith.

This is a dumb book filled with multiple logical fallacies and misleading statements. Thankfully, it is only 99 pages in length, otherwise it can be certain that Mouw would have simply added to those piles of nonsense that the bleeding heart liberal kind find to be so important in constructing "dialogues," whereas Jesus said to "Beware!" From the outset, Mouw begins his assault by recounting his days where he was asked by Mormon officials to comment on Ravi Zacharias' visit to the Mormon Tabernacle back in 2004, which in itself was a debacle, since Zacharias blew a golden opportunity to tell the truth about Mormonism in light of the gospel truth. Mouw reiterated his "apology" in behalf of all Christians, who allegedly had sinned "against Mormonism," yet does not provide any specific examples where any Christian has sinned. Mouw, though, spends the next chapter essentially building one straw man argument after another to prove how sinful Christians have been toward the Mormons. In fact, to add insult to injury, he goes after the late Walter Martin and one encounter he had with a young Mormon male, who abruptly left a meeting shouting "You're not even trying to understand!," as an example of Christian sinfulness. From there, Mouw moves to criticism of "countercult" ministries and persons, but once again, never actually gets around to naming anyone in his charge. He simply makes stuff up to suit his thesis, and all of this while trying

to hide behind a "Calvinist" Christian veneer. Mouw, then, spends three chapters rambling on over three topics of concern he has with Mormon beliefs, yet never gets into any substantive detail why they are such a concern. He brings up Jesus, the Book of Mormon, and Joseph Smith, but wastes all his page-space prattling on about the Christian creeds, how encouraged he is over Mormon development, and the "possibility" that Joseph Smith may not have been such a false prophet after all. A classic stupid comment that he repeats in the book was, "I do believe that people can have a defective theology about Christ while still putting their trust in the true Christ" (49) and "A person can fall far short of a robust theological orthodoxy and still be in a genuine relationship with Jesus" (99). Really, Dr. Mouw? So, a person can believe that Jesus was as a created being from a nebulous "intelligence," who was conceived in a cosmic sexual relationship between two gods who worked their way to divinity from a previously created human state, whose lineage extends all the way back to nothing, and then when it was time for him to be "tabernacled" to a human body, his Celestial father came and sired Jesus' body with one of his father's daughters (or Jesus' sister), and then after a period of trial and error, Jesus then worked his way to godhood, and that person can have a "genuine relationship" with the biblical Jesus? After all, that is Mormonism 101, Dr. Mouw, and you don't have a problem with that? Mouw finishes up by writing a chapter on cutting the Mormons some "slack." Why? Well, they're not as up to speed as the rest of us, and well, you know, they just deserve it. And that in spite of his earlier commentary where he lauds the Mormons for their Ivy League degrees and academic acumen. This book is absolute tripe, written by a person who cares so much about his Mormon colleagues that he would rather see them spend eternity in hell, than dare to make a stand for the truth. He is the classic example of what a false teacher and pastor were all about from both the Old and New Testament perspectives, who is ever wanting to "dialogue," but never actually say anything of substance. Oh, he feigns, repeatedly, about how much he disagrees with this and that Mormon doctrine, but then retracts his disagreement by telling everyone that it is proper to play with fire, rather than put the fire completely out. Of course, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. So, let me encourage whoever is reading this to get a copy of his book and read his commentary. If you don't come away with a sense that he has done the Mormons a service, as well as the polar opposite toward Christians and Christianity, by writing such a piece of misleading propaganda, then you need to re-read it again and again until you do.

BOOK REVIEW: "Talking with Mormons: An Invitation To Evangelicals" by Richard J.

Mouw Reviewed by Fred W. Anson (as published on Beggar's Bread) Scolasticus

Consummati=====Richard J. Mouw's book

"Talking with Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals" represents his maiden voyage into the vast sea of Mormon Studies books. As such, anticipation of a valuable and timely message was high given his bio: "Richard J. Mouw has served as president of Fuller Theological Seminary since 1993, after having served the seminary for four years as provost and senior vice president. A philosopher, scholar, and author, Mouw joined the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary as professor of Christian philosophy and ethics in 1985. Before coming to Fuller he served for 17 years as professor of philosophy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He has also served as a visiting professor at the Free University in Amsterdam. A graduate of Houghton College, Mouw studied at Western Theological Seminary and earned a master's degree in philosophy at the University of Alberta. His PhD in philosophy is from the University of Chicago. Mouw has a broad record of publication. He has been an editor of the Reformed Journal and has served on many editorial boards, including currently Books and Culture. He is the author of 19 books..."[1] Indeed, Dr. Mouw has had a long and distinguished career and many of his books, particularly those on Reformed, Creedal Theology are recommended reading. Out Of His

League=====Of course, given such an impressive resume, there's an expectation that this book should be well written, and it is. Dr. Mouw writes in a tight, succinct, engaging style and his arguments are logical, clear, and understandable. Dr. Mouw is a craftsman of style and rhetoric, however the substance of his argument fails to satisfactorily address those issues with Mormonism that present the greatest challenges to Evangelicals and others with years of experience in the field. Ultimately this new entry into the arena is clumsy and counter-productive. It's quickly apparent that Dr. Mouw has exceeded the limits of his competency. For a start, Dr. Mouw is talking to the wrong Mormons. "College Professor" and/or "Scholar" has no place in the hierarchy of the LdS Church.[2] They don't interpret official doctrine, they don't define LdS orthodoxy, they don't dictate LdS Church policy and they have exactly no "Priesthood Authority" over those who do. Thirteenth President Ezra Taft Benson made this quite clear when he said: "Doctrinal interpretation is the province of the First Presidency. The Lord has given that stewardship to them by revelation. No teacher has the right to interpret doctrine for the members of the Church. If Church members would remember that, we could do away with a number of books which have troubled some of our people"[3] In expecting the learned lay person to have any influence on the theology, doctrines and practice of the LdS Church, Dr. Mouw appears to have psychologically projected his own evangelical tradition onto the Mormon movement. He doesn't appear to grasp that Mormonism is, and always has been governed magisterially by its First Presidency. It is a "top down" institution that simply does not answer to the professors in its private

university.[4]To illustrate this point, it should be noted that of all the myriad changes to LdS theology that have been enacted in Salt Lake City (home of the Church Office Building for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)[5], I can think of none have originated in Provo (home of Brigham Young University).[6]A Fine Example Of ... What

Exactly?=====This isn't to say that Dr. Mouw limits himself exclusively to leading LdS academics. He also relates his interaction with Elder Jeffrey Holland, who is a member of the "Quorum of the Twelve Apostles" and occupies one of the top positions in the Mormon hierarchy:[7]'Elder Jeffrey Holland, one of the LDS General Authorities, not only has talked privately with some of us about the ways in which LDS leaders are placing a much stronger emphasis these days on the "finished work" of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary, as well as the need for fallen sinners to rely completely on the grace of God for salvation; he and his colleagues have also publicly preached that kind of message in unambiguous terms to tens of thousands of Mormons in their addresses in recent years at the annual General Conferences. The evidence is available to anyone who has access to YouTube!'[8]However, there's an incongruity between what Dr. Mouw claims and the supporting evidence he produces to support it.[9]Specifically, the address that Dr. Mouw presents as "a fine example" of this new trend in Mormonism was the 2009 General Conference Easter Message.[10] If you watch the video, Holland doesn't present the mainstream Christian view of "the 'finished work' of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary, as well as the need for fallen sinners to rely completely on the grace of God for salvation", instead what he gave was the type of generic LdS Easter Message that's been given at Annual General Conference sessions for decades.[Link to Video withheld per policy]And in accordance with LdS Theology, the main emphasis (please note the graphics in the video in particular) is on the Garden of Gethsemane where - in direct contradiction to what's taught in the New Testament - LdS General Authorities have always taught that the atonement took place.[11] Further, the message that Mouw claims is clearly presented here is hardly "unambiguous" - Holland's words can be interpreted to refer to either Gethsemane or Golgotha depending on your presuppositions.And notice that Holland doesn't mention, or reference grace in this address at all! Nor, is the atonement presented as all sufficient and final. Rather, when Holland uses the word, "finished" it's given in the context of Christ finally ending the suffering.[12] So, Jeffrey Holland simply does not use the type of orthodox, mainstream Christian language that Mouw credits him with in the address.And though the difference between Gethsemane and Golgotha might appear to be a trivial technicality, it underscores the vast differences between orthodox evangelical Christianity and Mormonism. By situating it at Golgotha, Evangelicals locate the atonement in the sacrifice of Christ;

by situating it in Gethsemane, Mormons locate the atonement in the obedience of the believer. It's the difference between grace and works. On the one hand, there is the truly finished work that the believer looks to in faith; and on the other there is the completed demonstration that the believer aspires to recreate (albeit metaphorically). In the latter, Christ might show the way, but he stops short of becoming the way, thus the believer is thrust back on his own efforts to secure the goal. As one recent commentator noted, Mormonism is more about attainment than atonement,[13] but such a focus denies the redemption narrative that is so highly valued by evangelicals. And oddly, the fact that Holland's address does not mention or refer to grace at all doesn't seem to trouble Dr. Mouw in the least. Rather he seems to prefer to detect a "shift" towards the Reformed Christian understanding of grace somewhere between the lines in a place, apparently, where no one else can see it. Nothing New to See Here!=====Given this propensity, one might suggest that he ought to listen more closely to the 2011 Easter message given by Thomas S Monson, the ultimate authority in the LdS Church, in which he states that: "He it was who died on the cross to atone for our sins. He became the firstfruits of the Resurrection. Because He died, all shall live again." [14] Could this be what Dr. Mouw is looking for?[Link to Video withheld per policy] But again and alas, this is nothing new, the LdS Church has always taught that Christ died and extended unconditional grace to the world so that ALL human would be resurrected and judged. This is often referred to as "General Salvation" in LdS Theology, as opposed to "Individual Salvation" which is only for a select few (that is faithful, righteous, endowed, commandment keeping Mormons) who earn eternal life in the presence of God via their good works.[15] Thus, when considered in context and in total, every single one of the references to the atoning work of the cross in these Conference Addresses is referring to General Salvation rather than Individual Salvation - this is a distinction that continues to land Mormonism in the theological cult category.[16] So, ultimately, Elder Holland's so-called 'fine example' combined with all the other General Conferences addresses, the continued teaching of LdS Leaders and the body of official, correlated[17] Church Educational System manuals[18] discredit Mouw's assertions. There's just nothing new here - nothing has changed! So why is Dr. Mouw getting so excited? Now About Your Choice of Friends...=====Further, Dr. Mouw ought to be more discerning in seeking authoritative voices within Mormonism. Elder Jeffrey Holland has demonstrated the greatest pattern of manipulation both within and without the LdS Church. For example, his infamous "Safety for the Soul" address from the Fall 2009 General Conference [19] is now held up by many Mormon Studies Scholars as a modern example of the Mormon practice of rhetorical manipulation as well as "Lying for the Lord".[20] And I found it ironic that the "Safety For

The Soul" address was given in the Fall General Conference a mere 6-months after the Spring Easter Message that Dr. Mouw presents as 'Exhibit A' of alleged movement toward mainstream Christian orthodoxy by The Brethren.[21] Another example of Holland blatantly lying is his videotaped interview with BBC journalist John Sweeney about whether Mitt Romney took blood oaths when he went through the Temple. Mitt Romney took these oaths before becoming a missionary for the LDS Church in 1966. The Temple penalties were removed in 1990, well after Mitt Romney took them.[22][Link to Video withheld per policy] BYU Professor, Robert Millet, who is featured prominently throughout the book, has regularly been "caught in the act". Numerous examples could be cited for Mr. Millet but probably the most dramatic example was his presentation to a group of LdS Missionaries preparing for their 2-year mission in which he coaches them on "how to handle anti-Mormon criticism"[23] In this video Millet speaks about how to handle the tough "anti-Mormon" questions missionaries may face while on their missions (or afterward) using tactics like: "We never provide meat when milk will do", in other words obfuscation; "We seek to answer any serious question by finding the most direct route to the Sacred Grove", in other words redirection; "Don't answer the question they ask, answer the question they should have asked" in other words deflection. And while we're not privy to the private sessions between Mouw and Millet's "teams" it seems reasonable to expect that the Millet team engages in such tactics.[Link to Video withheld per policy] Regarding that team, concern has also been expressed about BYU Professor J. Spencer Fluhman of whom Mouw writes: "Spencer Fluhman is a young Mormon scholar who recently earned his Ph.D. and is now a history professor at Brigham Young University. A participant in our Mormon-evangelical dialogue, Spencer converses easily with evangelicals, showing a willingness to entertain new - and old! - questions in a self-critical spirit. There's no question about his fidelity to his Mormon faith, but he also clearly wants to link his Mormon convictions to what he sees as the deep concern in the Christian tradition to acknowledge the supremacy of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior." [24] Based on that analysis, wouldn't you think that Mouw is right to have great hope for future change in Mormonism given the presence of open-minded young men like this? Perhaps we should consider what Mr. Fluhman had to say about Evangelicals in a recent New York Times article before we draw any hard conclusions: "Anti-Mormon attacks by evangelicals have betrayed anxiety over the divisions in their movement and their slipping cultural authority as arbiters of religious authenticity. Some big-hearted evangelicals have recently reached out to Mormons with genuine understanding, but they must now fend off charges of getting too cozy with Satan's minions. Because evangelicals are hard pressed for unity to begin with, and because they have defined themselves less and less in terms of historic Christian creeds, their objections to

Mormonism might carry less and less cultural weight." [25]Based on that one, is tempted to ask, "Dr. Mouw, while it appears that this young Mormon scholar seems to be 'impressed' with your hearts, he seems to be somewhat less than impressed with your heads (not to mention Evangelical heads in general). It would seem that Mr. Fluhman is of the opinion that the LdS Church has Evangelicalism on the ropes, that we're fading fast and that we don't really have much of value to add to society relative to Mormonism - now one can only wonder where he got these ideas from Dr. Mouw!" "Peace for our time"

(NOT!)=====Adding it all up, Dr. Mouw's uncritical acceptance of what these rather notorious Mormon figures say in their private discussions, combined with how he appears to use "reading between the lines" as definitive evidence of a major shift taking place in the LdS Church one could easily lead one to conclude that he is ignorant, naive, and lacks good judgment as well as discernment. One need only recall the picture of Neville Chamberlain declaring "Peace for our time" as a tutorial as to where having such deficiencies in an Ambassador can lead.[26]For The Sake Of Brevity

(really!)=====It's an important subject, but for the sake of brevity I haven't broached on how Dr. Mouw insists on publicly misrepresenting, slandering and libeling fellow Evangelicals. The late Walter Martin who died in 1989 seems to be a favorite target for the wheels of his bus in this book but there are others. This pattern of behavior had already gotten him labeled everything from a "Pandering Slanderer" to "the LdS Church's best Apologist" so I expect this book will simply add fuel to the fire. Suffice to say, Dr. Mouw's infamous November 4th, 2004 Tabernacle apology to Mormons sounds hypocritical given how thoroughly and repeatedly he's borne false witness of his own people!Another complaint I have with this book is how Dr. Mouw is constantly lamenting Christians for not really understanding official LdS Theology, then filling page after page with misinformation derived solely from the unofficial, private, uncorrelated, personal opinions of LdS intellectuals while ignoring the vast body of approved, public, correlated LdS materials (books, magazines, manuals, etc.) -- the latter being the material that defines what constitutes official LdS doctrine and theology and that contradicts what he's hearing in those private meetings. So tell me, who would you advise Dr. Mouw to listen to: A bunch of BYU Professors sequestered away and privately arguing over their personal opinions out in Provo, or the LdS Church First Presidency publicly dictating official Church dogma and doctrine to the membership in Salt Lake City? If It Walks Like A

Duck=====Finally, it's hard to take Dr. Mouw seriously when he uses criteria like this to conclude that Mormonism isn't a cult: "In fact, even the

label 'cult' seems inappropriate for describing the Mormonism that we've seen up close. Jehovah's Witnesses - they're a cult. They stick to a party line. You don't find them arguing among themselves - at least in a way the rest of us can see and hear. If someone does insist on raising questions from within about Jehovah's Witness teachings, they're quickly expelled from the group. And the very idea of a world-class Jehovah's Witness university is a hard one to entertain. Mormonism is a different story altogether. Brigham Young University is world class. It has an excellent faculty, with doctorates from some of the best graduate programs in the world. Some devout Mormons are well-known scholars at major secular schools." [27]What about the Worldwide Church of God? They had a respected and accredited University too, but they were still a cult.[28] And let's not forget "The September Six" (all academics and most BYU Professors) who were excommunicated on September 1993 for not sticking to the Mormon party line.[29]Then there's the recent Excommunication of Lyndon Lamborn on August 19, 2007 for "raising questions from within" about official church accounts of Mormon History that didn't reconcile with reality - what about that?[30]If the LdS Church isn't a cult, then why has 13th LdS Church President Ezra Taft Benson's "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet" been quoted from at least once in every recent General Conference and continues to be cited and reprinted regularly in official, correlated LdS Church books, periodicals, and manuals? [31] Dr. Mouw, if President Benson's pervasive and highly influential address isn't a formula for mind control, I don't know what is!And let's not forget the countless Mormons who have had their Temple Recommends pulled - or have even been excommunicated - because they gained a testimony of Jesus Christ but lost their testimony of Joseph Smith. Why is belief in and loyalty to a human being (the founder) so paramount if the Mormon Church isn't a cult?Finally we have the BITE Model[32] and other Sociological models for Mind Control Cults that we can "use as a plumb line" against. Mormonism has consistently met the criteria when evaluated against such tests.[33]Michael Jordan Shouldn't Play Baseball . .

.=====Much more could be said about just how flawed and misguided the substance of this book is - Mouw exposes his naiveté and ignorance on virtually every page. It's hard for this reviewer to see a scholar of Dr. Mouw's stature embarrass himself so thoroughly by stumbling and bumbling around in an arena where he's so obviously so unqualified. Dr. Mouw appears to be in very deep denial on a great many things - not the least being his qualifications to work in an area that's outside of his area of accomplishment, training, expertise and skills.Or put another way, just as Michael Jordan shouldn't play baseball, Richard J. Mouw shouldn't talk with Mormons.So despite my respect for many of Dr. Mouw's other accomplishments, in the end I simply cannot recommend this book. However, I have a book

recommendation for Dr. Mouw: Please read "The Peter Principle"[34] because, to me it explains what's really going on when you're talking with

Mormons.=====NOTES:=====

===== [1] See [URL withheld per policy](retrieved 2012-08-10)[2] For a more complete description - including a superb graphical representation - of the hierarchy of the LdS Church see [URL withheld per policy](retrieved 2012-08-07)[3]Â Â Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.317; "The Gospel Teacher and His Message," also cited in Charge to Religious Educators, pp. 51-52, and; The LdS Church manual, "Teachings of the Living Prophets", p.25; [URL withheld per policy](retrieved 2012-08-08)[4] A case in point is how the LdS Church treated BYU Professor Randy Bott's Washington Post comments on race in February 2012 (see [URL withheld per policy] ; retrieved 2012-08-12) In their church statement, the LdS Church clearly stated, "BYU faculty members do not speak for the Church." [5] See Wikipedia "Church Office Building" [URL withheld per policy] (retrieved 2012-08-10)[6] See Wikipedia "Brigham Young University" [URL withheld per policy] (retrieved 2012-08-10)[7] Richard J. Mouw.Â Â Talking with the Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals, Kindle Locations 873-877[8] See Wikipedia, "Jeffrey R. Holland: LDS Church Leadership"[URL withheld per policy](retrieved 2012-08-08)[9] The accompanying endnote then references the YouTube video [URL withheld per policy] ; Op Cit, Holland,Â Â Talking with the Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals, Kindle Location 961[10] "None Were With Him" by Jeffrey R. Holland[URL withheld per policy](retrieved 2012-08-07)[11] "[It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Christ] "suffered as only as God would suffer, bearing our griefs, carrying our sorrows, being wounded for our transgressions, voluntarily submitting Himself to the iniquity of us all, just as Isaiah prophesied....It was in Gethsemane that Jesus took on Himself the sins of the world, in Gethsemane that His pain was equivalent to the cumulative burden of all men, in Gethsemane that He descended below all things so that all could repent and come to Him"(Ezra Taft Benson,Â Â Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, pp.14&15)(retrieved 2012-8-08)[12] "But Jesus held on. He pressed on. The goodness in Him allowed faith to triumph even in a state of complete anguish. The trust He lived by told Him in spite of His feelings that divine compassion is never absent, that God is always faithful, that He never flees nor fails us. When the uttermost farthing had then been paid, when Christ's determination to be faithful was as obvious as it was utterly invincible, finally and mercifully, it was 'finished.'"(Op cit, Holland, "None Were With Him") [13] Adam Gopnik, "I, Nephi: Mormonism and its meanings

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