

REALITY QUEST

Volume One

November 1, 1993

Issue I

The Beginning

This Newsletter is dedicated to one person's search for truth. That individual is me - Christopher Marc Nemelka.

I have given up the pursuit of anything associated with normalcy in the society of the human species in which I exist. These depredations of happiness (as some may refer to them) which I have given myself include, but are not limited to, wealth, power, orthodox relationships (generally accepted as normal), and wisdom. I include the latter of these listed depredations because it is this which I pursue. In order to properly and vigorously pursue anything, one must first, want it bad enough, and secondly, not possess it. This is true of me in both instances. If I were prideful and gave the suggestion that I possessed wisdom or truth, then what would entice me to pursue something I already thought I had? Therefore, it is impossible for a prideful being who thinks he or she is in possession of truth, to find it. Alas, if I think I am not prideful, am I not prideful in thinking so?

And so begins my quest for truth, which in essence is the only reality.

If this newsletter fulfills its purpose, it will share with any who are interested the trails and experiences which I have and am to have in my quest. Yes, I could spend long, tedious hours writing a book about my *adventure*, however, since I have already acknowledged that I do not possess truth, then how can I write a book about it? I have learned a lot in the short 32 years of my existence on this planet, but my truths continue to change as I pursue them. Being the case as it is, I would be forced to rewrite and revise any work which I would set forth as my knowledge of truth. Ever wonder how foolish the decedents of archaic philosophers and scientists must feel about the so called "truths" which their ancestors perpetuated? How would you like to find out that your great-grandfather was considered a wise sage in his time and realize that he taught his followers and students that the world was flat and if they went far enough, they would fall off the end? Kind of embarrassing, Huh?

I intend to save my posterity the embarrassment. Therefore, I have decided to share my views of truth and life in the form of this newsletter. By getting the newsletter each week, when possible, the reader will be able to follow the evolution of my thinking and the truths which I believe at this time. The reader can learn something or reject everything if he or she desires, but at least they will come to know me as I am, not as someone says I am.

A few years ago I wrote the following philosophical statement about truth:

Truth is what you believe to be true. A lie is what you believe to be untrue. What are lies to some, are truths to others. Therefore, real truth is hard to find. Yet, real truth is things as they happened, are happening, and are to happen.

If you belong to a group of some who accuse others of lies, it is most assured that they who you accuse think the same of you.

The barrier between truth and lies is communication. However, each man and woman have their own way of communicating that which they say, hear, or think.

No one can truly lie. For that which they communicate is truth to them whether it is real truth or not.

Real truth seems to bring happiness to those who communicate it as such and those who interpret it as the same. Sadness and strife seem to occur and are caused by those who communicate lies or interpret real truth as such.

Therefore, it could be said that true happiness can only be found in knowing, understanding, and accepting real truth and not in one's perception of it as lies or truth.

If a man or woman is angered by truth, then he or she has accepted it as a lie and deceives themselves. If one accepts truth as a lie, and is not angered, because they know real truth, he or she then justifies their truth whether it is real truth or not.

Does it do any good to teach real truth? For some will accept it as such and others will call it lies.

Each person carries within themselves their own truths, or sometimes said, their own God. By this God they judge between truth and lies and are taught the truth which they will accept.

If one can convince another that their god is a God of truth, then this presenter of this truth becomes a God, or a prophet, because the one who has been convinced accepts the presenter as such. Having accepted this truth, or God, all other truths, or Gods, become lies, or Satan, who is often referred to as the father of lies.

Oh, if one could only know real truth, then they would surely know true happiness!

I was born and raised in a normal family. Six brothers, five sisters, and the experiences of any big family. I was raised in the Mormon faith, as far as religion goes, and was taught from birth that the only source of truth comes from God, a unknown being, but very much a reality to a small child. I was taught to fear this God who I didn't understand. My parents forced me to attend church, thus fulfilling what they considered their obligation for my spiritual upbringing. When I approached my father to let him know I did not want to attend church, he would rhetorically respond, "If you can tell me any better place where you should be on Sunday, then you can go there instead of church." Now, to a young child, anything was better than church. However, no matter how hard I tried to justify my necessity to visit the local swimming hole, or go on a joy ride to town with my friends, my dad always seem to convince me, as I felt slight pains of remembrance in my behind, that church was the best place to be.

Thus began the development of my early understanding of truth. The Mormon faith, not unlike most, teaches that unless a person believes in the things taught in the Church and receives the ordinances of the same, they will not please God. In other words, I was taught to believe that my church was the only true church of God on earth. How wonderful, I used to think, that I was so lucky to belong to the only true church. I felt a great sorrow for those who didn't join my church and thought for a long time that only the righteous would join our faith and the wicked would not. At a very early age I began to develop a sense of pride which hindered my quest for reality.

At the age of 25 I began to realize that the people who did not believe as I did were not as wicked as I thought. In fact, I began to imagine that if the kind of people who I met at church on Sunday were they which would inherit heaven, I would rather take my chances in hell. It wasn't until I learned that others were as good as me that I was able to have enough passion and tolerance for others and their beliefs to begin to try and understand them. To understand them I had to learn more about their beliefs and why they believe the way they do. Thus, began my quest for reality.

What Is Faith?

I have always been curious about what part faith should play in my pursuit of truth. Faith was taught to me as being: a belief in something not seen or understood by human reason. Could I possibly pursue and have faith? How can I find out the truth of something I have accepted on faith? I finally concluded that in order to pursue truth as I intended, I could no longer accept anything on faith alone. If there was something which I didn't understand, then I should use my reason and intellect (that which I have gained by experience, which includes secular studies, ect...) to study it out until I find the answer.

As I proceeded with my quest for the knowledge of truth, keeping in mind that which I learned about faith, I began to find that everything which I accepted by faith had many answers and conclusions. For example, It would depend on who you were talking to if you wanted to find out something about how life started. The religionists (Christians) claim God created us in His own image. The evolutionists preach that my great grandfather 1000 times removed was a monkey, and if you go further back, a piece of slime. The fact is, I don't know who is correct. (Though it is much easier to swallow being a descendent of a God instead of a piece of slime) Both base their opinions on aspects of faith. The religionist because they believe in something never seen by their own eyes, and the evolutionist because they base their belief on theories, which are nothing more than statements based on faith.

I have concluded that I must find the truth for myself. To do this properly I must reject everything which I study and learn from others as "real truth" and establish my own. It is quite a challenge to do this without offending my fellow beings with whom I share this small little planet. Everyone has his or her opinion. And, everyone thinks they are right. It is rare for me to encounter a person who does not think their opinions are right. Nevertheless, because of my search I have been alienated from those who call themselves my family. Most of my family is of the opinion that I am "not playing with a full deck of cards". All I can say to them is: "You don't need a full deck of cards to win the hand. All one needs are the right cards."

I eventually discarded all things which I had been taught by my parents and others to accept by faith. Doing this, I knew I would loose the filial relationships which existed between us. I made the sacrifice of these relationships to improve my chances of finding "real truth". Having rid my mind of all faith, I was able to finally realize what faith really was. (Better yet, I was able to finally have my own understanding of what faith is to me.) Faith is simply the easy way out for the human species. (I say human species, because we are the only animals on earth who have any faith.) When we can not explain something, or the explanation is not understood to our satisfaction, we accept what ever it is we can't understand by faith. Therefore, faith appears to be more for children and the ignorant rather than for a intelligent being.

I once accepted the fact that if there was a God. He was God because he was much more powerful and knowledgeable than me. It was taught to me that we have the potential to become like God and know and do the things which he does. Well, having thrown this doctrine out the window with the rest of the things I had ignorantly accepted on faith, I came to the understanding that perhaps whoever came up with this idea was on the right track. I came to this conclusion by realizing that the more I learn and understand the more "real" power I have over my own life. Therefore, realizing that there is tremendous power in knowledge. However, I learned that faith is not knowledge, it is faith. Since it is assumed that God is omniscient, or all knowledgeable, then it is safe to assume that he has no faith. If God has no faith then it is not one of his attributes. If it is not one of his attributes and he created us in his "own image", then it should not be one of our attributes. Using this method of reasoning, I realized that it is knowledge I must pursue and not faith.

Faith is essential for the ignorant who depend on it to bring them the hope they need to make it through the non-understandable reason for our existence. Faith is necessary to help a human through the pain and sorrow of death, which in itself is inexplicable. Faith is necessary to help the complacent justify their complacency. Faith helps the bad be good, and the good continue to be good. (For these it is easier to obey a commandment based on faith rather than finding out why the commandment was given. "Because God says!" is much easier to digest than because if we do such and such, it causes certain problems.)

Faith is a term which meaning is found inside each person who possesses it. It is a great help to most, but a great hindrance in the pursuit of truth.

PRIDE

The single most detrimental thing to my pursuit of truth has, and always will be, my pride. It didn't take me long to figure out that I was incapable of learning anything if I harbored pride in my heart. I have learned from many humbling experiences that pride blinds the mind, hardens the heart, and deceives us.

The pride that I felt and was taught to cherish, made me, an American, ridicule and put myself above those of other nationalities. I was an *AMERICAN*! I lived in the greatest nation on earth. To top that, I was a *MORMON*, and belonged to God's only true church on earth. No one was in any better

situation than I. Knowing this closed my mind to the truth. Why in the world would I want to know anything at all about any other people, or their beliefs, for that matter, when I was among the best? What could I possibly gain from learning about other cultures, peoples, or ways of thinking when I had a corner on truth. All I had to do was have faith (there's that word) in my government and the leaders of my church, who told me to have faith in my government. It was okay with me if God chose to punish "the heathen" with earthquakes, pestilence, and war. It's their fault for not being a Mormon American.

This sense of pride was also instilled in my thinking by the extracurricular activities which I chose to involve myself in. As a pretty good athlete, I learned that being the best is something I should eagerly pursue. I was inculcated (repeatedly instructed) to do what was necessary to win. Oh, of course, by abiding by the rules. I soon found my pursuit of being numero uno (#1) the most important thing in my life. As a football player I thought the best thing I could accomplish was to put the best player on the other team out of commission by injuring him. In one game I did just that, and my reward for this feat of heroism was the cheers of the crowd and the pat on the back from my coach. Oh, what pride I felt as I realized I had just ended the hopes and dreams of that young player.

Some would argue that pride is good. The same argue that competition and the pursuit of excellence is the way to go. From my experience, I vehemently disagree. If I would have let my pride get in the way of my quest, I would fail. I realized that pride was one thing which can not be present in one who pursues truth. If one is to eventually "know", one must first realize that they "don't know". This was previously discussed in the opening part of this issue of my newsletter. Also, it was apparent to me that there is no way for me to pursue excellence when I did not really know what excellence was. To some it is one thing, to others it is another. How was I suppose to know who truly had the right idea about excellence?

It wasn't until after I relinquished all pride, (which by the way, hasn't been too long since the date of this first issue), that I began to really gain happiness in my quest for real truth. I found that pride caused me to close my mind to possibilities which would eventually led me to find out some truths which I had not known before. Without pride, I am *proud* to say, I am finding truth.

SELFISH ME

I now live alone. To some this appears to be very selfish. I have children to be responsible for. Why not live with one of their mothers so as to better provide for their needs? I have tried this, but have found in each instance that their mothers unknowingly keep me from my quest and attempt to get my mind focused on their (personal relationship) needs. They want a man to snuggle with. To tell them that they're the greatest and that I can't live without them. I could very well focus on their needs and desires, but I know that my happiness comes in my quest and not in illusionary relationships which are broken and ended as the leaves of a shaken oak tree. Yes, it is selfish. Perhaps very selfish. However, I have yet to conclude that my selfishness is not for the benefit of all those who call me father, brother, uncle, or any that have or will call me husband.

I believe that my quest and the sharing of it by way of this newsletter will greatly enrich the lives of those who know me and are willing to read what I write each week. I hope that it will be thought provoking and might interest some into making the same quest for knowledge.

There is so much to learn and not enough time to learn it in. I hope the few minutes it takes to read this newsletter will enrich your understanding of yourself and benefit you in trying to figure out a man who appears so different than others of his same species. (Perhaps he's not of the same species and that is his problem!)

Until The Next,