

REALITY QUEST

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My ex-wife had been granted visitation to our two children, but during these visitations would not treat the children as I expected her to. Being a prophet of God, owing to the fact that I thought I received "personal revelation" from him, I believed my x-wife was disobeying God. (According to every written Christian scripture, she was). I refused to let her interfere in the children's life and kept her from seeing them.

I left Salt Lake City and went to Missouri, where I hoped to find other disillusioned Mormons searching for the "promised land". (Joseph Smith, the Mormon founder, prophesied that Missouri would be where the Mormons would gather to await the second coming of Jesus.)

In Missouri, I wanted to give Paula another opportunity to be the mother of her children, so I wrote her a letter offering to allow her to do so, if she would let me be their father and if she lived under my rules. Before leaving for Missouri, I was served with an affidavit that outlined the complaints Paula had against me for not allowing her to exercise her visitation privileges. One will notice that the attorney who represented Paula had failed to serve me with an *Order to Show Cause*, which should legally accompany an affidavit, telling me when to show up in court. I had no idea that I was suppose to be in court, nor did I understand what was expected of me by way of allowing visitation to a woman, who I thought at the time, didn't deserve to see the children she had abandoned.

Needless to say, I left for Missouri before Paula's attorney was able to serve me legally and properly. (See appendix B for the papers the attorney filed in court. Notice that I was supposedly served the *Affidavit* and *Order to Show Cause* on the 8th day of December, 1987, but the order was not even filed in court until the 11th of December. I was only served the *Affidavit* on the 8th, and knew nothing about the order to appear in court. How was I suppose to show up at a court date I knew nothing about? I met with Paula's original attorney in this matter in 1992, and she admitted that she had made the mistake.)

When Paula refused to come to Missouri to be the children's mother under my auspices, something that in retrospect, I wouldn't have done either, I decided that if she was going to spurn *the church of the Lamb of God*, then she would have to suffer by losing her ability to be the children's mother.

I formed a transient, self-employed company which would require me to continually move from place to place in search for work, thus making it difficult for Paula to establish formal visitation rights.

It wasn't long before Paula stopped trying to track me down; and not having heard from her, I decided to settle my family down in one place.

CHAPTER FOUR

WITHOUT FILIAL LOVE

I never understood why Paula stopped trying to legally obtain her visitation rights to her children. My immediately family knew of my where whereabouts most of the time, and since my eldest brother, Mike, was married to her eldest sister, Teena, I figured Paula could find me if she wanted.

It soon became apparent that my most of the members of my family had cast me off as a fool, crazy, and deceived. The only reason they had done this was because I had left the religion that they belonged to, and claimed it was no better than any other. If any one knows the pride a Mormon carries in his and her heart, they will understand why my family ostracized me. My eldest brother is a staunch Mormon, and his religious conviction and relationship with his wife caused a hate for me to swell in his heart that left me without any support from those who once called me a member of their family.

I figured with Mike and the rest of my family on her side, Paula could have found me anytime she wanted. However, I never heard from her until the following occurred on March 10, 1990: (This excerpt is taken from *Reality Quest*, Volume One, Issue VII, entitled, *DAD -VS- ME*. *Reality Quest* is a weekly journal/newsletter that I am writing for the benefit of my children.)

"It wasn't long after being employed as a security officer for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints that my religious illusions and dreams were shattered. I won't go into the reasons why at this time. It is sufficient to say, that my employment there led me to the determination that the modern Mormon church was just as corrupt as any other earthly church. However, I chose not to give up my Mormon heritage so quickly.

I was determined to find out about God for myself. I began to study what I believed to be the "word of God" as contained in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and all the original writings of Joseph Smith, who, though I had found out did some very deceptive things, I considered to be a prophet of God, the last which had lived upon earth. From the scriptures and the original writings of J. Smith, I concluded that the modern Mormon church had corrupted itself and that the true church of God no longer existed.

In the Book of Mormon, there is a story of a man named Lehi who belonged to the "church of God" in his time. Lehi found out through personal revelation that his church was corrupt and would soon be destroyed. He decided to take his family and "depart into the wilderness" where he knew that God would direct him wither he should go and what he should do. During his departure, Lehi came upon the Liahona, a compass which would lead him where the Lord would have him go. From J. Smith's writings, I ascertained that this "Liahona" was simply symbolic of the "gift of the Holy Ghost" which all members of the Mormon church are taught they receive upon baptism and acceptance into the church. With this gift, we are taught as Mormons that we are granted the ability to receive direct revelation from God.

Needless to say, I knew I had the "Holy Ghost", and so I "departed into the wilderness".

For two years, Jackie and I wandered to many different places attempting to find our "promised land". Previous to this time, Paula had divorced me and given me custody of my two eldest children, Brittany Nicole and Joshua Marc.

Paula divorced me because I married her when I was fresh off a mission for the Mormon church and "hornier than hell"; and she was a cheerleader in her senior year of high school who couldn't stand her obnoxious mom. Anyone with common sense could see that this marriage was headed for trouble. Any other foolishness, like has been spread about my divorce by "family chatter boxes" who haven't much better to do than spread vicious lies, such as, "Paula divorced Chris because he raped and beat her", is total garbage. Why would Paula voluntarily give custody of her two children to a guy who raped and beat her? Anyone who could possibly believe this "basura" has a very limited intelligence quotation.

Anyway, I didn't feel too bad about moving all over the place, because Paula kept ridiculing my lifestyle to the children during her visitation privileges and moving around kept her from doing this.

My travels put us in the state of Washington. In Washington I found a farm store which I purchased. I invited my father to come to Washington and take advantage of the store with me.

My father is the epitome of the entrepreneur. He came, he saw, he took the store over. This didn't bother me in the least, for I wanted to provide something that my father and Gloria, my step-mother could depend on in their retirement. I was willing to work for the "family store" for free in exchange for nothing more than food for my family and a little cash to send to a destitute family in Argentina.

My father's and my problems started because of my zealous attitude toward my religious views. I believed with all my heart, that like Lehi of old, I was called away from a corrupt church in a corrupt world to find a better "promised land". I did not think I was to be a prophet to the LDS Church or any other church, for that matter. I was not "riding around talking with my deceased grandpa", which rumor has been circulated by spurious (not genuine) family members. I was simply pursuing what I felt was right in my heart. Yes, what I felt in my heart were to me "the promptings" of the Holy Ghost. (Of course, with maturity I have concluded that all these "promptings" are simply my own emotions and ego at work. However, I still to this day believe that there is a spiritual existence which interacts with our mortality.)

My little brother James came to work at the store. On one occasion I begin to tell James of my great interest in God and The Book of Mormon. I told James that he should read The Book of Mormon more often and abide by its precepts. In fact, I tried to get him to read it with me.

Well, owing to the fact that our father, which was James' and my common bond, never read the scriptures with us, James thought this request to be rather eccentric and weird. He went back and reported his dealings with me in a most embellished (exaggerated) way to the rest of my family.

Our problems came to a head in the following way:

My father and I were working in the store when an elderly lady entered and asked to speak with Jackie about the LDS Church. I told her I was Jackie's husband and there was no need for her to talk with Jackie about the Church. I politely, if it can be done, ridiculed the woman and her intentions. My father came to the aid of the lady by escorting her from the store telling her something about what a hopeless case it was to talk to me about religion.

In retrospect, my father had every right to do what he did. I deserved his intervention. However, my father then proceeded to make the mistake which has brought him his greatest miseries in life. My father lost his temper. He just didn't lose his temper, he exploded. He came at me with more anger than I had ever witnessed. In front of his grandchildren, he proceeded to reprimand and ridicule me in the most abusive manner. He came very close to punching me in the face. He proceeded to yell at me telling me that, "...you are Chris Nemelka, not Abinadi, Joseph Smith, or whatever".

Throughout the whole incident, I was as calm as a summer's morning. I waited for him to finish his hate and anger, then I asked him to leave. He angrily left; taking with him James and any portion of filial love which he once had for me. After his departure, little Joshua Marc came up to me with tears swelling in his tiny eyes and asked, "Daddy, why is grandpa so mad at you?" I couldn't answer the poor, little guy. I didn't know why another human being would treat someone like my father had just treated me. Though I espoused my own religious views, sometimes overzealously, I have never hurt anyone or treated anyone the way my father had just treated me.

My father returned to Salt Lake and began a crusade of the most outrageous lies a human could perpetuate against another. Just what he said, I do not know. But, I do know he turned everyone against me. However, at the time, I was totally unaware of what he was saying about me.

I figured that my dad would settle down and we could once again remain father and son. About one week after the above incident with my father, I called my mother, unaware that everyone sided with my father without knowing the truth in the matter, and informed her that Dad could come up to Washington and have the store; that Jackie and I would be moving. My mother did not know what to say, because my father had all ready concocted a most vicious plan against me to take away my store and put me in jail.

My father contacted my ex-wife, Paula, in Montana and arranged for her and her father to meet him in Washington so that she could take custody of Brittany and Joshua when I was put in jail. Here is how the incident unfolded and folded:

I was working in my store when I received a call from my father who asked me if one of his friends, whose name I cannot recall, though he lived in Washington close to where my farm store was located, was at the store. Puzzled as to why his friend would be at the store, I told my dad he wasn't, and asked if there was something I could do. He told me his rental car had broken down and that he wanted his friend to come to pick him up. I told my dad I would be glad to come to get him. He said no, and that he would find another way. My father hung up and left me quite puzzled as to why he didn't want my help. (Little did I know, that he had Paula and her father in the rental car with him.)

Not too long thereafter, my father entered the store. I greeted him with a smile. My smile soon turned to astonishment when three deputy sheriffs came in behind my dad. Like a rush of cold water hitting the face of a sleeping man, I woke up and realized what was going on. Before I had a chance to respond, I was ordered to put my hands up and get against the wall. After being frisked, the officer informed me that my father accused me of being a mental case who would not let my ex-wife see her children and that I would, "Kill my wife and children and then myself if anyone tried to bother me." My father's diabolical plan was to convince the sheriffs that I was insane, give Paula back her kids, take my store and put me in a "nut house".

To make a long story short, my father's plan backfired against him "big time". The deputies interviewed me, Jackie, the children, and the farmer who had sold me the store. After these short interviews, the sheriff in charge came to me and apologized with all his heart. He told me to go to court and get a restraining order against my father so that he could never attempt the injustice to me and my family again. I told him it was all right.

I then faced my father. I asked him how he could do such a thing. He shrugged and told me never to come around him again. I told him that wouldn't be too hard of a request to do in light of what he had just done.

When my father had gone with Paula, her father, and his tail between his legs, I called my brother Cory to tell him I harbored no bad feelings toward him or any other of my brothers and sisters. No sooner had Cory heard my voice than he began to scream at me that I was a "false prophet". I was stunned at his ignorance of the situation. I always assumed Cory was one who would not fall for the one-sided story, and would not make judgment until he heard the "whole story". This time I was wrong. I can't remember the rest of my conversation with Cory, but I heard all I needed to convince me that my father had poisoned my siblings against me.

At this point I felt all alone, just as Lehi in the wilderness with no family but his wife and children..."

Paula had a chance to take me to court and sue for visitation. She didn't do anything, and thanks to my father, my hope of any filial help and testimony in the future was shattered. (See appendix ? for a copy of the police report of the above incident.)

CHAPTER FIVE

FORGIVE ME, PLEASE

Ironically, it was on my search for the "promised land" that my whole idea of life, religion, and what I was doing with my life and that of my children changed.

I was always a strong willed person, yet I loved people and generally got along with everyone I met, (even though at the time, I thought they all were wicked). However, it was my associations with these people who were not religious, that began to help me break away from the religious dogma which blinded my mind to reality and hardened my heart against those who didn't believe as I did.

I came to know many good people who smoke, drank, and looked at nude magazines. In fact, I felt more at ease around these typed of people than I ever did around good, so called, "Christians".

I concluded that if these kind of people are going to inhabit hell, then I wanted to go there too. I certainly didn't want to be put in the same place as those who *thought* they were going to heaven.

I put down my scriptures and began to investigate the other side of religion, i.e., reality. I always knew that there were two sides to every issue; and I began to investigate the opposing views of others. It wasn't long before I came to the conclusion that all religion really was, is a fool's attempt to prove to the world that they are not.

I came to know many people on my "journey", and gained some lasting friendships which broke down the walls of bigotry that religion had built around me.

It was in the first part of 1991, that I began to understand that I had made a mistake in keeping Brittany and Joshua away from their mother.

After I had thrown out the bigotry which my religion had formed in my heart towards everyone that was not a member of, what I believed at the time was "*the church of the Lamb of God*", I was able to clearly see that Paula had every right to see the children and be involved in their life. I became extremely sorrowful for not allowing her to do so. I knew Paula was a good woman- I was married to her for three years.

I came to the conclusion that if I had been married to me at the time Paula was, I would have wanted a divorce too. Thus having humbled myself enough to realize I was no better than Paula or anyone else.

In February of 1991, Jackie and I were living in Kent, Washington, next to the home of some wonderful, non-religious people who adored our family as much as we adored them. (See appendix ? for a personal reference from the Rick and Joy Church family of Kent, Washington.)

I decided to drive all the way to Columbia Falls, Montana, find Paula, tell her I was sorry for keeping the kids from her, make amends, and invite her out to see the kids and take them on a visit.

I travelled to Montana thinking the whole way how wonderful it would be to work things out with Paula.

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