

A Visit with Denver Snuffer

Questions and Answers
5-13-15 Tim Malone

Question Four: *In the same lecture, you quoted from your journal, describing the disciplinary process you went through, your appeal and the significance of section 121 which contains the phrase, “Amen to the priesthood of that man.” You then read, “Last general conference (April 2014), the entire First Presidency, the 12, the 70, and all other general authorities and auxiliaries, voted to sustain those who abused their authority in casting me out of the church. At that moment, the Lord ended all claims of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to claim it is led by the priesthood. They have not practiced what He requires. The Lord has brought about His purposes. This has been in His heart all along.” This is an astounding declaration. It has been the subject of much discussion on the forums and blogs. It was and is a difficult thing for many LDS members to hear or read. FAIR and other apologetic sites have fallen all over themselves to show how impossible such a claim can be. The idea of a modern, living prophet, authorized and in possession of all priesthood keys held by Joseph is the bedrock of the LDS Church claims to be God’s kingdom on earth today. Your claim evokes emotional distress in some who consider it. It’s been a while since this declaration came out. Is there anything you would add now to help multi-generational members of the LDS Church deal with such a devastating, all-encompassing foundational claim? What would you add?*

ANSWER (Denver): I would add that it's a mistake to focus on me when you think of this issue. The issue is larger than a single man, and the issue deserves careful consideration of everything that was covered in that first answer in this interview.

I am no happier than others are about this. Does anyone really think that this does not upset me? Does anyone believe that I have pride in this, or it makes me pleased to say what I have said? Those that think that, have no idea who I am or what is in my heart. I'm probably more brokenhearted by the things I've been told and commanded to teach that the audience could be. I receive unwelcome news and then deliver it to others. This is an ordeal, nothing else. Unwanted, unwelcome, unsought, and unpleasant. I do it to please God, not to get praise. It does not inspire praise from most people who hear what I say or read what I write.

I have spent days mourning, unable to speak about some things, even with my wife, as the events have unfolded. There have been times when I have been so upset that have not been able to carry on a conversation about what is underway. It has required two and three days for me to adjust to unwelcome news. I could give you an example but I'll pass on that.

On second thought, I will give you one example: The section you read in the question quoted from my journal was written months before it was read to an audience. When it was written, I thought that writing was only for my family, my kids. I did not expect it to become public.

There are some times when the Lord gives you the words to write, and there are some times when you compose it yourself. That particular entry was given to me to write. I considered it extremely private. I considered it extremely personal. Outside of my wife alone, no one was aware of that entry in my journal until the talk made it public.

Every one of the 10 talks were given by inspiration to me in outline form before they were delivered to an audience. On the day I first began to prepare to give the talks, I sat down and in one sitting I wrote all the outline notes for the first five talks. I ran out of time that day and so only the first five were outlined. I

also didn't want to put any notes down for the next series until after I delivered the first two, so I could gauge the time it would take to cover the topics. The first two talks were given in fairly rapid succession, only eighteen days apart. It was after those were given that I went on to outline the sixth, seventh, eight, and finally the ninth talks. But I never got anything for the 10th talk.

You should understand these outlines were prepared months in advance. I had a long hiatus between first and second parts of the year—between talks given in the beginning months and the conclusion the next year. During winter we didn't drive, and so I had all nine talks outlined but I had nothing for lecture 10. Nothing. My eventual conclusion—because the content had been given by inspiration to me on lectures 1 through 9—ultimately, was all the 10th lecture was going to contain was a summary of the first nine. So, literally, I began to go back to the notes and to highlight what I would use as a summary in the 10th and concluding lecture. I prayed about it and nothing was given to me. So left to my own I thought it was a reasonable conclusion.

I finished the 9th talk in St. George and with it concluded all the notes I had. But on the night that the ninth talk was given, that night I was awakened and the content of the 10th talk was revealed to me. If I had known anywhere along the line the content of the 10th talk I would have done something to prepare the audience for what was coming. I didn't know what was going to be in it. When I got the content of the 10th lecture, it was so distressing to me that I told my wife the next day while on a walk down in St. George (we stayed in the area for a while) that this was not going to be good. This was not going to be a pleasant thing. She asked me about it, but I told her I would not be able to discuss it right then.

I wrote down all the notes, I transcribed what needed to be said, but I didn't give any preview of the talk to her. Unlike the other ones, I just continued to try and change the Lord's mind about the content. She heard the talk for the first time with the audience. She knew how upset and distressed I had been and what I had been saying about the material. At the first break in the lecture she got up, came up to me and said, "I now get it." That lecture was not easy to give.

People who think that I'm enjoying this, and that I look out and say, "Good! Now I'm giving the Mormon Church their comeuppance!" don't realize anything about what it takes to do what has been asked of me, or how extremely difficult all of this is. I'm not happy about the burden. It ill-suits me.

Multigenerational families may have their family traditions, but I was truly converted at the age of 19. I invested my heart and soul into the Church. It was like coming home for me. I believed I was the Church's best friend and loyal supporter.

I was the single most successful missionary in the mission in which I was baptized, as just a lay member of the Church. I produced investigators continually, and baptized many of them, the missionaries baptizing many others.

When I transferred by the military to Texas I was called as a stake missionary. There was a third missionary serving there who was waiting for a visa to go to Brazil. In those days it was difficult to obtain visas. Every night when I came home from work, that missionary showed up and he and I were missionary companions. We went out and tracted, and taught, and baptized. There was a young couple, the husband was studying to become a minister in the Church of Christ. We began teaching him with him trying to convert us, and us convert him. We got the couple to the point of having a testimony of the Restoration. They got an answer from prayer. They had a testimony, but they were faced with the crisis of losing his profession and of alienating his family. They concluded, despite the fact they had been converted, they couldn't pay the price to be baptized. They told us they didn't want us have come by anymore.

I taught Gospel Doctrine in Sunday School for nearly 3 decades. I was on the High Council. When I spoke as a High Councilor in my Stake, the Bishops announced in advanced who the visiting High Councilman would be, because attendance would go up. I loved the gospel and I was devoted to the Church. To say it is more distressing to multigenerational families than to me is incomprehensible to me. It is a tragedy what has happened to the Restoration. But it has happened. Ignoring it will not change the events. To focus on me when dealing with so important a matter is ridiculous. Forget about me and study the issues.