

# POST MORMON PAST

Ronald Wilcox

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## APOLOGIA

I suppose I should have foreshadowed my own shadow. I should have seen what I did not want to see. That said, I must say, I see what I see for fear my shadow over-take me, for fear I become mere shadow of my former Mormon self. Formerly and formally, I tell it like it is, that is to say, “it” being what I see I say, what I say I mean, what I mean to say, I *think* is really me. I like to think I think so, so I say what I think.

Were I to devise destruction to myself as a man the *first* thing I would do is destroy my name, if not destroy, at least change it, make it—*meaningfully demeaning*. Suddenly I’m not a Mormon. What? Am I also suddenly not Ron? Am I to play with letters, digits, symbols, syllables, vowels, tricky consonants, as if they were really more me than I who am, who is, who, hopefully, one day will be? Why?

At whose instigation am I no longer a Mormon? Is a Catholic less a Catholic because the word implies a phrase of recognition, a “universal” church? Is a Mormon merely a lowly nick-name, discarded at leisure, because the full name any Mormon will tell you is: *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*.

What slinky madness sneaked in when the central pole I lean upon is yanked away from me? Do you expect me to fall? Satan, maybe, might expect me to. Not my Heavenly Father, who knows me more than I do myself. *I am a Mormon*.

How would I, were I *Lucifer*, strike at the heart of my faith. Why I would yank away the clumsy pole I lean on as I look high above me toward the sun. He would hope, I assume, I would sink into the dark shadow the bright sun casts behind me, like a tar pit of disbelief. He would play with my name and say Ron, why not juggle a few syllables, become *More Ron*, or *Moron Ron*, or, better still, *Post Mormon Ron*.

Yes. Yank away that rough “post” I lean upon, *Mormon*, a long-ago nick-name first devised in obloquy by enemies of The Church (my new name?) but risen to admiration through the years, as in Mormon Tabernacle Choir, known, beloved, admired world-wide. How easy it was. All that went before was an “error,” a stupid mistake, a maudlin jibe, one used by all my forebears proudly: *Mormon*.

Me, I’m too brave, too smart, to occupy the air with less than *the church of jesus christ of latter-day saints—lower case in case my “pride” should show*. Who thinks this way? Who but a died in the wool bureaucrat, one who assumes a pet peeve (we’re more than “Mormons”) proves his intuition to be a revelation, that we are to shed the designation like an old coat, cast it aside, claim we never were what we said we were, for we are now . . . now . . . not “Mormons.”

No, we are . . . what *are* we? Well, we’ll define that another time in the manner of the bureaucrat employing pure bureaucratize to a new problem he just invented. And why is this so important, Moron Ron, or whatever your name is? Why bother to get your garments in a tussle, your shorts in a twist, or whatever it is you wear these days of your elderly majority, you old coot? I’ll tell you why.

I am a Mormon.

So, the question again, how would I (Lucifer) strike at the very heart of a soul? The pole, the wretched, splintery, battered, pole the fool leans upon. *Identity*. Yank it away. Let the fool lean on something *else*, if lean he must. Just don’t use the word *MORMON*. After all, *heh, heh*, minus an “m” we have a, *hee, hee*, MORON. That’ll show him who’s *boss*, whose boss has a *boss*, and, by God, that’s *me*, Lucifer, Too damned clever for you by increments far past the human mind.

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DIALOGIC<sup>1</sup>

~~dialogue with myself~~

B-b-but, it's just a name.

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

Okay.

Present your sweetheart with a bouquet of  
say, *stinkweeds*. They smell as sweet.

They're *roses*.

Mormons are still Mormons when they say  
they aren't Mormons.

*Exactly*. Now you're catching on . . . even  
though you *are* a moron . . . I mean, Mormon.

Don't call me a Mormon. I'm not a Mormon.

I'm a member of . . . *the church of jesus christ  
of latter-day saints*. God told me personally  
that Jesus would be insulted if you called him  
anything but Jesus Christ.

So don't call you Mormon.

Exactly. We call Jesus Jesus.

*Savior. Lord. Master. Logos (the Word).*

*Son of God. Son of Man. Son of David.*

*Lamb of God. Light of the World.*

*King of the Jews. Friend of Man.*

You just made my point. Mormons  
don't have to be called Mormons.

What should we call them?

Well . . . you got me there.

A *revelation* will tell us what to call us.

I hope to become a member of

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I.T. S. Eliot: "dialogic" is consonant with Eliot's ideas in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," where Eliot holds that "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."~~Post Mormon Past.

*The church of Jesus Christ of Latter*

*-Day Saints Tabernacle Choir.*

That's kind of clumsy.

Why not just "Tabernacle Choir?"

You mean like the really neat one  
like what belonged to Sister Aimee  
Semple McPherson?

No, I mean

Temple Square Tabernacle Choir."

But your temple ain't square. It's sort of  
"ratcheted" into segments.

Stop complaining. It's a revelation.

It sort of snuck into the mind of the prophet.  
"The Lord has impressed upon my mind the  
importance of the name He has revealed for  
His Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day Saints."

That's what Russell M. Nelson, the church's  
present president, said in a statement recently.  
I'm impressed.

You better be. Otherwise, you're out.

*Caput.* De-churched. Excommunicated.

I won't say another word about it.

Honest?

Honest.

Only a fool would.

It goes straight to the heart of the church member,  
whose member (the heart) was mistakenly pierced  
by a nick-name way back when. So get used to it.

Shape up or ship out.

I promise to shape up. Soon as you tell me  
which shape to shape up to I'll shape up.

Just don't call me or you a Mormon.

I won't. That's a promise.

Amen.