

The Agony and Ecstasy of Witnessing



The fact that witnessing involves both joy and pain was again recently brought home to me. I was teaching a Bible Class attended by a non-active Mormon. By the second week it was becoming obvious that he was greatly disturbed by the lessons. He erupted when we came to passages stressing that only through faith in Jesus can people enter into the Father's presence. In keeping with LDS doctrine, he was offended at the thought of God not allowing "good" people into heaven.

As he angrily left the room, I felt a stab of pain. Since I had previously had a couple of productive visits with him, I had hopes that he would be brought to faith. Therefore his rejection of Jesus hurt. In addition, I knew that the tension with his Christian relatives would increase dramatically. As I saw how upset his Christian wife was, Jesus' words in **Matthew 10:34-36** immediately came to mind:

Matthew 10:34-36 (NIV) "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to turn

"a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
³⁶a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

Matthew 10:34-36 (KJV) Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. ³⁶And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

But I also experienced joy that night. Also attending that class were two Christians who originally were from LDS families. Not only did they witness eloquently to that man about their faith in Jesus; they did so lovingly. It was obvious that not only did they love their Lord deeply – they loved this Mormon man deeply.

Just think if nobody would have cared enough for these two individuals or their families to witness to them? Not only would they still be in the darkness of Mormonism and be on the way to outer darkness; Christ would have two less fervent witnesses. But because people cared enough to share with them the wonderful fact that Jesus was their Substitute they are not only enjoying the light of his love but are also reflecting that light out to others.



Over the years I have experienced many non-Christians, including many Mormons, reject the truth that Jesus has already done everything for them. Each time that happened, it hurt. But the Lord has also been good in allowing me to witness the power of the gospel at work as it brought the spiritually dead to life. There's no comparison between the two. The ecstasy far outweighs all the agony. Seeing people coming to life before your very eyes is a joy that knows no bounds. It reaches all the way to heaven.

Luke 15:10 (NIV) In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Luke 15:10 (KJV) Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Over the years, numerous Christians have wondered if witnessing to Mormons is really worth all the effort, and yes, pain. It is a lot of work. Often there is pain involved. But is it worth it? O, yes! Ask any Christian who was once LDS. Ask any Christian who has been privileged to be used by God to bring Jesus to a Mormon. And when you get to heaven, ask the angels. They will tell you about the great joy you gave them as you shared the wonderful message of free and full forgiveness in Christ. Think about these things and then go – and go and tell others about Jesus, our wonderful Substitute.

Pastor Mark Cares

