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I Have Failed In Life

by Kent Heaton

Spencer Tracy is listed as one of the top one hundred movie stars of all time. A superstar of the 1940's films, Tracy became the first to receive back-to-back Oscars (1937/1938) and was nominated for numerous other Oscars. From the accolades given by men, Spencer Tracy is a pillar of admiration for millions who have seen his films and admired his work. In a recent conversation about Spencer Tracy, fellow actor Burt Reynolds recalled the time he spent with the actor. Reynolds, commenting on the unwavering success of Tracy's work, asked if there was anything Tracy had every failed at. Tracy replied, "I have failed in life."

It is easy to see great men for what we see them to be and what we want them to be. Spencer Tracy is one of my favorite actors and I look forward to seeing any movie he is in. The truth about real life is that it is a harder master than what Hollywood portrays on the silver screen. A former Jesuit prep-school student who once intended to become a priest, Tracy understood the true nature of life. I believe this to be true for all men. No matter the successes of life and the accomplishments of a lifetime of work, man is still created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). It is from this likeness of God that all men possess a conscience that makes them aware of their immortal being. The vast majority of the world has seared that conscience in rejection of God (Matthew 7:13; Romans 1:28; Ephesians 4:19).

When life is measured by the rule of true worth, the things that men seek for are without value. Solomon sought all the things that men seek today. He sought after wisdom and concluded, "I have seen everything that is done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind." (Ecclesiastes 1:14) Solomon sought after pleasure and discovered that it was vanity. He filled his life with wine and song and laughter and

found it all to be without substance. His possessions were multiplied beyond comparison with houses, vineyards, gardens, parks, pools and forests of trees but all this was empty. He writes, "And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11)

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Does this sound familiar in your mad dash for all that life will offer? Are we so consumed by the pursuit of this world and all the accolades of men and glory of men and find that in life we fail?

Jesus posed this serious question for all to consider: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26) When you are closing your eyes in death, what will it matter how much money you have in the bank? What will it matter if you lived in a big mansion and drove expensive cars? What will it matter that you filled your life with the pleasures of the flesh? What really matters when death knocks on the door of your heart?

Solomon's conclusion to his study of life (the book of Ecclesiastes) is this: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether

it be good, or whether it be evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) Life is not about what we gain here but what we seek to gain after death. Life is not about the praise of men but the praise of the Father who says, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” (Matthew 25:23) Jesus said, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and

take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done.” (Matthew 16:24-27)

Book of Mormon vs. The Bible

The Mormons, also called Latter Day Saints, form a religious group who believe that God revealed a book through Joseph Smith that tells the story of Jesus’ appearance to American Indians. According to their claim, this book contains another covenant of Jesus Christ. That is, a covenant other than and in addition to the New Testament.

We know that the Bible is the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and that the Bible by itself provides “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). Jude says that the faith has been “once delivered to the saints” which implies that it does not need to be added to (Jude 3). If the Bible is the complete word of God, if it will equip us fully to salvation, then the Book of Mormon, or any other “revelation” acquired after the completion of the New Testament, is unnecessary.

But there are other problems with the Book of Mormon. It plainly contradicts the Bible in numerous places. Since we know that the Bible is God’s word, we can use it as our standard of measure. If something contradicts the Bible, it cannot be true. Note some of the things the Book of Mormon says in contradiction to the Scriptures.

The Book of Mormon says that there were three days of darkness at the death of Christ, “...he spake concerning the three days of darkness which should be a sign given of his death...” (1 Nephi 19:10).

The Bible says that there were three hours of darkness at the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:45). “Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.”

The Book of Mormon says that Jesus was born in Jerusalem, “And behold, he shall be born of

Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers...” (Alma 7:10).

The Bible teaches that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king...” (Matthew 2:1). “Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem...and she brought forth her firstborn Son...” (Luke 2:4-5).

In the Book of Mormon God shows Himself to men, “And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself to you” (Ether 3:13).

The Bible teaches that no man can see God, “He who is the blessed and only Potentate ... whom no man has seen or can see” (1 Timothy 6:16).

The Book of Mormon says that God has flesh and blood, “And he saith unto the Lord; I saw the finger of the Lord, and I feared...for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood” (Ether 3:8)

The Bible says that God is not flesh, “God is Spirit...” (John 4:24).

Other contradictions could be noted, but these are enough to make our point. The Book of Mormon is not the word of God.

April 25, 2004

Attendance
AM Worship: 239
PM Worship: 188

Wednesday Evening: 160

Our Goal:
Every member
at every
service!