

March 12, 2016

President Ivins,

This is my response to your 3.11.16 email.

Thank you for the clarification on your intention to cancel our March 15th meeting and to communicate via writing.

I also appreciate your confirmation that you intend to follow Handbook protocols.

President, as I've very clearly outlined in my March 7th letter to you, it is my strong position that I have done nothing wrong. I also very clearly demonstrated to you the following principles and concepts:

- "If we have the truth, it cannot be harmed by investigation. If we have not the truth, it ought to be harmed." – President J. Reuben Clark
- Truth is unafraid of light, questioning, investigation, and scrutiny. In fact, truth *demand*s it. This is true whether investigation is taking place in the private room or in the town square.
- The free flow of information and a healthy, balanced marketplace of information are *paramount* and *crucial* to the freedom and free agency of the individual.
- Free agency – supposedly the church's most cherished and foundational principle (after all, Heavenly Father lost 1/3rd of his children fighting for it) – demands not only the existence of a healthy and balanced marketplace of information but access to full and complete information and facts – *both* positive *and* negative.
- Free flow of *all* information = true free agency.

These principles and values are my principles and values. These values are ingrained into my own DNA. In fact, few things infuriate me more on this planet than censorship and the obstruction of free flow of information. To censor and to obstruct is to limit and to steal the freedom and free agency of everyone. As current Church Historian Elder Steven E. Snow concedes, the church's pattern has been to not be transparent or complete about records, facts and information.

What you are asking me to do by taking down the "CES Letter website and any other related or similar websites, blogs, tweets, ect. [sic]" and to "stop distributing your materials about the Church to others" is to censor sincere questions as well as hard facts and truths (and its open discussion in the Mormon marketplace of information) about the church's foundational truth claims, as verified and confirmed by the church's [own essays](#).

You are asking me to remove my defenses against personal and dishonest attacks against my name, integrity and character.

You are asking me to limit and to obstruct not just my own free agency but the free agency of members and investigators of the church who also share the same sincere hard questions about the church's foundational truth claims.

Why won't you and the church just answer the questions? Why all of this 1984 nonsense and secrecy?

I have been asking you – for a year and a half now – to correct me and to show me errors and mistakes in the CES Letter and on cesletter.org so that I can publicly correct them. Why won't you just answer my questions, President?

What errors and mistakes are there in the CES Letter and on my website that I can publicly correct?

If there are no errors or mistakes, why am I being punished for seeking and sharing the truth?

What questions am I being punished for asking?

Attacking the Questioner and Messenger

You wrote:

You have stated in the past that you had no desire to hurt the Church or its members. I am glad to hear that, although you need to understand that some of what you have said and done has done just that. If you are sincere in your expressed desire to keep your Church membership and to explore answers to your questions, it will be my privilege to work with you.

With respect, President, where have you been? I asked you these questions a year and a half ago in the fall of 2014. You agreed to help me back then only to go radio silent and to break that silence with a phone call on January 25, 2016 threatening me with excommunication. You tried to hold a court on me on Valentine's Day without talking to me. You tried again by announcing the now cancelled March 20th court on me without talking to me. But now...it's a "privilege to work with [me]"?

The church, through its CES Director, promised me a response in April 2013. Three years ago. I never heard back from him again. The church has had three years to answer the questions as promised me. Why still no answers?

Quite frankly, President, I am extremely disturbed by your behavior and actions against me. As you know, we ended our November 2, 2014 meeting on a good note where you expressed to me

that you thought I was a good man and that you wanted to help me. However, because you're "not a historian," you were going to pull in others to help answer my questions and concerns.

I waited patiently for a year and a half for your help. I was floored when you called me on January 25, 2016 not to give me answers – as I was expecting – but to threaten my membership instead.

I was disturbed by your actions on February 8, 2016 when you decided to break our January 25, 2016 gentleman's agreement to have an informal meeting on March 15, 2016 by not just breaking it but blindsiding me with announcing a disciplinary court to be held on Valentine's Day evening. You never called me to repentance. You never pointed out errors or mistakes in the CES Letter or cesletter.org for me to publicly correct, despite my multiple requests to you. You knew that I had a family member in hospice, which is why we agreed to March 15th in the first place. Yet, you still attempted to break our agreement by pushing to excommunicate me for reasons I did not know or understand.

It felt like bullying to me. It was not Christlike in any way.

I was extremely alarmed and disturbed by your actions on the week of February 8th with your claim that newly "additional information" demanded a disciplinary court be held against me that week on Valentine's Day. I was even more alarmed and disturbed when I read your disciplinary court notice a few days later stating that a court was being held against me because of "conduct unbecoming a member." I had no idea what you were talking about or accusing me of. These actions and very vague insinuations felt like a character assassination attempt on the part of you and the church by insinuating that I was being disciplined for moral failings (i.e. – adultery, rape, spousal abuse, child abuse, child molestation, or whatever other despicable evils left to the imagination of members who hear excommunication because of "conduct unbecoming a member" and "additional information").

Fortunately, you've cleared this up by clearly showing that any disciplinary action against me is not because of moral failings on my part but because of what you mistakenly perceive as "apostasy" through CES Letter and my being open with questions and doubts about church essay verified problems with LDS Church foundational truth claims.

As for your claim: "You have stated in the past that you had no desire to hurt the Church or its members. I am glad to hear that, although you need to understand that some of what you have said and done has done just that."

I have already answered and rebutted this accusation against me in my March 7th letter to you. For your convenience, I am copying/pasting from there to answer/rebut your accusation once again:

It is not my goal nor is it the goal of the CES Letter Foundation to drive members out of the church. My goal has been to get official answers from the church as promised me by its CES Director three years ago.

It is not me or the CES Letter itself that causes people to leave, if they do, but rather the facts and information verified by the church's own essays and other LDS approved sources that test and challenge testimonies. It is not only the disturbing facts that trouble members, it is the betrayal that many members feel learning these troubling facts for the first time after a lifetime of discipleship and faithful study of correlated church history.

The church's essays are shaking many, many members' testimonies. In fact, there are members who see the essays themselves as acting in opposition to the church and its foundational truth claims.

The great irony is that yesterday's "anti-Mormon lies" are now today's church essay facts.

Yesterday's historians and members with questions have been disciplined and excommunicated on accusations that they were "acting in opposition to the church" by simply publishing and discussing the very same information and facts verified today publicly by the church's own essays. Many wonder if the church will ever reverse those excommunications and apologize to those historians and individuals for being ahead of their time by speaking and writing the truth.

Again, my questions:

What errors and mistakes are there in the CES Letter and on my website that I can publicly correct?

If there are no errors or mistakes, why am I being punished for seeking and sharing the truth?

What questions am I being punished for asking?

Jeremy T. Runnells