

April 10, 2016

President Ivins,

I received your letter announcing a disciplinary council to be held against me on April 17, 2016. This is my response to your April 7, 2016 disciplinary court letter.

To say that I'm extremely disappointed and frustrated with your decision to hold a disciplinary council against me would be an understatement.

As I wrote in my last email to you on March 24<sup>th</sup>:

"It is my sincere hope that your next email to me will contain answers that I have been asking you for – *many times* – over the past year and a half. Questions which you agreed to help me get answers to – with *zero conditions* attached – in our November 2, 2014 meeting."

Rather than answering the questions, you went ahead and followed your year and a half pattern of consistently refusing to answer my sincere questions while attempting to excommunicate me on unfounded accusations.

Why won't you just answer the following questions, President?

- What errors or 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?

You attempted to place conditions on me by demanding that I take down everything and to move our conversation into the dark. Your demands were disturbing as they sought to obstruct and destroy the free agency of myself and others, to obstruct the free flow of information, and to imbalance the Mormon marketplace of information.

I have asked you questions seeking understanding and clarification from you as to how you and the church justify your demands to censor me, obstruct my free agency and the free agency of others, and to take our conversation away from the light of transparency and openness into the dark of secrecy and non-transparency. You likewise refused to answer and clarify.

After 3 years of waiting from the CES Director to fulfill his promise to give me answers to my sincere questions and concerns and after a year and a half of asking you over and over and over and over for answers and for you to fulfill your pledge to help me get answers, it is now becoming very clear to me that the church does *not* have answers.

It is now becoming very clear to me that you and the church not only do not have answers to the very serious problems to LDS Church foundational truth claims, you and the church are actively seeking to censor, silence, and kill the messenger rather than address the message.

In your April 7<sup>th</sup> disciplinary council letter I received from the Stake Clerk, you accused me of apostasy along with the following accusations as grounds to justify holding a disciplinary council against me:

1. Published materials and participated in interviews which have attempted to discredit the Church;
2. Publicly expressed your view that the Church's scriptures are fraudulent; and
3. Expressed opposition to Church leaders, including the Prophet Joseph Smith.

I will now respond to each one of your above accusations:

1. *Published materials and participated in interviews which have attempted to discredit the Church;*

I have already responded to and rebutted this accusation in my March 6, 2016 letter to you. The fact that you are still using this against me demonstrates that either you still do not understand the background and evolution of the CES Letter and related subsequent work or you are dishonestly ignoring the facts.

The Church's own essays (<https://www.lds.org/topics/essays?lang=eng>) discredit many of the Church's own foundational truth claims. Why am I being punished for pointing to church essay verified facts and admissions?

I have asked you over and over and over and over and over to show me any errors and mistakes in the CES Letter and elsewhere (this offer has included and still does include my interviews). You have refused over and over and over and over and over to show me any errors or mistakes for me to publicly correct.

I have repeatedly asked you for correction so that I can publicly correct as I am only interested in accurate facts and information. You have consistently refused to not only point out any errors or mistakes but you have never called me to repentance before attempting to hold not one but *two* now cancelled disciplinary councils against me.

2. *Publicly expressed your view that the Church's scriptures are fraudulent;*

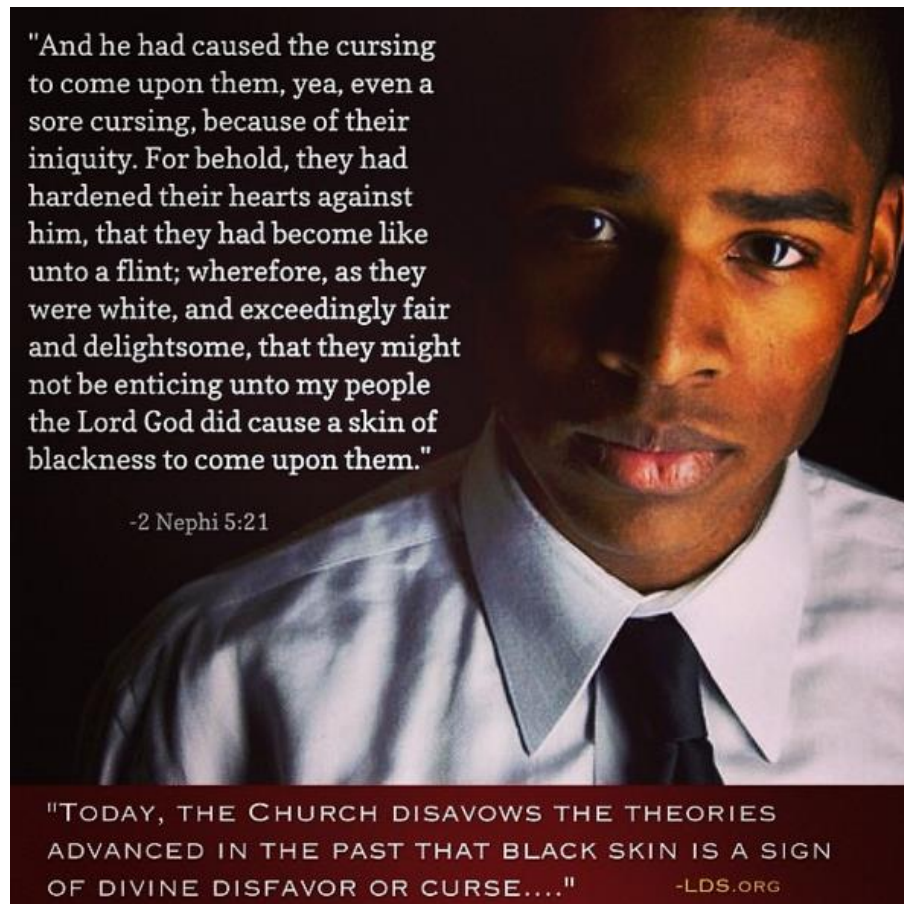
The Church's own essays (<https://www.lds.org/topics/essays?lang=eng>) discredit not just the Book of Mormon but the Book of Abraham and the Book of Moses. Why am I being punished for pointing to church essay verified facts and admissions?

Some examples:

**Book of Mormon:**

“Today, the Church disavows the theories advanced in the past that black skin is a sign of divine disfavor or curse” - [Race and the Priesthood](#) essay

This directly contradicts the Book of Mormon itself:



**Book of Abraham:**

“Neither the rules nor the translations in the grammar book correspond to those recognized by Egyptologists today...Scholars have identified the papyrus fragments as parts of standard funerary texts that were deposited with mummified bodies.” – [Translation and Historicity of the Book of Abraham](#) essay

In other words, Joseph’s Book of Abraham translations are wrong. Joseph Smith translated a standard funerary document that has nothing to do with Abraham or anything he claimed in

the Book of Abraham. Everything Joseph translated in the Book of Abraham, including the facsimiles, are incorrect as verified by modern Egyptologists.

“These fragments date to between the third century B.C.E. and the first century C.E., long after Abraham lived.” – [Translation and Historicity of the Book of Abraham](#) essay

By “long,” the church means 2,000 years. This means the papyri did not come from Abraham’s own hand as Joseph and the church claimed the last 175 or so years. This essay statement directly contradicts the statement found in the Book of Abraham:

“The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, *written by his own hand, upon papyrus.*” – [Book of Abraham](#)

The evidence against the Book of Abraham is so damning that the church abandoned, through its essay, its long held position that Joseph Smith did a literal translation from papyri. Rather than a literal translation, the church is now selling a contradictory and bizarre “Catalyst Theory,” which states that the Book of Abraham didn’t come from a literal translation – as the church has long taught Joseph Smith claimed – but rather from revelation.

### Book of Moses:

“Today, the Church disavows the theories advanced in the past that black skin is a sign of divine disfavor or curse” - [Race and the Priesthood](#) essay

This directly contradicts the Book of Moses itself:

“...there was a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people...” – [Moses 7:8](#)

### 3. Expressed opposition to Church leaders, including the Prophet Joseph Smith.

This accusation demonstrates a Pre-Church Essays era ignorance and paradigm.

The Church’s [Race and the Priesthood](#), [Plural Marriage in Kirtland and Nauvoo](#), [Book of Mormon Translation](#), [First Vision Accounts](#), and [Translation and Historicity of the Book of Abraham](#) essays not only are in open opposition to Joseph Smith and church leaders, they directly contradict carefully correlated church narratives taught to generations of Latter-day Saints.

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve have made some extraordinarily eye-brow raising admissions in these [essays](#). Among these admissions:

“Today, the Church disavows the theories advanced in the past that black skin is a sign of divine disfavor or curse, or that it reflects unrighteous actions in a premortal life;” - [Race and the Priesthood](#)

In other words, yesterday’s prophets are today’s heretics. Yesterday’s doctrine is today’s disavowed “theories”. Yesterday’s “anti-Mormon lies” are now today’s church essays facts.

Hindsight is 20/20. Yesterday’s prophets, seers, and revelators were not only wrong on so many important doctrines and claimed revelations – they contradict each other.

Brigham Young was wrong about Adam being God, for claiming it was received by revelation, and for introducing this false doctrine into the veil of the Temple.

Brigham Young was wrong about Blood Atonement.

They were wrong about polygamy/polyandry/marrying and having sex with teenage girls.

They were wrong for over 130 years on the blacks. Not only was the Priesthood denied but black individuals and black families were denied – for 130 years – the blessings of the Temple because of what the [Race and the Priesthood](#) essay admits and disavows as “theories” originated by racist Brigham Young in 1852. Worse, this racist teaching was accepted by 130 years of prophets, seers, and revelators all pointing to God himself as the source and gatekeeper of the ban.

They were wrong about Mark Hofmann’s fraud and forgeries.

They were wrong about so many other things.

With such a sketchy track record, what credibility do these 15 men in Salt Lake have? Why do they deserve our blind loyalty and unquestioning obedience?

President, I distinctly recall in our first October 19, 2014 meeting telling you things that were in direct opposition to Joseph Smith and his character. I remember telling you about the polyandry – how Joseph married other living men’s wives – as well as how Joseph lied to Emma, the Saints and the world about his dozens of polygamous marriages in the dark. When I told this, you had every reason to accuse me of direct opposition to Joseph Smith and that what I was telling you were “anti-Mormon lies.”

Well, something remarkable happened a few days later on October 22, 2014. The church released its very disturbing and problematic [Plural Marriage in Kirtland and Nauvoo](#) essay verifying that what I told you in our meeting just three days earlier was true and factual. In fact, this essay went further than I did by admitting the crazy but factual anti-free agency

story of an angel with a sword threatening Joseph Smith with destruction if he didn't practice polygamy.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> when I told you these facts, I was speaking in direct opposition against Joseph Smith and his character. It was a vicious "anti-Mormon lie."

Yet on October 22<sup>nd</sup>? It was no longer in direct opposition to Joseph Smith and his character. In fact, October 19<sup>th</sup>'s "anti-Mormon lies" suddenly became October 22<sup>nd</sup>'s church essay facts.

This event illustrates the problem: what you perceive as "opposition" and "anti-Mormon lies" are really church essays verified facts and church essays verified truth.

I have done nothing wrong. All I've wanted was the truth. All I've wanted was to resolve my doubts and concerns about the discrepancies of what I was learning in Sunday School and Church correlated narratives to the disturbing historical and doctrinal facts now verified by the [church's own essays](#).

To drag me into a disciplinary court is a grotesque injustice. To excommunicate me is an atrocious grotesque injustice. You are attempting to spiritually murder me while refusing to answer the very reasonable questions I have asked you so many times the past year and a half.

In your letter, President, you stated the following:

"As His representative in the stake where you reside, I want you to know that I stand ready to help you and your family in any way that I can."

Then help me. *Please answer my questions.*

Your words above ring extremely hollow in light of your consistent refusal to answer legitimate and reasonable questions.

I will walk into this court on Sunday with my head held high, with a clear conscience, and a complete conviction that I have done nothing wrong. I will defend myself vigorously.

Jeremy T. Runnells