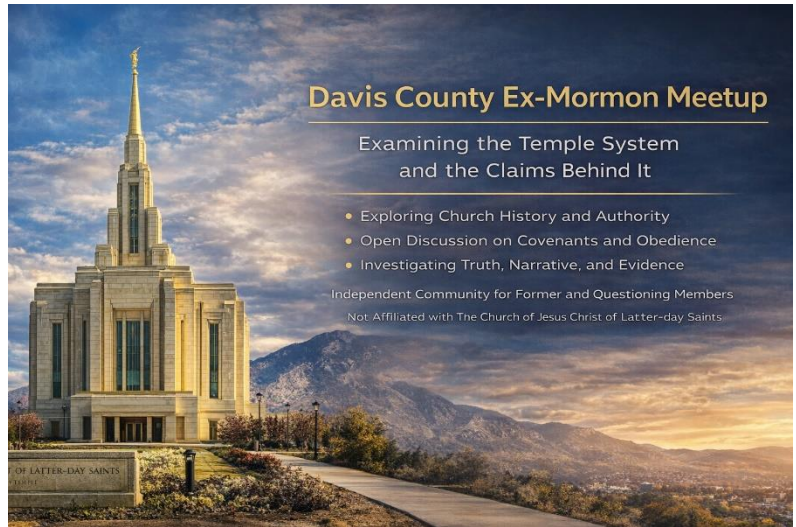


**Davis County Ex-Mormon meetup Sunday April 26, 2026, 02:30 PM at Smiths Marketplace, 1370 W 200 N, Kaysville, UT 84037.** Entering Smith's turn right, take the up staircase on the right side of Starbucks, turn right on the 2nd floor at the top of the stairs, take 10 strides passing the lockers to the conference room entrance on the right. **Contact:** Francis 'Nelson' Henderson, 858-668-6943, [francisnh12@gmail.com](mailto:francisnh12@gmail.com)

[All links from Invitations.](#) (375 Members)

**Our purposes: First,** we uncover the fallacies, deception, and misinformation employed by the LDS Church to gain control over our lives.

**Secondly,** when leaving Mormonism, people often find that they no longer have community or support. Our goal is to provide support for each other and to build community. So, whether you are a member, or left the church recently, or have been out for years, or were never Mormon but are looking for community, come and socialize with us and share your story.



We assist anyone wishing to resign their Church membership or post their own Exit Statement. Recommend [www.wasmormon.org](http://www.wasmormon.org).

“[The Grand Deception](#)” Art Carpenter’s new comparison, line-by-line, teachings of the King James Version of the New Testament against LDS doctrines.” Note: Art’s work is always found here: [All links from Invitations Full Exit Statement](#) of Francis ‘Nelson’ Henderson

**Invitation:** [Honesty: Duty of Candor, Negligence and Dereliction of Duty](#)

**Video:** Lost Faith or Honest Inquiry? [Mormonism and the Law: From Joseph Smith to Dallin H. Oaks](#) (49:10) [Benjamin Park, Historian](#)

The indictment is simple. Two of the highest leaders of the Church, Dallin H. Oaks and Todd Christofferson, are attorneys. Their professional training makes ignorance impossible, and their own actions reveal what they know. From the *Gospel Topics Essays* to their quiet revisions of the *Book of Mormon*, to President Russell M. [Nelson’s public demonstration](#) (0:51) of Joseph Smith’s “seer stone in the hat,” they have disclosed enough to recognize that Smith’s foundational claims cannot be sustained. If the *Book of Mormon* is not historical, then LDS Church foundational claims collapse.



Any honest Aaronic Priesthood teenager could connect those dots<sup>1</sup>. Yet these men, armed with superior knowledge and authority, have chosen silence, half-truths, and cosmetic disclosure. That is not prudence; it is **negligence**—a knowing failure of duty. When silence maintains a falsehood, silence itself becomes deceit. This is the textbook definition of **dereliction of duty**.

## 2. Honesty (for those still pretending not to know what it means)

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<sup>1</sup> [FannyAlgerAffair-AdulteryDisguisedAsMarriage.pdf](#)  
Smith’s [Happiness Letter](#)<sup>1</sup> to 19-year-old Nancy Rigdon  
[A Moral Critique](#) of Joseph Smith’s Secret Marriages to the Partridge Sisters

Honesty is not a game of selective disclosure or a performance of moral rectitude while concealing inconvenient facts behind one's back. It is the full alignment of one's words with the whole truth of a matter, not merely the fraction that flatters one's cause.

An honest person does not conceal critical information and then congratulate himself for not having *technically* lied. That is the refuge of the lawyer who forgets that the law was meant to serve truth, not replace it. Silence, when it permits a falsehood to stand unchallenged, is a lie told with the mouth closed.

Honesty does not traffic in half-truths, euphemisms, or carefully staged omissions “in the interest of faith.” Such performances are simply deceit dressed for Sunday. Nor does it resort to rhetorical distractions—attacking a source's loyalty rather than confronting the evidence. That maneuver, beloved of Mormon apologists, is called *argumentum ad hominem* everywhere else, and *gaslighting* in modern English.

Honesty is an act of **courage**, not convenience. It demands truth even when the truth makes one's institution look shabby or one's prophet seem human after all. It is not situational, not subject to correlation-committee review, and not voided by fear of what the faithful might think.

That a definition of honesty must be supplied to men who claim prophetic gifts, manage billion-dollar assets, and carry law degrees is astonishing. Yet in today's Church—where half-truths are canonized as “milk before meat”—the clarification is overdue.

Honesty is not the art of withholding facts until discovery becomes inconvenient. It is not the dignified silence of leaders who know more than they will say. To misdirect, to obscure context, or to deflect by questioning a messenger's loyalty—these are all dishonest acts. The moral weight of a statement lies not in whether it can pass legal scrutiny but in whether it gives the hearer an accurate understanding of reality. Those who trade in technicalities while posturing as servants of God reveal their allegiance to something smaller: the preservation of the enterprise.

A religion that cannot survive honesty is already dead; it merely hasn't been told.



### **3. Responsibility and the Duty of Candor**

As one ascends through the ranks of any organization, the definition of honesty expands with the reach of one's influence. What might be ignorance in a novice becomes negligence in a leader. Responsibility rises in direct proportion to authority.

The higher one's station, the greater the duty to inspect one's own beliefs for self-deception. To confuse emotional arousal with revelation is not spirituality but negligence. To codify that confusion into policy is dereliction of duty. When a man interprets his every physiological thrill as the whisperings of God, he makes his endocrine system a deity and his conscience a bystander. Such self-deception is not innocent; it is willful blindness weaponized by position.

### **4. The Fraud of "Feeling the Spirit"**

The Mormon teaching that emotions are divine messages is sentimentality masquerading as theology. It confuses psychological comfort with epistemic certainty. To equate a surge of warmth or a tearful tremor with revelation from the Almighty is to canonize one's own bias. It is an ethical abdication, a conversion of self-indulgence into piety.

An omniscient God, we are told, reveals eternal truth through the same chemical signals that accompany hunger, nostalgia, or caffeine. That is not revelation; it is biochemistry mistaken for authority. The result is a church hierarchy populated by men unable to distinguish conviction from evidence—leaders who interpret their own certainty as proof of inspiration.

This confusion breeds moral disaster. It allows the devout to claim divine endorsement for their prejudices while dismissing dissenters as faithless. It is how sincere men commit dishonest acts without ever feeling dishonest.

### **5. The Temple Endowment and the Institution of Obedience<sup>2</sup>**

Joseph Smith's temple endowment is the structural embodiment of authoritarian values. Within its dramatized allegory, questioning authority is portrayed as rebellion against God, while obedience—unquestioning and absolute—is elevated as the highest virtue. It replaces moral reasoning with ritual submission.

The ceremony's deeper lesson is not about covenant but control. It teaches that divine approval flows downward through a chain of command rather than upward through conscience. This inversion of ethics ensures that future leaders, even intelligent ones, will inherit obedience as holiness.

Oaks and his peers are its perfect product: brilliant, disciplined, and incapable of heresy. The temple forbids the self-examination that would expose its own moral flaw. Thus, the Brethren's silence is not merely tactical; it is the logical outcome of ritualized obedience. They have confused loyalty with integrity and self-deception with faith.

### **6. Conclusion**

Leadership multiplies responsibility. What the laity may call confusion, a prophet must call deceit if he persists in it. Those who demand obedience, collect tithes, and claim prophetic authority assume a duty of candor, competence, and care. They ask for and receive the trust of millions whose lives and identities depend upon their representations.

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<sup>2</sup> The Temple is ethically deficient because [it destroys the very thing that makes morality possible](#) — human freedom.

To know that Joseph Smith's foundational stories are false and not refute them—to profit from belief while concealing disproof—is complicity in a fraud. A man who claims revelation while suppressing fact commits both spiritual treason and professional malpractice.

The honest course is the harder one: to admit deception, to dismantle the myth, and to start again on the solid ground of truth. Until that happens, the organization remains what it has become—a monument to institutional self-deception, staffed by men too frightened of their own emotions to test whether God is truly the author of their certainty.

## Telling Church History

Dishonesty or manipulation of information are perilous temptations religious leaders face if seeking to maintain Church truth claims and image. Joseph Smith's fantastical claims about the Book of Mormon or the Book of Abraham are now verifiably not translations, not historical, but are Smith's contemporary inventions.

### **Truth versus Rationalization**

Truth is simple and coherent; dishonesty always multiplies complexity. Rationalizations arise only when trying to reconcile the irreconcilable. For example, modern DNA<sup>3</sup> evidence demonstrates that Native Americans are not Israelites. There are no Lamanites. Yet Church leaders continue to obscure the facts, layering explanation upon explanation refusing to see the untrustworthy character revealed by Smith's lies, his court record(s), his ethical failure(s).<sup>4</sup>

There are many forms of dishonesty: factual denial, selective omission, misinterpretation, misleading marketing, and—most insidious of all—self-deception. A community whose leaders embraces any of these betrays its members, because it denies them the dignity of informed choice.

### **Commands to Tell History Dishonestly**

In my own day, Apostle Boyd K. Packer demanded that Mormon historians demonstrate that “the hand of the Lord [has been] in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now.”<sup>5</sup> This was not advice—it was a command that professional historians present a faith-promoting narrative, even if that meant suppressing or falsifying the record.

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<sup>3</sup> [Appendix B - Lamanite Genetic Genealogy](#) Native Americans are not Israelites

<sup>4</sup> [FannyAlgerAffair-AdulteryDisguisedAsMarriage.pdf](#)

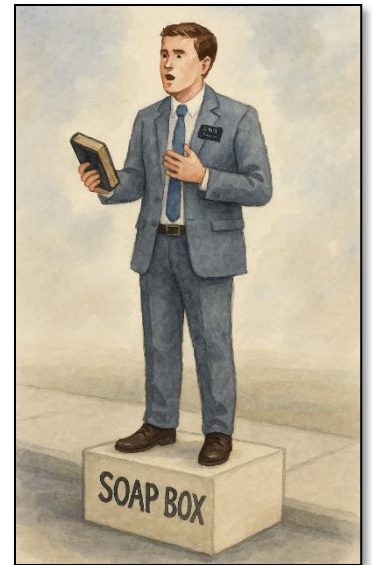
[Marrying Wealthy Orphans](#): The Inheritance of Maria and Sarah Lawrence, By Francis N Henderson

<sup>5</sup> Boyd K. Packer, “The Mantle is Far, Far Greater Than the Intellect,” presented on 22 August 1981 to Seminary, Institute, and Brigham Young University religion instructors, and published in [Brigham Young University Studies](#), 21

Ezra Taft Benson also admitted his frustration when seminary and institute teachers asked, “When and where can we begin to tell them our real story?”<sup>6</sup> The very question, he said, implied that the Church had not been telling the truth. And he was right. Leaders, teachers, and writers have long fed members a mixture of platitudes, half-truths, omissions, and plausible denials.

### When Lying is Justified

Of course, not all lies are immoral. If the Nazi Gestapo demanded to know whether you were hiding Jewish families in your attic, lying would be justified—because protecting innocent life outweighs abstract honesty. But LDS Church’s lies are of a very different nature. They cannot be justified as life saving because they destroy the very freedoms required for a moral choices. Such lies are to preserve institutional power. They are designed not to protect the vulnerable, but to protect the corporate image of the Church.



### Conflicts of Interest

Church leaders consistently frame their obligation to truth differently than ordinary moral people do. Joseph Fielding Smith, as Church Historian, deliberately withheld early accounts of Joseph Smith’s First Vision that contradicted the official version. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, while President of BYU, denied that electroshock aversion therapy for gay students was conducted under his watch—though evidence later proved otherwise. In both cases, truth was sacrificed to protect institutional reputation.

This is the recurring pattern: when the choice arises between honesty and institutional image, *image wins*. The corporate Church comes first, members’ rights to informed consent come second—or not at all.

### Dishonesty as Habit

The ongoing self-deception by Church leaders when they testify “I know” instead of “I believe” or “I have faith” is a continuation of the delusion they practiced their whole lives leading up to high office. An honest testimony might say, “I live as if these things are true.” But the institutional formula requires “I know,” which is intellectually dishonest. That [dishonesty](#)<sup>7</sup>, repeated endlessly, becomes habit. Habit becomes reflex. Reflex becomes policy.

### The claim of “Being Right,” seeks to Control

The act of “being right,” or of “knowing” is not about truth, but attempts to compel obedience. It was Joseph Smith’s original purpose in Testimony meetings, and it remains the unexamined model modern leaders follow. The most blatant example is in the Temple, where the Law of Obedience is a relic of Old Testament patriarchy. It demands loyalty to priesthood authority over conscience, institutional allegiance over personal integrity.

### The Oaks Ethic

Elder Oaks’ perspective on truth-telling reflects this institutional ethic. His framework emphasizes:

1. **Institutional Loyalty** – The priority of protecting the reputation and trustworthiness of the Church, even above individual well-being.
2. **Hierarchical Obedience** – Deference to priesthood authority and strict adherence to established order.

<sup>6</sup> Ezra Taft Benson, *The Gospel Teacher and His Message* (Salt Lake City: The Church Educational System, 1976), 11-12.

<sup>7</sup> TOTAS: Deconstructing Dishonesty - An Apostolic Rationalization for Lies – Examination of [Oaks Justification](#)

Elder Oaks - Gospel Teaching on Lying. A Virtual Reading. Apostle Dallin H [Oaks to students and alumni](#) at BYU Law School.

3. **Moral Absolutism with Exceptions** – While insisting on moral absolutes, Oaks allows exceptions where “higher duties” are at stake—meaning, in practice, that preserving the Church often justifies withholding or distorting truth.

It appears Lawyers like Elder Oaks have justified to themselves sins of omission when he thinks it protects the Church, at least in the short term. His lifelong words and actions, combined with the high office he is screened to fill, reveal the authoritarian values I suspect he has uncritically adopted from the main thrust of the [Temple Endowment](#). It puts institutional interest first, above individual rights to informed consent.

### **The Verdict: Image Over Integrity**

Taken together, the evidence demonstrates a consistent pattern. When faced with the choice between honesty and institutional image, LDS leaders choose image. They justify it as protecting faith, but in reality it protects authority. The price is borne by ordinary members, who entrust their lives, families, and futures to an institution that withholds the very truth they need to make informed choices.

This is not harmless. It is an ethical betrayal. It is the continuation of the same delusion cultivated in Testimony: the institutional insistence on “knowing” when one does not know. What begins in the pew as a ritual of certainty becomes, in leadership, a policy of concealment.

### **Closing Argument**

The modern apostles perform less like prophets and more like defense attorneys for a long-dead client whose guilt is no longer in question but whose reputation must still be preserved for billing purposes. Their strategy is as predictable as it is contemptible: they isolate every outrage of Joseph Smith’s life—his lies, his forgeries, his marriages to other men’s wives—as “complex historical matters,” never to be considered together lest the jury of the faithful glimpse the pattern. Each new revelation is excused by appealing to his “prophetic mantle,” as though inspiration were an all-purpose plea bargain. Any ordinary man exhibiting Smith’s behavior would be condemned as a predator or a fraud, but the Brethren wave the statute of limitations like incense, as if sin fades into sanctity after a century and a half of polishing. They will forgive him anything—bigamy, deceit, coercion—so long as it happened on parchment browned with age. In their moral arithmetic, time itself is the redeemer; truth is the casualty; and the prophet, forever guilty, is forever innocent.

This indulgence is not born of compassion but of dependency. The institution cannot survive the full truth about its founder because its own authority is collateralized against his sanctity. To admit that Smith was not divinely chosen but self-appointed would bankrupt the whole enterprise; every subsequent “prophet” would be exposed as heir to a fraud, not a revelation. So the leadership clings to him with the desperation of debtors guarding their only remaining asset. The result is a culture of inherited delusion, where moral judgment is suspended in the name of loyalty, and collective denial is praised as faith. The saints are told that history is complicated when, in fact, it is merely inconvenient. Their devotion demands that they love the man more than the truth, because to love the truth would end the Church.

The Church cannot claim to be the steward of truth while practicing deceit. Truth does not fear inquiry. Truth does not punish scholars, historians, and seekers of integrity. Truth does not need to be guarded behind walls of plausible denial. If the LDS Church insists on image over integrity, it proves by its own actions that its foundation is not truth but fear.

### **Jury Instruction: The Reader’s Verdict**

You, the reader, are the jury in this case. The evidence has been presented. The counts are clear: deliberate deception, habitual dishonesty, and institutionalized concealment. The verdict is not mine to impose—it is yours to render.

Ask yourself:

- Can an institution that suppresses facts, rewrites history, and punishes truth-tellers be trusted with your conscience?
- Can leaders who place institutional image above honesty be trusted with your loyalty?
- Can a religion that demands certainty at the cost of compassion truly claim to be a steward of truth?

In law, a witness who lies under oath is discredited. In religion, an institution that lies under oath to God and humanity is disqualified. You must decide whether the LDS Church's pattern of dishonesty—rooted in Testimony as ritualized delusion—renders it unworthy of your allegiance.

Truth is not fragile. Truth does not require secrecy. Truth does not punish doubt. If the Church were built on truth, it would welcome scrutiny rather than fear it. Therefore, the case is in your hands. The only question is whether you will continue to give loyalty to an institution that has forfeited its right to claim it.

*“A church that rewrites its history and silences its critics is not defending truth—it is defending power. Testimony enforced as certainty is not faith but coercion. The LDS Church has made its choice: image over integrity. The only question left is whether you will continue to give loyalty to an institution that has broken trust.”*

Could it be that something has changed in church leadership when the "Joseph Smith Papers Project" was authorized and funded? For example, Oaks would have been among the Church leaders authorizing it, therefore, should we be cutting him some slack?

Short Answer: No. Nothing in the “Joseph Smith Papers Project” indicates that Dallin H. Oaks ever abandoned, softened, or even reconsidered his view that institutional preservation outranks honesty or that he has a superior ethical duty to all those who trust and follow him. In fact, the Joseph Smith Papers Project—and the way it is framed, curated, and promoted—proves the opposite.

It is tempting to believe that the project signals a softening of Dallin H. Oaks' long-held stance that “everything may be sacrificed”<sup>8</sup> to protect the Church's authority. Yet a careful examination of the project's origins, structure, and messaging—combined with Oaks' continued rhetoric—reveals that the underlying ethic has not changed.

The Joseph Smith Papers Project arose not from a desire for open accountability but from the Church's recognition that the historical record could no longer be contained. Independent historians, journalists, scholars, and ordinary members were already publishing original documents online. By the early 2000s, the Church faced a simple choice: release the documents themselves or lose narrative control forever. Thus, the project serves as institutionally controlled transparency, a method of publishing documents in a format that preserves the Church's interpretive authority.

The analytical essays accompanying the documents consistently avoid clear conclusions, psychological insights, or any acknowledgment of deception. The release of information is thus framed, softened, and domesticated so that damaging implications remain unstated.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> [Do church leaders think they have a duty to tell the truth.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Marrying Wealthy Orphans](#): The Inheritance of Maria and Sarah Lawrence, By Francis N Henderson. The damning conflict of interest Smith created as guardian to the Maria and Sarah Lawrence \$8,000 inheritance while simultaneously marrying the girls. It's

Oaks' Continued Rhetoric Proves His View Has Not Changed. If Oaks had changed his mind, we would expect to see evidence of it in his teachings. Instead, his post-Joseph Smith Papers speeches continue to emphasize:

- obedience over inquiry,
- loyalty over evidence,
- unquestioning trust in leaders,
- and the spiritual danger of criticism—even when true.

Oaks has not contradicted, qualified, or apologized for his earlier statements.<sup>10</sup> He has not welcomed open examination of the project's historical implications. On the contrary, he warns members not to look outside approved interpretive sources, even while those very sources quietly concede facts that undermine Joseph Smith's foundational claims.

The Joseph Smith Papers Project ensures that the brethren now have full access to primary documents that unequivocally disprove key historical claims:

- the papyri behind the Book of Abraham date over a millennium after Abraham,
- the Book of Mormon contains extensive 17th-century KJV material,
- Joseph Smith's treasure-digging court records exist,
- DNA evidence contradicts the Lamanite narrative.

Yet Oaks' teachings have not shifted in the slightest to reflect these realities. The documents are acknowledged; the implications are ignored. This is not transparency. It is informed concealment.

In Conclusion, the Joseph Smith Papers Project does not exonerate modern leaders. If anything, it intensifies their responsibility because they now know the full historical record in detail. Yet the brethren continue to demand obedience based on narratives that record refutes.

The moral breach lies not only in what Joseph Smith did but in the brethren's continued refusal to acknowledge what they now undeniably know. The project has not yet changed Oaks' stance—it reveals his refusal to acknowledge their implications. This is not growth. It is informed continuation of the same ethically compromised stance.

Oaks rhetoric since the project's publication shows no evolution toward candor—only a refined version of the same institutional preservationist he articulated in the 1980s. If anything, the Joseph Smith Papers Project confirms that he knows the historical problems intimately. Despite the tithing, the sacrifice, the obedience, Oaks forsakes his awful responsibility owed to all who trusted.

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believed the girls recovered none of the 1846 jury award of \$7,759.06 plus \$4,275.88 in damages. Employing public relations tactics LDS Attorney Gordon A. Madsen 170 years later, impossibly, only needed to cast doubt on the 1846 court result.

<sup>10</sup> [Oaks Doctrine of Institutional Supremacy](#)

## Testimony as Manufactured Certainty and Ethical Betrayal

Testimony is the wrong goal. Feelings are not evidence. The bodies' reaction to emotions are not answers to prayer. Instead, the goal is truth, evidence, compassion, conscience, being true to oneself.<sup>11</sup>

In Mormonism, a “Testimony” is framed not as personal faith or hope, but as absolute, unquestionable truth. Members learn to stand and declare: “I know the Church is true,” “I know Joseph Smith was a prophet,” “I know the Book of Mormon is the word of God.” These declarations are presented as factual certainties—indelible and beyond doubt. Yet this is not knowledge. It is a collective delusion: ritualized psychosis that normalizes certainty without evidence.

*“When we speak untruths, we are guilty of lying. We can also intentionally deceive others by a gesture or a look, by silence, or by telling only part of the truth. Whenever we lead people in any way to believe something that is not true, we are not being honest.”*

LDS Definition of Honesty

By repeating “I know” in Fast and Testimony meetings, members gradually silence doubt, stamp out inquiry, and merge their identities with the institution. What would be pathological elsewhere—asserting certainty in absence of evidence—is lauded as sanctified strength in the Mormon context. Declaring knowledge becomes an act of obedience masquerading as spiritual insight.



Once publicly proclaimed, that “Testimony” becomes a chain. Doubt is not just questioned—it is betrayal. The believer pledges loyalty before peers, children, and God; the Church no longer needs reasoned defense, because it has trained its members to be its mouthpiece.

Perhaps most disturbing is how children are inducted into this. In Fast and Testimony meetings, young boys and girls are ushered to the stand and coached to recite words they barely comprehend: “I know the Church is true.” This is programming, not faith formation. Children learn that certainty equals approval, that uncertainty means weakness—or worse, sin. Over time, this molds minds to value obedience over authenticity.

### **Testimony Undermines Faith’s Ethical Purpose**

The true purpose of faith should be to foster compassion, community, and human flourishing. But Mormon Testimony replaces empathy with enforcement of belief. Certainty becomes an idol that breeds intolerance—any dissent is pathologized. Rather than softening hearts, it hardens them; rather than inviting inclusion, it compels exclusion.

This destructive pattern is evident in the treatment of scholars and truth-tellers who acted with integrity:

- **David P. Wright (1994)** – A gifted biblical scholar, Wright’s research on the Hebrew Bible and LDS scripture demonstrated that the Book of Mormon drew on 19th-century sources. For this integrity, he was dismissed from BYU and excommunicated by his stake in Massachusetts in 1994, punished not for malice but for scholarship rooted in honesty.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [Testimony – Paul Built it – Smith Copied it](#), By Francis Nelson Henderson, Sept 2025

<sup>12</sup> [Another Mormon Scholar Is Punished](#), The scholar, David P. Wright, an assistant professor of Judaic and Near Eastern studies at Brandeis University, is the sixth Mormon intellectual to be excommunicated. Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance, Vol 3, Ch 23, [David P. Wright](#) - PUSHED OUT OF MY SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL HOME"

- **Lavina Fielding Anderson (1993)** – A respected editor and feminist scholar, Anderson published her landmark 1992 essay documenting ecclesiastical abuse and the suppression of LDS intellectuals. For her refusal to recant, she was excommunicated in September 1993. She later described her “apostasy” charge as rooted not in disloyalty, but in her willingness to tell the truth about institutional behavior.<sup>13</sup>
- **Janice Merrill Allred (1995)** – A theologian and trustee of the Mormon Alliance, Allred’s writings explored the theology of “God the Mother.” In her case study *White Bird Flying*, she explained that her 1995 excommunication was not truly about doctrine but about obedience: “The real issue was not my views about God, but whether I would submit to male priesthood authority.”<sup>14</sup>

These individuals were expelled for their integrity. Each case demonstrates that in Mormonism, strengthening one’s Testimony means strengthening one’s loyalty to the institution at the expense of truth, compassion, and conscience. The ethical cost is devastating: communities lose their prophets of honesty, while obedience masquerades as righteousness.

*“When a church asks you to silence your doubts, punish your questions, and sacrifice honesty for belonging, it is not asking for faith—it is demanding submission. The LDS Church has betrayed the very people who trusted it most. Every member must decide: will I keep surrendering my conscience, or will I reclaim it?”<sup>15</sup>*

If there is one thing the LDS Church has perfected, it is the art of teaching its members to treat their own minds like fragile heirlooms—objects to be shielded from any contact with truth not issued by Church headquarters. The tragedy is not that members lack intelligence but that they have been trained to fear their own capacity to think.

From childhood, they learn that their “testimony” must be protected like a skittish animal. Doubt becomes sin. Questions become betrayal. Curiosity becomes Satan’s tool. And information—ordinary, historical, factual information—becomes radioactive. The result is a congregation of people who erect psychological barricades against anything that might disturb their cultivated certainty.

This is not faith; it is intellectual quarantine.

Why? Because the Church ties belief to identity so tightly that if the belief cracks, the self cracks with it. They preach “I know... I know... I know...” until the very idea of not knowing feels like annihilation. They fuse theology with self-worth, family belonging, eternal destiny, and social acceptance. Under such conditions, doubt is not merely inconvenient, it is existentially catastrophic.

And the leaders know this. They depend on it. If members allowed their minds the freedom they fear, the Church’s truth claims would disintegrate by lunchtime. So, the institution enshrines a culture in which certainty is virtue, inquiry is vice, and protecting one’s own ignorance becomes an act of righteousness.

This is not spirituality. This is the psychology of people trained to guard their own chains.

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<sup>13</sup> Lavina Fielding Anderson, “The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26, no. 1 (Spring 1993).

<sup>14</sup> Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance, Vol 2, Part4, [White Bird Flying](#): My Struggle for a More Loving, Tolerant, and Egalitarian Church. Janice M. Allred

<sup>15</sup> The sentiment expressed is a common theme in discussions about religious trauma, institutional trust, and personal conscience. The quote is a modern statement on social media related to the LDS Church