

I am not insane.. Really

Written by Ed Decker
Thursday, 20 October 2011 22:17 -

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I found this old news report in a long lost file. I thought you might enjoy it.

Ed at: www.saintsalive.com

**Controversial LDS Critic Ready to Repent and Return To the Faith?
'No,' He Says, 'I Haven't Gone Insane',**

BY BOB MIMS THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE
Saturday, July 1, 2000

The rumor hit Mormon Internet discussion groups like a trumpet blast from the golden horn of the Angel Moroni: Ed Decker, who left the LDS Church in 1976 to become one of its most

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reviled foes, was returning to the faith. It was the story of the Prodigal Son all over again.

Decker, founder of the ex-Mormons group Saints Alive in Jesus and author of such LDS exposes as "The Godmakers," would confess his errors and possibly repent during the Aug. 24-25 Mormon Apologetics Symposium at Alta. Problem was, it just wasn't true. More on that later.

The source of the speculation? A news release from the symposium's sponsor, the Foundation for Apologetic Information & Research Inc. (FAIR), stating that Decker had asked to present a paper to the group of Mormon defenders titled "Confessions of a Professional Anti-Mormon."

In announcing Decker's overture, FAIR President Darryl Barksdale admitted to being wary and asked him to submit a draft of his paper. Still, he could not completely contain his excitement about hosting the forum for such a sensational personal revival.

"If Mr. Decker is sincere in his desire to repent of his deceptive and un-Christian past, we certainly applaud his change of heart and his willingness to undo some of the damage he's done," Barksdale said. "It takes a courageous man to do that. We welcome him with open arms."

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But members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can hold off breaking out in a round of "Come, Come, Ye Saints." Decker, reached through his Saints Alive headquarters in Issaquah, Wash., says not only will he be a FAIR no-show, he has no intention of returning to the faith.

"No, I haven't gone insane. I'm not going back to the Mormon Church," he said, though he acknowledged having contacted FAIR about speaking. Decker said his original inquiry was "kind of tongue-in-cheek" and that FAIR's reaction had convinced him he would be better off not going.

"I saw this [conference] pop up on my e-mails and just thought I'd e-mail [FAIR] and see what they'd think," Decker said. "I was looking for something between me railing on the Mormons and falling down on my face and confessing and 'repenting my evil ways.' "

Had he spoken to FAIR, Decker said he simply planned to "tell them there are irrefutable, nonnegotiable differences between Orthodox Christianity and Mormonism." "My idea was maybe we can come up and communicate without being seen as an evil person for having left the church," he said, adding he would not pursue attending the conference further.

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Barksdale reacted with a mixture of humor, disappointment and relief upon learning of Decker's true intentions. "I was really shocked when I got his e-mail. With Ed, you never know. But I was more amused than anything else," Barksdale said from his Santa Cruz, Calif., home.

Barksdale e-mailed Decker back, tentatively welcoming him and asking for a draft copy of his paper. Now, he can make up his speaker's list minus the controversial LDS critic, though he left an invitation open.

"When I told my LDS apologetics e-mail group, half of them said 'No' or 'Heck no,' but the remainder said to bring it on," Barksdale said. "He'd certainly be welcome, but I tell you he might be uncomfortable -- he'd be facing a lot of the best minds in the LDS Church."

FAIR is in its third year, having been launched in late 1997 by a handful of Mormons participating in LDS discussions on America Online. They created a Web site as a repository for responses to church critics and later began distributing a free monthly newsletter. Barksdale said the FAIR site now averages 250,000 visitor hits a week. Meanwhile, the 2,500-member organization has published five books and is embarking on publication of a series of Mormon faith-promoting pamphlets.

Decker, too, operates a Web site for his ministry, which he says was called to "witness Jesus to those lost in Mormonism and other cults."

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