

Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: ^ ()

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--Preface

Below is the full-text, in-post document of an entry by Steve Benson, entitled "Behind-the-Scenes Efforts by the Benson Family to Silence Their 'Disloyal' Own," which appeared on the "Recovery from Mormonism" website, 12 August 2005, with original emphasis.

When it was reposted here recently, some lurking, night-of-the-living-dead Mormon apologist(s)--impersonating two deceased BYU political science BYU professors, including one for whom I worked as an undergrad teaching assistant--came to this site using bluster and expletives in their now-deleted diatribes to denounce its evil, untimely and factual encore.

In the spirit of openness, is provided here again, this time in slightly expanded, easier to read, line-by-line form, trolls be damned.

--Introduction: Come, Come Ye Saints, No Truth Be Spoken Here

The Mormon Church (assisted by its loyal, brainwashed, pious puppets) is notorious for its relentless attempts to control (meaning, deny) access to information by its lay membership and the public at large on a host of important issues.

My own personal experience in this regard over the past several years has involved such matters as:

1. official LDS Church secrecy and cover-up concerning the mental and physical health of my grandfather and former Mormon president, Ezra Taft Benson;
2. inappropriate involvement by Apostle Boyd K. Packer in the excommunication of feminist author Paul Toscano and the subsequent attempted cover-up of this abuse of ecclesiastical power by Apostle Dallin Oaks;
3. efforts by Oaks and fellow apostle Neal A. Maxwell to keep secret from the general LDS Church membership their views on many important doctrinal, historical and policy matters, including the historicity of the Book of Mormon, the provability of the Book of Abraham and the means by which LDS leaders supposedly receive divine revelation;
4. attempts by my grandfather and others to discourage research into the official Mormon Church position on the theory of organic evolution, for fear that it might reflect negatively on the authority, credibility, knowledge and expertise of the Brethren; and
5. an effort by Utah's Mormon Senator, Orrin Hatch, to persuade me to intervene in order stop media investigation of LDS General Authority Paul H. Dunn's wartime fabrications.

--Aiding and Abetting the Ignorance: A Benson Family Legacy

The Mormon Church has been aided in its efforts to control access to information vital to rational decision-making by loyal accomplices within its membership ranks.

Sadly, in my case, these have included members of my own family, who--in the name of protecting the Church and sustaining its "prophetic" leadership--have vigorously attempted to block efforts to obtain or release important facts on certain "delicate" and potentially embarrassing matters facing the LDS Church.

The purpose of this examination is to provide a window, born of my own experience, into vigorous behind-the-scenes efforts by members of the Benson family to discourage, criticize, silence and, if necessary, publicly de-legitimize those (in this particular case, myself) who have been seen as a threat to the institutional interests of the Mormon Church.

In my case, certain members of the Benson clan determined to do what they could to stop me from making public statements about deliberate misrepresentations by the Mormon Church concerning the deteriorating health of my grandfather and his ability to serve as president.

In relation to Benson family efforts to silence me, RfM poster, "DebbiePA," recently asked:

"Steve, this all happened a long time ago. I'm curious:

"Do you still feel like you're suffering the fallout of leaving?

Are there family members and/or friends who never spoke to you again? Are there family members and/or friends who left the Church and came back to thank you? What, if anything, would you have done differently when all this was going down?"

Quoting from a previous post of mine on RfM, I replied:

"I have a cordial, but distant relationship with most of my immediate and extended family. They are up to their puffy white temple hats in the Church, and we don't have a whole lot to talk about since I no longer do green Jello, Priesthood Session or Book of Mormon reading time.

"I do occasionally attend family functions or drop in for visits when behind the Zion Curtain (but not often because, frankly, there is way too much Mormonism that entangles and obstructs honest relationships, all of which I find annoying and which bring up old hurts and anger that will never completely dissipate). I am in the process of processing and hope to come to some comfort level with them. I have a couple of sibs with whom I am quite close; the others are friendly, but we aren't drinking buddies--yet (heh, heh).

"The Mormon Church is the neutron bomb of religion. It destroys the inner workings of families, leaving people hollow, devastated and incomplete--with the outward appearance of structure. Having been poisoned by it, I try staying away from it as much as possible. I am much happier outside its epicenter."

As will be seen, when it came to exposing the truth about deliberate Mormon Church lies designed to disguise the actual mental/physical health and capabilities of its president Ezra Taft Benson, distraught and worried members of the Benson family tried to muzzle me in order to prevent the emergence of what they saw as potential threats posed by my assertions to both the faith of members within the ranks and the authority of Mormon Church leaders.

These efforts will be demonstrated by quoting extensively from private correspondence sent to me by various members of the Benson family during the time period in question. Given the sensitive nature of these letters, the identity of their authors will remain anonymous, limited in characterized to general kinship relation.

--Background on the Efforts to Silence Public Dissent Within the Benson Ranks

In the summer of 1993, I went to the media with criticism of the Mormon Church's blatantly deceptive handling of my grandfather's deteriorating mental and physical health.

I accused the LDS Church leadership of deliberately misrepresenting his condition and asserted that, in fact, my grandfather was so infirm that he was functionally incapable of meaningfully administering the affairs of the Church in his role as its president.

Later that same year, [by then-spouse] Mary Ann and I resigned our membership from the Church.

My criticisms resulted in concerted efforts by some in the Benson family to get me to shut up.

Those attempts included behind-the-scenes personal attacks, as well as public efforts to discredit me. While some Benson clan members were particularly pointed in their assaults, others were somewhat less harsh, although equally concerned about the impact of my statements and actions.

I had confided to some family members that my faith in Mormonism was a low ebb; thus they also pleaded with me not to leave the Church.

Below are verbatim excerpts from their correspondence.

--From an In-law, 16 July 1993:

"Mr. Benson,

"I read an article in my local paper about your comments relating to your grandfather and could not imagine your motive. Is your cartoon not enough exposure to satisfy you?

"Common sense would tell anyone that if your grandfather were his old self, he would be at the pulpit. No one is being deceived. Brothers Hinckley and Monson are only showing respect and love for someone whose life has been one that merits that respect. Several of our Prophets in my lifetime have needed help from those set apart to counsel with them.

"For you to suggest a man-made solution for a Church founded on prophecy (when there is really no problem) makes me wonder about your commitment.

"My husband is a bishop. When he is away his counselors carry on the functions of the ward with full authority. Is not the situation the same? And are not second-guessing the Lord? And did your mother teach you no filial respect?

"I have always been proud to be a part of the Benson family, though I've never made people in my area are of that relationship because I didn't want to boast about others' accomplishment. Now, I'm happy to have kept silent because I am ASHAMED to be related to YOU."

--From a Sibling, 15 May 1993:

"I have been wanting to write this missive for quite a while and I hope that what I have to say to you will be regarded as coming from a loving [relation] . . . I will be plain and I will be blunt . . .

"Because I love you, I feel not only an obligation but a right to tell you where your spiritual and intellectual quest have taken you too far afield and how your actions will not only impact your life but the lives of your family and countless others.

"Quite frankly, I was VERY surprised--even shocked--to hear some of the things you said during your visit to Provo awhile back and more recently on the phone. This is not to say that I love or respect you any less [but] . . . [o]ne of the purposes of writing the following, Steve, is to try and encourage you to do some real faith-examining.

"It appears as if faith no longer plays a vital part in the religion equation for you; your desire to prove EVERYTHING on a mental/rational/intellectual level has precluded your exercising a great deal of faith . . .

"And while I consider you to be incredibly bright . . . I have been blessed to associate with men over the past few years whom I think are far ahead of you (and me) in the intellectual ability field. . . . Nothing against you, Steve, but I am more apt to believe their testimonies and witnesses [about] . . . the validity of the Book of Mormon than I am to be enticed by . . . your musings about this or that relative to Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. . . .

". . . [Y]ou are a big-time Pulitzer-Prize winning cartoonist who makes his living as a self-appointed gadfly, commissioned with the responsibility to point out exactly where everybody . . . has gone wrong. Figuratively speaking, you stand atop your drawing board and scream out at the top of your lungs that the King has no clothing on. And people love you for it. . . .

"Having said that, Steve, in some areas YOU STILL DON'T KNOW WHICH WAY IS UP, DO YOU? .

"You cannot tell me that, just as Jesus taught that 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' [Mormons] are party to the greatest fraud ever perpetuated on the American continent--or, for that matter--on the peoples of the world.

"Steve, try as you might, you cannot selective ascribe to certain tenets of Mormonism the power to produce [professionally-accomplished Mormons] while in the same breath, disparaging certain principles taught by Joseph Smith==the charismatic--and dismissing him as nothing more than a self-serving and self-indulging fake who established a fatally-flawed system of religion.

"It seems to me, Steve, that your egalitarian approach to life . . . has necessitated your realignment into a very large grey area . . . Your journeying into this nebulous region has discounted the need for black/white, right/wrong, truth/error decisions by embracing the ecumenical mantra: 'The important thing in this life is to be nice to everyone . . .'

"Will your ecumenical outlook force you to become more and more an apologist for and less and less a defender of the faith?

"Will you ever come to the defense of the Prophet Joseph Smith and of his mission or will you continually strive to find the chinks in his armor and the holes in his story?

"Will you ever accept what the Book of Mormon has done for the lives of millions of Latter-day Saints in bringing them closer to God?

"Will your perpetual concerns with horses in the New World or with the Spaulding Manuscript or with this or that permanently prevent you from reading the Book of Mormon with 'a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ'? . . .

"Will your children ever hear you bear such a testimony or will they only remember that their father said that the most important thing in life was to be nice?

"Will you accept that while Mormons do not have a corner on the truth market, they do have the power and authority given them by GOD HIMSELF to perform saving ordinances?

"Will you ever accept Mormonism--lock, stock, and barrel, with warts and all--as the only way a human being can be saved?

"Will your ecumenical leanings prompt you to disregard the right kind of baptism, the right kind of marriage, the right kind of anything in this life?

"Will you rob your sons--and possibly your daughters--of the great experience in any 19-year-old's life: the chance to go out and serve God and to serve others rather than staying home and pursuing various self-centered activities? . . .

"Will you ever enjoy the temple ceremony for what it represents--an overview of this earthly existence and summation of the immutable promises from God if we are obedient--instead of superficially criticizing it as 'warmed-over Masonry'?"

"Will the perpetual questions and doubts that you harbor influence your children to not 'walk in the ways of the Lord,' thus bringing the responsibility for their eternal welfare squarely down upon Mary Ann's and your shoulders?"

"Will you and Mary Ann have temple recommends at the time your [younger sibling] is married or will the Benson family be resigned to exchange congratulations outside the front doors?"

"Will Mom and Dad's latter years in life be spent worrying about their eldest son's salvation and that of his family?"

"Will you continue to QUALIFY your answers to questions about your belief in the Brethren, in the Prophet Joseph, and the veracity of the Book of Mormon and other temple recommend queries?"

"Do you ever consider the impact your actions will inevitably have on countless others?"

"As much as I appreciate your wanting to find truth wherever it may be, Steve, it appears to me that sufficient consideration has not been given to the effects such a self-centered pursuit can have on those for whom you have been given stewardship in this life . . .

"[Y]our attitude smacks of the pervasive perspective of your baby-boomer generation: 'TO HELL WITH RESPONSIBILITY! I WANT TO PURSUE MY OWN LIFE AND MY OWN AMBITIONS AND THROW EVERYTHING ELSE TO THE WIND.'

"Having been robbed of the chance to express yourself as a youth, you now consider it a RIGHT to go the other polar extreme. You feel that the world and the family and Mom and Dad owe it to you to let 'you be you' and to question and criticize and belittle the mission and lives and testimonies of those who have gone before . . .

"Let me conclude with just a word about family, if I may. Neither you nor I had any say (or at least I think we didn't) in the matter of which family we were born into. It just so happens that God saw fit to put us with the Benson family--a family who has had a long and venerable list of Church leaders.

"Not only has this been a tremendous blessing--given that we have enjoyed opportunities that millions of others could only hope or dream for--it has been a weighty responsibility. Our entire lives, we have been known as the Bensons and grandchildren of the Prophet . . .

"Do you intend to lessen the importance of [Grandpa's] life mission or even worse, deny his divine calling, by weakening or destroying the faith of those who believe him to be a prophet of God, just as his predecessors were?"

"Will your desire to 'buck' the Benson name to establish your own 'independence' and your own 'image' come at the price of others' testimonies and faith? . . .

"As much as you like to think of yourself, Steve, as 'your own man', membership in the Benson family denotes some very serious responsibilities which, like it or not, will follow you until the end of your life. . . . [W]e did not choose to should such weighty roles; nevertheless, God has given them to us and He expects us to fulfill them to be best of our ability. . . .

"Allow me to conclude by saying this: Believe it or not, inasmuch as you might think that you are indispensable to the public good in your role as social commentator and overall critic, the Church will continue to prosper and grow and develop, whether you believe in it or not . . .

"I sincerely hope and pray that your 'pursuit of truth' will be directed by God, as you read and think about these inspired words [from Elder Bruce R. McConkie]:

"The Church is like a great caravan . . .

"What does it matter if a few barking dogs snap at the heels of the weary travelers? Or that predators claim those few who fall by the way? The caravan moves on. . . .

"Ahead is the celestial city, the eternal Zion of our God, where all who maintain their position in the caravan shall find food and drink and rest. Thank God that the caravan moves on."

"Steve, will you and your family be on the caravan? I sincerely pray that you are."

--From an In-law, 16 July 1993:

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"I read an article in my local paper about your comments relating to your grandfather and could not imagine your motive. Is your cartoon not enough exposure to satisfy you?"

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"My husband is a bishop. When he is away his counselors carry on the functions of the ward with full authority. Is not the situation the same? And are not second-guessing the Lord? And did your mother teach you no filial respect?"

"I have always been proud to be a part of the Benson family, though I've never made people in my area are of that relationship because I didn't want to boast about others' accomplishment. Now, I'm happy to have kept silent because I am ASHAMED to be related to YOU."

--From a Sibling, 26 July 1993

". . . [I]t has been painful to hear what has transpired of late and to see the quandary that Mom and Dad and the rest of the family are in because of what you have done and what you continue to do. Nevertheless, no one needs to remind you that you are your own man, Steve, and that you must resolve certain questions and concerns.

"I just wanted to write and tell you that I love you and that I am praying for you. If all goes well . . . I'll try to make it home for the reunion in August. I would love to sit down with you and have a real good heart-to-heart at that time. You're a good man, Steve."

--From a Sibling, 10 August 1993:

"Dear Stephen,

"I wanted to let you know privately of my feelings concerning what you have been doing publicly lately.

"Grandpa is quoted in Elder Oaks' latest talk as saying something to the effect that not all truth has the same value. What you perceived to be so compelling and truthful that you needed to publicly 'expose' it pales, I feel, when examined next to other truths or values.

"You make a point over and over to say that you are only stating what you believe. According to your observations.

"If feelings are what count here, as well as conclusions drawn from personal observation, I feel you have done more damage than good and caused more pain than you know or care to know.

"My overall view of the entire subject of what you've said about Grandpa is, 'Big Deal.' But you've hurt others, and from watching you and reading articles, I personally draw the conclusion that you don't care and that you have no conscience. Besides which, having visited Grandpa on numerous occasions, I think you are wrong . . .

"I love you as my brother. I always will. I will not discuss this subject with you in person or by telephone. We don't agree and that is not going to change. I hope that the family reunion will be a time of fun and good times for your children and all of us."

--From a Parent, 23 August 1993

"Dear Stephen.

". . . I remember weeks ago when you told me on the phone of the struggles you were going through as far as the Church was concerned. I remember very distinctly you tearfully saying, 'I want to believe . . . I just can't.' And I responded that you can believe again. And with God's help and our united faith and our prayers you will. I have every confidence of this . . . I know you can, Steve, believe again. I know you can if you truly desire it and that the Spirit can be yours.

"And now may I offer some counsel in the spirit of love:

"Please do not go public in your criticism of the Brethren and/or the Church. It's one thing to have a difference with the Church and to work it

through privately vs. going to the media and 'counseling the Brethren' and 'taking on the Church' publicly.

"And sometimes the very best public statement you can make is, 'No Comment.'

"And, please don't make light of things very sacred to others: the Book of Mormon . . . comparing a living prophet and your grandfather to 'a storefront mannequin' and referring irreverently to a 'momentary infusion of the Holy Ghost.'

"These offended me and others. To me it would be like making fun of what the Pope did on his recent visit as he shook the incense among the congregation, sprinkled holy water or burnt candles--all sacred to the Catholic Church . . .

"Also, disclosing all truth at times is not a virtue. . . .

"With all my heart I want you to remain in the Church as you work through your Church challenges. The Church has blessed your life and you have blessed the Church and its members . . . Obviously, your degree of activity in the Church is a decision you will make. But stay in the Church, Stephen. I plead with you, stay in the Church. The Holy Ghost bestowed by the Priesthood of God is real. I need it. You need it to make the right spiritual decisions for you and Mary Ann and your family."

--From a Cousin, 24 August 1993:

In a letter to the editor of the Arizona Republic written by a child of one of Ezra Taft Benson's daughters, entitled "Ezra Taft Benson: My Grandfather vs. Steve Benson: Cousin," the author declared that my claims about Ezra Taft Benson's "health and capacity" were "false."

The writer went on to publicly testify as to the true nature of my grandfather's condition, based on a personal visit the writer had had with him at a recent family reunion:

"[Ezra Taft Benson] was very much aware that we were present and acknowledged us and our little ones. He wouldn't let go of our chubby baby's legs or the portrait we brought up to him. He sang songs. We played on the piano and [he] even said, 'I love you' as we departed. He was very alert and aware, notwithstanding his old body bound by a wheelchair. Our society thinks that when the body goes so does the mind but that is not necessarily so.

"Anyway, who does Steve think he is? The personal health official of E.T. Benson? The official spokesperson for the Church? Or the self-appointed Savior from all those liars, crooks and huddled politicians?"

"Maybe Steve relishes the attention and craves such controversy. Maybe he seeks the acclaims of the world over his own personal testimony of what's really true.

"Has he forgotten that faith is a fundamental principle that counters the learning of men? Isn't it true that when a man thinks they are learned they think they are wise and don't want to listen to the counsels of God? I sure hope that Steve realizes that when all is said and done he can feel reassured that he did what the Savior would have him do. What is Steve's current status in the Church? Is he trying to disprove the Church? . . .

"We have been promised that we will not be led astray if we will follow the counsel of the living prophet. The sad part is that the oldest grandson is trying to convince us that God does not choose his leaders nor the length of their service . . .

"Thank goodness God is considerably more tender and loving than we are! Thank goodness the Church has 84 other General Authorities to be adequate back-up for the Church's functioning prophet!"

--From a Cousin, 24 September 1993:

"It is my understanding that you have a difficult time believing that Grandpa could receive revelation in his state and that the leaders of the Church have deceived the members, leading them to believe that he is indeed a functioning prophet . . .

"Yes, indeed, he is aging . . . [H]e is 94 years old. There is no doubt about that . . . Indeed, it is extremely difficult for him to speak, walk and eat, etc. However, I honestly believe that he is a functioning prophet. I do not believe he performs all the duties which he once did--in fact, he can hardly do anything. BUT there is no doubt in my mind that he can let his counselors know his opinion on a certain issue, whether yea or nea, by a simple yes or no--or shake of the head or squeeze of the hand . . .

"When I was visiting him, two of the days he was very alert--his eyes were bright, his smile was charming but the other two days he seemed a little tired and not quite as responsive. So, when you see him and he's not as responsive as you would have hoped him to be, maybe the next time might be a better day for him. Let's give the good man a break! . . .

"Steve . . . [w]e know that when a Prophet becomes old and even to a state where they cannot say and do anything and are totally non-responsive, who cares? It has happened before and it may happen to Grandpa also but REALLY it does not matter. It is TOTALLY irrelevant. That is why there are counselors, a Quorum of the Twelve and Councils of Seventy.

"As for the leaders' deception, I don't agree at all . . . President Hinckley was not deceitful at all. He was very clear and very honest. He was matter-of-fact and tactful at the same time regarding Grandpa's condition . . .

"The saddest part of your opinions, in my view, is to see your disrespect for Grandpa. Maybe in your mind, you love him and care deeply for him and maybe you think you're just trying to improve the system--I don't know . . . Even if you have these opinions strongly formed in your mind, I would be careful in what you say and to whom--because to everyone else who hears, there is no respect . . .

"If you have strong feelings, I think it would be in much better taste to go to the Church officials rather than to the media, which to me and to others is a sign of great disrespect, not only to Grandpa but to all the Benson family.

"Whether you realize it or not, you are representing the family--all of us by going public with our viewpoints; and what is unfortunate is that it is totally unrepresentative of everyone's feelings! It is one thing to have an opinion--it is another to take it to thousands and in the process of it all, break the hearts over and over again of those people WHO LOVE YOU MOST!

"If I were you, I would LET IT ALONE. You are hurting us, who are your family, MORE THAN YOU CAN POSSIBLY REALIZE! If you never change your opinions on these issues, that is your decision but I fail to understand why you have to try to influence others with those opinions.

"I understand that it is your profession to influence others and it is your right as an American in freedom of speech but at what price? The most valuable possession one has is their family and in my opinion you are defending your right of free speech at the expense of your loved ones."

". . . [I]t has been painful to hear what has transpired of late and to see the quandary that Mom and Dad and the rest of the family are in because of what you have done and what you continue to do. Nevertheless, no one needs to remind you that you are your own man, Steve, and that you must resolve certain questions and concerns.

"I just wanted to write and tell you that I love you and that I am praying for you. If all goes well . . . I'll try to make it home for the reunion in August. I would love to sit down with you and have a real good heart-to-heart at that time. You're a good man, Steve."

--From a Sibling, 13 October 1993:

"Dear Stephen,

"I think of you and your family often and hope you are well . . .

"I pray for you. Hope your eyes are recovered after your [RK] surgery. I pray for a spiritual RK for you. We love you and Mary Ann and the children."

--From a Sibling, 17 October 1993:

"Dear Steve:

"I've heard what's happened over the past few days [of leaving the Church] and just wanted to write to say I was sorry to hear the news. . . . I just wanted to write and say that I love you and your family. True, I don't support you or agree with what you've done, but that doesn't have anything to do with it, really.

"The important thing is that you'll always have a friend and a listening ear on my end. I sincerely hope everything works out all right.

"You've made a decision that will inevitably have some serious repercussions, that there is nothing I can do at this point. You'll just have to work through this thing on your own.

"True, I have tried to distance myself--not from you as my brother or from your family--but from the activities you've been engaged in during the past few months. I'll continue to do so but I'll also keep being one of your biggest fans in other areas."

From a Sister of Ezra Taft Benson, 18 October 1993:

"I had a strong feeling come to me that I should write to you . . . I am your aunt . . . sister to our Prophet, your Grandfather, President Ezra Taft Benson.

"He is a great Prophet and has a deep love for his Father in Heaven, his Savior Jesus Christ and his wonderful family. He has a great love and respect for you and I'm sure you will never let him down.

"Haven't you noticed, Steve, that after each Prophet gives the message the Lord has for His people, there's a waiting period to see how many people will continue to believe and have faith in their teachings? Many people left the Church while Joseph Smith was in jail. Many stayed stronger than ever. President Kimball was ill and couldn't work, President McKay, President Joseph Fielding Smith and most all the others but the Church went on stronger than ever. Satan would love to destroy it but he will never have the power to do so.

"Oh, Steve, your family and Grandfather love you so much. You are one of our Father in Heaven's choice spirits. Satan always works on the Lord's strongest and most intelligent and choice spirits the hardest. You had to be one of the Lord's most intelligent and noble spirits. That's why Satan is working on you so hard through other people. Don't give in, Steve. The Lord loves you and needs you . . .

"How would you feel when you meet people in the spirit world, and they say, 'Steve, you could have helped me have eternal life but you didn't'?

"Steve, you could have so much and help save so many people. You just have to see the light and know what a great and noble spirit you are. Satan would give anything to have you and your lovely family. This life is so short and people's praise so UNIMPORTANT.

"Eternal life with our Father in Heaven's praise for eternity is for you. God bless you, my dear, and your dear wife and family. You'll never be happy without them."

--From the Wife of a Cousin, 21 October 1993:

"Dear Steve,

"I hope this letter doesn't get tossed out with the rest of the 'hate' mail you have been receiving but I felt it necessary to vent my frustrations by writing to you and expressing my feelings about what you are doing.

"I don't know if you recall, but shortly before [we] were married, you and Mary Ann had us over and we had quite a lengthy discussion on what it was like to be married into the 'Benson' family and how you had to work out some of the problems associated with this. I have always respected you for many reasons but mainly because you were working hard to become successful on your own without using the Benson name to further your aspirations.

"And now I have been deeply disappointed by what you are doing. I have tried to remain open-minded and to not pass judgment about this whole affair. I personally regret the decision that you and Mary Ann have made to leave the Church but we all have our own agency and you have exercised that free agency.

"The thing that bothers me is that you have capitalized on your being the grandson of President Benson to gain publicity and further your own agenda. That fact that a member of the Church has decided to leave the Church is not even newsworthy, as I'm sure thousands of members leave or are excommunicated from the Church each year.

"I know your Grandpa would not support your actions, as you say he would, and I know that deep down you know that, too. If you really cared about your family and your Grandpa, you would have made your decision on your own without trying to gain the publicity you have or even have waited until your Grandpa had passed away. After seeing you and Mike singing to your Grandpa at Conference and acting so sweet to him, I was really disappointed at your actions.

"I don't want this letter to in any way affect our friendship and I would be glad to talk it over at any time if you want, as I have enjoyed many other discussions with you in the past on various topics. I just felt that I must voice my opinion, as I guess you have felt you must voice yours. I just wish you have done it in a little different manner, not for the sake of the Church, but for the sake of your family.

"Now that all this has been said and done, I just hope you don't make your life a quest to destroy the Church. I have often viewed the 'anti-Mormons' as people with 'no life.' Whether or not you believe the doctrine, you cannot deny that, in general, Mormons are good people that better their community and have high standards of living.

"Be 'pro' anything, even start your own Church if you want but don't dedicate your life to degrading a good thing, whatever it is.

"I feel badly that we belong to the same Church and see things so differently. I guess you can always find fault if you try hard enough.

"I hope you take this letter in the intent in which it was written. I have had so many people ask me why you were doing this and in the past I have defended your cartoons and such but I really wish I could see some purpose in your recent actions other than for personal gain."

--Conclusion: Truth is the Enemy of Mormonism and the Destroyer of Mormon Families

My father warned me in late summer of 1993 that the media was "the enemy of the Church." I reminded him that I was a member of the media

He responded by telling me that if I ever again spoke to the press about the health of President Benson, he would see to it that I would never again be permitted to see my grandfather. My father sternly advised me that he had been called by his own father--Ezra Taft Benson--to assist him in carrying out his sacred duties as Prophet, Seer and Revelator for God's Church. That included, he said, protecting him from the Church's enemies.

I asked my father if he was hearing what he was saying. I asked him if he was willing to break up our family over devotion to the Mormon Church. I told him that if that was the kind of gospel he was preaching, I did not want anything to do with that Church.

My father was taken aback by my comment and said he would reconsider his ultimatum.

But it was too late. Already my faith lay in ruins. This was just one more gaping hole in an already sunken foundation.

A few weeks later, Mary Ann and I had our names formally removed from the membership rolls of the Mormon Cult.

Jesus vowed:

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:35-37)

If this is the definition of "God's Church," then, surely, Mormonism is God's Church.

And as far as I'm concerned, Mormonism's God can have it.

see also:

--"Behind-the-Scenes Efforts by the Benson Family to Silence Their 'Disloyal' Own." by Steve Benson, RfM, 12 August 2005,

[https://www.google.com/url?](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKewjW1YKZp8LOAhVS02MKHdCaAloQFggcMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.exmormon.org%2Fmormon%2Fmormon421.htm)

[sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKewjW1YKZp8LOAhVS02MKHdCaAloQFggcMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.exmormon.org%2Fmormon%2Fmormon421.htm](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKewjW1YKZp8LOAhVS02MKHdCaAloQFggcMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.exmormon.org%2Fmormon%2Fmormon421.htm)

--"The Cult Crush: Efforts by Steve Benson's Family to Shame & Silence Him," 14 August 2016,

<http://www.exmormon.org/mormon/mormon421.htm>

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **getbusylivin** ()

Date: August 15, 2016 07:08PM

Freedom from emotional and intellectual bondage go hand in hand. Once we stop allowing what others think of us to affect us, we can begin to think clearly, to weigh evidence, to find our modicum of truth.

I don't care what others think. If they want to think the world is 6,000 years old, that a guy with a rock in a hat had "God" on speed dial, that they'll ascend to some paradise when they're dead, hey, have at it.

But don't expect me to agree. You got nothing that says I will.

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **cinda** ()

Date: August 15, 2016 10:13PM

I enjoyed reading each and every letter to you and find them fascinating. Thank you for sharing.

From a Sibling, 15 May, 1993:

"Will your ecumenical outlook force you to become more and more an apologist for and less and less a defender of the faith?"

This question is confusing to me but maybe only because I don't have a clear understanding of exactly what is the goal of the church 'apologists'.

It seems to me that "apologist for" and "defender of" the faith are one in the same. At least, that is how I am interpreting the two, perhaps incorrectly?

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **robinsaintcloud** ()
Date: August 16, 2016 02:21PM

I had the same thought, cinda. I think they just used the wrong words, or used words in the wrong manner. I also agree with your first comment, but in an expanded manner....I enjoy reading all of Steve's posts.

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **pettigrew** ()
Date: August 16, 2016 02:31PM

Me too.

I enjoy reading Steve Benson writing extensively about Steve Benson's adventures in Bensondom ad-nauseam. Every one of his four stories get better and better with every re-telling and re-re-re-re-telling.

Can't wait for the next one...

Perhaps you're enjoying them more because

Posted by: ***** ()
Date: August 17, 2016 06:17AM

you're simply enjoying reading them again.

If you click on the sources provided at the bottom of the OP in this thread, you will see that the content hasn't changed from prior postings.

If, on the other hand, you really don't want to read the same post again, then you can, you know, not read it again.

Decision, decisions.

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **madalice** ()
Date: August 16, 2016 02:38PM

Steve: Your posts about the goings on behind the scenes are very validating. I always suspected the higher ups in the church thought and acted like their letters show. I wasn't imagining things.

There was so much fuel in those guilt trips that you could have traveled around the world a couple of times. I'm glad they weren't able to manipulate back into the church. In spite of all their dire predictions, it seems like you're doing just fine.

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 08/16/2016 02:39PM by madalice.

Thanks for posting.

Posted by: **cl2** ()
Date: August 16, 2016 02:54PM

Your experiences are a huge help to many people.

Re: Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider

Posted by: **fatheredbyparents** ()
Date: August 16, 2016 04:16PM

When I read this:

"As much as I appreciate your wanting to find truth wherever it may be, Steve, it appears to me that sufficient consideration has not been given to the effects such a self-centered pursuit can have on those for whom you have been given stewardship in this life..."

I became physically ill and nauseous.

And not just because I was eating Del Taco – though that might be part of it.

IMO, if you have been 'given stewardship' over people or property, you OWE to to them to pursue truth and act in the best interest of honesty and integrity. I would say sufficient consideration was given, and your relative was up in the night.

On and on

Posted by: **^** ()
Date: August 17, 2016 06:28AM

One family member suggested that I wait until certain members of my nuclear family died so as to not hurt their feelings by speaking my mind while they were still alive.

I asked, "When they're gone, for who else's benefit will you then ask me to delay expressing my thoughts until they also are dead? When does it stop? I think I'll express my opinions now."

It's all about control. A Mormon thing.

No brainer. No chainer.

Benson Family Deploys Guilt Guns Trying to Silence Whistleblowing Insider - <http://www.exmormon.org>