

"Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: pollythinks ()
Date: December 26, 2015 03:46PM

This is a mystery to me. In one of the previous subject threads, I read about a person who claimed to "believe" (in Mormonism?), but is still an inactive member of the church.

Interesting. Just what does one believe in that is important enough to "believe", and yet still choose not to be an "active" member?

- . That Joseph Smith was a true prophet? (A preposterous conclusion, by all accounts.)
- . That the Book of Mormon really came from golden-like plates an angel told J.S. about, and which Joseph translated from gibberish into English with his head in his hat?
- . Believe in the sizable sections of the BofM that J.S. plagiarized from the Bible?
- . Believe that Joseph was forced to have sex with women he was not married to, or an angle would stab him to death with his sword?

Can someone please straighten this puzzle out for me?

Thanks.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: Greyfort ()
Date: December 26, 2015 03:49PM

When I went through periods of inactivity, it was simply because I didn't actually like going to church. At the time, I loved being a Mormon. But I'm very uncomfortable in social groups. I spent all of my time being afraid that someone would ask me to say a prayer, read a scripture or give a talk.

I loved my friends there, but I hated being put on the spot.

Edited to basically add that it's a difficult church to be a shy introvert in.

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 12/26/2015 03:50PM by Greyfort.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: Liz ()
Date: December 26, 2015 03:56PM

I've concluded that members have heard "I know the church is true" for so many years that even inactives still believe it.

A residue that makes no sense to me. They will defend the church but won't attend.

Maybe the temple oaths still put the fear of god in them even though they've left all

that behind them. I'd say they are superstitious and believe it will be well with them if they say they believe.

To deny would have consequences eternally in their minds. I think the fear they have learned keeps them attached like a giant religious umbilica cord. They don't want to be active, but still feel indoctrinated enough to be afraid.

There are as many reasons for a member's inactivity as there are inactive members. The common denominator as I see it is fear. They don't want to be cut completely off and to deny is to deny privileges for eternity.

Or as my son would say, "They are just too fearful to do anything more than be inactive. Resigning takes effort and puts them in the spotlight. Inactive means they are still part of the herd, but graze where they want."

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: StillAnon ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:05PM

I play professional football for the Denver Broncos. I don't go to practices. I don't attend team meetings. I don't dress & play in their games & the coaches don't know who I am. Am I still a Denver Bronco?

I have a better understanding of people that really don't believe but still attend, until they can figure out a way to get their family to escape, than I do of people that don't follow the rules & still claim to be a member.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: hikergri ()

Date: December 27, 2015 09:39AM

Sure! Your name is still on the roster and the coach's assistants still check on you. Not to mention, you know you have a open invite each week to sit on the sidelines.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Templar ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:07PM

I've known Mormons like that. They swear they know the church is true, but don't live it.

IMHO They are full of shit!

If I knew TSCC was really true, as they claim they do, I would spend every waking moment in living all the principles of Mormonism to ensure my eventual godhood as the church promises to the faithful. Why waste eternity on a few short earth years?

Of course, in my case, I don't believe a word of it and will not waste my time living a fallacy.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: scmd ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:07PM

I've met a few of such people, and it baffles me. In college I met even more who were marginally active (enough to maintain the ecclesiastical endorsements necessary for continued enrollment in BYU, anyway) but didn't even bother to go through the motions of following some of the major rules when no one who would care was looking. Most of them proclaimed something to the effect of, "I know The Church is true; I just can't live it." I find both of these attitudes and/or lifestyles baffling. If I really believed all that mumbo jumbo to be true, I would do my best to try to live by their rules. Fortunately, I know it's not the one true church for me, anyway, and I no longer feel compelled even to go through the motions.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: scmd ()

Date: December 26, 2015 10:39PM

Catholics have the one out of the sacrament of reconciliation, otherwise known as confession. Even though it wasn't really designed that a person should feel free to willfully sin because forgiveness would be as close as the nearest confessional cubicle, it's how too many Catholics have lived their lives. Even if one believes that it's OK, one would still be taking one's chances, as not one of us really knows when he or she will take his or her last breath.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: the1v ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:18PM

Hang out with some Catholics for a while. The vast majority of them are exactly the same. They are christened, take communion, get married, and die Catholic. Those are the only occasions when they attend. They put a few crosses on the wall and don't do much else. On occasion they will attend mass at Easter and Christmas.

Most of them still believe that the Catholic church is the true one.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Templar ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:29PM

the1v Wrote:

-
- > Hang out with some Catholics for a while. The vast
 - > majority of them are exactly the same. They are
 - > christened, take communion, get married, and die
 - > Catholic. Those are the only occasions when they
 - > attend. They put a few crosses on the wall and
 - > don't do much else. On occasion they will attend
 - > mass at Easter and Christmas.

My wife's Catholic parents are like that. Her mom "fully believes" in the Catholic Church, but only goes inside for weddings and funerals. Her dad goes with her mom, but never says anything about any beliefs he may or may not have.

When I asked my wife about it, she just said that her mom was very fearful and clearly did not want to discuss the matter further. My wife, in spite of being

baptized a Catholic, wants no part of any religion. She thinks they are all stupid and a complete waste of time and money. We agree on that fact.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: summer ()

Date: December 26, 2015 05:22PM

Catholicism allows for a range of activity. There are only two services a year that are "required" to be considered active, and those are Easter and Christmas. But many people who consider themselves Catholic are almost entirely inactive. My mom was one of them. She only rarely attended church but would pray each evening before bed. Her mom seldom attended church as well, but she made sure that her kids were raised in the faith.

I would say that is the case for most denominations.

Mormonism tends to have a black-and-white mentality, but in that respect it is no different from other churches. There is a range of belief and activity rates.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: adoylelb ()

Date: December 26, 2015 05:44PM

Most of my dad's family is like that, completely inactive, but they would still identify as Catholic. It doesn't matter that the last time they've been inside a Catholic church was for my grandma's funeral, while they no longer go to church, they would still say they're Catholic. Now, my dad would consider himself agnostic or even atheist, and one of my uncles has not only accepted his gay son, but attended his wedding and treats his new son in law as one would treat the spouse of their child, as part of the family.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Greyfort ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:37PM

As a teen, my sister and her friend attended church with me. Then they stopped going. My sister said, "I just don't believe that I need to go to church in order to show God that I love Him."

To her, it wasn't about being in a building every Sunday.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: grubbygert nli ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:47PM

I have some extended family members like that.

They are blissfully ignorant of any issues with Mormonism but as soon as someone says something unflattering about TSCC or JS their old programming from primary kicks in and they go into testimony mode.

Oh, and they insist that their kids be TBMs because they honestly believe that's the "right" way to be.

It's really odd and I could never live my life that way but... yeah, those people exist.

I think it's probably because of these still-believing inactives that some TBMs will try the old, "I know that deep down you still know..." trick on us... because that tactic has probably (as weird as it seems to us) gotten a somewhat positive response before.

Re: ["Believing but inactive Mormons"](#)

Posted by: Stray Mutt ()

Date: December 26, 2015 04:59PM

It's the definition of "jack Mormon."

Originally a jack Mormon was a non-Mormon, particularly in early Utah, who pretended to be Mormon for business and social reasons. But as that became less necessary, the term shifted to apply to anyone who isn't a "real" Mormon, including inactive believers.

Re: ["Believing but inactive Mormons"](#)

Posted by: canadianfriend ()

Date: December 26, 2015 06:42PM

What I'm thinking is that believing but inactive Mormons have accepted the fact that they will be going to the terrestrial kingdom and not the celestial kingdom. The terrestrial kingdom is supposed to be a beautiful place, but they will not be in the presence of God, Jesus or Joseph Smith. However, they will be visited by Jesus (and presumably Joseph Smith if he's not too busy with his celestial wives), so the terrestrial kingdom is really not too bad. It's a compromise. By accepting the terrestrial kingdom as their destination, the members can live a more reasonable life style and will not need to pay the cojolds their required fees.

Re: ["Believing but inactive Mormons"](#)

Posted by: Greyfort ()

Date: December 26, 2015 06:54PM

I think too that they're always thinking in the back of their minds, "I'll get myself back there someday."

[For my family](#)

Posted by: cl2 ()

Date: December 26, 2015 07:00PM

I think it is more about things like "forever family," being with my parents in the next life. They don't know the doctrinal issues, nor do they want to. They buy more into the milk and don't care about the meat, but then they don't go to church and live lives that are absolutely not mormon lives.

But then when a mormon comes to them and says, "I felt your mother while I was in the temple," they buy into it. I'm like WTF?? When my sister told me the above one, I said to her, "Don't let a mormon hijack your relationship with our mother." Every now and then she'll show that she still buys into some of it, but she hasn't been to church more than once or twice in 30 years.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: blakballoon ()
Date: December 26, 2015 07:01PM

This has baffled me for years, and I'm married to one.
Whilst I was TBM it made me angry and frustrated. How can one believe but not act.
How can you seem to be two different ppl.

Believe in the fullness of the restoration-
But I can't be bothered to try that hard

Respect and admire the 'priesthood'-
anything to do with the ph is annoying and demanding

The temple is a great work of the latter days, temples will
Cover the earth-
Not going ever again stupid boring.

We have prophets seers and revelatory yippee-
Not going to GC to listen to boring old men, I'll just fall asleep.

3 degrees of glory, right on!-
I don't want to be in the CG with those twats.

When the mishie's knock on the door, he groans and rolls his eyes, yet 5 mins into visit
he's going all spiritual ninja on them and regaling them with endless stories from his
mission. He doesn't stop! And the mishie's have to try and get away ffs! I'm wondering
if that's why they stopped coming lol.

Now I've left church I'm just relieved I don't have the issues many of you have shared
on here. I can't see him ever wanting to go back the activity. The kids barely
remember church so all good there.

I really want to talk to him about my unbelief, I've mentioned
Joes wives (no he only married Emma) the stone in a hat (but but what about the U and
T) DNA n the BoM (but they are Lamamites) he get that's confused look on his face
that is kinda cute, but I wanna punch n say JUST THINK FOR A MINUTE DAMMIT!
Anyway, sorry it's so long, but I think Liz near the top nailed it. There's still
consequences in his mind to getting totally out.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: cpete ()
Date: December 27, 2015 01:02AM

I believe in being inactive.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: poopstone ()
Date: December 27, 2015 02:01AM

Your describing the "jack mormon" the one who believes but for reasons like work
they don't go. What is helpful to remember is that mormonism is a white collar, middle
management, have the weekend and holidays off kind of church. The redneck, white
trash, working class (myself included) just don't fit. We are too worried about drama at

work and paying bills to be worried about home teaching or ppe interviews. Also many many people just don't feel welcome in a perfect church.

Think about all the families with gay relatives (cognitive dissonance going on). need I say more?

[DH is one of them.](#)

Posted by: catnip ()

Date: December 27, 2015 02:02AM

When I resigned from the church many years ago, he stopped attending, as he did not want to make religion a divisive element in our marriage.

We don't often talk specifics, but occasionally, he will says things like "God sometimes uses imperfect people to teach perfect doctrines." (Referring to JS, I presume.)

He considers himself a Christian, and is perfectly content to attend the Presbyterian Church I now attend, (he wants me to be a Christian of SOME variety) but I think if I dropped dead tomorrow, he would return to the LDS fold.

He was very impressed when the young minister at my church made it clear that ANY believing Christian was welcome to partake of communion at Christ's table, not just members of that particular church. He likes that part of it.

[Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"](#)

Posted by: oneinbillions ()

Date: December 27, 2015 05:25AM

Incidentally my parents are believing but inactive. They told me that they were "offended" several times by members of their ward; I've heard my mother attest on several occasions that if she ever did go back to church, it wouldn't be to her old ward. But they still fervently believe in God, prayer, scripture and even the Q15, which I personally find baffling. And yes, Joseph Smith too. They don't really care to investigate, of course. They take the whole thing at face value.

They've come a long way from the zealously they showed when I was a kid, and have lightened up on a lot of stuff like shopping on Sunday or the "word of Wisdom". It just makes me sad that they won't question their beliefs even after I became atheist and resigned. I keep waiting for them to bring it up one day, to ask why I left and actually listen... It'll probably never happen. They're too set in their ways.

[Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"](#)

Posted by: drq ()

Date: December 27, 2015 08:43AM

Just adding my two cents to the excellent responses already given.

I think they are like most people when it comes to religion. They have a Sunday School/Primary knowledge of Mormon doctrine. It's all sort of vague rainbows and unicorns and happy families. They were born into it and it's been their identity since they were children, and they don't really think much about it. They've never studied any other religion or belief system or philosophy, because they just really don't care much about those things. Be a good person and don't hurt others and you're fine.

Being "active" or "inactive" is really a Mormon concept. Other religions don't categorize people that way. You're "affiliated" or "unaffiliated."

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: rain ()

Date: December 28, 2015 02:20PM

This, exactly. Spot on. This was my parents, who grew up in Utah. You aren't active, but if someone were to ask you what your religion is, you say Mormon. It's the only religion you know, but you don't really participate and just know the basic idea of warm and fuzzy family. You occasionally go to church on Easter, sometimes the HT's or VT's drop by, but you don't really want to get too involved because boy, they can get pushy, can't they?

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Strength in the Loins ()

Date: December 27, 2015 10:36AM

This is my father.

Never made a damn bit of sense of to me. If you truly "know" that it's all true, how could you not do so much more?

Actually, in his warped thinking, I believe he expected me to make up for his shortcomings. He wanted to be able to point to his active faithful son that he had done something right.

God what a horrible horrible waste all of it is. Waste of time, waste of money, waste of relationships that would be so much richer without the dynamics that the cult throws into it.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Greengooblygook ()

Date: December 27, 2015 09:35PM

So removing records make you a ex mormon? Last I checked a ex mormon was anyone who was kicked out by the church. you need to get the balls to be kicked out. Confess to the bishop and get exed.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: scmd ()

Date: December 28, 2015 03:41AM

Greengooblygook Wrote:

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- > So removing records make you a ex mormon? Last I
 - > checked a ex mormon was anyone who was kicked out
 - > by the church. you need to get the balls to be
 - > kicked out. Confess to the bishop and get exed.

Just as the LDS church has no monopoly on how to worship (or NOT to worship) or

how to be happy, there's also more than one way to become an exmormon.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Templar ()
Date: December 28, 2015 08:52AM

Greengooblygook Wrote:

-
- > So removing records make you a ex mormon? Last I
 - > checked a ex mormon was anyone who was kicked out
 - > by the church. you need to get the balls to be
 - > kicked out. Confess to the bishop and get exed.

Back when I left TSCC in 1970, the only way "out for good" was ex-communication. My mother was upset enough, that as a RM and BYU graduate, I turned my back on the church and married a non-Mormon. I saw no need at that time to inflict further pain. And, quite frankly, I never did anything to warrant ex-communication.

I simply moved from Utah and never had anything more to do with the church (other than their occasional visits and phone calls). I formally resigned soon after it became possible to do so which brought an end to all official Mormon contacts. On occasion, I do have limited interaction with my Mormon neighbors, but it never involves any religious discussion.

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 12/28/2015 08:55AM by Templar.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: drq ()
Date: December 28, 2015 09:51AM

An ex-Mormon is someone who used to identify as a Mormon, but doesn't any more. That's what "freedom of religion" means.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: Steve Nagill ()
Date: December 27, 2015 09:45PM

I been working deep cover for the last 40 years...

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: dag ()
Date: December 28, 2015 09:43AM

Going to the Mormon Church isn't going to save anyone. Who cares what the dogma is. It's ridiculous.

Re: "[Believing but inactive Mormons](#)"

Posted by: baura ()
Date: December 28, 2015 02:03PM

What about all of us? We know it's true (just ask any close TBM who will say, "deep down he/she knows it's true") yet we not

only don't go, we actively call it false.

Re: "Believing but inactive Mormons"

Posted by: Greyfort ()
Date: December 28, 2015 02:41PM

When I was a child, they actually had you fill out your religion on school forms. I had been christened as a baby in the Catholic Church, but I had never been to a Catholic service in my entire life.

But, due to lack of anything else to call myself, I'd put down that I was Catholic.

Recovery from Mormonism
www.exmormon.org
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