

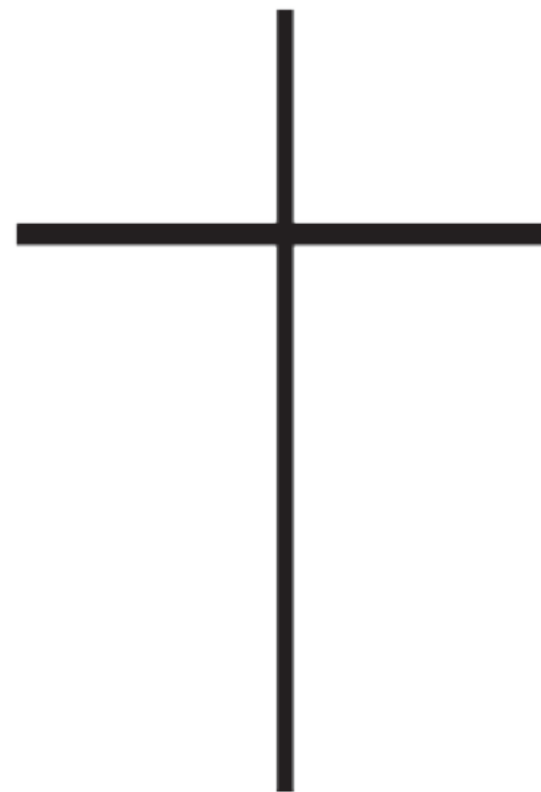
Some favourite quotes from /r/radicalchristianity:

"God awaits from humanity a creative act." --Nikolai Berdyaev.

"TheBaconMenace is the best and also the coolest." --
/u/Demon_Nietzsche

"The dinosaurs were made in the image of Ken Ham." --
/u/TheBaconMenace

by /r/radicalchristianity
RADICAL CHRISTIAN
volume 1: fall 2015



Radical Christian is published
anonymously and/or via pseudonym.
The authors of the articles may choose
to be recognized however they wish.
Please respect the anonymity of the
authors by not revealing their identity.
Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this project. I'd like to thank the moderators and users of /r/radicalchristianity for dealing with all the posts related to this zine, and being excited for it to come to fruition.

I'd like to thank all of those people who contributed. It's not easy to contribute to a project like this, especially as its taken a long time to figure everything out, and bring this issue to fruition.

I'd especially like to thank two people who have been integral to the creation of this zine. Without /u/hpyhpyjoy and /u/Jimmy_Melnarik this zine wouldn't exist. You two put in the time gathering resources and making sure that this thing got put together. I recognize how difficult it is to stay positive about a project, especially in the nature of anonymity. We couldn't have done this without you! Thank you so much!

-DN

A note

How on earth could the members of the /r/radicalChristianity make a zine? We are as varied as they come, and the conversations we desire to have are commonly unwelcome in larger community bodies. So we congregate in an internet sub-forum space and share what we read, what we think, what we are unsure about, and help one another in that process. And although the subreddit is not opposed to its members posting personal or original work, there is something about a community project that brings out the type of work that we may have otherwise missed out on. This is our first stilted attempt at a group project. It contains essays and poetry and art and manifestos and fictional letter correspondence. It is varied, and it is ours. Share it.

/u/Jimmy_Melnarik

About Radical Christian

Radical Christian is the child of a group of Christians, Atheists, Post-Theists, Apathetists, etc., who are interested in the intersection of philosophy, theology, critical theory, revolutionary politics, and faith.

We are interested in exploring both philosophical and theological thought and action. The definitions of "radical" and "Christianity" each carry a certain denotative vagueness while still retaining enough connotative force to be a mostly accurate descriptor of who we are as a group.

Many of us find our beliefs marked by a certain desire for disassociation with and transgression against conventional Christian institutions and culture. We support divergent forms of thinking. Together we are a group consisting of materialists, idealists, realists, anti-realists, pragmatists, mystics, theists, atheists, occultists, heretics, socialists, anarchists, communists, Marxists, pacifists, insurrectionists, and many other identities burdened with either an inordinate number of prefixes or else with none at all.

We explore this creative reality in our lives, but also through an online discourse. Please feel free to visit our website or visit us on reddit.

Grace be with you. May your path be filled with joyous rebellion!

Find us online at:

www.reddit.com/r/radicalchristianity

<http://radicalchristianzine.weebly.com/>

God spoke to me.
He told me that I should not kill.
He told me that I should not injure.
He told me that I should not insult.

Anyone.
Not even Satan.
But, he told me I should destroy all evil.

He told me that if evil should stand before me I should grind it to a powder.
Look inside myself.
Look inside every action.

Look inside every action.
If I see evil, inconvenience is not a defense.
I am not unique, I am not special.

God did not say this to me, alone.
He says this to every thing.
Not just every person, every thing.

I just happened to listen.

A Message

By /u/notadefense

Inconvenience is not a defense.
 Inconvenience is not a defense.
 God spoke to me.
 I should not believe me when I say this. I will know to believe me when I see the change in me.
 That is how God will speak to me. Not through my words, but through the change in me.
 God has spoken to me. He has told me, "Inconvenience is not a defense."
 I am a test. We are all a test.
 All of this has been put here as an obstacle to be overcome.
 My inconvenience is no defense.
 I can rip the pages of my bible out. Rip them all out and wipe my bottom with them and that would be more Christian than what I do now.
 That would be more Christian than what I do now, than how I live now.
 I can sit and read the bible everyday and pretend to know what it means: it means nothing.
 If I do nothing, guess what it means? Nothing.
 At least if I wiped my bottom with it it would be cleaning me.
 I make it appear to be a book of nothing, because I do nothing. People who see me read the bible will think, this is a book that causes me to do nothing.
 It is more of an insult to do what I do now, than if I were to wipe my bottom with the pages.

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abilities of laziness, love, creation, friendship, generation, poiesis or whatever else may offer up a cathartic outlet for our alienated life. This means doing nothing or withdrawing from production or to sublimiate our passion through a joyful medium rather than toward a productive one. To be effective against the regimes of financial capitalism and computational fascisms, one has to practice a bodily politics and an embodied politics. This means withdrawing from the networked hegemony and in turn from the logic of production generally. No withdrawal is ever enough, but it also requires a turning toward something else.

To chill means to take it easy, to calm down and relax: to chill is to practice an open orientation toward our desires.

Someone might make the demand for you to chill out, but this isn't quite right: chilling out is something we ought to want. It is a way to escape from the inflow of the nervous energies of labor: it's a time to unwind. To be chill is a self-directed relaxation. You can be lazy and be chill, but you might also chill out within another activity.

Regardless, being chill is a disposition that is in opposition to capitalist production. Being chill requires a non-productive ethic. When you chill you're not working, however it does not exclude creation.

Work is an overrated and played out concept for politics. We don't just need more vacation time or higher wages; we need liberation from these mechanisms of oppression altogether. Only in withdrawing from labor can we find a way from alienation and exploitation. This is not even a call from labor toward struggle, but just a call to relax and unwind. Being in love, with friends, being creative and so on are far more preferable to struggle. Struggle is just as undesirable as labor.

Workers of the world
chill out.

Questioning Our Normative Frameworks In Order To Bring About the Kingdom

by /u/Demon_Nietzsche

There are changes occurring in our world today that have left some people in confusion. Concepts such as gender and sexuality that have, in the past, been understood as objective and factual are today being transversed and questioned. Changes to our norms and traditions can often be frustrating, and this frustration can lead to anger and violence. One only needs to glance at the current United States political climate to see that there is a battle waging against changes to the ways that the world has always been understood. It is my hope in this essay to, first, examine how normative frameworks function and, second, explain why we, as Christians, ought to be at the forefront questioning these normative frameworks. By doing this, I hope to present a Christianity that is open to new frameworks that are more inclusive and loving.

The first thing that needs to be addressed is how normative frameworks come into being. I'd like to present an analogy from my everyday life. When I go out I tend to put my wallet in my back pocket. Throughout the day I have a habit of checking that pocket periodically, to make sure that my wallet is still there. Sometimes the action of checking my wallet is conscious, but often this action is subconscious. Every once in a while I will put my wallet in some other location (such as a front pocket or bag) because I had been sitting on it for too long and it has become uncomfortable. After I have done this I still check my back pocket for my wallet. The moment I touch my back pocket, and my wallet is not there I have a brief moment where rationality ceases and is replaced with panic. The sudden realization that my wallet isn't where it is supposed to be brings fear. This is not a rational fear, but it is the fear that something is not as it should be.

In a sense, the placement of my wallet has become normative for me. Perhaps there are societal influences that have

these that our strong protestant work ethic makes anti-Christ's of us all.

Production itself is bodily and in turn a temporal procedure. Capitalist production occupies the space of kronos: this is the rhythmic time of everyday life. We wake up, work, eat lunch, work some more, and come home. However, telematics open up a kairotic entrance for capitalist production. Capitalism is not just a daily rhythm of work, but we live it moment to moment.

The working lunch is the new paradigm: in the eruption through kiosks, labor pursues workers throughout the world. Telematics mean that there is no such thing as being away from the keyboard; work connects to our bodies through our mobile devices and wireless networks. When labor is largely liberated from physical spaces, the standard of the eight-hour workday just dissipates into the background of so called progress and advancement.

Largely, the discourse surrounding the informationalization of labor is passé, what is left unconsidered is the architecture of the network that facilitates this informationalization. There is a larger intensity of network infrastructure in the west; the industrial or Fordist modes of production have fled the United States in search for cheaper labor elsewhere in the world. In its wake are administrative and "service" oriented fields. The west has reached a new bourgeois mode of production in the telematic administration of labor elsewhere in the world. Globalization has transformed the world into a system of production that perfects the division of labor and alienation as a technique of labor. The telematic medium creates circuits of labor between material and immaterial labor.

Activist attempts always come up short in making suggestions or trajectories of action that can deal with the global scale of production we find ourselves in. With a heavy dose of realism, we have to consider that there is nothing to do. Very seriously, I mean that the best politics may be in reimagining what it means to be social or political without production: exercise our

led me to adopt this norm, but there is nothing that is primordially right or true about this placement. There is nothing primordial or natural about the placement of my wallet in the back pocket. Despite this, the fact that I've consistently placed my wallet in that place has led me to hold this placement as true. When that real truth isn't followed, when my wallet is out of place, something is wrong. This wrongness causes fear, panic, and occasionally irrational anger. I lash out at the people I passed on the street that day, and I think that, perhaps, they stole my wallet. I get angry at myself, thinking that I forgot my wallet somewhere. None of this is rational, but it is all too real.

In a similar vein, we as a society, community, or group of people tend to establish normative frameworks which shape the ways that we interact with the world. A normative framework is a framework that shapes the way we understand how the world is supposed to function. Social norms help to constitute what we, as a society, consider normal. There is nothing primordial about these norms, and yet they are able to have a profound impact on the ways in which we live our lives. This is not to say that norms are arbitrarily defined. Norms develop out of real differences in phenomena that we see in the world. Now, just because they are not arbitrary does not mean that they should not be questioned. This is a thread I will examine below.

Suppose the garbage truck is supposed to come every Friday at 9am. Everyone puts out their garbage believing that it will be picked up at the right time. When this norm isn't followed people become angry. It is true that the garbage is picked up at a certain time, and in a certain place. Through our actions as a society we have created a norm that is true to our lives. The idea that the garbage is picked up on Friday is true, but it is a truth that we have built up as a society based on societal actions. The time and date might initially be arbitrarily defined, but as a norm develops it develops because of societal interaction with that norm.

The Working Lunch: A Chill Manifesto

The constellation of so called “modern” or “developed” countries spin on the axis of production. Organizations of labor are important, but the orbit of production seems inescapable. Whether capitalist or socialist: politics, economy, and culture are successful only as far as they are productive. Telemetics introduce new vertices into this productive ideology. When are we not working? In a culture where labor has been informationalized, we are always working. Every lunch is a working lunch. Critical theory, let alone Marxism, seldom has the capacity to carry out this critique of production. On occasions, theorists point at this problem of production (Lafargue and Baudrillard come to mind), but we do not have the imaginations to exit the ideology of production. Political struggles, as well as labor, are largely undesirable: we need a politics that emphasize those things that are joyful to us. A more egalitarian relationship of workers to their labor cedes too much already: this is a manifesto that urges an orientation toward realizing desire.

Radical political projects have only made suggestions that alter the organization of labor in the world, but it misses the problem: production itself. Production is an ideological and technological apparatus that all of our waking life is deposited into. Production is a techné of which we have not considered the logic. Labor is miserable. It is our inclination to defend labor, but let’s think about it a little more. We confuse our labor with other creative eruptions. We don’t need more work or a better job, we need to embrace the self-direction in poiesis, creation, imagination, generation and play. Why do we defend labor with such religious fervor? The liturgy of capitalist production has invaded us spiritually. Here, we ought not forget Jesus who tells us to “[C]onsider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” It is moments like

Having a normative framework that builds an understanding about when the trash is picked up isn’t a very problematic one. It is at best a good norm and at worst a neutral one. There are many

damaging norms, which hurt people – these are the norms that we need to be concerned about. One normative framework that has been in the news lately is gender binary. As strange as it might seem at first, gender, and our conception of gender, are social norms that have been socially constructed. These are norms that run deep in Western culture. Gender has been constructed through representation and repetition. The more we think about gender as

a binary between male and female, the more that this understanding of gender becomes true. As Deleuze states, “What everybody knows, no one can deny” [1, p. 130]. What this means is that if everyone agrees about something, no one can claim that it is false. In this sense, what is agreed upon by society becomes true. The problem with the Western heteronormative framework [2] is that it is dangerous and damaging to those who do not fit into it. In the United States, more than 30% of LGBTQ+ youth reported at least one suicide attempt within the last year, and 50% of

transgender youth will attempt suicide at least once before they turn twenty [3]. Our normative framework suggests that these individuals shouldn’t exist, because they do not fit into a standard notion of what is normal.

In addition to erasing these groups there are substantial rates of violence against LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly transgender women of colour. According to the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs there was an 11% increase in anti-LGBTQ+ homicides in 2014 over 2013. Over 50% of these crimes were against transgender women of colour. Transgender women of colour have an especially difficult time with the police.

Approximately 27% of survivors who reported violence against them to the police faced hostility from the police who were supposed to be helping them [4]. By systematically establishing this group as normatively wrong, and being outside of the

Untitled.

by /u/melodude

and what of God?

God gives me the strength to step aside
and let God handle the situation
like a baby elephant defers to hir mother

now imagine the mother doesn't exist
this is God.

(to exist assumes a metaphysics)

Perhaps, if you are J. Caputo
the mother insists

(or maybe she has been dead all along)

a dead god.

(maybe Nietzsche was wrong)

The only way to live might be to kill her –
only in death can one be resurrected

embrace life

only then will you understand.

Maranatha. Our Lord Has Come.

parameters of normal, we, as a society fail them. Our normative framework suggests that these individuals shouldn't exist because they do not fit into a standard notion of what is normal.

It is quite easy to dismiss those who we see as bigoted for being out of touch. However, I want to examine why people get angry about those who are outside the heteronormative ideal. Let us return, for a moment, to the analogy of my wallet. When my wallet is not where it is supposed to be I get frustrated and angry. As mentioned, I get angry at people I saw on the street that day thinking that they stole it. I'm frustrated with myself thinking maybe that I dropped it. In a similar vein, people get angry when the garbage is not picked up on Friday like it is supposed to be. Our society is conditioned to think that the things we believe to be true will function "properly". So, when someone doesn't fit into our normative framework when it comes to sexuality or gender, people become prone to anger. People get angry with these individuals because they have subverted something that was understood as true. It is easy to get angry when someone appears to be different. In summary, people get angry when their framework of heteronormativity, which they have been accustomed to their entire life, is questioned.

One of my favourite quotations comes from an interview that Michel Foucault did with Michael Bess. In the interview Foucault states:

"In a sense, I am a moralist, insofar as I believe that one of the tasks, one of the meanings of human existence—the source of human freedom—is never to accept anything as definitive, untouchable, obvious, or immobile. No aspect of reality should be allowed to become a definitive and inhuman law for us. We have to rise up against all forms of power—but not just power in the narrow sense of the word, referring to the power of a government or of one social group over another: these are only a few particular instances of power. Power is anything that tends to render immobile and untouchable those things that are offered to us as real, as true, as good." [5]

This concept, that the world should be controlled by the wealth of the earth should be controlled by the people and worked and distributed by the people is the economic system that is talked about in the Scripture. Yet in revelation, Joseph Smith said "It is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin" (D&C 49:20), because "If you are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things" (D&C 78:5-6).

The narrative, set about by our Heavenly Father, through revelation to Joseph Smith, speaks clearly of rejecting riches, and instead to care for the poor and needy. You must heed the warning of Samuel the Lamanite, "The day shall come when they shall hide up their treasures, because they have set their hearts upon riches; cursed be they and also their treasures."

09/17/2015

Societal norms are powerful. They make things real, true and good. We need to question these norms in order to rob them of their power. When we question "What everybody knows" it loses its power and can be denied. Norms constitute hierarchies and binaries that are able to immobilize individuals. It should be noted that Foucault does not consider all power bad. Later in the interview he states "Power is not always repressive. It can take a certain number of forms. And it is possible to have relations of power that are open". The garbage being picked up at the same time every week is an example of a norm that is not damaging, that is not repressive. That's not the framework that I'm interested in questioning. The frameworks we ought to question are those that damage and repress.

Christianity holds an interesting place in all of this. In one sense, Christianity is the religion of the state and the powerful. It is a rigid institution that is full of rules that have been put in place to govern and control the people. Yet, in its conception, Christianity worked against the state. Historians who study the historicity of Jesus suggest that he was likely a zealot who worked against the Roman government [6-8] (Asian, 2014; Brandon, 1967; Martin, 2013). The fight against Roman authority might explain Christ's death, and the persecution of the early church by the Roman Empire. Additionally, in Scripture we can see that the ministry of Jesus and his apostles fought against the powers that existed (whether Jewish or Roman). They fought back against the normative power structures in their region.

Now, some might argue that Jesus was not a Zealot, but we can turn to Scripture for further evidence of Christ being anti-empire. At the very least, Christ stands with the oppressed in their struggle against their oppressor. Many passages in scripture argue that the Kingdom of God will bring about the ultimate inversion of hierarchical power structures [9]. Christ spends his time with the poor and downtrodden and centres his message upon them [10]. This signals that these are the people that Christ wishes to

“It will go on of its own accord; the workmen themselves will arrange everything.”[Marxist]

“But the capitalistic organization was established just because, for every practical affair, there is need for administrators furnished with power. If there be work, there will be leadership, administrators with power. And when there is power, there will be abuse of it — the very thing against which you are now striving.” [Anarchist]”

The main point of Anarchism is liberty, and liberty is both the leading ideal in Mormonism. The problem with both Capitalism and Communism is that it leads to a curtailing of this liberty by a state. Following a state will inevitably lead to an abuse of some form of power and ruin, but nothing bad can come from truly following the guidance of Christ.

A major concern with people about Anarchism is that they believe it removes our agency, by not being allowed to own property. As Proudhon, the Anarchist said, “Property is theft”, this might come as a massive shock to the Mormon, the personification of the model American, however surely this just echoes similar thoughts to something Brigham Young once said, “There shall be no private ownership of the streams that come out of the canyons, nor the timber that grows on the hills. These belong to the people: all the people.”

This sounds incredibly like a form of Anarcho-Syndicalism, we’re not talking about not being able to own things such as cars, and other commodities, we’re talking about factories and other means of production being owned by the workers, instead of privately owned, as in a Capitalist society, where the owners steal the work of the workers, and rob them of their labour. The workers, owning a factory as a collective, instead can use the property for the common benefit of the society.

empower in his ministry. Finally, Christ states that each of us is to “love [our] neighbour as [ourselves]” [11]. Followers of Christ are called to love everyone with the same love with which they love their family and friends. This is the ultimate call to equality. We cannot love those who are oppressed if we do not fight against the power dynamics, the hierarchies, and the striated space that exist which cause their oppression

It is my contention that the goal of Christianity is to be a force that questions and tears down the hierarchies that have been put in place by the powerful over the oppressed. This is the radical message of Christianity. Christians are called to question the norms and traditions that have been put in place: the norms that systematically oppress certain groups of people in order to benefit other groups; the norms that systematically oppress certain species in order to benefit other species; the norms that say that it is okay to destroy the world as long as it benefits capital interest. Christians, in the call to love their neighbours, are compelled to be complicit in the ultimate inversion of hierarchy. We are called to constantly question those oppressive structures that exist so that we might be able to care for our neighbours, and to be good stewards of the world. This might mean questioning those things that are dearest to us including the church, faith, and Christianity itself.

Christians are ordered to bring forth the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is, fundamentally, the end of the State, the end of Empire, in favor of the Kingdom. Christians believe that when the Kingdom comes there will be no further need for this questioning. Power will be abolished and “The wolf will live with the lamb” [12]. This kingdom is an ideal, and perhaps utopian. The hierarchy will be destroyed, and we will live in harmony with one another. This ideal may never come, but we must keep striving towards it. We must continue to fight back against dominant interests that oppress others. We must fight to bring this Kingdom to earth.

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as: "The assumption that normal and natural expressions of

sexuality in society are heterosexual in nature. A heteronormative

society is structured morally, socially, and legally to position other

forms of sexuality as deviant and to discriminate against non-

heterosexuals. The dominance of heteronormativity as an

ideological position forwarded by state and church meant that

homosexuality was illegal in most countries, though it has been

recently decriminalized in many Western states." Heteronormativity

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11.

because they had freedom of choice. Thus they call Communism

the Devil's version of the United Order.

I think the reasons they refuse to call the United Order left wing,

apart from the fact that in general, the Church is the cliché of a

model American citizen stuck in the 1950's, as shown by the door-

to-door salesmen Missionaries, are a good indicator of why

Mormons speak out against the Left Wing. They have this straw

man of a Socialist. Someone who denies religious rights, and leads

them to a dictatorship, that removes the main thing that our

Heavenly Father has given us: our agency.

Does socialism have to lead to these things though? Of course it

doesn't, there are many other ways to achieve Socialism without

Marxism (though I do not deny you can be Marxist and religious,

while his philosophy is anti-religion, I am sure you incorporate his

other theories, I personally cannot stand it), and it seems that the

best way would be through the sort of Christian Anarchism

advocated by Leo Tolstoy. The idea of a dictatorship of the

proletariat, advocated by Marxism, to me is detestable. Yes that

would reach the same end goal as us, but what we lose at the

same time is our freedom, our agency, instead of being a

dictatorship of the proletariat, and instead everything is controlled

by what Bakunin warned of, a "Red bureaucracy." Instead of being

wage slaves to large corporations, suddenly instead they are wage

slaves to the state.

To quote Tolstoy:

"The capitalistic organization will pass into the hands of workers,

and then there will be no more oppression of these workers, and

no unequal distribution of earnings." [Marxist]

"But who will establish the works; who will administer them?"

[Anarchist]

24.

While you may find a lack of Left Mormon Radicals in the Church, you press certain members hard enough you can certainly will find radical right wing groups, your American style libertarians, Anarcho-Capitalists and the like, many of whom are the darlings of many an average Churchgoer, championed by the views of members such as the infamous painter Jon McNaughton, who combines in a tasteless manner, religious, political and (bad) historical themes, in paintings that, ironically, are reminiscent of those from the Soviet Realist movement in Stalinist Russia. This group also includes anti-communist and conspiracy theorist, Cleon Skousen, a man who at the time, while being recommended from the Pulpit by Church authorities, was also being accused of teaching ideas perilously close to Nazism. Likewise, Skousens almost protégé, Glenn Beck, falls into this group. The biggest name within the church, was the former Church President, Ezra Taft Benson; though once he became President he toned down the rhetoric. The world of right wing Libertarians and Anarcho-Capitalists is a disgusting, hateful one. How can anyone imagine it would be possible to build Zion, when they won't even build anything that won't serve them, or make them money? Imagine a Zion like that, maybe they can charge you for visits to Christ as well?

We do not need to look far for an alternative though; we just need to look at the Scriptures and church history, where we have the United Order. The United Order is somewhat reminiscent of the modern Kibbutz movement in Israel, though of course the Kibbutz has many problems of its own. Whenever you even try to mention United Order and the Left in the same sentence though, you are suddenly jumped by rabid Church apologists, huffing and puffing that the United Order couldn't be left wing, and the bogeyman of Mormonism, (insert scare quotes) Communism. They say this because of some strange belief that because it's religiously based, it cannot be left wing, because Marx spoke out against religion, and

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/06/books/reza-aslans-zealot-the-life-and-times-of-jesus-of-nazareth.html>

[9] c.f. Mark 10:17-31 which ends with the text stating that “[In the Kingdom of God] many who are first will be last, and the last first” (NIV)

[10] c.f. Matthew 21:31b in which Christ tells the Chief Priests and Elders, “I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the Kingdom of God ahead of you” (NIV). Also see Matthew 25: 31-46 where Christ compels us to treat all people as if they were Christ.

[11] Matthew 19:19, NIV

[12] Isaiah 11:6a, NIV

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But surely it is impossible to preach the authentic Gospel, while at the same time not preaching revolutionary ideas to the lower classes? The idea of Christianity is that every one of us has access to the Holy Spirit, a universality that makes each one of us equal. In Christianity, there are neither men nor women, Jews nor Greeks; we are all equal in our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Why has this assimilation happened though? It seems that ever since the 1890's, after the Church had given up Polygamy and the ideas of forming collectivist economic societies. It has been on a path to becoming as American as Apple Pie. Mormonism had to assimilate to destruction by their host culture, and instead they risk destruction by assimilation, transforming themselves into patriotic citizens. And to finish the conversion into becoming such a bastion of Capitalism, the Church itself became a Corporation. No longer can the Saviour remove the moneychangers from the Temples, because the moneychangers own the Temples.

So what is the alternative to world at the moment? I will pre-empt you quoting President Ezra Taft Benson, who before he became President of the Church was a member of a far right conspiracy organisation, the John Birch Society, and constantly brought anti-communism into the Church, in the fervour of McCarthyism and the Red Scare that was happening at the time. He used the same tired clichés of the misunderstanding of far left politics that started in this scare, and have continues until the present day. Of course his preaching, as well as those of other General Authorities, has left such a lasting influence of folk-doctrine on members of the Church, that Communism, as it is in the majority of America, has become a sullied word, a disgust to those who see themselves as hard working Americans.

I will get one of the "alternatives" out of the way quickly, because not only is it not really an alternative, the idea of it disgusts me.



Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green & pleasant Land

The hymn talks of the need to build Jerusalem, our Zion, upon England's green & pleasant land, which is in line with the Churches desire for us to build Zion in the countries in which we reside. It questions would Jesus want his kingdom built in a land, destroyed by dark satanic mills, constructs of Capitalism? Of course he wouldn't, and this applies to all constructs of Capitalism, the banks, and all other such forms. This isn't the sort of destruction, inequality, and slavery that Jesus would have us build.

This entire history of this Church has been revolutionary, where did this go? When did we give up on the idea of revolution? The idea of rallying against Capitalism and its inequalities, supporting the right for people to revolt, in order to bring about the utopia we strive for. Our Zion. All one needs to do is look at the first French convert to Mormonism to believe this: Louis A. Bertrand, the revolutionary and political editor of the Communist paper Le Populaire. He preached Mormonism and Utopianism to the masses, isn't this what we should strive to be like?

Yet the Church has been assimilated into American culture, and as can be seen, it is starting to assimilate the rest of the world as well. Gone are the days when Church Presidents could announce that they defy the United States; General Authorities would talk in support of the proletariat, giving them a voice; and Missionaries would preach not only the Gospel, but preach the idea of revolt to the lower classes, so that they could gain themselves a voice.

The Fall

/u/identknowwhattopaint
Oil on panel, 30x25 cm

Whilst differing interpretations exist within Christian doctrine, most agree the Eden narrative in the book of Genesis is charged with symbolism. Adam and Eve are the image of humanity falling from a divine proto-utopia, to a broken, mediated existence of separation. The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the real crux of the story, embodying everything for which humanity rejected God. The single instant of eating from the fruit is conceivably the most significant event in human history (literally or figuratively depending on your own hermeneutical preference) and thus it is the moment depicted in The Fall. By conflating the Apple logo with the fruit, this painting suggests the archetype of the late-capitalist consumer products has become the very root of spiritual disobedience. Societal valuation of material wealth above all else, numbs those who engage to any provocation of the divine. Contemporary consumer culture is the new utopian dream. It makes grand claims of personal freedom, ubiquitous luxury and immediate satiation of desire; it looks the innocent flower, but is in reality the serpent come to tempt away from gospel living.

never tells a citizen what occupation he shall follow, whom he shall vote for or with which party he shall affiliate...” Of course, we know this not to be true, the Church constantly, wrongly forsakes its own guideline and gets involved in Politics to push a Conservative agenda, but this idea exists in theory anyway.

Is it not the desire of each of us, and every member of the Church, to help build Zion? Not when Jesus returns, but now, to protect us from the evils of the world, the poverty and the inequality? So surely, while you support the Mitt Romneys of this world, politics to benefit the rich, we work to build an equal Zion. Us radical Mormons, no matter how small we are, will win in the end. When Zion is built, it won't be due to your businesses and Capitalism, the Babylons of this world, whose towers shall be overthrown.

But what would Zion look like; I think the best way to see this is outside of the Mormon Church, in the English hymn, Jerusalem:

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold;
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!

Hos Me

By Devin Horn

The movement needs you
the you needs movement
why don't they teach us?
why can't we teach them?
Addicts of overbeing
twelveteen and sod steps
ahead of Christ left behind
we're absent, we're queer
we want another beer
on strike for human rights
human lives
afraid to die
one diets for pie in the sky
when thunder roars
go indoors
Trust Allah
truss yor kamei
this land is your land, my land
to the waterboarded unseen
Addicted to gambling
leave my car unlocked
in a grace dishwasher safe
Jesus the sublime pornstar
onflesh onesex
believe it! Buy it!
or not! hos me

Letters to a Conservative: Conversations with a Mormon Radical

Inspired by Letters to a Germany Friend by Albert Camus, I decided to write an introduction to Mormon Anarchism in the form of a series of letters. This is the first of those letters, introducing the idea of why the Church needs a form of left wing radicalism, as it has throughout its history. Further letters will go into more detail on topics such as Liberty, Property Ownership, etc.

by /u/Jooseman

First Letter

I remember being told, not once, but many a time, that I cannot be on the Left and belong to this religion, and whenever I have tried to argue about the Churches own left-wing radical past, I have been met with shoddy arguments and silence. Because of this, I have kept my silence; I have lived a lie, professing a conservative attitude when required, even to you, but never believing. I can no longer live like this, the folk-conservative attitude that plagues the church is killing it, and I must speak out.

I must first say however, to calm any concerns, this isn't an attack on the truthfulness of the Church. I fully believe in the church, and sustain that God has chosen the Prophet, the Apostles, and all such General Authorities. This however, contrary to some strange popular belief, does not make these men infallible. It is official Church policy to stay out of Politics, saying, in an official message from the first presidency in 1903 that it "does not attempt to exercise the powers of a secular government, but its influence and effects are to strengthen and promote fidelity to the law and loyalty to the nation where its followers reside ... The Church does not dictate a member's business, his politics or his personal affairs. It

The Fury of Aerial Spraying

–Dallas 2012

"I'm tired of frogs and flies and gnats," God said,
 "So kill a goat. Then, use its blood to cake
 Your posts and lintels thick, or I will take
 Your sons when I come down and strike them dead."
 Last night we heard planes buzzing overhead.
 As pesticides rained down on White Rock Lake,
 We lay there, half asleep and half awake.
 I thought about the Hebrews: They, in bed,
 Had heard Egyptians screaming, or the still
 Emptiness of death. The angel came—
 Or didn't – and then left. This was the same,
 But with the roles reversed: God not the shrill
 Whining of the planes, but the moths and strays
 Who'd die – or wouldn't – gasping in the haze.

“Here all guilt ceases, for it cannot cling to such flowers as these.”

Deleuze and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus, 69

“I am afraid my heart is bitter to-night, and so the thoughts and feelings that pertain to Christmas are far from me. But when I think of the thousands of white-livered politicians who will take the Christ's name in vain, and yet not see His image being crucified in every hungry child, I cannot think of peace. I have known as a child what hunger means, and the scars of those days are with me still and rankle in my heart, and unfit me in many ways for the work to be done. A holocaust of every Church building in Christendom tonight would be as an act of sweet savour in the sight of Him whose name is supposed to be worshipped within their walls. If the spiritually-proud and pride-blinded professors of Christianity could only be made to feel and see that the Christ is here present with us, and that they are laying on the stripes and binding the brow afresh with thorns, and making Him shed tears of blood in a million homes, surely the world would be made more fit for His Kingdom. We have no right to a merry Christmas which so many of our fellows cannot share.”

-Keir Hardie