

Bryan Peterson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2009 9:57 AM
To: Bryan Peterson
Subject: Fw: letter to josh with cut and paste

I'm sorry, I didn't forward this on the last e-mail.

--- On Sat, 11/15/08, Susan Powell [REDACTED] wrote:

FILE COPY

4 - 3 6 3

BATCH NUMBER

From: Susan Powell [REDACTED]
Subject: letter to josh with cut and paste

Date: Saturday, November 15, 2008, 8:51 AM

sorry for all the cut and paste and the blind cc, the purple is the msg for [REDACTED]) on facebook and below that is the actual letter...let me know what you think-Susan

i wrote him a 3 page letter that was definitely written with divine inspiration. outlining how the gosple was central to our dating/proposal/engagement and marriage and how he gradually turned away and how he treats me like a roommate, dictating how i spend my money i earn and non job working time. and how he's alienated us from all family, friends, neighbors since he is too involved with polictics, and worrying and ignores any cues that his audience is not interested in his topic. and how he belittles me for believing in a higher being, having faith, and wanting to pay tithing and live my religion to its fullest (that was the answer in the temple)

and then i left everything up to him saying i wouldn't comromise anymore and i don't expect him to have overnight changes but i want religion to be a positive topic in my family without him trying to take away our children's free agency to choose (he is always trying to force his opinions on everyone else and the only way to get through to him is relate it to money or his boys...)

unfortunately, all he got initially out of the letter was, "no-you can't pay tithing b/c it's money out of the family budget and he doesn't believe good things happen if you pay tithing and religion just encourages fear and tithes is one of them."

so we had a 2 hr screaming fight last night. i got him to see some of my perspectives and he said he might be willing to start going to church. (i gave him your example of faith/tithing/real estate) along with other good examples but it really seems like he's digging in his heels on not paying tithing. his words are, "if i'm saving money by not having a cell phone, we carpool everywhere or do without so we are saving on a second car and you (me/susan) make bread from scratch and we are very tight on our groceries...then you can't just waste all that savings on paying tithing" and yes i've tried the argument that your hand has to be open on holding your money to allow you to receive anymore of it" and you have to put one foot in the dark sometimes to start seeing the light...

oddly, i'm working overtime this sunday and i had to do a shift swap next sunday so i kind of want/expect him to go to church without me...when we were driving to work this morning i was telling him about the new schedule (we move to 11) and how our oldest likes to visit certain people during

sacrament etc...i'm wondering if i should compromise with not paying tithing for a little bit on the "gradual" concept of him going back to church.

in the very heated part of the argument, i would say, "then maybe you should move out, maybe this is over, you don't seem to want to change and always blame me for our problems" (like i complained about the cheap/lame bday present he gave me and he felt like he had gone out of his way for me...and that's why he's not affectionate to me, and i said i'd give him some credit for that since i didn't know he came back late from lunch to buy my present and since it wasn't on a list he felt like it was an extra-but this excuse still doesn't explain the last 4 years...)

so yeah, sorry so long but tell me what you think!!!

FILE COPY

4 - 3 6 3

BATCH NUMBER

I am not threatening a divorce, but what you ask of me is too great to bear. You must understand that my religion is a part of me. You can't ask me to pick and choose only certain parts of it to live and expect me to be happy. You say I should put our marriage and our family first, which I agree.

When we were dating, the gospel is what brought us together. (we met at Institute for goodness sakes!) When we got married the gospel was the center of our marriage and our family. You proposed to me using the scriptures, D& C and you had church music playing and a picture of the Portland Temple on display. I have to ask myself now, was this an act? Were you just pretending? In my heart I think this answer is no. But you've chosen to forget all of this and have been influenced to a negative outlook in life.

You don't want me to participate in anything related to the church, the gospel or "that thing" I believe will truly make me happy. I believe in it not because of fear, like you say, but from experience, I've seen it work, and I know you have too. So you must understand my perspective. If you expect me to only pick and choose certain gospel principals to practice because they are convenient to you...That is like asking you to go on through life without technology or computers or something you use every day that makes life easier. Like asking me to go through life without a heart or experiencing emotions like I'm a robot and constantly following your direction whether I want to or not.

Looking at other husband/wife couples, whether they are LDS or not, depresses me now because I miss my husband who loved and cared about me. I miss the husband that was worried about whether or not I put a coat on when it's cold, or kissed me when he buckled me into my seat in a vehicle. You are so worried about peripheral stuff, not CORE basics. Your wife, your kids, being ETERNALLY sealed as a family.

I remember being terrified that we wouldn't make it to the temple before we got married. That before our wedding, something horrible would happen and you would die and I remember just praying that I would at LEAST be sealed to you.

I still worry. But now it seems that you don't care about these things. That's like me suddenly not cooking, saving money, and working a 40 hour plus work week in addition to taking care of our children and home. I guarantee that you would not be happy if I changed everything that you knew about me when we got married. But that's what you've done to me. You want to dictate how I will live my life. Down to how I will spend money and if I can use my non paying job hours towards anything I enjoy that might be religious.

I'm not expecting you to suddenly love going to church 3 hours every Sunday and another 5+ in miscellaneous weekday church activities. But it makes me very sad to not have my eternal companion sitting across the aisle from me in the temple, or in the celestial room to pray with. I don't want you to be unhappy but you must realize, these past couple of years I've grown more sad as I see my reality changing from a husband in the gospel to just that roommate that dictates everything. You always come up with more ideas on how to improve our lives, our financial situation, which is good. But your plan always involves me. That should tell you something. You need me, just like I need you. And yet you seem to be doing everything in your power to push me away.

You claim I'm too cold or unloving. I've tried to change this but it seems that you will always hold something against me. Like you've put up a wall so you won't get hurt. You give me the excuse that you are worried about

[REDACTED]

It's about you expecting me to suppress a huge part of my life.

I know this church is true. I KNOW I will receive blessings if I TRY to do what is right. I know it doesn't necessarily mean I'll be rich or live in a fairytale. But I know I'm being blessed on a daily basis. Not making a trade error at work, or getting in a car accident.

[REDACTED] By having a home and a reliable job (as far as you can get in this economy/market). Being able to pay bills and falling into a phone job and getting the necessary license so I can always have a good paying job. These are blessings!

[REDACTED] That we were able to find such a good daycare and jobs close to home and that we can carpool. That you had the inspiration to get jobs, and leave the real estate market alone for a while. That we have ward friends and neighbors offering to help us with anything. ([REDACTED] offering to help with the basement).

I want my husband back want to know that I can talk openly about religion in my own home without worry that my husband, their father, is going to make me feel about 2 inches tall for believing that there is a higher being, a bigger purpose. Tithing is just one symptom of what's wrong with our marriage. If you don't want to believe anymore, that is your choice. But you don't need to bring others down with you.

You seem physically incapable of having a conversation that doesn't revolve around your interests. Whether it be politics, the economy, energy crisis, conserving etc. And yes! I agree these are all good topics and worthy concerns. But it's like you have no ability to notice if your audience doesn't want to talk about your topic. Or if heaven forbid, they disagree with you! That no matter how much talking you do you may not be able to change their mind! I admit this must be partly my fault because you keep preaching to me on a topic until I give in. And I mean it when I say you don't notice your audience. You don't have conversations, you preach about whatever topic and if anyone dares to make a comment, especially against you, you see it as an all out debate that you must "win". You can just talk with someone and not always be stressed. What good is a paid for house and a self reliant lifestyle if you never have time to enjoy it? No friends around, never a spare moment to enjoy the wonderful boys you are trying to so feverishly hard to create this perfect place for.

Guess what, you are just like our Heavenly Father in that aspect. He wants us all to be happy and self reliant and kind to others and smart. But he's allowing us to choose. You so far seem to have ignored HIS help. I've chosen to try to get as much help as possible and I've been ridiculed by you for it. That's free agency. But when you hound a topic to death and you won't give up until you "win" then you are taking away everyone else's free

FILE COPY
4 - 3 6 3
V.271.000003
BATCH NUMBER

agency.

A perfect example of how you seem to lack the ability to have a conversation would be when my dad came to visit us right after his plane almost fell out of the sky. He was clearly stressed and wanting to relax and you just wanted to CHANGE his free agency from Republican (you assume) and when he actually made it abundantly clear that he didn't want to talk/debate or be your audience while you preach/hound (this is something most people won't tolerate so they either avoid you or don't know how to end the conversation they never wanted) Anyways, when my dad stopped you from your debate you were trying to have. You stopped talking, and kind of stood there with your mouth open and then walked, almost stomped away in disgust. As if my dad was appalling and you have nothing more to say to him because he didn't want to have an ugly one sided debate.

This instance shocked me. What if your boys dare to have their own opinions? Are you going to hound them until they change their mind to your opinion? This is NOT free agency. All I want is the best for you and me. I will leave that choice up to you. Our family, our children all come second. They will find their own spouses and make their own families and will leave us in the dust. As long as we give them their free agency we can hope that they'll choose to include us. But it really comes down to you and me. [redacted] will grow up and move out. Do you want me to be with you??? And do you want to have us BOTH be happy with us and ourselves???

I'm not forcing you to be something you claim you are not, or no longer are. And I expect you to not force me to stop doing things I don't agree with either. I already made my choice to practice my religion to the fullest. Temple, tithing, faith, service, ALL OF IT!!!! This will not be one of many letters. I will not compromise only to have your promises to me broken again and again. You already did that when you chose the world, your father and so gradually your lack of any faith or church attendance that I didn't realize what was happening.

Then you broke another promise when you said I could be a full tithe payer on my income as long as I move my paycheck to the joint account. Once again, you got your way with my paycheck and then you backed out of your promise and tried to blame me for it.

I will not compromise any more in this area of my life. I already did and regret and blame myself for allowing it to go this far. I still love you and believe we can still have an eternal marriage and family. I am leaving the choice up to you. It's your agency. It's free because Jesus died for us. Our Father sacrificed HIS son for US ALL. Can you imagine letting [redacted] It reminds me of the story about the trainmaster that realizes the tracks are off and has to hold it in place manually. Then his son is in harm's way and he has to choose to save the train full of people and sacrifice his son. This is a Christian belief, not LDS. If you believe in a higher being then this is simple. I will not sacrifice my beliefs any longer. I don't want to lose you and I don't want [redacted] to lose a married mother and father. But more importantly I know they should have HAPPY parents.



FILE COPY

4 - 3 6 3

BATCH NUMBER