

YOU DON'T WANT TO BE A MOCK STAR

Mockery is all the rage—
except in the Lord's eyes.

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

Can you name some signs of the last days? There are quite a few well-known ones: the Restoration, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, various disasters, the spreading of the gospel, general wickedness. Well, here's one specific sign you may not have thought of: mockery.

Two New Testament writers mention that there will be mockers in the last days (see 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 1:18). That is, there will be people who mock and ridicule Jesus Christ, His teachings, and His followers. But as His disciples, we are told to be long-suffering and

patient (see 2 Peter 3:11–15), looking forward to His coming and the fulfilling of His promises, abiding in His mercy and having compassion for others (see Jude 1:22).

Of course, mockery isn't a new thing, but it sure seems to be spreading. And even though you may never mock the things of God, the mocking lifestyle is not one for a disciple of Jesus Christ to emulate.

Mock On? No, Thanks.

To mock means to ridicule, make fun of, or taunt. It sometimes includes unflattering mimicry, like imitating someone and using a funny voice or exaggerated gestures or imagery. We've all seen it. It's everywhere. People love it, it seems.



But the Lord doesn't.

Nowhere in the scriptures is mockery approved of. In fact, it's specifically condemned. For instance, Alma the Younger taught:

"Is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother . . . ?

"Wo unto such an one, for . . . he must repent or he cannot be saved!" (Alma 5:30–31).

Mockery is a symptom of the basic sin of pride. And the basic feeling behind

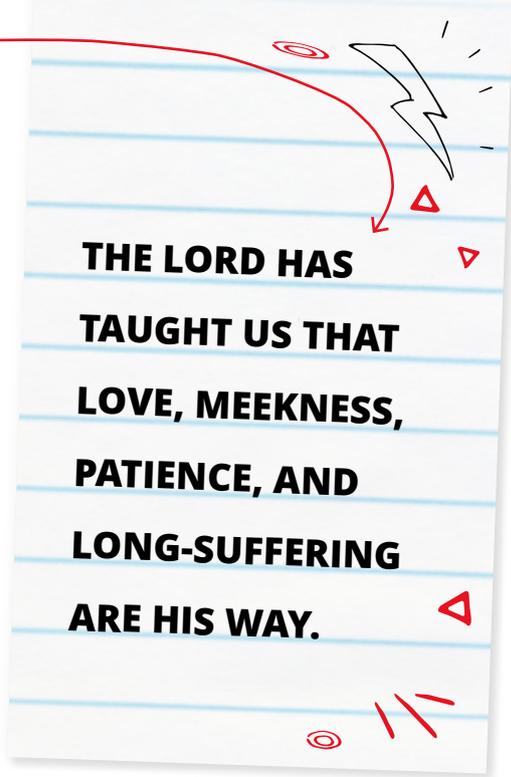
mockery is contempt—looking down on others—that is, looking down on *people*, not just disagreeing with what they say or do.

This is not what the Lord wants. He has said, "Let every man esteem his brother as himself" (Doctrine and Covenants 38:24). We are all of equal worth. Alma asked, "Will ye persist in supposing that ye are better one than another[?]" (Alma 5:54). That kind of thinking leads to mockery. Mocking people is one way people try to set themselves above others.

What's more, mockers are usually trying to get others to join them. One image from Lehi's dream really shows this. The people in the great and spacious building were "in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers" (1 Nephi 8:27). The finger-pointing draws an us-vs.-them line, saying, "You better be with us, or you'll be shamed and laughed at." Like misery, mockery loves company. That's partly because deep down, the proud are often also incredibly insecure.

Be Meek. Don't Mock.

With all of the mocking going on out there, it can be tempting to join in. It looks like they're having fun, right? Everyone's doing it, especially on the internet and on social media. We may even be tempted to fight fire with fire—to use the world's own weapon against it, to point back at those finger-pointers in the great and spacious building to see how they like a taste of their own mocking medicine.



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But again, that's not the Lord's way.

"Revile not against those that revile" (Doctrine and Covenants 31:9).

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

That's a much higher standard than the world's standard, which seems to say, "Mock everyone and everything that's different from you in any way."

It can be hard to endure others' mockery and not respond with mockery, because our culture would have us believe that the cleverest, most hurtful mockery wins the contest for people's attention and respect. But that's not so. The Lord has taught us—and shown us—that love, meekness, patience, and long-suffering are His way.

If we're true followers of Jesus Christ, we won't mock our brothers and sisters, because our hearts will be filled with His pure love (see Moroni 7:47–48). ■