



# Illegitimate: How a Loving God Rescued a Son of Polygamy

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## Illegitimate: How a Loving God Rescued a Son of Polygamy Details

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## **From Reader Review *Illegitimate: How a Loving God Rescued a Son of Polygamy* for online ebook**

### **John Kennedy says**

Mackert describes his life being raised in a rigid and joyless home as one of 31 children with one father and four mothers as members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. His birth mother is a sixth generation polygamist dating back to Joseph Smith's era. The story is a microcosm of the dysfunctional family life that put the leader of the FLDS behind bars on rape-related charges. Mackert describes how he wanted to kill his father, in part because the father had sexually abused Mackert's four full sisters. But this is a story of redemption, and how Mackert came to forgive his father for all the wrongs inflicted on him as both a child and adult. The fact that the father didn't change his behavior or become a Christian himself makes the story even more effective.

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### **Yibbie says**

This biography is a heartbreaking look into the home life of one of the most secretive cults in America. Brian Mackert was born into a polygamist family. But he doesn't start the book there. He starts with the effect it still has on his life. Then he writes as if he was talking again to the counselor who helped him deal with some of the deepest pains in his life. It moves back and forth between his growing up years and the first few years of his life outside of the cult.

It's not easy to read about what he, his siblings, even his mother went through. It's also not for children. The abuse his sisters suffered is terrible. He speaks of it as delicately as possible but he tells you enough to leave no doubt about their suffering.

The last few chapters are both the most heartbreaking and the most joyous. So many of the books written about the FLDS have no real joy at the end; this one does. It was so wonderful to read of the freedom he and some of his siblings found in Christ. He wrote of that clearly enough so that others could find it as well. Several of the siblings in this book participated in a documentary about the FLDS. Here is a link to that documentary on Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBpTQmBo2Ik>

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### **Pam says**

I loved this book, I thought he was honest about the FLDS church. He didn't skip over doctrine of the church that might offend others. He just told it like it was. It really shows how close the doctrine is between the flds and mainstream lds. Mainstream Mormons don't practice polygamy or tell people who to marry. But I do think that mormons do have a political system. Who you know, how much money you make, how "worthy" they are. LDS people that don't believe in the, you can become a God doctrine, have not read history and are uninformed.

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### **drowningmermaid says**

This is the best book I have read on what it is like to live in a polygamist family. The majority of these

troubled-life memoirs lack structure, and/or don't seem to know enough about the differences between life in a polygamist family and life in a mainstream family in order to show the differences.

It really effectively illustrates (although I don't think this was the author's intention) the way these boys get set up to fail in the wider world. Polygamist culture, which, more often than not work out to be more like a series of single mothers trying to raise eight kids apiece, encourages distrust of authorities, a belief that you are above the law and are not answerable for your actions, that ends justify means, that suffering is to be ignored and discounted, and above all secrets must be kept from society at large, from the rest of the community, from the tattling members of a family, and from yourself. Status and image matter more than hard work. All of this is the perfect makings for a drug addict.

Frankly, it's the only memoir from an ex-FLDS person that I really felt I could trust. Another thing about being raised in a cult is the tendency to lie, whether to Gentiles ("Answer them nothing"), or to your family ("No need to air dirty laundry," "If you don't have anything nice to say don't say anything else), and to yourself ("If you just have faith enough, you don't need to weigh anything based on evidence.") It's the only book that talks frankly about the cousin intermarriage, and the rampant sexual abuse.

I think what it really illustrates is how different life was before Warren Jeffs really came to power. When Mackert left the cult, he was able to get a GED with flying colors and enter the army. Some of the kids who are dumped on the street now, do not know what side of WWII Germany fought on. They can barely read, sometimes have no math skills, and have such poorly-developed people skills that they can't tell that drug dealers are dangerous people to befriend. (Even with all this, they can sometimes enter the army, but the odds of success there are slim.)

I could see some mainstream Mormons having difficulty with the portrayal of their (heretical) sect as a cult. This book is clearly written with one particular audience in mind: the evangelicals who are Mackert's current church home. To be honest, I was expecting to be bashed over the head a lot more with Pentacostal propaganda, but there's only one or two places that made me gag. (view spoiler)

Also to be honest, I don't see that he's changed his belief structure all that much. (And this is the ex-evangelical talking here.) He's gone from one set of fundamentalist beliefs to another, but never changed the way of determining truth (i.e. taking spiritual feelings to be "evidence" of historical reality, etc.) Overall, I'm pretty sure he's happier where he is, and frankly, I probably wouldn't recommend my own agnostic freethought to someone who was raised in a cult. I just couldn't see it being all that meaningful to someone who's expecting miracles and visions and powerful conversion experiences.

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### **Tina Delarm says**

#### **Good book from a boys perspective of view explained alot of the lifestyle**

Interesting read from a boy perspective and view worth reading explains alot of things as far as the lifestyle thumbs up

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### **Dawn Michelle says**

I have read quite a few books on the FLDS groups that are in the United States and Mexico. The books that I previously read have focused on the LeBaron family [who were based in Utah and in Mexico and resulted in

multiple deaths of brothers] and this is my first foray into the group that was ultimately led by [the now incarcerated] Warren Jeffs. This is not my only book in my collection of this group, but this is my first read.

As far as I know, this is the only book that features a man who left the FLDS - all of the other books I own or have seen have been by women who have escaped [and it is much harder for a woman to leave that group] and when I saw this book, I knew that I had to read it. To see how a man left this group [which we learn is MUCH easier and with little recrimination] was fascinating; it was also fascinating to see how they all lived - the Polygamous group that lived in Mexico lived in object poverty and there was much infighting and many issues. That does not seem to be the case here. Not only does Brian's father work, two of the "mothers" also worked, so while they did not have a lot of money [who does when there is 31 children's mouths to feed and 5 adults], they were not living in abject poverty. Brian is the 28th child of 31. I cannot even imagine. And while the "1st wife" always had the top wishes, the second wife in this group, Mother Donna, was the ruler of the house and everyone seems fine in bowing to her wishes. They had a big house and farm and all worked together [instead of the poverty and barely surviving of the Mexico group]. I believe that there is some connection between Brian's family and the Allred's [from whom the Mexico group came from as well], but he doesn't address that, so I do not really know. It would seem that if you come from multiple generations of polygamists, there will be quite a bit of crossover.

Brian never really felt that he was a "true" FLDS member [no matter how hard he tried and how hard he worked to please his father] and his leaving wasn't all that big of a surprise for those around him or himself really. But leaving physically and leaving all you have ever known and believed is W A Y harder. Especially when you hate and despise your very own father.

Brian's story is fascinating and his journey from a young boy to a man, from a person striving for both God and his father's love within the FLDS confines, to a husband and a new believer in Jesus Christ and the gospel keep me completely entranced. His ability to forgive a man who up until the very end had very little time for him is nothing short of amazing to me. To see the stories of his siblings that were also able to walk away and find freedom from that life was also fascinating. And the stories of what his sisters suffered and how people turned their heads and hearts is completely heartbreaking.

This was a really good read and I am glad that I hunted this book down and read it.

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### **Dundee Library says**

I enjoyed it, but all the way through I wanted to break the cult mindset this lifestyle cripples its children with! I've read titles about the hardships girls endure but never one from the perspective of a boy. Their treatment is just as harsh and unforgiving. Brian Mackert does a wonderful job of describing his childhood and break into Christianity.

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### **Paula Hartman-Carlo says**

This was an interesting look at Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) from the point of view of a former member. The author grew up in a polygamous family and he describes how it affected his life. My only real complaint about the book is that he gets a bit preachy at the end; I'm glad he found God & Jesus and it changed his life for the better but then he took it a little too far. Still, it was fascinating to learn what life was like within that culture.

## Ruthanne says

I don't know that the book was "amazing", however, it is still worth the five stars. An inside look at the FLDS group from the eyes of a man who was able to leave. His upbringing colored much of his grown life. It was moving to read how one verse from Isaiah managed to upend his entire foundation. A true story of the love and grace of a forgiving God and a loving Father. I would strongly recommend this read for anyone who wants a look into the very different life of the FLDS and the path to God's saving grace.

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## Roger says

Very interesting inside view of fundamentalist mormons. Amazing that this continues today.

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## Jacy says

It was 5 stars until around page 250 when the author began to lament the fact that he was never able to offer up his child on a silver platter to his child-molesting father. For SHAME! That poor child would never be given the opportunity be abused and neglected like his relatives. What a sad, sad thing. The authors fears of being like his father were valid, apparently. He was WILLING and actively TRYING to expose a child to an abuser. What, exactly, does that make him? and his wife for that matter?

The author seemed to think that forgiveness = reconciliation to the point of using his own child (the one he should protect) as a litmus test for whether or not his father was still an abusive child molester. Thank God that the author was thwarted and his plans never came to be.

While this book has been praised for the insight into the polygamist community, I don't think that accurate. While context is given, this book was more insight into one family's journey not the culture as a whole. I was happy to see how many of his relatives are doing well, regardless of whatever religious choices they have or have not made. The writing was acceptable. The preaching... I wasn't expecting it (until the point that I was, maybe 2/3 into the book?) but it was more humble than I anticipated. And (obviously, based on his eagerness to expose his child to an abuser) was not anywhere close to being judgmental. The lack of judgement was particularly refreshing, especially as his passion for his religion and his God are so clearly evident.

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## Sarah says

Well, another Mormon polygamist book for me, but this one is written by a former FLDS member who is now a Christian.

I enjoyed this book - most of the books I've read from the FLDS were written by women, so it was insightful to get a guy's perspective.

The review that mentioned page 250 was a little strange to me, as I was listening for that and didn't hear anything close to what Jacy mentions. There were a few places where Brian *seemed* to waffle on whether or

not his father actually did abuse his sisters, which was strange because other places he seemed convinced.

Not a life-changing book, but very fascinating nonetheless.

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### **Chelsey Thompson says**

I enjoyed hearing about what it was like for someone growing up in an FLDS family. It was also very interesting to have a better understanding of FLDS/LDS history. After living in the Salt Lake City area for 5 years myself, I could connect with the locations he mentioned and the behaviors I had experienced. My only complaint is that it was a little too preachy for me -- especially toward the end.

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### **Duane says**

I have to admit this book let me down some. At the end of the book, I felt that the author contradicted himself on so many points he made earlier in the book. He tells the lonely and harsh upbringing he endured while being a member of the FLDS family. His father was a horrible man and his real mother a hollow shell of a parent, yet he spent the entire book telling how much he hated yet needed the love of his father. I just couldn't grasp it. It did reveal some of the behind-the-scenes lifestyle of that cult, but it could have went deeper. I can see how a regular Mormon would not care for this book. A nice book, but not a great book.

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### **Heidi says**

I was surprised by nothing in the description of the way the polygamist community/family is run. I was disheartened by the way the author grouped Mormons into the same group on so many doctrinal levels. His information was certainly skewed. I also don't understand how the author makes the point of Mormons not being Christians over and over again. He obviously could be better informed.

I feel for his experiences and am glad he was able to find a happier way to live his life with a loving family and peace in his heart. I wish there could be freedom for all people who wish to escape polygamy and all its evils.

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