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Utah's Dark Reality Just Keeps Getting Darker

2010 Utah Suicide Report

Mark 12:29-34; "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

As Jesus said in the passage above there is nothing more important than to love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbors as yourself. This is known as Shema. The Mormons seem to have missed that part of the Mosaic Law and Jesus' views of it in their misguided efforts to spread another gospel along the way.

The vital stats of Utah play themselves out to be proof of how bad things can be when we don't follow Shema – the greatest of all the laws.

Compare what Jesus says with what the Church says about ordinances and laws. It becomes abundantly clear when studying the doctrines of Mormonism their two greatest laws to be obeyed is godhood status and marriage (sex). The results of the latter set of laws leads down a tawdry path to nowhere while the former gives eternal life.

In case you're not aware how prevalent a problem this is in the Rockies think about this. The following info is from a blog called High Country News. (1)

"To put these data in better perspective, as of Sept. 17, 2010, there have been a total of 6,816 coalition military fatalities during our nine years supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and seven years supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom (source: casualty.org). In our little six-state region, we have had roughly three times the number of deaths due to suicide than both wars combined during the same nine-year period."

Utah Suicides 9,087

There have been 9,087 suicides in Utah since 1980, an average of 302 every year. (2)

Suicide numbers 60%

While a health department spokeswoman reported in Provo's Herald Extra that "it's mostly good news for Utah" for 2010 the real issue glares back at its readers with an unanswered question.

(3)

60% of males in Utah between the ages of 15-34 who commit suicide are indeed members of the Mormon Church. That conclusion comes from a study by BYU published in the Oxford Journal and again in the Mental Health Library based in Ogden, Utah. Their only determination was based on whether or not the member had received the age appropriate priesthood status. (5)

Suicides for 2008, 2009, 2010
1,336

On average someone took their own life every 17.22 hours in Utah for 2010.
Twenty nine kids under the age of 20 committed suicide in 2009.
That amounts to 1 kid every 12 days.
There were 1,336 suicides in Utah from 2008-2010.

From 2008-2009 there was a 12.7% increase of suicides. (10)

The Utah Department of Health hasn't officially published the total number of suicides in Utah for 2010 at the time of this report (Feb. 18, 2011), however a recent comment made by a health department spokeswoman sheds light as to what they probably are. Ms. Bemis told the Provo based Herald Extra they are 15% above last year's rate so this would mean there were 509 suicides. (11)

There were more suicides in Utah from 2007 to 2009 than AIDS, hypertension, homicides and birth defects – combined; 936 vs. 1,195. (12)

Comparing suicides and car wrecks in Utah: there were 35% more suicides than deadly car wrecks in Utah from 2006-2010; 2,061 suicides compared to 1,341 fatal car wrecks. (13)

Utah Compared to the U.S.

In the U.S. the age-adjusted rate of suicide in 2008 was 11.6 per 100,000.

In Utah the age-adjusted rate of suicide in 2008 was 15.0 per 100,000 and for 2009 it was 17.0. (14)

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in America with suicide coming in at 11th place.

Suicide was the 7th leading cause of death overall for 2009 in Utah and ranked in the 8th place for 2008. (15)

How we ranked the totals: 873

Suicide affects all races in all communities, but it seems those in the age groups of 15-34 have the highest rates. This is the case for the nation as well as Utah; however, Utah's rate is well above the national average and as stated in previous reports this has been the case for decades now.

The only category that rivals suicide in this age group are "unintentional injuries" so we want to compare suicide with each of the deaths in that section of the report as well as the rest of it to find the leading cause of death in Utah.

As you'll see suicide is the leading cause of death for 5 of the age brackets in 2008-2009. (See footnotes 16-18 for references)

Mental Health in Utah

1 Out of 5

Like the majority of other states in the nation, Utah received a grade of "D" in the Mental Health of America according to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Grades were based upon the availability of professionals, access to hospitals for those in need, costs to the individual needing help, state expenditure per person in that state as well as other criteria. (19)

Utah has one of the lowest expenditures for those who are mentally ill and from what future economic outlooks are portraying, there won't be a change to that anytime soon. A brief article in a Provo based newspaper sheds some light onto the dire situation. (20)

About 25% of the population in Utah has some sort of depression or anxiety disorder according to Jed Burton, director of clinical services at Weber Human Services. (21) The latest reports show more than 17% of the female population takes antidepressants in Utah with the rate for males are significantly lower at 8%. (22)

The Mental Health Library (mentioned above) noted there is a significant need to reach out for help. Commenting that even though "bishops receive no formal training on counseling for suicidal thoughts" members are often encouraged to seek out "spiritual counseling with Church leaders, priesthood blessings and personal devotion rather than medication or professional counseling". Perfect.

The Church acknowledges they are now seeing every problem in the wards they see in the mental health clinics and according to psychologist Rick Hawks who organized the Mental Health Resource Foundation in Ogden, "that's a scary thought..." (23)

Population of Mormons in Utah

1,691,200 = 60.4%

The latest data available on the population of Mormons in Utah is from a report in the Salt Lake Trib in December 2009. Utah's Mormon population actually rose 0.0005% in 2009 bringing it to 60.4%. (24)

Utah's Health Department Vital Stats reported the population for 2009 in Utah was 2,800,089. Based on the population of Utah and what the Trib reports that would mean 1,691,200 million people are LDS. (25)

Drug Overdoses in Utah At What Price – 587

The number of people who died from a prescription drug overdose in 2008 was 277 and in 2009 it rose to 310. These numbers were not included in the totals for the suicide numbers, but one has to wonder how many should have been.

Utah, along with the Appalachian and Southwest states led the nation in having the highest death rates from drug overdoses. According to Utah Health News published by the Department of Health, Utah experienced a 400% increase in prescription drug deaths since 2000 and “are the number one cause of injury deaths in Utah, killing more people each year than car crashes.” (26)

Eighty nine percent of the 310 deaths were attributable to methadone and oxycodone. (27) In a stark contrast to the high increase of deaths due to opioids, Utah should be an example for others on how to get the public’s attention.

In 2006 Utah had the highest rate in America for nonmedical use of pain killers. In 2008 they experienced the greatest decrease in the number of deaths which goes to show us that education is power. They need to put those ads back on the airwaves with an update of what took place.

Domestic Violence Numbers in Utah 47.5%

Since 2000, 40% of all adult homicides have been domestic violence related. (28)

Out of the 48 homicides that took place in Utah for 2010, 19 were related to domestic violence. The numbers for domestic related deaths in 2010 actually decreased from 27 deaths as reported in 2009.

From 2004-2010 there were 360 homicides in Utah, 47.5% of which accounted for domestic violence related.

Utah Domestic Violence Council the numbers are “still too high” and serve as a reminder for all of us there is no excuse for domestic abuse. (29)

Rape Numbers in Utah 14,566

Virtue Worth More Than Life

Miracle of Forgiveness, pg. 61-62; “Your virtue is worth more than your life. Please, young folk, preserve your virtue even if you lose your lives. Do not tamper with sin ... do not permit yourselves to be led into temptation. Conduct yourselves seemly and with due regard, particularly you young boys, to the sanctity of womanhood. Do not pollute it... Nearly always those who lose their chastity first partake of those things that excite passions within them or lower their resistance and becloud their minds. Partaking of tobacco and liquor is calculated to

make them a prey to those things which, if indulged in, are worse than death itself. There is no true Latter-day Saint who would not rather bury a son or a daughter than to have him or her lose his or her chastity-realizing that chastity is of more value than anything else in all the world."

I don't even know what or how to respond to something so stupid. And to think that statement came from the mouth of a "prophet"...

According to an article from the Deseret News in 2008 "One third of Utah inmates are sex offenders, the highest percentage in the nation." (31)

There was one rape every 9.47 hours in Utah for 2009

Below is our biennial chart comparing Utah with other states for rape from FBI reports. We noticed that once again Utah's rape rate is above the national average while other crime rates are lower. It should come as no surprise Utah leads the nation in having more sexual predators in their prisons than the rest of the nation. (32)

I still stand by my original analysis of the rape problem in Utah being a major player from one of the core teachings of the Church. Look, rape has been and always will be a dark, filthy problem in any society. Historical evidence has proven that societies where males have to dominate women also have high rape rates. And unfortunately with a high rape rate of women, there is typically a higher than average rate of child sexual abuse as well.

From 2008-2010 CPS investigated 14,566 cases of child sexual abuse. (33)

Overall for 2009 there were 2,652 counts of forcible sex offenses and 250 counts of non-forcible sex offenses. These are not necessarily the rape totals in chart above. A forcible sex offense counts the offenses of forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object and forcible fondling. A non-forcible sex offense counts the offenses of incest and statutory rape. (34)

The 2007 Rape in Utah Survey found that "nearly 1 in 3 women report experiencing some type of sexual assault during their lifetimes, but less than 12% of these crimes are reported to the police (Table 10)." Compare that with the national rate of 1 out of every 6 women who will be raped during their lifetime. (35, 36)

Why is it more dangerous for women in Utah than those outside of Utah?

And if being raped by a family member or friend wasn't bad enough there's more trouble lurking for kids in Utah when they go to school.

The State of Utah's Children Public Schools in Utah
51st

Morality, pg. 105; "The power of creation-or may we say procreation-is not just an incidental

part of the plan: it is essential to it. Without it the plan could not proceed. The misuse of it may disrupt the plan.” – Boyd K. Packer

KSL television ran a report in 2009 about sexual misconduct amongst the teachers and discovered the number one reason educators were forced to give up their licenses was for sexual misconduct. They said that since 1992 there have been 313 teacher license revocations; 208 of which were for sexual misconduct.

Unbelievable. It used to be that teachers were looked upon with the same respect as clergy or police – can we as a society say that nowadays? (37)

With 43 school districts in Utah and an average of 15 licenses being revoked every year there’s a pretty good chance one of those teachers might be in your school district if you live there. Since 2001 there have been 73 instances of a teacher having sexual activity with a student. (38, 39)

Kids. You either love ‘em or hate to be around them. With the “Families are Forever” campaign and high fertility rate Utah’s always bragged about, you’d think the state of Utah would take better care of the state of the children. The Utah Board of Education and Children’s Defense Fund reports that Utah spends more money on prisoners than they do on students and ranks at the very bottom of student expenditure in the nation. (40)

Birth Rates

Speaking of kids...Utah’s birth rate went down in 2009 from the previous year while still holding onto the title of being the most fertile in the nation. (41)

In 2009, 55,063 babies were born.
In 2008, 55,605 babies were born. (42)

3x the national average

Utah rated above the national average in 3 categories:

Births

Marriage

Divorce

Utah’s natural increase in the population was 3 times higher than the nation’s average, they were married more often and their divorce rate was higher. (43)

19.2 births in Utah per 1,000

13.5 births in U.S. per 1,000

8.2 marriages in Utah per 1,000

6.8 marriages in U.S. per 1,000

3.6 divorces in Utah per 1,000

3.4 divorces in U.S. per 1,000

Highest Pornography Use is in Utah 2009

5.47

No surprise here in the Journal of Economic Perspectives and PC World reported that there were more online porn subscriptions in Utah than anywhere else in the United States. For every 1,000 Broadband subscribers there were 5.47 households checking in on the red light district of the internet world. (44)

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