

GLEANINGS — September 6, A.D. 2015  
Let's Play Lord Potato Head!

In the 1,952<sup>nd</sup> year of grace, the Hasbro company first manufactured a toy that had been invented by George Lerner: **Mr. Potato Head**. It consisted of a variety of plastic ears, eyes, noses, mouths, hats, and shoes. These features would be attached by way of push pins onto an ordinary potato, according to the player's fancy. The toy changed a bit over the years; as of 1964 a real potato was no longer required. Mr. Potato Head went on to appear in the Toy Story series of movies, and as a float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. He can be spotted to this day on ball caps, T-shirts, etc.

This classic American toy was and probably remains great fun for kids of all ages. And it is a fine example of human ingenuity and successful marketing. It is NOT a good model of how to worship and serve God! But apparently, some believe they can trifle with Him Who is the only way to a certain and saving relationship with God – the living Lord Christ – as if He were lifeless "Lord Potato Head!" Here's how they play the game:

Their potato, figuratively speaking, is usually a featureless, nebulous IDEA of Jesus. This amorphous mental idol is typically based on a few isolated or fragmented words from the Gospels (do not judge...I am with you always...blessed are the poor), or words Christ never spoke (God helps those who help themselves...as long they "love" each other they can do as they please...heaven and hell are here on earth) to which are added visual conceptions of Jesus foisted on the unwary by painters and sculptors.

These usually depict a man striking what the artist conceives to be religious or spiritual poses, and making what he conceives as gestures of the same pious sort. (*Or is it that they want him to look like he is drying his fingernails?*) Perhaps some Lord Potato Head players include a mental version of the aura or halo seen in some objets d'art which make the painted figure look like he has a shiny metallic plate on his head.

Next, let some ill winds of the false or shallow doctrine that comes from TV charlatans and paperback writers of "inspirational" drivel blow across the mind of one playing with this deceptive theological toy, and a grotesque caricature of the Biblical, historical Jesus is almost complete.

The rest of him is cobbled together in that idol factory known as the human heart. Strangely, the finished Lord Potato Head's ethics and beliefs are perfectly aligned with those of the one playing with him! Hmm...can we sleuth out the cause of this odd similarity?

When someone having fun with Lord Potato Head is presented with a disagreeable commandment, difficult saying, hard teaching, or perplexing, incarnational characteristic of the BIBLICAL Jesus Christ, the player readily dismisses it with high indignation. "MY Jesus wouldn't say that!" "MY Jesus isn't like that!" "MY Jesus taught unconditional love!"

And there you have it. There is no such person as MY Jesus or YOUR Jesus, there is only the genuine, risen, reigning Lord Jesus of the holy Bible. And though His Gospel is surely a message of lavish grace, and is sincerely offered to the undeserving, it is not a plea from a personified toy, wistfully hoping to be "accepted" and played with. It is a trumpet call to sinners: Come repentant to the dread sovereign of the universe in order to be forgiven and accepted by Him! It is not a call to make up a god according to human imagination, but to be transformed and conformed by Him...to be remade in the image of the holy Son of God!