

Series: Unmasking the Cults

A Spotlight on Mormonism



Founder: Joseph Smith (1805-1844)
Date: Founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) in 1830 (Palmyra, New York)
Location: Headquarters now in Salt Lake City, Utah
Writings: *Book of Mormon* (Smith's translation of the golden plates) published in 1830.

The Pearl of Great Price

The Book of Doctrine & Covenants

Deseret News – a daily newspaper

The Ensign – a magazine for adults

New Era – a magazine for teenagers

The Friend – a magazine for children

The Church News – a newspaper that covers religious and church issues

Key Text: **John 10:16**
16And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

Symbol The angel Moroni, usually perched atop temple spires, with trumpet in hand.

Buzz Words
Great Apostasy
Restoration of the True Church
Celestial Marriage
Baptism for the dead
Word of Wisdom (Dietary laws)
Follow the brethren (means to follow without doubt or question)



BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER!

Attitudes Needed – meekness; fear, patient, apt to teach, gentle

1 Peter 3:15

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

2 Timothy 2:24–26

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

The material below is taken from the following sources:

<http://christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html#founding>

http://www.wayoflife.org/index_files/liberty_university_and_mormans.html

Fast Facts on Mormonism by John Ankerberg

"As is true for most other allegedly Christian groups, talking with Mormons can be difficult because of the semantics barrier." from **Fast Facts? on Mormonism** by John Ankerberg

Witnessing to a Mormon is like trying to climb Jell-O: it's hard to get a foothold.

Both Mormons and Christians need to understand that when they use terms such as God, Jesus Christ, trinity, grace, virgin birth, salvation, heaven, hell, the scriptures, and so on, they will be talking past one another unless they understand what each group means by these terms.

Expect them to have responses like, "We do not believe that" or "that's just the way you interpret the Scripture."

It is important in witnessing to Mormons to show them that they have placed their trust in something truly untrustworthy. Here are a few areas on which you may focus.

The Doctrines of Scripture

Doctrine of God

Doctrine of Christ

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Doctrine of the Trinity

Doctrine of Eternal Punishment

Doctrine of Salvation

THE GREAT APOSTASY

Was there really a great apostasy? Did the true Church die out so we now need a restoration the Mormon Church being the true Church restored? The biblical response is clear. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus declared, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Ask them, "Does this sound to you like Jesus

thought there would be a total apostasy? Could Jesus have been wrong?" Keep in mind, in your conversation, that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). Therefore, how could he fail?

PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY

What about the Mormon priesthood authority? Is it biblical? Not at all. The Aaronic priesthood was to be held only by those of the tribe of Levi (Numbers 3:5-10). This priesthood was fulfilled by the atonement of Christ (Hebrews 7:11-28; 10:8-18); thus, making this priesthood no longer valid or necessary.

THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE

Since Mormons do not believe the Bible is fully trustworthy, you may encounter some trouble using the Bible. But you should never stop using the Bible, simply because of their unbelief. In spite of their unbelief, the Bible is still the word of God; and it is true (John 17:17) and reliable (Isaiah 40:3).

THE GODS OF MORMONISM

Mormonism teaches that God has not always been God, but that through obeying the laws and ordinances of the Gospel he was able to progress to deity. Therefore, the god of Mormonism is a changing being. He was once a man, who then became a god. His knowledge, wisdom and power have thus increased. Mormons believe that all faithful Mormons will also progress to become deities.

In contrast to Mormonism, the Bible reveals a distinctly different and wonderful God. The true God does not change (Malachi 3:6), nor does he grow in knowledge (Isaiah 40:13). There is none like him, he is unique, he is the only true God (Isaiah 43:10; 44:6-8; 45:5, 21-22; 46:9; 1 Corinthians 8:5). He has always been God (Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28).

When using the Bible with Mormons, often they will respond to your use of a passage with, "Well, that's just your interpretation." Simply respond by having them look closely at what the passage says. You may also refer to cross-references to aid in your presentation.

ARE WE SAVED BY WORKS?

Mormons, when attempting to prove the necessity of works for individual salvation, will often reference James 2:17, "faith without works is dead." In order to answer this misuse of the Scripture, you must become familiar with the teachings of James.

When one carefully examines this verse in its context, one can see that it does not teach a works-based salvation. The context: people claiming to have faith in Christ but not showing this in their everyday lives (1:19-2:13). James's "justification" (v. 24) is in reference to men, not God. His point is that men can only see that your claim to faith is true by how it is expressed in your life. "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (v. 18). Your works prove your claim to faith to those who cannot see your heart. Christians are called to live up to their claims.

ARE THE TWO STICKS OF EZEKIEL THE BIBLE AND THE BOOK OF MORMON?

Mormons often refer to Ezekiel 37:16, 17 as a prophecy of the Book of Mormon. But is this really the point of

the prophecy? As always, it is important to read the context. Ask your Mormon friend to read verses 15-22. God explains the meaning of the prophecy to Ezekiel, so that he can in turn explain it to his countrymen. It says nothing about the Book of Mormon. Once they have read the passage, then ask them, "How does God explain this prophecy to Ezekiel? Don't you think we should believe Gods interpretation?"

You may also want to note that Ezekiel is told to write on some sticks, but the Book of Mormon was allegedly written on golden plates. After noting this you can ask, "Wasn't the Book of Mormon written on golden plates? But Ezekiel is told to write on sticks, not golden plates. Could you be reading something into this passage that is not there?"

Finally, you may want to ask them what Ezekiel was to write on the sticks (v. 16). Then ask them, "Does it say to write Bible and Book of Mormon?" They will answer "No." Then ask, "Do you think that might be because this prophecy is not about books but about tribes?"

WERE THE "OTHER SHEEP" IN THE AMERICAS?

Mormons use John 10:16 "I have sheep which are not of this fold" to argue that Jesus needed to visit his people in the Americas. Who are these "other sheep" according to the Bible? Several passages clearly teach that these "other sheep" are the Gentiles. Study the following passages yourself. John 11:51-52; Acts 10:45; 11:18; 13:46; 14:27; 15:3-23; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-19; 3:3-6. Choose one or two to have your Mormon friend read aloud. Ask them what the passages say, and to whom they refer.

JOSEPH SMITH AS A FALSE PROPHET - See Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 21-22