

Quick Facts About... Mormonism

The Mormon religion (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) is one of the most active proselytizing religions in the world. They claim to be just another Christian denomination. Are they?

This pamphlet has been produced to help you understand what the Mormon church believes. It will clearly reveal that Mormon doctrines are not taken from the Bible and, if this is so, that the Mormon

religion is not just another Christian denomination. In fact, it does not resemble biblical Christianity at

all. If you would like to better understand the differences between Mormonism and historic, orthodox

Christianity, please write: cultrsch@pionet.net

God the Father

He was once a man as you and I.

He has both a spirit body and a physical body.

Both bodies are "like a man in form."

His physical body has flesh and bones, but no blood now.

His spirit body (also material, but of a purer, more refined kind) dwells wholly within his physical

body, and can never be separated from it.

He is a glorified, perfected man who attained salvation on another world, and progressed by obedience to his own father god, from whom he finally received exaltation. (He was a man who died and was resurrected to become a God.)

Just as he will always remain our father god, and we subject to him, so he is subject to his own father god above him (who likewise is subject to his father god, etc. ad infinitum).

He is not omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent.

His personal name is Elohim.

Jesus Christ

Pertaining to his physical life on earth, he was not begotten by the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God from Heavenly Father.

Heavenly Father and Mary conceived Jesus' physical body in the same way that we were conceived by our earthly parents.

His personal name in the Old Testament was Jehovah.

The Holy Ghost

He does not have a physical body of flesh and bones but he does have a spiritual body in the form and likeness of man.

He is not omnipresent but his influence (whatever that means) can be every place at the same time.

The Trinity

The Trinity is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

They are three separate Gods united in purpose. Thus they are one God "in purpose."

There are an infinite number of Gods. Man can become a God.

Prayer

Prayer should be directed to God the Father, through the Son, and to no one else.

The Scriptures

Mormons accept four books as scripture: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

The words of the living prophet are accepted as scripture when he is officially acting as prophet on specific issues.

The Bible

"We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly." (Eighth Article of Faith)

the Book of Mormon

"Translated" by Joseph Smith from golden plates he found hidden in the Hill Cumorah in the state of New York.

He "translated" it by placing seer stones (Urim and Thummim) in a hat and closing the hat around his face. The proper translation would appear as illuminated lettering in the bottom of the hat. (Note this is transcription, not translation.)

Joseph Smith said it is "the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book."

The Gospel

The fulness of the gospel includes: the priesthood, faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands

to receive the Holy Ghost, temple endowments, temple marriage, and obedience to all the commandments.

The Priesthood

Heavenly Father's power is derived from the priesthood.

All things were created through the power of the priesthood.

Proper priesthood authority, granted through the LDS church, is necessary to perform the ordinances of the gospel, including: preaching the gospel, baptism, confirmation, the sacrament, temple marriage, etc.

Aaronic Priesthood

Joseph Smith claimed this priesthood was given to himself and Oliver Cowdery in 1829 by John the Baptist.

This is a lesser priesthood than the Melchizedek.

Melchizedek Priesthood

Joseph Smith claimed this priesthood was given to himself and Oliver Cowdery by Peter, James,

and John sometime after the Aaronic priesthood had been given.

This is a greater priesthood than the Aaronic.

Three Degrees of Glory

The highest degree is the Celestial Kingdom, whose inhabitants live in the presence of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Within the Celestial Kingdom itself there are three levels. Only in the highest of these does one become exalted to godhood and enjoy marital and familial relationships

for all eternity. Only worthy Mormons married in the temple can attain this.

The middle degree is the terrestrial kingdom. They are only visited occasionally by Jesus Christ, but not by Heavenly Father. They do not become gods and are not part of an eternal family.

The lowest degree is the telestial kingdom. They are the ones who rejected the Mormon gospel. They spend time paying for their sins in hell. They are visited by the Holy Ghost but not by the Father or Christ.

There is also a place called outer darkness. This is everlasting punishment reserved for apostate Mormons, Satan, and the demons.

Hell

It exists in the spirit world for the punishment of the wicked.

Hell is eternal, but punishment therein is not.

Most who go to hell eventually are resurrected to live in the lowest of the three levels of glory, the telestial kingdom.

Baptism

Baptism is necessary for: remission of sins, church membership, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, obedience, and entering the Celestial Kingdom.

Baptism is by full immersion and can only be performed by one holding the proper priesthood authority.

Baptism of infants is a mockery before God.

Temple Recommend

A "temple recommend" is needed to enter a Mormon temple.

Only Mormons judged worthy by their Bishop and Stake President are given a temple recommend.

To get a temple recommend, you must answer several questions like the following ones:

- * Have you ever violated the law of chastity without resolving it with the proper priesthood authorities?
- * Do you sustain the President of the Church as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator?
- * Are you a full tithe payer?
- * Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?
- * Are you totally honest in your dealings with others?

Temple Marriage

Marriage in a Mormon temple by the authority of the Melchizedek priesthood is for time and eternity.

Families can be together forever under such marriages. Death does not sever the family bonds. If obedient, the family will be reunited as husband, wife, and children after death.

Temple marriage is necessary to attain exaltation. It is the only way to become as Heavenly Father is - able to have spirit children.

Temple Work

Temple ordinances and covenants are necessary for exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. Temple work consists of: baptisms for the dead, washings, anointing, receiving a new name, endowments, marriages and sealings for both the dead and the living. All the blessings attendant to these rites are sealed upon the recipients conditioned upon their continued obedience unto the end.

Citing their "sacredness," the Mormon church tries (unsuccessfully) to keep the details of all these rites secret. Members who experience them are forbidden to speak of them outside the Mormon temples.

Though originally supposed to have been given by infallible and unchangeable revelation,, the details of these rites have undergone extensive revisions, the latest and possibly most sweeping of which were made in April, 1990.

Exaltation

"As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become."

To attain this requires obedience to God's laws and ordinances. To do this you must: be a baptized and confirmed member of the Mormon church, receive the Holy Ghost, receive the temple endowment, be married for time and all eternity in a Mormon temple, love God and worship him, have faith in Jesus Christ, love your neighbor, obey the law of chastity, repent,

pay

a full tithe, be honest with others, speak truthfully, obey the Word of Wisdom, perform temple ordinances for dead relatives, observe the Sabbath, attend church regularly, teach your family the Mormon religion, have family and individual prayers every day, honor your parents, teach

the

gospel to others, study the scriptures, obey the prophets of the Lord.

"In other words, each person must endure in faithfulness, keeping all the Lord's commandments until the end of his life on earth." (Gospel Principles, p.292, 1988 ed.) This book is an authoritative reference for Mormon doctrine. It is published by the Mormon church itself, with the copyright held by the Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Fall

The fall is considered a fall "upward" and "in the right direction."

It was not a serious sin but instead "was a necessary step in the plan of life and a great blessing to all mankind," and essential in our progression toward exaltation.

Adam and Eve's purpose in being the first people to live on earth was to bring mortality into the world.

Atonement

Adam's sin brought about physical and spiritual death for all mankind. Christ's atonement overcame physical death and provides unconditional resurrection for all mankind. It also provides opportunity to overcome spiritual death. This, however, requires personal effort and obedience to all the laws and ordinances of the Mormon Gospel.

Christ atoned for the sins of all mankind by suffering and sweating blood in the Garden of Gethsemane. The cross is despised as a murder weapon by most Mormons. Though Christ's death on the cross is frequently mentioned in connection with "the Atonement," specific reference to bearing of sin or suffering for its punishment is almost always connected to Christ's

agony in Gethsemane, seldom to his death on the cross. However, recently they have included Christ's death on the cross as part of the atonement.

The First Vision

Joseph Smith claimed that in 1820, while he was praying in the woods about which church to join, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him.

He claimed Jesus declared all of the creeds of the churches were "an abomination in his sight."

The Great Apostasy

With the death of the apostles, error began to creep into the church.

In short order the church fell into complete apostasy, believing many false doctrines and losing some doctrines.

False doctrines included the beliefs that God is spirit and does not live in a tangible body, and the doctrine of eternal torment in hell.

There was no true church on the earth from that time until Joseph Smith restored it in 1830.

The True Church

Some marks identifying Mormonism as the true church include: revelation, authority from God, church organization, ordinances performed for the dead, spiritual gifts, and the use of Jesus' name in the church title.

The only true church today is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Prophet

The top office in the Mormon religion is that of "the prophet of the church." He is considered to be God's inspired leader whose authority extends over the entire church and the world.

The prophet will never be allowed by God to teach the church false doctrine. While acting as prophet his words are scripture, binding and infallible.

The presence of a living prophet is one of the distinguishing marks of the true church.

Mormons uphold all their "General Authorities" (the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, the Presidency of the Seventy, the First and Second Quorums of Seventy, the Patriarch, and the Presiding Bishopric) as "prophets, seers, and revelators." The authority of the Twelve, together as a Quorum, and the authority of all the Seventy together as a Quorum, are each said to be equal to that held by the Prophet by himself. In "the order of the Lord," their keys in this respect remain dormant so long as the Prophet is alive. At his death the First Presidency is dissolved and Church leadership devolves upon the next ranking Quorum.

Word of Wisdom

You should not: drink wine or strong drinks (meaning alcohol), smoke, use chewing tobacco, drink "hot drinks" (meaning coffee, tea, caffeinated drinks), or take drugs except as necessary medicine.

You can eat: fruits, vegetables, herbs, meat (sparingly and only in winter, cold, or famine), fish, and grains.

The Law of Chastity

Breaking the law of chastity is next to murder in seriousness.

People may be excommunicated for breaking the law of chastity.

The Preexistence

Everyone is literally a procreated spirit child of God the Father.

We had a conscious existence in heaven as spirit children before coming to earth.

We could not progress on to become Gods if we had remained in heaven forever. We needed a physical body in order to progress towards exaltation.

AGAPE CHAPEL MINISTRIES

P. O. BOX 59004

NORWALK, CA 90652 USA