

Mormons – Part 1

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

I. Introduction

- A. This “church” boasts ____ million followers, world-wide, with the majority now outside of the US.
- B. They are Quite Dedicated to their religion
1. They give large amounts of time and money to serving in their church €6 billion annually – not a bad thing
 2. Many young Mormons (83,000) choose to serve a full-time proselytizing mission– not a bad thing
 3. Have a health code that rejects alcoholic beverages, tobacco, coffee, tea, and other addictive substances – not a bad thing
 4. They tend to be very family-oriented, and have strong connections across generations and with extended family – not a bad thing at all
 5. Mormons also have a strict law of chastity, requiring abstention from sexual relations outside of opposite-sex marriage and strict fidelity within marriage – not a bad thing
- C. Mormons label themselves as ‘ _____ ’ (Christ-followers), yet MANY of their beliefs differ from Biblical Christianity.
1. Believe in the Bible, but not only the Bible. They believe other books are equal with the holy scriptures
 - a. _____ – Another Testament, by Joseph Smith
 - b. _____ – Moses and Abraham’s discussions with God, written by Joseph Smith
 - c. _____ – 138 special revelations to Joseph Smith, and a few later men
 2. Believe Jesus and Satan are _____
 3. Believe Jesus was born of a virgin named Mary – but that God the Father had sex with her to make Jesus!
 4. Believe Jesus had at least _____, and many children, of which Joseph Smith is a descendant
 5. Believe EVERYONE was already a Mormon, as spirit-babies, they just don’t know it.
 6. And so on.
- D. They are NOT Christ-followers, but Joseph Smith followers. They are a CULT, and will keep any follower of their religion damned and under the wrath of God (John 3:36).
- E. How can I sit in judgment? John 7:24; 12:47-50; 1st John 4:1 (MANY false prophets). And we have done already, I have spent much time judging MYSELF first!

II. Main Lesson

A. How Mormonism Started

1. Not from the Bible, but from a _____ in 1820. The “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” never existed anywhere in history until 1830.
 - a. A 14 year old young man named Joseph Smith grew up and lived in western New York state in America.
 - b. He was excited by a Christian revival where he lived in 1820 to pray to God for guidance as to which church was true, and that he should join.
 - c. In answer to his prayers he was visited out in the woods by God the Father and God the Son, _____, who told him to join no church because ALL the churches at that time were false, and that he, Joseph, would by himself bring forth the true church. This event is called "The First Vision."
2. Another Heavenly Visitation, and Another...
 - a. In 1823 Joseph is said to have had another heavenly visitation, in which an angel named _____ told him of a lost sacred text
 - 1) Written by ancient _____ living in _____

- 2) Engraved on tablets of solid gold
 - 3) In an Egyptian language – hieroglyphics
 - 4) And buried in a nearby hill (just happened to be nearby)
- b. Joseph was told it was the history of the ancient peoples of America, and that Joseph would be the instrument for bringing this record to the knowledge of the world.
 - c. Joseph went and found these gold plates in 1827, and miraculously translated them into English with the help of seers stones (smooth, round rocks that he placed in his hat that showed him what the words meant on the gold plates)
 - d. The translation of the gold plates was published in 1830, and known as The Book of Mormon.
 - e. It definitely was not the last vision young Joseph had! Throughout his short life, he had over 130 recorded visions and revelations!
3. The Book of Mormon Itself
 - a. The Book of Mormon is supposedly a religious and secular history of the inhabitants of the American continent from about 2200 BC to about 421 AD.
 - b. It tells the reader that the American Indians are all descended from three groups of immigrants who were led by God from their original homes in the Near East to America.
 - 1) One group came from the Tower of Babel
 - 2) And two other groups came from Jerusalem just before the Babylonian Captivity, about 600 BC.
 - 3) They were led by prophets of God who had the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is thus preserved in their history, the Book of Mormon.
 - c. Many of the descendants of these immigrants were known as ‘Christians’, even **before** Jesus Christ was ever born in Bethlehem, but many were unbelievers.
 - d. Then, over time, light-skinned believers and dark-skinned unbelievers fought many wars, the last of which left only the unbelievers as survivors, who are the ancestors of the American Indians.
 - e. The most important event during this long history was the visit of Jesus Christ to America after his crucifixion, when he ministered to (and converted) all the inhabitants.
 4. Restoring the “True Church”
 - a. Joseph Smith was directed by revelation from God to reestablish ("restore") the true church, which he did in 1830.
 - b. He was visited several times by heavenly messengers, who ordained him to the true priesthood.
 - c. He continued to have revelations from God to guide the church and to give more knowledge of the Gospel.
 - d. Many of these revelations are published in a book called, the Doctrine and Covenants.
 5. Doesn't Agree with History
 - a. In 1828, eight years after he says he had been told by God himself to join no church, Joseph Smith applied for membership in a local Methodist church. Other members of his family had joined the Presbyterians. Hmmm? I thought he wasn't supposed to join any church.
 - b. Joseph Smith was not known to be a very spiritual man at all, but well known as a story teller. He was consistently described as someone, whose chief source of income was hiring out to local farmers to help them find buried treasure by the use of magic and "seer stones." Joseph Smith was actually tried and convicted in 1826 on a charge of extortion (_____), pretending to know where gold mines, and treasures were underground, charging people for him to help them find it!
 - c. The Book of Mormon is full of rich details of the history and culture of two vast, ancient civilizations, the _____ and the _____.
 - 1) This includes 38 cities, the geographical location of dozens of rivers and seas, crops, kinds of animals, metallurgy, kings, massive wars and battlefields, migrations of peoples, palaces, etc.
 - 2) Thus, it is reasonable to assume, that there will be loads of evidences in the archaeological record, particularly since only 1,600 years has passed since hundreds of thousands perished on the hill Cumorah in the last great battle.

- 3) However, what is most significant and troublesome is the total lack of ANY evidence.
- 4) Not one city has ever been found, not one river or sea, not one artifact like a sword or shield, not one scrap of the Reformed Egyptian language, not one battlement, not one person, nation, or place in a New World inscription, etc., and no geological reference has ever been shown to exist.
- 5) The detailed history and civilization described in the Book of Mormon does not correspond to anything found by archaeologists anywhere in the Americas. The Book of Mormon describes a civilization lasting for a thousand years, covering both North and South America, which was familiar with horses, elephants, cattle, sheep, wheat, barley, steel, wheeled vehicles, shipbuilding, sails, coins, and other elements of Old World culture. But no trace of any of these supposedly very common things has ever been found in the Americas of that period. Nor does the Book of Mormon mention any of the features of the civilizations which really did exist at that time in the Americas.
- 6) At this point in time, even Mormon scholars admit this.
- 7) The LDS church has spent millions of dollars over many years trying to prove through archaeological research that the Book of Mormon is an accurate historical record, but they have failed to produce even a shred of pre-columbian archeological evidence supporting the Book of Mormon story.

B. The Life of Joseph Smith

1. A constant _____ – a story teller
 - a. "View of the Hebrews" which was a very popular book published in New England, that went through two editions shortly BEFORE Joseph Smith produced the Book of Mormon. The thesis of "View of the Hebrews" is that the American Indians are descendants of Hebrews that came to America by ship in ancient times [sound familiar?].
 - b. He evidently took a fictional book about the American Indians, and changed it into a religious book
 - c. Joseph Smith's mother said that when he was a child, he entertained the family with made-up stories of the ancient inhabitants of America and used incredible details. Sounds like he was thinking about it for a long time.
 - d. After marrying Fanny Young, he constantly lied to her about “marrying” more women, until he was found out, and he started to teach that GOD told him it was now okay! WHY LIE IF IT IS OKAY?
2. A Fake Diviner - Treasure Seeker – using seer stones, and divine revelations
3. An extortioner, and _____ – stole and made money in his new religion off of the secret masonic symbols he learned as a mason
4. A _____ – he married, some secretly, up to 50 women, two of which were 14 at marriage, one 16 years old, and 1 as old as 58. He married 18 women in 1843 alone (the year before his murder)!!! His successor, Brigham Young had 50 wives!!!
5. He faked his ability to supernaturally translate an actual Egyptian scroll, claiming it was Scripture, and called in The Book of Abraham (included in the Book of Mormon) – later was proven totally false!
6. Promoted himself as the person everyone will ultimately have to face one day at the Judgment “No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith.”
7. Persecution
 - a. Joseph Smith and his followers were continually rejected by the majority of the people, for their religious beliefs, and driven Westward, from New York State to Ohio, then to Missouri, then to Illinois, where Joseph Smith was murdered in 1844 by a mob,
 - 1) He ordered the burning of a building that published a newspaper that said some damning things about him and his plurality of wives
 - 2) People demanded he be tried for restricting the freedom of the press, and so he was put in jail, pending trial
 - 3) 200 angry men stormed the jail and Joseph Smith jumped out of the window, and was shot over and over as he fell

- b. Joseph is now honoured as a “martyr to his beliefs.”
- c. Joseph Smith’s murder while he was in jail at the time is referred to as the proof that HE had saved the world, like Jesus – BY HIS OWN BLOOD!

C. Leadership Today

1. The church was then led by Brigham Young, Joseph's successor, to Utah, where the Mormons settled successfully.
2. The LDS church is led today by the secretly chosen successors of Joseph Smith.
3. Its direction as a church, and core teachings have changed dramatically throughout its 180 year history – it is nothing like the church it started out as!
4. The president of the church is believed to be a "prophet, seer and revelator" just as Joseph Smith was (and like every Pope claims to be), and guides the members of the church through NEW revelations and guidance from God.

D. What Mormons Believe – Part 1

1. The modern LDS church is believed by Mormons to be the only true church, as restored by God through Joseph Smith. Other churches, derived from the early Christian church, are in apostasy because their leaders corrupted the scriptures, changed the ordinances of the original church, and often led corrupt lives, thus losing their authority.
2. They have a unique view of the _____
 - a. According to Mormonism, there is a vast number of planets throughout the universe ruled by countless gods who were once humans.
 - b. A long time ago, on one of these planets, Elohim was born as a spirit child to an unidentified god and one of his goddess wives.
 - c. Elohim was later born to human parents who gave him a physical body. Through obedience to Mormon teachings, death, and resurrection, Elohim proved himself worthy and was elevated to godhood. Elohim is the Mormon's heavenly father and he lives with his many wives on a planet near the (mysterious) star _____. There, the Mormon god had endless celestial sex with his many wives, producing billions of spirit children.
 - d. The Moon and the Sun are inhabited by people. Joseph taught that the people on the Moon were about 6 feet tall, dressed like Quakers, and lived to be about 1,000 years.
 - e. And that our sun, does not actually shine, but that it gets its light from Elohim’s home star, Kolob! WRONG!
3. Jesus and Satan
 - a. To decide the destiny of the spirit children, the head of the Mormon gods called a council. Elohim's two oldest sons were in attendance--Lucifer and Jesus (that's right, Mormons believe they're brothers). The decision was made to create Earth and send all the spirit children there to learn good from evil. Lucifer wanted to force everyone to become gods, but the Mormon Jesus wanted to give people freedom of choice, just as on other planets. A vote approved the Mormon Jesus' idea. Jesus would be the savior of Earth. Lucifer got angry and convinced a third of the spirits destined for Earth to fight alongside him in a revolt. Lucifer and his followers were sent to Earth, forever denied physical bodies, existing as Satan and his demons.
4. Humanity
 - a. Those who remained neutral in the fight between God and Satan were cursed to be born with black skin.
 - b. Those who fought most valiantly against Lucifer would be born into white Mormon families. Elohim came to Earth with one of his wives as Adam and Eve in order to start the human race.
 - c. Thousands of years later, Elohim left Kolob to come to Earth in human form again, having sex with Mary to provide Jesus with a human body. This Jesus had at least three wives (according to Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde)--Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene--through which he fathered a number of children. Joseph Smith is one of his descendants.

Introduction to Cults

5. America
 - a. After his resurrection, Jesus came to America to preach to the Indians, who are really the ten lost tribes of the Israelites.
 - b. By AD 421, the dark-skinned Israelites--the "Lamanites"--killed off all of the white-skinned Israelites--the "Nephites"--in various battles.
 - c. The records of the Nephites were recorded on golden plates which were buried by Moroni--the last living Nephite--in the Hill Cumorah.
6. Joseph Smith Himself
 - a. 1400 years later, Joseph Smith supernaturally uncovered the golden plates near his home in upstate New York. He was supposed to be a prophet, and given visions in which he was told to organize the Mormon church because all Christian creeds were an abomination.
 - b. By maintaining a rigid code of financial and moral requirements and through secret temple rituals, Mormons prove their worthiness to become gods.
 - c. Everyone will stand in judgment before Joseph Smith, Jesus, and Elohim.
 - d. Those who are sealed in the eternal marriage ceremony in the LDS temple will become gods with many goddess wives, ruling over many planets and spawning new families throughout eternity.
 - e. According to Mormonism, Joseph Smith has done more for us than any other man, including Jesus Christ.
 - f. Joseph Smith died as a martyr so that we may become gods.
 - g. So sad!

III. Conclusion

- A. Galatians 1:6-9 warns us
- B. These are serious differences between what the Bible teaches and what Mormons believe
- C. We have just started to look at what Mormons believe and teach, and when we compare it with what the Bible says, there is just NO WAY it can be considered "Christian" – only a CULT!
- D. Religion damns people – Only Jesus saves
 1. Whether it is Mormon, Catholic, Protestant, Baptist, Buddhist, Hindu, Islam
 2. Prov 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
 3. John 8:12-24 exposes all religions are false if Jesus is not the ONLY light of the world, and Saviour of mankind! Period!
- E. You have a choice – just ignore the issues, and go along with whatever is popular at the moment, or search out the truth, and find out if the Bible is really the word of God, and is true!
- F. Next Week... More About What They Believe, and What is Wrong With Mormonism
- G. Any Questions?