

Mormonism by Pastor Dan Domke – April 2006

They're back! Each spring just after the robins show up Mormon missionaries also show up, young men on bikes, black pants, white shirts with ties and wearing name tags identifying their name and that they are an elder in the Church of the Latter Day Saints. They're clean cut and often carry backpacks. Mormon missionaries are out in force across the country. I often pray the true church would have such commitment to spread the good news we have in the real Christ.

Many people think they are another denomination of the Christian Church. They are not and they are not Christians. Mormonism is a cult that distorts and twists the teaching of the Bible and adds to it with an addition to the Bible—the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon plagiarizes the King James Bible in thousands of places. Like the Islamic view of the Qur'an, Mormons also see the Book of Mormon as a completion to the Bible. They use some of the same terms as we do, like Trinity, but they are not Trinitarian. They may baptize in the name of the Trinity, but they do so for the dead. And I mean that literally. They baptize living people as proxies for people who have already died to save them from eternal death. Scripture says however, "It is given for man to die once then the judgment". (Hebrews 9:27) The goal of every Mormon man is to have his own planet to populate through his multiple spiritual wives and then to rule as a god. In other words, the goal of Mormonism is for the men to become God, and the women to become their goddess wives (that is plural wives, if not physical certainly there is spiritual polygamy) to help populate these planets with their spiritual children. In other words the Mormon women's hope is to be a spiritual goddess and eternally pregnant. Another fact: They view Adam as god.

Mormonism teaches polytheism: The Mormon plurality of God's doctrine is found most explicitly in the Pearl of Great Price (Book of Abraham 4-5) and contradicts the fundamental biblical teaching of one God in three persons.

Let's take a look at Mormonism and grow in our understanding of this false religion and thus be prepared to witness the truth of Christ to the missionaries if they happen to knock at your door.

Many today are under the false impression that Mormonism is merely another Christian denomination, when in actuality Mormon beliefs are not only unbiblical, but *anti-Christian*. Below are the highlights of what Mormons believe concerning their source of authority, the Trinity, God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, sin, salvation, and heaven and hell:

1. Source of Authority. Mormonism teaches that the canon of Scripture was not closed when the Bible was completed. They have three sources in addition to the Bible, all of which they believe contain God's revelations — the *Book of Mormon* (changed in more than 4,000 places since 1830), *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *Pearl of Great Price*. However, Mormons follow the teachings of these three books even when they contradict the Bible. For example, Mormonism teaches that the Bible is the Word of God "as far as it is translated correctly." Then whenever a Mormon belief contradicts Scripture, the Mormons say that particular part of Scripture is translated incorrectly, and that the correct translation is in one of the Mormon scriptures (*The Maze of Mormonism*, p. 131). Thereby, the Bible is rejected as the infallible Word of God. [e.g. "The Bible is considered usable, but suspect due to its many errors and missing parts" (Articles of Faith No. 8, *Ensign*, January 1989, pp. 25, 27).

2. Trinity. Mormonism teaches polytheism (versus monotheism taught in the Bible), believing that the universe is inhabited by many gods who produce spirit children. Joseph Smith declared, "I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these

three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 370). Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie spoke about the Godhead in this way. “Plurality of Gods: Three separate personages: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, comprise the Godhead. As each of these persons is a God, it is evident, from this standpoint alone, that a plurality of Gods exists. To us, speaking in the proper finite sense, these three are the only Gods we worship. But in addition there is an infinite number of holy personages, drawn from worlds without number, who have passed on to exaltation and are thus gods” (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 576-577).

3. God. In Mormon theology, the god of our planet is believed to have once been a man on another planet, who through self-effort and the help of his own father-god, was appointed by a counsel of gods in the heavens to his high position as the god of planet Earth, and now has a physical, resurrected, glorified body. Mormonism teaches that through the atonement of Christ and by their good deeds and “holy” living, men can one day become gods, and with their multiplicity of “goddess wives,” populate their own planets. (This is what the celestial marriage and the Mormon temple vows are all about.) Mormon theology, therefore, humanizes God and deifies man. **This is outright idolatry.**

4. Christ. Mormonism acknowledges the divinity of Christ, but as noted above, Mormon doctrine on what constitutes divinity falls seriously short of the biblical standard. Mormonism teaches that Jesus, Lucifer, and all the demons, as well as all mankind, are actually all spirit brothers and sisters, born in the spirit world as spirit babies to our man-god Heavenly Father and his goddess wives. Mormon leaders have consistently taught that God the Father (“Adam-god”) had sexual relations on earth with Mary (his own spirit daughter), to produce the physical body of Jesus. Early Mormon apostles also asserted that Christ was a polygamist, and that His wives included Mary and Martha (the sisters of Lazarus) and Mary Magdalene.

5. Holy Spirit. In Mormonism, a distinction is drawn between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit. As LDS Apostle Marion G. Romney stated: “The Holy Ghost is a person, a spirit, the third member of the Godhead” (*Ensign*, May 1977, pp. 43-44). The sixth LDS prophet, Joseph F. Smith, explains that the Holy Spirit is not a person but rather an impersonal force: “You may call it the Spirit of God, you may call it the influence of God’s intelligence, you may call it the substance of his power; no matter what it is called, it is the spirit of intelligence that permeates the universe” (*Mormon Doctrine*, McConkie, pp. 752-753).

6. Sin. In Mormon theology, it is not quite clear how the first humans, Adam and Eve, came to live on this earth and received bodies, but somehow they did and began the process of human procreation, whereby bodies are produced for their spirit children. But at the very beginning of the process of human generation, sin entered necessarily. The earthly bodies of Adam and Eve were intended to be immortal tabernacles for their spirits, “but it was necessary for them to possess through mortality and be redeemed through the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ that the fullness of life might come.” Therefore, they disobeyed God’s commands. Since the fall of man was necessary, it became necessary for men to disobey God in order to do His will. Adam’s fall, thereby, was a fall “upward.” Concerning the transmission of sin to Adam’s posterity, Mormons take a negative position -- they believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression. Having rejected the doctrine of the imputation of the guilt of sin, Latter-Day Saints likewise repudiate the transmission of inherent corruption or original sin.

7. Salvation. Mormon theology teaches that the atonement of Christ was essential to our salvation and eternal life with God, but that it is **not** sufficient. Christ’s shed blood on the cross *provides* for universal resurrection of all people, but does not *pay* for personal sins; according to Mormonism, only Christ’s blood shed in the Garden of Gethsemane atones for personal sin. Besides faith in Christ, complete and permanent repentance of all sin as well as many good works are required. Mormonism also teaches that one must be baptized in water to be saved (baptismal regeneration with a twist), and that salvation will also be available in the next world for those “missing-out” in this one. Therefore, Mormons avidly pursue genealogy and practice baptism for the dead.

8. Heaven and Hell. Mormonism teaches that there are three degrees of glory: Celestial (for good Mormons able to cease sinning in this lifetime), Terrestrial (for good people who do not comply with all the teachings of Mormonism), and Telestial (for those who have lived unclean earthly lives). (See also *Mormon Doctrines*, p. 348.) Mormonism teaches that there is a hell, but only for the “sons of perdition,” a very small number of souls that cannot be redeemed. According to Mormonism, then, the vast majority of mankind will be “saved,” though it should be obvious that no one will make it to the Celestial Kingdom. [Black people used to be totally out of the equation: “Black people are black because of their misdeeds in the pre-existence” (*Three Degrees of Glory*, LDS Apostle Melvin J. Ballard, p. 21); “The Negro is an unfortunate man. He has been given a black skin. But that is nothing compared with that greater handicap. He is not permitted to receive the priesthood and the ordinances of the temple, necessary to prepare men and women to enter into and enjoy a fullness of glory in the Celestial Kingdom” (Elder George E. Richards). In 1978, however, the Mormon Church announced that God had lifted his curse from the African race.] They did so under extreme pressure from the public.

9. Temple Rituals. A typical temple ceremony would take place as follows: “The ritual began in a small cubicle where we had to strip completely. We then put on ‘the shield,’ a poncho with a hole for the head, but open on the sides (similar to a hospital gown). We went through a series of ‘washings and anointings,’ as various parts of our bodies were touched by elderly temple workers who mumbled appropriate incantations over them. Our Mormon underwear, ‘the garments,’ are said to have powers to protect us from ‘the evil one.’ It had occult markings, which were so ‘sacred’ that we were instructed to burn them when the garments wore out. The endowment ceremony mocked all doctrines held to by Biblical Christianity, and Christian pastors were portrayed as servants of Satan. We had to swear many blood oaths, promising we would forfeit our lives if we weren’t faithful, or if we revealed any of the secrets revealed to us in the temple ceremonies. We were made to pretend by grotesque gestures to cut our throats, chests, and abdomens, indicating how we would lose our lives. We were never told who would kill us! The inference was, and history testifies to, that it would be the Mormon priesthood.” (Testimony of a former Mormon.) [Note: The blood oaths and portrayal of Christian pastors were removed in April of 1990, despite the fact that the ordinance was purported to have been given originally by a revelation and was never to be changed.]

10. More Citations Detailing and Amplifying Mormon Doctrine. All of the statements below are from Mormon authors in good standing with the Mormon Church:

- The true gospel was lost from the earth. Mormonism is its restoration (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 635). They teach there was an apostasy and the true church ceased to exist on earth.
- We need prophets today, the same as in the Old Testament (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 606).
- The Book of Mormon is more correct than the Bible (*History of the Church*, 4:461).
- If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation [the context is the full gospel including exaltation to Godhood] outside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 670).
- There are many gods (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 163).
- There is a mother god (*Articles of Faith*, by James Talmadge, p. 443).
- God used to be a man on another planet (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 321; Joseph Smith, *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, pp. 613-614; Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 345; Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, p. 333).

- After you become a good Mormon, you have the potential of becoming a god (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 345-347, 354).
- God the Father had a Father (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 476; Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, p. 19; Milton Hunter, *First Council of the Seventy, Gospel through the Ages*, p. 104-105).
- God resides near a star called Kolob (*Pearl of Great Price*, pp. 34-35; *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 428).
- God the Father has a body of flesh and bones (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 130:22).
- God is in the form of a man (Joseph Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, p. 3).
- God is married to his goddess wife and has spirit children (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 516).
- We were first begotten as spirit children in heaven and then born naturally on earth (*Journal of Discourse*, Vol. 4, p. 218).
- The first spirit to be born in heaven was Jesus (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 129).
- The Devil was born as a spirit after Jesus “in the morning of pre-existence” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 192).
- Jesus and Satan are spirit brothers and we were all born as siblings in heaven to them both (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 163).
- A plan of salvation was needed for the people of earth so Jesus offered a plan to the Father and Satan offered a plan to the Father but Jesus’ plan was accepted. In effect the Devil wanted to be the Saviour of all Mankind and to “deny men their agency and to dethrone god” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 193; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, p. 8).
- God had sexual relations with Mary to make the body of Jesus (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 218, 1857; Vol. 8, p. 115). This one is disputed among many Mormons and not always ‘officially’ taught and believed. Nevertheless, Brigham Young, the second prophet of the Mormon church, taught it.
- Jesus’ sacrifice was not able to cleanse us from all our sins, (murder and repeated adultery are exceptions) (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, p. 247, 1856).
- Good works are necessary for salvation (*Articles of Faith*, p. 92).
- There is no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 188).
- Baptism for the dead (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. II, p. 141). This is a practice of baptizing each other in place of non-Mormons who are now dead. Their belief is that in the afterlife, the “newly baptized” person will be able to enter into a higher level of Mormon heaven.
- The Holy Ghost is a male personage (Le Grand Richards, Salt Lake City, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 1956, p. 118; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, p. 179).

Hopefully, with this information you are prepared to meet the challenge of witnessing with knowledge to a Mormon Missionary that comes to your door. Scriptural knowledge is the foundation for true Christian faith. The work of God's people is in part to expose the darkness (Ephesians 5:11) the teachings of antichrist wherever his chaos tries to exert itself. Christian education begins first with scripture study and teaching. Then application, with the Lutheran Confessions and other topics as they relate to confessing the one true faith that saves and being prepared to give a defense of the Christian faith.