



Mormonism

# Review

- ▶ Last week, we looked at whether or not Mormons are Christians
- ▶ If you ask a Mormon, they will say that they are indeed Christians, the only true Christian church on earth
- ▶ However, in Mormon history, they have not always claimed to be Christians, but something other
- ▶ If we look closely, we see that though they use a lot of the same words as Christians do (atonement, grace, baptism, etc.), those words have different meanings for them

# Review

- ▶ These differences extend even to the fundamental question of who God is
- ▶ The Mormons have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but they believe the Father and the Son to be separate individuals
- ▶ The origin of God is also different, with God the Father having His beginning as a human man who was exalted, and Jesus being the first Spirit child of the Heavenly Father
- ▶ Along with different meanings, Mormons have a different goal: to become a god, sealed in celestial marriage, repopulating and ruling over their own world, just as they believe God did
- ▶ In order to become a god, they follow a strict pattern of obedience to Mormon teaching, which we'll find out more about today
- ▶ Let's watch Part 4: Burden of Belief

# Burden of Belief

- ▶ The system of rules and regulations in Mormonism is similar to what we see in the Old Testament with the Jewish leaders, the Scribes, and the Pharisees
- ▶ These leaders added roughly 600 more rules on top of God's Law, placing a large burden upon the people to keep them
- ▶ Which of the Mormon regulations would be most difficult to keep?
- ▶ What results from a failure to keep these regulations? How might a person feel afterward?

# Perfect, as your Heavenly Father

- ▶ Christians can feel the same way, guilty and full of despair, because we fail to keep God's Law perfectly as He requires
- ▶ We know that our sinful nature prevents us from doing good things and leads us to do evil
  - ▶ “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one” ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10-12, 23)
- ▶ Even good deeds, when done apart from Christ, count for nothing
  - ▶ “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment ...” (Isaiah 64:6a).

# The vine and the branches

- ▶ When we are connected to Christ, however, we can bear much fruit
  - ▶ “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5)
- ▶ How does Jesus’ image of a branch separated from its vine make clear the impossibility of pleasing God by our works apart from faith in Christ?
- ▶ Discuss the selfish motives that would taint any good deed performed to please God apart from Jesus Christ

# Grace alone

- ▶ Our situation would be truly dire apart from Jesus:
  - ▶ Now we know that whatever the Law says it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the Law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the Law comes knowledge of sin (Romans 3:19-20)
- ▶ But God's grace comes to us in Christ
  - ▶ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the Law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show His righteousness at the present time, so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the Law (Romans 3:21-28)
  - ▶ How do Paul's words "apart from works of the Law" make it clear that our standing with God in eternity has nothing to do with our works, and everything to do with Jesus' life, death and resurrection

# Rest in Jesus

- ▶ Jesus' perfect life, His innocent suffering and death in our place, and His victorious resurrection have secured our
- ▶ eternal life in the glorious presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- ▶ Forgiven and free, now we can carry Jesus' invitation to Mormons and all those living under the crushing load of
- ▶ guilt, shame, fear and despair.
- ▶ (Jesus said,) "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and
- ▶ learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My
- ▶ burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30)